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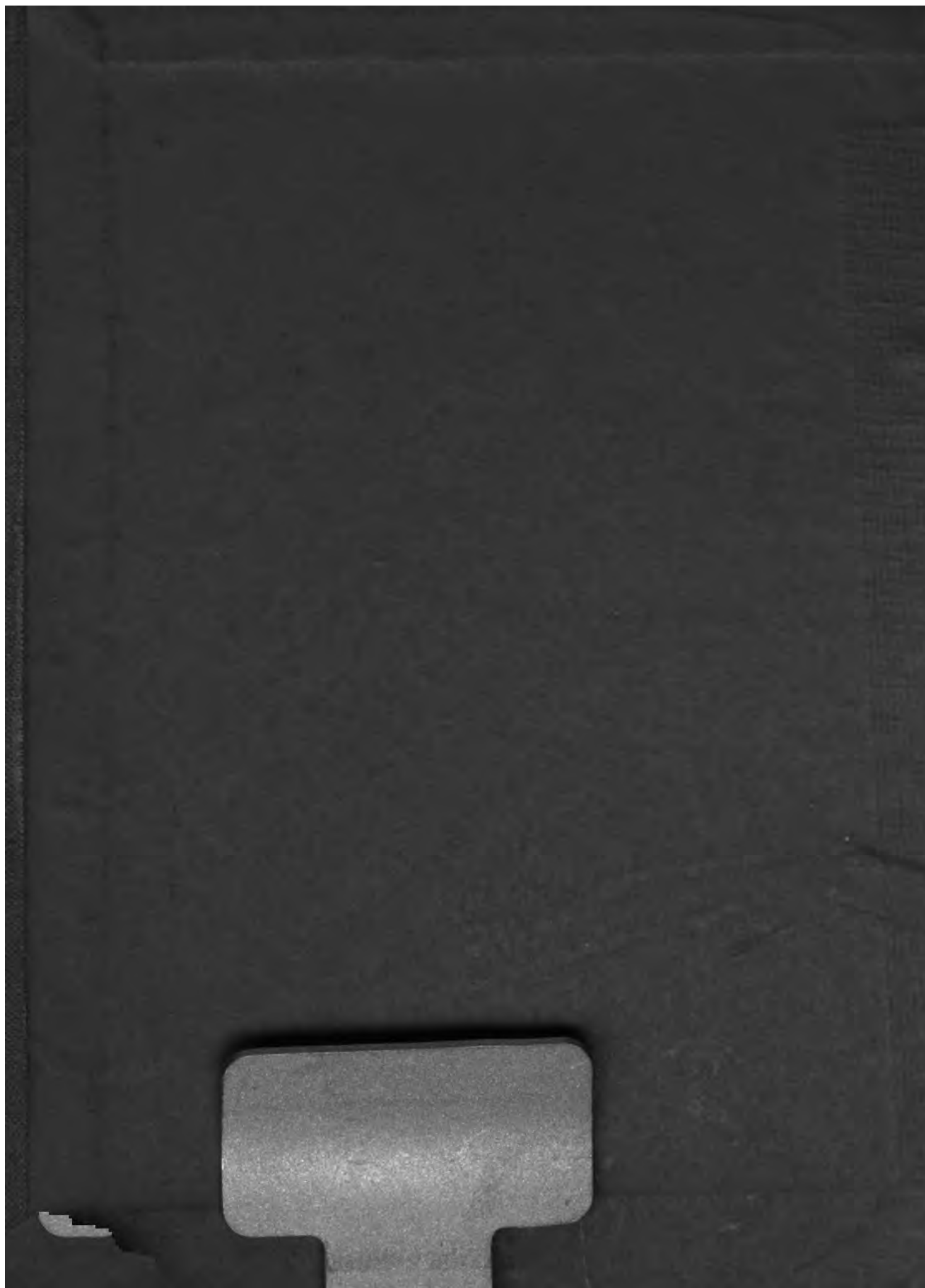


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# The Canterbury Poets

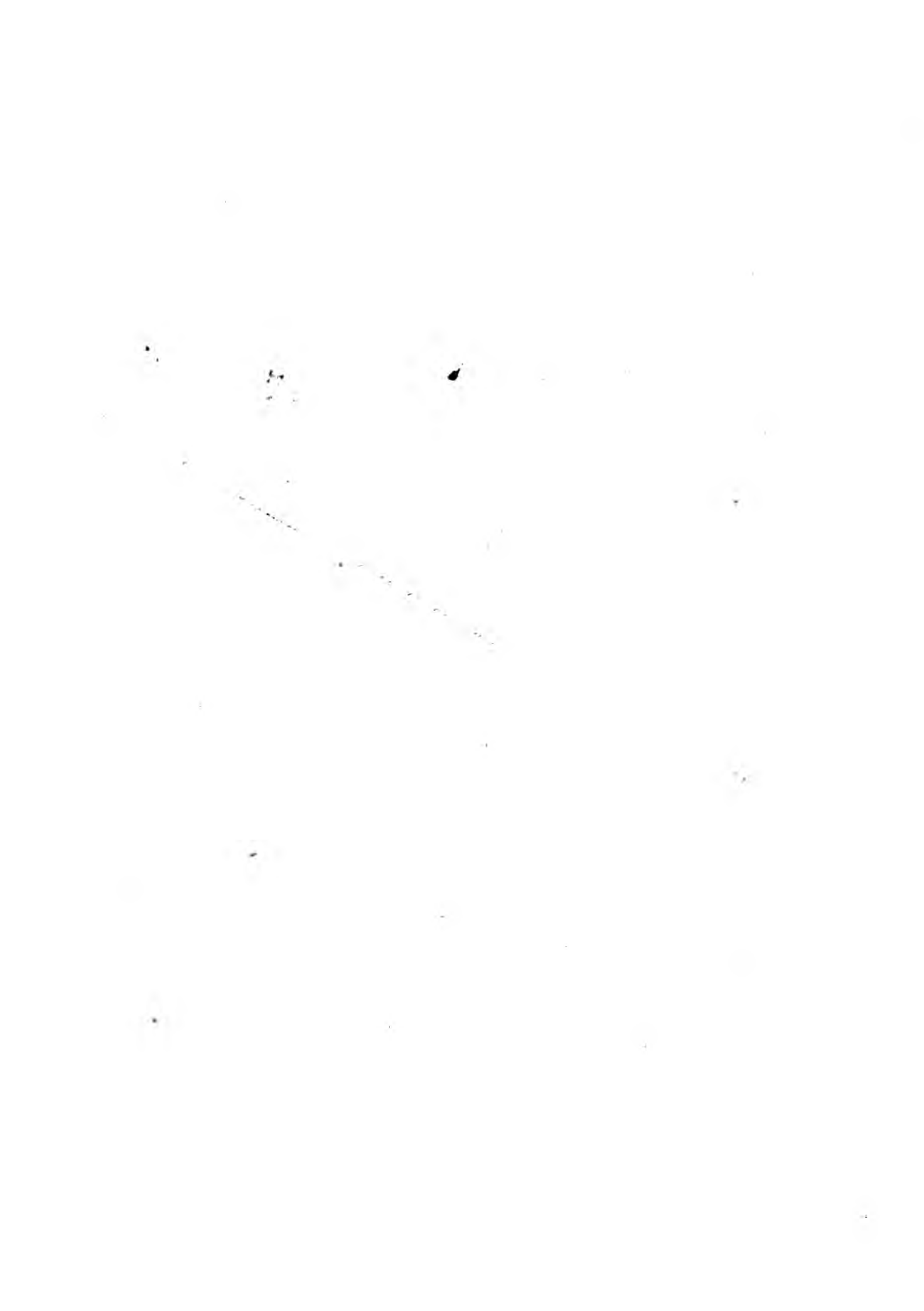


BURNS









THE POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
ROBERT BURNS  
*POEMS.*

With a Prefatory Notice, Biographical  
and Critical.

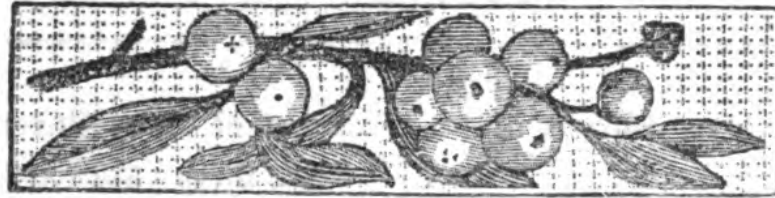
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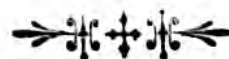
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## Prefatory Notice.

---



HE Prince of the Poets of the People—of those who have sprung from the ranks, and the rich tones of whose lyres have found an echo in the popular heart—ROBERT BURNS, was born on 25th January 1759, in an “auld clay biggin,” or cottage, about two miles south of Ayr. This “auld clay biggin” in which the great poet was born was built by his father, who himself was a notable man. “My father,” wrote the poet, “was of the north of Scotland, the son of a farmer, and was thrown by early misfortune on the world at large, where, after many wanderings and sojournings, he picked up a pretty large quantity of observation and experience, to which I am indebted for most of my pretensions to wisdom.” Having sufficient intelligence to know the value of a good education, this noble-minded father spared no exertion on his part in the education of his children. His means were essentially limited; “but where there’s a will there’s a way” is a maxim, for the truth of which the British, above all races, are the most ready to vouch, and though it is far from equal to the strain so often put upon it, yet a powerful will is able to perform wonders; and Burns was blest with a father who had such a will, and that, too, united with a high moral purpose seldom to be met with in any grade of society, and the “way” somehow was found by which his children, to a great extent, obtained the education desired.



When five years old the poet was sent to school, and about two years after, upon the removal of the family to Mount Oliphant, his father united with other neighbour farmers to engage a teacher for their children "at a small salary." Reading and writing, and some knowledge of arithmetic and English grammar, were by these means early acquired, and to these, in after years, Burns was enabled to add a knowledge of geometry and mensuration. He also added a slight acquaintance of Latin and French, and what was of more value still in a poet's education, he was by degrees made acquainted with some of the best English literature; while as for the songs and ballads in his own Doric, these he had sung into his ears and into his heart by the sweet tongue of his own mother, while she yet dandled him upon her knee. Talk of a lack of a classical education; but for one who, above all others, was ordained to be the people's poet, and more emphatically still, the poet of the poor, what more could a university training have done? While it is recorded as an instance of Burns's aptitude for learning that he parsed nouns in his eleventh year, he yet appears to have had only a dull ear for music, and to have had much difficulty with his music lessons—a matter conceivable enough when we reflect that even in these early years the poet may have been too much engrossed with certain mysterious tones in the deeps of his own soul—an inner music—to have permitted that culture of the ear required for the appreciation of external music. Who would care to pay much heed to a squeaking fiddle or a droning bagpipe who was already alive to and enthralled by the music of the spheres? The clever young teacher of Burns—one Murdoch—never dreamed of this state of things, and his large dark-eyed pupil in consequence "had a dull ear." So had his

brother Gilbert; but this Gilbert "had the liveliest imagination and the readiest wit," and had the teacher been asked at that time which of the brothers was the most likely to become a poet, he would assuredly have answered Gilbert. Of course Murdoch was a teacher, but no poet nor prophet. "Robert's countenance," said he, "was generally grave and expressive of a serious contemplative mind. Gilbert's face said, Mirth, with thee I mean to live." And yet of the two, the latter was the most likely to become a poet! Yet this teacher was a man of intelligence, but so little is the poetic temperament understood, and so little does the world know of the stuff of which poets are made, that they are regarded as simpletons and day-dreamers, and unfitted for actual life, or unfit to live, for that matter, or as a sort of rhyming merry-andrews—people who have an aptitude for discharging in verse their ever ready-charged repartee rifles on every occasion, instead of being what the best of them are, beings who see most deeply into, and are, in consequence, able to take the clearest and sanest view of men and things. That they do not always conform themselves to the usages of society is altogether a different thing, and may arise out of causes which are less a discredit to themselves than to the world at large.

"The poet in a golden clime was born,  
With golden stars above;  
Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,  
The love of love."

"With the hate of hate and the scorn of scorn" of all that is hollow, and mean, and sordid, and base, of course; and "with the love of love" of all that is noble, and pure, and sweet, and comely to look upon. And should a harum-scarum bard, such as Burns is sometimes thought to have been, happen to meet in his

life's journey with more of the former—the sordid and base,—than of the latter—the sweet and comely,—what marvel if from his deep-toned lyre there should at times proceed a song, not merely formed of such phrases as “gentle zephyrs” and “purling rills,” and which would fall upon the worldling's ears not altogether “like music on the waters”—but a song pregnant with the scorn of scorn, and one calculated to strike the heart of the wrong-doer to the centre, or take the heartless hypocrite with affected horror. The only matter for marvel is that we have not a greater number of such songs; rather this would be a marvel did we not know the penalty which some of the world's great poets have had to pay for having dared to speak the truth, and so put its idolised devils for the moment to shame. And that Scotland's great poet was one of these martyrs, who that is at all acquainted with the facts of his life can deny? “Poor Burns—it is a great pity he did not act more wisely.” In so far as the remark applies to his having lashed selfishness, high-handed oppression, and duplicity, I say—for suffering humanity at least—it would have been a thousand pities if he had done otherwise. Burns yet erred like other men as a man, and for that the more was the pity; but of this in due time. It is for us a pleasanter duty just now to refer to the stage of his life when he is first known to have broken into song.

This occurred in his sixteenth year, and his first song, “Handsome Nell,” was written in celebration of “a sweet, sonsie lass,” who had been a co-labourer with him in the harvest fields. This girl, he wrote to Dr. Moore, the father of the celebrated general, Sir John Moore, had initiated him in the passion of love, “which, in spite of its acid disappointment, gin-horse prudence, and book-worm philosophy, I hold to be the first of human joys,

our dearest blessing here below ! How she caught the contagion I cannot tell ; 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 ratan when I fingered over her little hand to pick out the cruel stings and thistles. Among her other love-inspiring qualities she sang sweetly, and it was to her favourite reel that I strove to give an embodied vehicle in rhyme." This account of the origin of our bard's first song is alone enough to consecrate and endear it to all lovers of song ; but the song itself possesses at least one stanza of intrinsic value—

" She dresses aye sae clean and neat,  
Both modest and genteel ;  
And then there's something in her gait  
Gars ony dress look weel"—

a stanza which might have been produced by our poet in his more mature period. Burns himself, in speaking of the effort as a whole, said, " It is very puerile and silly, but I am always pleased with it, as it recalls to my mind those happy days when my heart was yet honest, and my tongue was sincere."

The "happy days" of this period ought rather to have been called "happy moments," since "ruthless ruin" had his father in its grip ; and Burns himself, though so young, had early and late to "work like a galley slave" to help the family in their sore need. The *Oliphant* speculation had proved a failure, and the lease had not yet expired ; and, through early hardship, the noble-minded father had grown prematurely old, and was unfit for labour. "We lived very poorly," wrote the poet.



"I was a dexterous ploughman, and the next eldest to me was my brother (Gilbert), who could drive the plough very well, and help 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 scoundrel factor's threatening letters which used to set us all in tears." And the reader who can read these words without also being set in tears may at once close the book, for he may rest assured that there is "something wrong about *his* heart," and whatever other ability he may have, he lacks the requisite feeling to be able to value aright the sweetest and best of Burns's precious poetry. Further, he may rest assured that there is something wrong about his head also, if, besides the tears, he does not feel the burning indignation which Burns felt at the hideous wrongdoers who could thus cause a noble family to suffer, and who have for generations thus caused hundreds of families, equally as noble and brave, to thus suffer; and for what purpose but to gratify a cormorant desire for wealth, and only that the possessors of such may be in a position to lord it over their fellows?

"It's hardly in a body's pow'r,  
To keep, at times, frae being sour,  
To see how things are shar'd"—

but it's not "in a body's power" *not* to feel at times as if possessed with a fury when we reflect

"How best o' chiels are whiles in want,  
While coofs on countless thousands rant,  
And ken na how to wair't"—

and the more especially when we know at what cost such "thousands" have been procured. To the nature



of that *cost* our poet, in his boyhood at Mount Oliphant, was rendered too keenly alive ever to forget it, and the whole thing was too vivid in his mind not to be embodied in song when he felt the power and had the opportunity to do so—as many of his poems, and more especially his inimitable “Twa Dogs,” will show. Of course, as these poems will also testify, however keenly he was made to feel such evils, his spirit was too powerful and too volatile to be readily crushed by them. Then if “the hate” and “the scorn,” of which Tennyson sings, were his, so was “the love,” and most emphatically “the love of love;” and one can willingly believe that no sooner had the burning rags of the factor’s letters been “puft up the chimla” by “a blast of the norlan’ wind,” than Burns might have been found at the gable-end, or in the stack-yard, pouring out other feelings than those of hate and scorn into the attentive ears of some handsome Nell. Even then he had the feeling, if he had not yet the voice, to sing—

“Gie me a canny hour at e’en,  
My arms about my dearie, O,  
An’ warly cares, an’ warly men,  
May a’ gae tapsalteerie, O!”—

and these feelings soon after deepened into passions which too often led him into errors, and errors which brought unhappiness to the poet, and finally ruin in their train.

The passions and the errors here referred to, however, were not so much felt or committed until some time after the family’s removal to Lochlea, an event which occurred in 1777. The condition of the family appears to have been somewhat improved by this removal, and the change had a corresponding effect on the bard’s spirits and genius. The “flood-gates” of his inspiration were more

widely opened, and song after song were poured forth, many of which are truly beautiful. As Lockhart has observed, "they show how powerfully his boyish fancy had been affected by the old minstrelsy of his country, and how easily his native taste caught the secret of its charm. The truth and simplicity of nature breathed in every line—the images are always just, often originally happy—and the growing refinement of his ear and judgment may be traced in the terser language and more mellow flow of each successive ballad." "Tibbie, I hae seen the day," "On Cessnock Banks," "My father was a farmer," and others, were of this period; and before he had reached his twenty-fourth year, "The Corn Rigs," "Mary Morison," "My Nannie, O," and others of his best songs were produced.

In his seventeenth year, much against his father's will, to give his "manners a brush," he had attended a dancing school; in his nineteenth year, to learn dialling, he had gone and spent some time at Kirkoswald, and in his twenty-first year he had, to learn the wool-combing trade, gone to Irvine, and through these and other means had had his observations on men and manners, and his knowledge of human nature and the actual world, extended. This increase of knowledge, however, was not to be had without a fee similar to what Eve had to pay for a taste of the forbidden fruit. Nor can I see how any real knowledge of human nature is to be had at a less cost. The market price of this article in this nineteenth century, with its hundreds of millions of men and women, just stands at about the same figure as it did to our two first naked progenitors in the Garden of Eden. "Knowledge," said Byron, "is sorrow," just as Bacon had as wisely said, "Knowledge is power," and they—it is no use blinking the fact—who have not the

knowledge, which can only be had with the sorrow or suffering, may make excellent tutors to infants, but will never have the "power" to take a position among the poets whose songs live in the hearts of a people. "Aye, but look at Wordsworth, what a pure life he led, and what noble poems he wrote." He did, and for these let us—"the select few"—be thankful; but are these the songs of a people's poet? The mighty genius of Milton can hardly be said to have produced such, and from the same cause. He was too puritanic, and though his sublime conceptions enthrall the imagination, they never reach the heart. Not so the best of the products of Chaucer and Shakespeare. They "give a very echo to the seat where love is throned," and the "power" by which they were enabled to give those inimitable portraitures of human life and character was—can there be a doubt of it?—in a great measure obtained through their having sinned and suffered for their sins—through a bitter experience—through their having committed errors as great as any that can be laid to the charge of Burns while he stayed at Irvine and Kirkoswald. Without his Irvine and Kirkoswald experiences Burns might have been a happier if not a better man, but would he have been a wiser poet? Then, let his life have been ever so pure, had he not been a fine poet, what would we at this day have cared for Robert Burns?

But there is another standpoint besides that of the Puritan's from which the case may be viewed. Our bard at the above-named places associated with smugglers and other lozels. True. But he was a poor man, and, as Principal Shairp observes, had not the choosing of his company. Then, again, he was "dowered with the love of love;" and let the shortcomings of his

associates have been ever so many, would the boundless sympathy which enabled him to perceive in the field-mouse which he turned up with the plough, a "fellow mortal," not enable him to perceive in the direst ruins of humanity a something that would touch his heart or elicit his regards? What was it that led the Nazarene to die on the Cross? What but the same "love of love" which led Burns to commit many of the errors of which he is accused? To the same high source may thus be traced much of that which is regrettable as well as much of that which is commendable in the life of our bard. Love for all helpless things that breathed and moved—this was his dominating genius—and more especially for mankind, for men as men and women as women, and not for any particular possessions or attractions they had, either inward or outward, beyond what he believed to be an unselfish heart. Let people have had, or appear to have had, that, or have appeared weak and down-trodden, and they had an unfailing passport to a grasp of his horny fist, and a share in his best feelings. Hence his apparent predilections for the company of "low people"—of men with a brand on their characters—and of the society of women who would have been bad models for Shakespeare's Perditas and Titanias, or for Milton's and Ben Jonson's Mother Eves and Orianas—of women who were far from being, according to his brother Gilbert, as beautiful always as he thought they were, nor, let me add, as virtuous; and this fact ought to weigh a "wee" on his behalf when we speak of the scrapes he sometimes got into with the fair sex. Some of the objects of his tenderest regards were, however, in every way worthy of them; and such an one was Peggy Thomson, whom he had met at Kirkoswald. This young woman, who had set his heart on fire and put an



end to his mathematical studies, and whom he described as having first seen in a garden, "like Proserpine, gathering flowers, herself a fairer flower"—though it has been said she was only in a kail-yard cutting a cabbage—was found to be already engaged, and could only meet his advances with a promise of friendship. It nevertheless cost him some heart-aches to get rid of the affair; and this was not effected before she had become the subject of several fine lyrics, for his "passions, when once lighted up, raged like so many devils till they got vent in rhyme; and then the conning over the verses, like a spell, soothed all into quiet."

The object of his next attachment appears to have been one Agnes Fleming, a se vant, at the time, of his friend Gavin Hamilton; and the fruit of this passion was "O'er the hills to Nannie, O!"—one of the best songs in the language. It is pleasant to think that the poet's father lived to see and appreciate this fine product of his son's genius, and it was the last of the bard's finest pieces he was destined to read. He died soon after, and with the painful impression that a sad end awaited his glorious first-born.

By this time Burns and his brother Gilbert had removed the family to the farm of Mossgiel, about three miles from Lochlea, in the parish of Mauchline, in 1784. The poet's father had long been incapacitated, by early hardship, from doing hard work, and the responsibility of maintaining the household had devolved upon the two sons, and chiefly on the poet—he being the eldest—and upon this new undertaking he entered with the evident determination, if possible, to prove successful. He read books on farming, calculated crops, attended markets; but in spite of his combined will and industry,

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and the utmost economy, his wisdom was "overset" by the same adverse fate which had along attended this unhappy family. Yet, if deserted by Fortune, he was still the darling of the Muses, and during his first two years at Mossgiel he composed—besides "The Twa Herds," "The Holy Fair," and "Holy Willie's Prayer"—the addresses to "The Mouse," "The Daisy," "The Auld Farmer's Mare, Maggie," and "The Cottar's Saturday Night," and, indeed, nearly all those fine poems which were soon after to cause him to be ranked among the best poets of Great Britain. Many of these are so precious that, once read, they are ever after remembered with joy. The inimitable humour and drollery of some of them, and the sweetness and pathos of others, excite our laughter or tears, kindle our fancy and imagination, or touch our deepest and sweetest feelings in a way that has been seldom equalled by the products of others, and even of our very greatest poets.

We cannot go into the Jean Armour case in detail in this note. Yet a few words must be said about this unpleasant affair. Burns, through his intercourse, had brought a stigma upon her family, and her father was indignant in consequence, and gave vent to his indignation in a manner that has in return excited the indignation of the poet's biographers. The case undoubtedly was a lamentable one. Yet with all my love and admiration for Burns I cannot conceive how the father, under the circumstances, could have acted much otherwise from what he did. That Armour should have shut his door against Burns, and have forbidden his daughter to have any further intercourse with him on pain of banishment, may sound in our ears harsh enough; but the poet in this father's eyes had brought a stain upon his family which no irregular marriage, and indeed any marriage in

his mind could wipe out. He was a Puritan, and lived and breathed in the very heart of Puritanism, and the finger of warning or of scorn could, by the godly or ungodly, be pointed to his door, and this for him to bear was worse than death. Then we must bear in mind that though Burns had written nearly all his great poems at this time, he yet had only a local reputation, or rather a notoriety as a loose scapegrace of a rhymers, and was not to the good folk of Mauchline, and could not be, the glorious poet of the people he is to us. His world-wide fame had yet to come, while in the meantime the direful effects of his follies—(which were crimes in Armour's eyes)—were living realities, and realities from which he knew not how to escape. At length, after a painful consideration of the matter, our bard resolved to go to the West Indies.

Before doing so, however, partly to obtain money, which he needed, and partly through a desire to have his merits known, he made up his mind to publish his poems. "I thought they had merit," he wrote, "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 victim to that inhospitable clime, and gone to the land of spirits." "A victim" to some more cruel end than even that which awaited him in his own land one can quite conceive might have been written for him in the book of destiny; but to think of the man who had penned the immortal "Address to a Mouse" being a slave-driver! Who in their imagination can realise that? To say the least of it, he would have made a rare slave-driver, and the "blacks" would have had a fine time of it, only—alas! for the "niggers"—the "dream" would have been too bright to last. Ah, Burns! we have only to think of the

greatness of his heart, and "a' his fauts and follies" are at once forgotten. But this the mass of purveyors for the public taste will not do. They are "sae guid theirsels," that they feel a keener interest in a man's failings than they do in his nobler qualities, and on this account the errors of a Burns or a Shelley must be hunted up and enlarged upon as if these could afford a more delicious dish for their hungry readers than the precious poetic legacies they have bequeathed to the world, or, what is as likely, as if they did not endure in a tenfold manner in the pangs of "regret, remorse, and shame" any possible retribution supposed to be due to their errors, and that almost at the very moment of their commission. For that they did so there is abundant proof. And this can especially be said of Burns in the case which now caused him to prepare for Jamaica. If we may accept his own statement, never did man love woman as he did the one he had wronged, and though, as he imagined, she had not been all he could have wished her to be towards himself, "I can," he exclaimed, "have no nearer idea of the place of eternal punishment than what I have felt in my breast on her account." He also expressed his grief in "A Lament," and in his song "The Gloomy Night is Gathering Fast," wherein he bids "farewell to the bonnie banks of Ayr," from which he fancied he was about to depart, never more to return. But happily there was a silver lining to the cloud which hung over his head at this moment, though he could not see it from his tears.

The publication of his poems, which at last was effected, turned out to be all that. They were issued from the Kilmarnock press, July 1786, and their success was complete. They established at once and for ever his claim to the title of Scotland's greatest National Poet.



"It is hardly possible to express," wrote Heron, "with what eager admiration and delight they were everywhere received. They eminently possessed all those qualities which can contribute to render any work quickly and permanently popular. They were written in a phraseology of which all the powers were universally felt; and which being at once antique and familiar, and now rarely written, was hence fitted to serve all the dignified and picturesque uses of poetry, without making it unintelligible—the imagery, the sentiments, were at once faithfully natural and irresistibly impressive and interesting. Those topics of satire and scandal in which the rustic delights; the humorous delineation of character, and that witty association of ideas, familiar and striking, yet not naturally allied to one another, which has force to shake his side with laughter; those fancies of superstition at which he still wonders and trembles; those affecting sentiments and images of true religion which are at once dear and awful to the heart, were represented by Burns with all a poet's magic power. Old and young, high and low, grave and gay, all were alike delighted, agitated, transported." Thus wrote Heron, who was himself a witness of the effects produced by the issue of Burns's poems.

The edition was quickly sold out, and in November the same year, instead of going to Jamaica, he went to Edinburgh to publish another edition by subscription. His fame had gone before him, and a reception awaited him on his arrival such as had never been accorded to a poet on his first becoming known—at least, not in Great Britain. Nearly everybody, from the highest to the lowest in the social scale, were anxious to get a blink of "the wonderful Ayrshire ploughman." Besides being the glory and idol of the masses, he was *fêted* in the

circles of rank and fashion, and entertained by the most famous philosophers and men of letters which the Scottish capital then boasted. To Professor Stewart in the first place, and, through him, to Mackenzie—the Man of Feeling—who reviewed his poems in No. 97 of the *Lounger*, the bard was indebted for his introduction to the upper circles and the Edinburgh public. Among people of distinction to whom he was introduced besides the Man of Feeling (Dugald Stewart was an old friend) were Drs. Gregory and Blair, Frazer Tytler, Lord Monboddo, and the Earl of Glencairn. In the society of such cultured minds “Burns was,” Lockhart said, “exactly where he was entitled to be.” He was, in verity, worthy of such, though how many of those luminaries thought the same, at this distance of time it would be hard to say. The stalwart rustic bard, with his horny fists, his swarthy complexion, and his large brilliant dark eyes, had flashed in among them; and by his demeanour, his culture, his originality, and wonderful eloquence, had completely taken them by surprise; but when the proverbial “nine days’ talk” had passed, what then? In all probability the majority of those who had been drawn out of their customary orbits by the sudden appearance of this new planet in the literary heavens would have shrunk back into their old courses or habits of thought, and under the sway of aristocratic or academic prejudices would be prompted to call into question the value of the impressions that had been produced by the uncommon phenomenon. “Men are jealous,” says Hazlitt, “and uneasy at sudden and upstart popularity, which wants the seal of time to confirm it, and what after all may turn out to be false and hollow;” and was this not a case in point? In this frame of mind—which envy most readily and



without fee lends jealousy a helping hand to produce—many would have an open ear for any tale that would tend to lower their erewhile *fêted* idol somewhat in their esteem; for we can easier brook the idea of having committed an error for once in judgment—since all men are liable to err—than we can submit to the idea of having our brightest and best qualities eclipsed by the splendour of those of another; and while in this frame of mind, such tales one can quite conceive may have reached the ears of many of his noble patrons. Rumour, “horsed on the viewless couriers of the air,” may have told ere long of the irregularities of our bard’s previous life, or of the fact that even while in Edinburgh he had other haunts than the resorts of rank and fashion, and other associates besides those of the learned and the high-born, and whose society he prized as much as he did theirs; and all this might form reason sufficient that they should at least have less anxiety as to the future weal of their sometime “honoured guest” than their attentions at first may have led him to expect. Be this as it may, no sooner had Burns turned his back on the Scottish capital than he seemed to be all but forgotten, and when he returned, as he did, to the city in the eusuing winter, he met with the cold shoulder from many of his former distinguished entertainers.

During his absence, he of course had hurried home, and having made glad the hearts of his dear old mother and her family by an account of his late splendid triumphs, he made a tour to the Highlands, and the Scottish and English Borders. Though these tours were, according to Principal Shairp, unproductive of any apparent valuable poetic work, yet through them he got a knowledge of localities, and traditions, and so on, that proved of service to him when he began to write his

songs for the *Museum* of Johnson, whom he met on his first visit to the capital. His rambles over, he returned there in October with the object of effecting a settlement with Creech, the publisher of his poems; but this was not accomplished till the succeeding March, and during the interim he is said to have spent much of his time in not the most select society. My own belief is that he spent such time in the best company he could command, and if the people with whom he mixed made too free at times with strong drink, they only did what nearly everybody else who had the means at that period was accustomed to do—not only in Scotland but in the whole of the British Isles. That matters in this respect are much improved at present is the natural outcome of the march of events, and is not so much a credit as it would have been a shame to us if they had not, seeing that the mass of people have other accommodation for social intercourse than that which a century ago could only be afforded by the beer and whiskyshops. Then Burns, whatever could be said of some of the “ranting, roving blades” with whom he at times associated, could not, at that period at least, be with fairness called the “drunken Burns” I have lately seen him called in a London periodical, though he, if occasion required, could take his glass, and had otherwise his failings, as we have already seen. Drunken he was not, and the other failings may all be summed up in, or resulted from, an indomitable passion for the fair sex. Had he been the former, he could not have conducted the great correspondence he up to the time of his death did, and at the same time have performed his social duties; and without his passion for women, he could not have left the many beautiful songs he has left for our enjoyment. This unhappy passion, however, seems to have grown

more and more uncontrollable after his first visit to Edinburgh, and during his second visit nearly to have led him into entanglements, from which he would have found it still more difficult to have escaped than from any in which he had been involved in the days of his obscurity. This was with a Mrs. M'Lehose—the Clarinda of his letters—a lady who had been deserted by her husband through incompatibility of temper. Though Clarinda had been married ten years, and had had four children, two of whom only were then living, she was yet young when Burns met with her—two years younger than himself; and she was beautiful—was possessed of cultured tastes—had some poetic ability—had a fascinating manner—and was altogether a being calculated to take captive the affections of the poet. And from many expressions in his letters to her, one would imagine that she had done so, and completely. She was to him, in the letters, “the first of women,” and “dear as the light that visits those sad eyes,” “dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,” and he vows to love her “to death, through death, and for ever,” all which words, with the rest of the letters in which they were contained, and some songs the bard had addressed to her, were treasured up in Clarinda’s memory till her dying day; and she lived to be an old woman. Burns undoubtedly had allowed himself to be drawn into an unhappy position by this fair sinner. Yet one cannot but rejoice that at the very moment he appeared the most a slave to the charms of Clarinda, he had become reconciled to one who had a more legitimate claim upon his regards—even his “bonny Jean;” and to this woman he was married in due form shortly after his return to Ayrshire in March 1788.

He now took the farm of Ellisland, on the western

bank of the Nith, six miles above Dumfries, on which he entered at Whitsuntide. On his first entering upon the farm he occupied a small smoky cottage, in which he was the "solitary inmate"—his wife and child being left at Mauchline—till December. He then took lodgings for them and himself at a neighbouring farm, where they remained till the finishing of a new homestead, which was now being built at Ellisland, and to which they could not be removed before the middle of the ensuing year. During the months preceding his wife's arrival, the poet's reflections on his position, on the responsibilities he had lately incurred, and how he was to acquit himself with credit in his new sphere of action, had repeatedly thrown him into a state of despondency. The apparent lack of sympathy, too, which he at first met with in the Ellisland locality helped to turn his gloominess into querulousness, and led him to entertain the most disrespectful notions of his new neighbours. "The only things in this country," he wrote, "to be found in perfection are stupidity and canting." But he was soon undeceived in this matter; he soon found, as Principal Shairp observes, that "there was enough of sociality among all ranks of Dumfries people, from the laird to the cottar—indeed, more than was good for himself;" and on the opening of the New Year, with his wife by his side, he found himself in better spirits.

Later on in the same year, 1789, he procured a place in the Excise, the application for, and the acceptance of which, appears to have cost him some misgiving. To ordinary men in ordinary circumstances the post of an exciseman would be held a post of honour; but need one ask if Burns was an ordinary man? or need one ask if his position in rela-



tion to the Excise was of an ordinary character? He was a splendid poet, and had in a supreme degree the sensitive organism peculiar to the children of the Muses—a being possessed of a capacity for the noblest thought, yet one who, having sprung from the masses, shared with them their prejudices as well as prepossessions; and a strong antipathy to the Excise, like that in our day to the police, was among them. Then, as a satirist he had not hesitated to lash the failings of others, for he had “the hate of hate and the scorn of scorn” as well as “the love of love;” and though he is not known up to this time to have used his weapon against the Excise, he is known to have been on terms of intimacy with men who were addicted to a traffic which it was the bounden duty of the Excise to put down. This being so, could he with feelings of honour seek or accept the office in question? or even if he could satisfy his conscience on this head, what would his late Irvine and Kirkoswald friends say? Would the erewhile ideal or idol of these people not be regarded as a turncoat on former professions, and be himself deemed in turn worthy of the lash he had so often and so freely used upon others? Reflections like these in all likelihood at the time occurred to torture the “ill-starred” bard, for he had “seen the day when his auditory nerves would have felt very delicately on this subject, but”—but, what was he to do? From his previous experience in farming, he could not possibly have had high hopes of success in his Ellisland speculation; and should he fail—and there had been so many failures in these matters in the family—what would be the result? What had Fortune allotted to his father when he had failed? The early experience of our bard was such, that when he became the least straitened in his means, and so was made to

consider his actual position and his prospects, he lost all his glowing enthusiasm, was bereft of hope, hung his harp upon the willows, and sunk into despair before the shadows of a JAIL, or STARVATION. To people who have been dandled in the lap of Fortune, these things have only a vague significance compared to what they have for those who have been actually on the brink of the one, or have for years lived in the dread of being actually thrust into the other; and to the sensitive poet they were not only realities, but the sternness of these realities was intensified when he considered that beside himself he had by this time others to care and cater for, and others whose helplessness he was bound by the strongest ties of humanity to protect. Vanity, whose voice is often mistaken for honest pride, or for conscience, might upbraid him for a lack of consistency, and remind him of the probability of his honesty being called into question by his *confreres* of other days; but the thought of a wife's despair, or of the cry of little ones for bread he might not have to give them—surely these ought to render him deaf to the one, and reckless as to what might be said over their smuggled whisky by the others. Moreover, in spite of his own or of others' prejudices, it must always have been clear enough to our bard that there was another side to the picture of a gauger beside that of the popular one, and if his daring and hardihood at one time in his young eyes may have given the contraband trader somewhat the air of a hero, was there not also a smack of the heroic in men who, in pursuit of conscientious duties, dared to confront the prejudices of the masses, and to beard the armed smuggler in his den? In the light of these considerations, Burns, again out of two evils, I imagine, was wisely led to choose the lesser—"on reason firm to build resolve"—

to apply for and accept the officership in question—which, bad as it was, was after all to him a godsend. “£50 a-year, and a provision for wife and orphans,” he fancied was “no bad settlement for a poet.” At any rate it was sufficient to relieve him from anxiety as to the future, and to leave his mind more at liberty for devotion to the Muse.

Literature and his excise duties now began to absorb the most of his time and attention, and his interest in the farm gradually declined, till after the lapse of about two years, when his excise salary having been increased to £70 a-year, the farm was abandoned altogether. His stock was sold, and he removed to Dumfries, where he spent the remainder of his days between the performance of his official work and the writing of songs for the collections of Johnson and Thomson, and in visits to—or in the reception of visits from—distinguished neighbours and strangers. During his residence at Ellisland, besides his noble “Address to Mary in Heaven,” he wrote several fine lyrics for the *Scots’ Musical Museum*, but he produced no poem of equal value to those which had already sent his name through the length and breadth of the land, except “Tam o’ Shanter;” nor did he produce anything of equal value afterwards. He had been urged by learned friends to try and write some work on a larger scale than anything he has left us, and he even contemplated the production of a drama, but happily never seriously tried to carry such a project into execution. I say happily, since it would have been a rare drama indeed that could have added anything to his fame, while a failure would have acted as a clog to it. A supreme regular drama, his best critics have thought, was not to be expected from our poet; but some of them think that he might have given us a series

of poems similar to "Tam o' Shanter." I think this supposition almost implies as much lack of consideration as the supposition that he could have produced a drama at all worthy to be ranked with his poems. The thing was just possible, but was it probable? If genuine poems could be composed at any moment by a mere effort of the poet's will-power, just as a mathematical problem may almost at any time be solved by an expert mathematician, we might have reasonably concluded that a series of other "Tam o' Shanters" might have succeeded the one he did produce. "But no man can say 'I will write a poem,'" says Shelley, and much less could even the greatest poet that ever breathed assert with confidence that he would write a series of "Tam o' Shanters." That verse by the mile can be spun out at will by any clever scribbler, a visit to our fashionable book marts in the months of October and November will testify; but if we have any doubts as to the utter unworthiness of such, a visit to the second-hand book stalls in the succeeding February and March will correct our misgivings at once. No poet ever did, or ever can, produce many masterpieces—or at least of the kind which prove a source of delight at once to the highest and the lowest in the social scale—to the cultured and uncultured. The rarity of appearance of such poems, whether as drama, or song, or ballad—and the best of epics is only a series of ballads—is assuredly notable, and when they do come, they form a sort of advent in verse literature; and so precious are they, that a few of them will not only immortalise the poet, but add to the glory of the nation that has produced them. How such poems come into existence is a question on which at all times the "doctors" have "disagreed," and so upon this question we shall not linger here; but whether they are



the products of observation and reflection only, or whether they are dropped from the stars, in the most divine perfection, into the poet's soul while he sleeps, and from thence in some lucky hour are again ordained to issue with their stellar lustre, somewhat dimmed indeed, yet rendered even more charming to mortal eyes by the variety of colour—the result of feeling and passion—they acquire from the channel through which they must pass ; or whether they have their origin in ideas which are in the poet's soul when he is born, and wherein they may have lain ever since God first said, "Let there be Light, and there was Light"—and wherein they might still have to lie, were they not driven therefrom by the irresistible force of some accident or what you will (even as sparkles of fire are forced from the flint by a blow of a steel-faced hammer), and so were compelled to bless the world by their radiant beauty—whether the famous poems in question have their origin in any of these ways, or in some other ; of one thing we may rest assured, and that is, when they are written they are produced upon compulsion. To no mere fancy nor desire to cut a figure in literature are we indebted for such poems, though such fancies and desires may naturally follow in their wake : and much less are they to be had for the asking. Through the request of a Captain Grose, indeed, the rhyming mill of a Burns may be set in motion, the outcome of which shall be a splendid poem to put into a book of Scottish Antiquities, but this is no proof the idea itself of the poem may not already have existed in the bard's soul, and ripe for expression before the request has been made. In the case of the genesis of "Tam o' Shanter," one can easily conceive that this was so, and the unusual swiftness with which the poem was composed—the piece was worded in one day—only shows that the ripeness for

expression and power of the idea was such that the poet could find no rest until he had put it into words. Hence his evident delight upon its completion. His soul had been delivered of a burden, and the jewel thus ushered into the light of day was to him doubly dear from the uncommon throes he had endured at its sudden birth. Of all his poetic products he deemed this poem his best; and it is in verity a masterpiece, and if he did not write anything after its composition equally precious on as large a scale, many of the songs which he afterwards produced are worthy of its company. That many of the said songs are equally worthless is also true, and one cannot but sympathise with those critics who regret that so much of his time should have been frittered away in their production. With such critics, however, one must stop here. When they go on to say that such time might have been utilised in the writing of more elaborate poems, or poems on a larger scale, they seem to write under an imperfect impression of the circumstances under which the poet laboured. These circumstances, comprising his inner as well as outer conditions, were such, as Principal Shairp has pointed out, as to render the concentrated effort essential to the production of great poems, a thing all but impossible to Burns, and these circumstances grew gradually worse and worse after his removal to Dumfries, and only terminated in an illness under which he died in his thirty-eighth year, 21st July 1796. One word more in conclusion. That Burns fell the victim of errors and embarrassments, into which he had been mainly hurried by his passions, there can be no doubt; but that these passions sprang from the same fount from which sprang all that is noblest in Burns as a man and a poet, and were in some sort the natural concomitants of the

latter—as has been herein stated—one cannot but think is also obvious, and ought never to be lost sight of in any estimate we would form of his character. For such an estimate, again, we ought in particular to study his poems. Many valuable facts as to his life have, no doubt, been recorded by himself and by his contemporaries, but these have come down to us mixed up with much gabble that is worse to us, as data, than if it were merely without any value ; whereas his best poems never *lie*, and whatever may be said of the man and his genius in other respects, Burns the man and Burns the poet are at least inseparable. The defects of the one are the defects of the other, but then so is all that is true and tender and sweet and noble and sublime and glorious ; and if we would throw the former into one of our critical scales and the latter into the other, can we have doubt as to which of those scales would at once be made to kick the beam ? All in all, then, the instinct is in the main right which has enabled the people to see in Burns one of the noblest of men, as he is in verity not only one of the noblest of poets, but one of our two most supreme poets, whose songs above those of all others have found a home in the hearts of the people. Need I say that other is Shakespeare ?

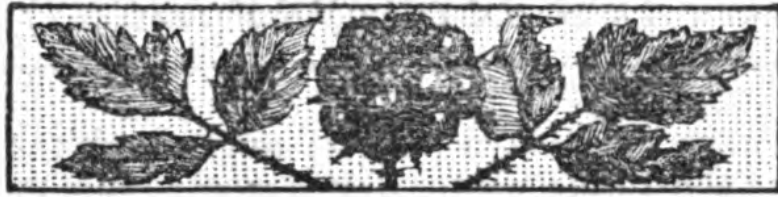
JOSEPH SKIPSEY.

*April 1835.*









# Burns's Poetical Works.

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## *P O E M S.*

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### THE COTTAR'S SATURDAY NIGHT.

INSCRIBED TO ROBERT 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.

**M**Y loved, my honour'd, 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 sequester'd 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 blaws loud wi' angry sigh ;  
 The short'ning winter-day is near a close ;  
 The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh ;  
 The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose ;  
 The toil-worn cottar frae his labour goes,  
 This night his weekly moil 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.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,  
 Beneath the shelter of an aged tree ;  
 Th' expectant wee things, toddlin', stacher through,  
 To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise and glee.  
 His wee bit ingle, blinking bonnily,  
 His clean hearthstane, his thrifty wifie's smile,  
 The lisping infant prattling on his knee,  
 Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,  
 And makes him quite forget his labour and his toil.

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

Wi' joy unfeign'd brothers and sisters meet,  
 And each for other's welfare kindly spiers :  
 The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnoticed, fleet ;  
 Each tells the uncoss that he sees or hears ;

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The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years ;  
Anticipation forward points the view.  
The mother, wi' her needle and her shears,  
Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new—  
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's and their mistress's command  
The younkers a' are warnèd to obey ;  
And mind their labours wi' an eydent hand,  
And ne'er, though out o' sight, to jauk or play :  
“ And oh ! be sure to fear the Lord alway !  
And mind your duty, duly, morn and 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 ! ”

But, hark ! a rap comes gently to the door,  
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,  
Tells how a neibor lad cam o'er the moor,  
To do some errands, and convoy her hame.  
The wi'ly mother sees the conscious flame  
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek,  
Wi' heart-struck anxious care, inquires his name,  
While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak ;  
Weel pleased the mother hears it's nae wild, worthless  
rake.

Wi' kindly welcome Jenny brings him ben ;  
A strappin' youth ; he tak's the mother's eye ;  
Blithe Jenny sees the visit's no ill ta'en ;  
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.  
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,  
But blate and lathefu', scarce can weel behave ;

The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy  
What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave ;  
Weel pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave.

O happy love !—where love like this is found !—  
O heart-felt 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 ruin'd maid, and their distraction wild !

But now the supper crowns their simple board,  
The halesome parritch, chief of Scotia's food :  
The soupe their only hawkie does afford,  
That 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood :  
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,  
To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck, fell,  
And aft he's prest, and aft he ca's it guid :  
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell,  
How 'twas a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.



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 wearing thin and bare ;  
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,  
He wales 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 heaven-ward flame,  
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays :  
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame ;  
The tickled ear 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,"  
That thus they all shall meet in future days :  
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 ;"  
And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road,  
The cottage leaves the palace far behind.  
What is the 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, oh ! may Heaven their simple lives prevent  
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile !  
Then, how'er crown 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 pour'd the patriotic tide  
That stream'd through Wallace's undaunted heart :  
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 !)  
Oh, never, never, Scotia's realm desert ;  
But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard,  
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard !

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## TAM O' SHANTER :

## A TALE.

**W**HEN chapman billies leave the street,  
And drouthy neibors neibors meet,  
As market days are wearin' late,  
And folk begin to tak the gate :  
While we sit bousing at the nappy,  
And gettin' fou and unco happy,  
We think na on the lang Scots miles,  
The mosses, waters, slaps, 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).

O Tam ! hadst thou but been sae wise  
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice !  
She tauld thee weel thou wast a skellum,  
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum ;  
That frae November till October,  
Ae market-day thou wasna sober ;  
That ilka melder, wi' the miller  
Thou sat as lang as thou hadst siller ;  
That every naig was ca'd a shoe on,  
The smith and thee gat roaring fou on ;  
That at the Lord's house, even on Sunday,  
Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday.  
She prophesied that, late or soon,  
Thou would'st be found deep drown'd in Doon !



Or catch'd wi' warlocks i' the mirk,  
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames ! it gars me greet  
To think how mony counsels sweet,  
How mony lengthen'd, 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, bleezing finely,  
Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely ;  
And at his elbow, Souter Johnny,  
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony ;  
Tam loed him like a vera brither—  
They had been fou for weeks thegither !  
The night drave on wi' sangs and 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 rair and rustle—  
Tam didna mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,  
E'en drown'd himsel amang the nappy !  
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,  
The minutes wing'd 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 snowfall 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 maun ride ;  
That hour, o' night's black arch the keystone,  
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in ;  
And sic a night he takes the road in  
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last ;  
The rattling showers rose on the blast ;  
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd ;  
Loud, deep, and lang, the thunder bellow'd :  
That night, a child might understand,  
The deil had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his grey mare, Meg,  
A better never lifted leg,  
Tam skelpit 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 glowering round wi' prudent cares,  
Lest bogles catch him unawares :  
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,  
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.

By this time he was 'cross the foord,  
Whare in the snaw the chapman smoor'd ;  
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 murder'd bairn ;  
And near the thorn, aboon the well,  
Whare Mungo's mither hang'd hersel.  
Before him Doon pours a' his floods ;  
The doubling storm roars through the woods ;  
The lightnings flash frae pole to pole ;  
Near and more near the thunders roll ;  
When, glimmering through the groaning trees,  
Kirk-Alloway seem'd 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' tippenny, we fear nae evil ;  
Wi' usquebae, we'll face the devil !—  
The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,  
Fair play, he cared na deils a boddle.  
But Maggie stood right sair astonish'd,  
Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,  
She ventured forward on the light ;  
And, wow ! Tam saw an unco sight !  
Warlocks and witches in a dance ;  
Nae cotillon brent-new frae France,  
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,  
Put life and mettle i' their heels :  
At winnock bunker, i' the east,  
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast ;  
And towzie tyke, black, grim, and large,  
To gie them music was his charge ;  
He screw'd the pipes, and gart them skirl,  
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.

Coffins stood round, like open presses,  
That shaw'd the dead in their last dresses ;  
And by some devilish cantrip slight  
Each in its could hand held a light—  
By which heroic Tam was able  
To note upon the haly table,  
A murderer's banes in gibbet airns ;  
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristen'd bairns ;  
A thief, new-cuttet frae a rape,  
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape ;  
Five tomahawks, wi' bluid red-rusted ;  
Five scimitars, wi' murder crusted ;  
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 even to name wad be unlawfu'.

As Tammie glower'd, amazed and curious,  
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious :  
The piper loud and louder blew,  
The dancers quick and quicker flew :  
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,  
Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,  
And coost her duddies to the wark,  
And linket at it in her sark.

Now Tam ! O Tam ! had thae been queans,  
A' plump and strappin' in their teens,  
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,  
Been snaw-white seventeen-hunder linen !  
Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,  
That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,



I wad hae gien them aff my hurdies,  
For ae blink o' the bonny burdies !

But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,  
Rigwoodie hags, wad spean a foal,  
Lowpin' and flingin' on a cummock,  
I wonder didna turn thy stomach.

But Tam kenn'd what was what fu' brawlie,  
"There was ae winsome wench and walie,"  
That night enlisted in the core  
(Lang after kenn'd on Carrick shore ;  
For mony a beast to dead she shot,  
And perished mony a bonny boat,  
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,  
And kept the country-side in fear).  
Her cutty sark, o' Paisley harn,  
That, while a lassie, she had worn,  
In longitude though sorely scanty,  
It was her best, and she was vauntie.

Ah ! little kenn'd thy reverend grannie,  
That sark she co't for her wee Nannie,  
Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches),  
Wad ever graced a dance o' witches !

But here my Muse her wing maun cour,  
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 aue bewitch'd,  
And thought his very e'en enrich'd ;  
Even Satan glower'd, and fidged fu' fain,  
And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main ;

D-d

Till first ae caper, syne anither,  
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,  
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"  
And in an instant a' was dark:  
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,  
When out the hellish legion sallied.  
As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,  
When plundering herds assail their byke,  
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 eldritch screech and hollow.

Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'lt get thy fairin'!  
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 keystone of the brig;  
There at them thou thy tail may toss,  
A running stream they darena cross;  
But ere the keystone she could make,  
The fient a tail she had to shake!  
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,  
And left behind her ain grey tail:  
The carlin claut 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 :  
Whane'er to drink you are inclined,  
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,  
Think ! ye may buy the joys owre dear—  
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

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*THE TWA DOGS.**A TALE.*

'T WAS in that place o' Scotland's isle,  
That bears the name o' auld King Coil,  
Upon a bonny day in June,  
When wearing through the afternoon,  
Twa dogs that werena thrang at hame,  
Forgather'd 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,  
Show'd he was nane o' Scotland's dogs ;  
But whalpit some place far abroad,  
Where sailors gang to fish for cod.

His lockèd, letter'd, braw brass collar  
Showed 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 wi' a tinkler-gypsy's messan :  
At kirk or market, mill or smiddie,  
Nae tawted tyke, though e'er sae duddie,

But he wad stan't, as glad to see him,  
And stroan't on stanes and hillocks wi' him.

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

He was a gash and faithfu' tyke,  
As ever lap a sheugh or dike.  
His honest, sonsie, baws'nt face,  
Aye gat him friends in ilka place.  
His breast was white, his touzie back  
Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black ;  
His gaucie tail, wi' upward curl,  
Hung o'er his hurdies wi' a swirl.

Nae doubt but they were fain o' ither,  
And unco pack and thick thegither ;  
Wi' social nose whyles snuff'd and snowkit,  
Whyles mice and moudieworts they howkit ;  
Whyles scour'd awa' in lang excursion,  
And worried 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 often wondered, honest Luath,  
What sort o' life poor dogs like you have ;



And when the gentry's life I saw,  
What way poor bodies lived ava.  
Our laird gets in his rackèd rents,  
His coals, his kain, and a' his stents ;  
He rises when he likes himsel ;  
His flunkies answer at the bell ;  
He ca's his coach, he ca's his horse ;  
He draws a bonny silken purse  
As lang's my tail, whare, through the steeks,  
The yellow-letter'd Geordie keeks.

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

## LUATH.

Trowth, Cæsar, whyles theyr'e fasht eneugh ;  
A cottar howkin' in a sheugh,  
Wi' dirty stanes biggin' a dike,  
Baring a quarry, and siclike ;  
Himself, a wife, he thus sustains,  
A smytrie o' wee duddie weans,  
And nought but his han' darg to keep  
Them right and tight in thack and rape.

And when they meet wi' sair disasters,  
Like loss o' health or want o' masters,  
Ye maist wad think, a wee touch langer,  
And they maun starve o' cauld and hunger :  
But how it comes I never kenn'd yet,  
They're maistly wonderfu' contented :  
And buirdly chiels, and clever hizzies,  
Are bred in sic a way as this is.

## CÆSAR.

But then to see how ye're negleckit,  
How huff'd, and cuff'd, and disrespeckit !  
Lord, man, our gentry care as little  
For delvers, ditchers, and sic cattle ;  
They gang as saucy by poor folk  
As I wad by a stinkin' brock.  
I've noticed, on our laird's court-day,  
And mony a time my heart's been wae,  
Poor tenant bodies, scant o' cash,  
How they maun thole a factor's snash :  
He'll stamp and threaten, curse and swear,  
He'll apprehend them, poind their gear ;  
While they maun stan', wi' aspect humble,  
And hear it a', and fear and tremble !

I see how folk live that hae riches ;  
But surely poor folk maun be wretches !

## LUATH.

They're no sae wretched's ane wad think ;  
Though constantly on poortith's brink :  
They're sae accustom'd wi' the sight,  
The view o't gies them little fright.

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

The dearest comfort o' their lives,  
Their grushie weans and faithfu' wives ;  
The prattling things are just their pride,  
That sweetens a' their fire-side ;  
And whyles twalpennie worth o' nappy  
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',  
And ferlie at the folk in Lon'on.

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

That merry day the year begins  
They bar the door on frosty win's ;  
The nappy reeks wi' mantling ream,  
And sheds a heart-inspiring steam ;  
The luntin pipe and sneeshin mill  
Are handed round wi' right guid will ;  
The cantie auld folks crackin' crouse,  
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 play'd.  
There's mony a creditable stock  
O' decent, honest, fawsont folk,  
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 thrang a parliamentin'  
For Britain's guid his saul indentin'—

CÆSAR.

Haith, lad, ye little ken about it ;  
For Briton's guid ! guid faith, I doubt it.  
Say rather, gaun as Premiers lead him ;  
And saying Ay or No's they bid him :  
At operas and plays parading,  
Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading ;  
Or maybe, in a frolic daft,  
To Hague or Calais taks a waft,  
To mak a tour, and tak a whirl,  
To learn *bon ton*, and see the worl'.

There, at Vienna or Versailles,  
He rives his father's auld entails ;  
Or by Madrid he takes the route,  
To thrum guitars, and fecht wi' nowte ;  
Or down Italian vista startles,  
Whore-hunting among groves of myrtles,  
Then bouses drumly German water,  
To mak himsel look fair and fatter,



And clear the consequential sorrows,  
Love-gifts of Carnival signoras.  
For Britain's guid !—for her destruction !  
Wi' dissipation, feud, and faction !

LUATH.

Hech man ! dear sirs ! is that the gate  
They waste sae mony a braw estate !  
Are we sae foughten and harass'd  
For gear to gang that gate at last !  
Oh, would they stay aback fra courts,  
And please themselves wi' country sports,  
It wad for every ane be better,  
The Laird, the Tenant, and the Cottar !  
For frae frank, rantin', ramblin' billies,  
Fient haet o' them's ill-hearted fellows ;  
Except for breakin' o' their timmer,  
Or speakin' lightly o' their limmer,  
Or shootin' o' a hare or moorcock,  
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 nor hunger e'er can steer them,  
The very 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 needna starve nor sweat,  
Through winter's cauld or simmer's heat ;  
They've nae sair wark to craze their banes,  
And fill auld age wi' grips and granes :

But human bodies are sic fools,  
For a' their colleges and schools,  
That when nae real ills perplex them,  
They mak enow themselves to vex them ;  
And aye the less they hae to sturt them,  
In like proportion less will hurt them.

A country fellow at the pleugh,  
His acres till'd, he's right eneugh ;  
A country girl at her wheel,  
Her dizzens done, she's unco weel :  
But Gentlemen, and Ladies warst,  
Wi' evendown want o' wark are curst.  
They loiter, lounging, lank, and lazy ;  
Though deil haet ails them, yet uneasy ;  
Their days insipid, dull, and tasteless ;  
Their nights unquiet, lang, and restless ;  
And e'en their sports, their balls and races,  
Their galloping through public places,  
There's sic parade, sic pomp and art,  
The joy can scarcely reach the heart.

The men cast out in party matches,  
Then sowther a' in deep debauches ;  
Ae night they're mad wi' drink and whoring,  
Neist 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 and jads thegither.  
Whyles, owre the wee bit cup and platie,  
They sip the scandal potion pretty :  
Or lee-lang nights, wi' crabbit leuks,  
Pore owre the devil's pictured beuks :

Stake on a chance a farmer's stackyard,  
And cheat like ony unhang'd blackguard.  
There's some exception, man and woman ;  
But this is Gentry's life in common.

By this, the sun was out o' sight,  
And darker gloaming brought the night ;  
The bum-clock humm'd wi' lazy drone ;  
The kye stood rowtin' i' the loan ;  
When up they gat, and shook their lugs,  
Rejoiced they werena men, but dogs ;  
And each took aff his several way,  
Resolved to meet some ither day.

---

THE JOLLY BEGGARS.

A CANTATA.—RECITATIVO.

**W**HEN lyart leaves bestrew the yird,  
Or, wavering like the baukie-bird,  
Bedim cauld Boreas' blast ;  
When hailstones drive wi' bitter skyte,  
And infant frosts begin to bite,  
In hoary cranreuch drest ;  
Ae night at e'en a merry core  
O' randie, gangrel bodies,  
In Poesie Nansie's held the splore,  
To drink their orra duddies :  
Wi' quaffing and laughing,  
They ranted and they sang ;  
Wi' jumping and thumping,  
The vera girdle rang.

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 and blankets warm—  
     She blinket on her sodger ;  
 And aye he gied the tousie drab  
     The tither skelpin' kiss,  
 While she held up her greedy gab,  
     Just like an aumos dish.  
     Ilk smak still, did crack still,  
     Just like a cadger's whup,  
 Then staggering and swaggering  
     He roar'd 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 daudle, etc.

My 'prenticeship I past where my leader breathed his  
     last,  
 When the bloody die was cast on the heights of Abram ;  
 I served out my trade when the gallant game was play'd,  
 And the Moro low was laid at the sound of the drum.  
     Lal de daudle, etc.

I lastly was with Curtis, among the floating batteries,  
 And there I left for witness an arm and a limb ;



Yet let my country need me, with Elliot to head me,  
I'd clatter on my stumps at the sound of the drum.  
Lal de daudle, etc.

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, etc.

What though with hoary locks I must stand the winter  
shocks,  
Beneath the woods and rocks oftentimes for a home,  
When the t'other bag I sell, and the t'other bottle tell,  
I could meet a troop of hell at the sound of a drum.  
Lal de daudle, etc.

RECITATIVO.

He ended ; and the kebars sheuk  
Aboon the chorus roar ;  
While frightened rattons backward leuk,  
And seek the benmost bore ;  
A fairy fiddler frae the neuk,  
He skirled 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, etc.

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, etc.

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 risk'd the body,  
'Twas then I proved false to my sodger laddie.  
Sing, Lal de lal, etc.

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 asked no more but a sodger laddie.  
Sing, Lal de lal, etc.

But the peace it reduced me to beg in despair,  
Till I met my old boy at a Cunningham fair ;  
His rags regimental they flutter'd so gaudy,  
My heart it rejoiced at a sodger laddie.  
Sing, Lal de lal, etc.

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, etc.

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 stoiter'd up and made a face ;  
Then turn'd, and 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 hae of a fool ?

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 tied up 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,  
Wha ken't fu' weel to cleek the sterling,  
For mony a pursie she had hookit,  
And had in mony a well been doukit.  
Her dove had been a Highland laddie,  
But weary fa' the waefu' woodie !  
Wi' sighs and sobs she thus began  
To wail her braw John Highlandman—

AIR.

TUNE—"Oh, an ye were Dead, Guidman !"

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.

With his philabeg and tartan plaid,  
And guid claymore down by his side,  
The ladies' hearts he did trepan,  
My gallant braw John Highlandman.  
Sing, hey, etc.

We rangèd a' from Tweed to Spey,  
And lived like lords and ladies gay ;  
For a Lawland face he fearèd none,  
My gallant braw John Highlandman.  
Sing, hey, etc.

They banish'd him beyond the sea,  
But ere the bud was on the tree,  
Adown my cheeks the pearls ran,  
Embracing my John Highlandman.  
Sing, hey, etc.

But, oh ! they catch'd him at the last,  
And bound him in a dungeon fast ;  
My curse upon them every one,  
They've hang'd my braw John Highlandman.  
Sing, hey, etc.

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, etc.

E-e

## RECITATIVO.

A pigmy scraper, wi' his fiddle,  
Wha used at trysts and fairs to driddle,  
Her strappin' limb and gaucy middle  
(He reach'd nae higher)  
Had holed his heartie like a riddle,  
And blawn't on fire.

Wi' hand on haunch, and upward e'e,  
He croon'd his gamut, one, two, three,  
Then in an arioso key,  
The wee Apollo,  
Set off wi' allegretto glee  
His giga solo.

## AIR.

TUNE—"Whistle owre the lave o't."  
Let me ryke up to dight 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 play'd,  
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, etc.

Sae merrily the banes we'll pyke,  
And sun oursels about the dike,  
And at our leisure, when ye like,  
We'll whistle o'er the lave o't.  
I am, etc.

But bless me wi' your heaven o' charms,  
And while I kittle hair on thairms,  
Hunger, cauld, and a' sic harms,  
May whistle owre the lave o't.  
I am, etc.

RECITATIVO.

Her charms had struck a sturdy caird,  
As weel as poor gut-scraper ;  
He tak's the fiddler by the beard,  
And draws a roosty rapier—

He swore 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 pray'd for grace wi' ruefu' face,  
And sae the quarrel ended.

But though his little heart did grieve  
When round the tinkler press'd her,  
He feign'd to snirtle in his sleeve,  
When thus the caird address'd her :—

## AIR.

TUNE—"Clout the Caudron."

My bonny lass, I work in brass,  
A tinkler is my station :  
I've travell'd round all Christian ground  
In this my occupation.  
I've ta'en the gold, I've been enroll'd  
In many a noble squadron :  
But vain they search'd, when off I march'd  
To go and clout the caudron.  
I've ta'en the gold, etc.

Despise that shrimp, that wither'd imp,  
Wi' a' his noise and ca'prin',  
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,  
If e'er ye want, or meet wi' scant,  
May I ne'er weet my craigie.  
And by that stoup, etc.

## RECITATIVO.

The caird prevail'd—the unblushing fair  
In his embraces sunk,  
Partly wi' love, o'ercome sae sair,  
And partly she was drunk.  
Sir Violino, with an air  
That show'd a man of spunk,  
Wish'd unison between the pair,  
And made the bottle clunk  
To their health that night.

---



But urchin Cupid shot a shaft  
That play'd a dame a shavie,  
The fiddler raked her fore and aft,  
Ahint the chicken cavie.  
Her lord, a wight o' Homer's craft,  
Though limping wi' the spavie,  
He hirpled up, and lap like daft,  
And shored them Dainty Davie  
O' boot that night.

He was a care-defying blade  
As ever Bacchus listed,  
Though Fortune sair upon him laid,  
His heart she ever miss'd it.  
He had na 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, and a' that."

I am a bard of no regard,  
Wi' gentle folks, and a' that :  
But Homer-like, the glowrin' byke,  
Frae town to town I draw that.

CHORUS.

For a' that, and a' that,  
And 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,  
Castalia's burn, and a' that ;  
But there it streams, and richly reams,  
My Helicon I ca' that.  
For a' that, etc.

Great love I bear to a' the fair,  
Their humble slave, and a' that ;  
But lordly will, I hold it still  
A mortal sin to thraw that.  
For a' that, etc.

In raptures sweet, this hour we meet,  
Wi' mutual love, and a' that :  
But for how lang the flee may stang,  
Let inclination law that.  
For a' that, etc.

Their tricks and craft hae put me daft,  
They've ta'en me in, and a' that ;  
But clear your decks, and here's the sex !  
I like the jads for a' that.

CHORUS.

For a' that, and a' that,  
And 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 Nansie's wa's  
Shook wi' a thunder of applause,  
Re-echoed from each mouth ;

They toom'd their pokes and pawn'd their duds,  
They scarcely left to co'er their fuds,  
To quench their lowin' drouth.

Then owre again, the jovial thrang,  
The poet did request,  
To loose his pack and 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.

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, etc.

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, etc.

Does the train-attended carriage  
Through the country lighter rove ?  
Does the sober bed of marriage  
Witness brighter scenes of love ?  
A fig, etc.

Life is all a variorum,  
We regard not how it goes ;  
Let them cant about decorum  
Who have characters to lose.  
A fig, etc.

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, etc.



## SCOTCH DRINK.

**L**ET other poets raise a fracas,  
'Bout vines, and wines, and drucken  
Bacchus,  
And crabbit names and stories wrack us,  
And grate our lug,  
I sing the juice Scotch beare can mak us,  
In glass or jug.

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

Let husky wheat the haughs adorn,  
And aits set up their awnie horn,  
And peas and beans, at e'en or morn,  
Perfume the plain.  
Leeze me on thee, John Barleycorn,  
Thou king o' grain !

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

Food fills the wame, and keeps us livin' ;  
Though life's a gift no worth receivin'



When heavy dragg'd wi' pine and grievin' ;  
But, oil'd by thee,  
The wheels o' life gae down-hill, scrievin',  
Wi' rattlin' glee.

Thou clears the head o' doited 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 siller weed,  
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.

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

That merry night we get the corn in,  
Oh, sweetly then thou reams the horn in !  
Or reekin' on a new-year morning  
In cog or bicker,  
And just a wee drap sp'ritual burn in,  
And gusty sucker !

When Vulcan gies his bellows breath,  
And ploughmen gather wi' their graith,

Oh, rare ! to see thee fizz and freath  
I' the lugget caup !  
Then Burnewin comes on like death  
At every chap.

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

When skirlin' weanies see the light,  
Thou maks the gossips clatter bright,  
How fumblin' cuifs their dearies slight :  
Wae worth the name !  
Nae howdy gets a social night,  
Or plack frae them.

When neibors anger at a plea,  
And just as wud 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.

Alake ! that e'er my Muse has reason  
To wyte her countrymen wi' treason !  
But mony daily weet their weason  
Wi' liquors nice,  
And hardly, in a winter's season,  
E'er spier her price.

Wae worth that brandy, burning trash !  
Fell source o' mony a pain and brash !

Twins mony a poor, doylt, drucken hash  
O' half his days ;  
And 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 plackless devils like mysel,  
It sets you ill,  
Wi' bitter, dearthfu' wines to mell,  
Or foreign gill.

May gravels round his blether wrench,  
And gouts torment him inch by inch,  
Wha twists his grundle wi' a glunch  
O' sour disdain,  
Out-owre a glass o' whisky punch  
Wi' honest men.

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

Thee, Ferintosh ! oh, sadly lost !  
Seotland lament frae coast to coast !  
Now colic grips, and barkin' hoast,  
May kill us a' ;  
For loyal Forbes's charter'd boast  
Is ta'en awa' !

Thae curst horse-leeches o' th' Excise,  
Wha mak the whisky-stells their prize !

Haud up thy han', deil ! ance, twice, thrice !  
There, seize the blinkers !  
And bake them up in brunstane pies  
For poor damn'd drinkers.

Fortune ! if thou'll but gie me still  
Hale breeks, a scone, and whisky gill,  
And rowth o' rhyme to rave at will,  
                                    Tak a' the rest,  
And deal't about as thy blind skill  
                                    Directs the best.

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

YE Irish lords, ye knights and squires,  
Wha represent our brughs and shires,  
And doucely manage our affairs  
In parliament,  
To you a simple Bardie's prayers  
Are humbly sent.

Alas ! my roopit Muse is hearse !  
Your honours' heart wi' grief 'twad pierce,  
To see her sittin' on her a—e  
                                    Low i' the dust,  
And sraichin' out prosaic verse,  
                                    And like to burst !

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

Stand forth and tell yon Premier youth,  
The honest, open, naked truth :  
Tell him o' mine and Scotland's drouth,  
His servants humble :  
The muckle devil blaw ye south,  
If ye dissemble !

Does ony great man glunch and gloom?  
 Speak out, and never fash your thoom!  
 Let posts and pensions sink or soom  
                                           Wi' them wha grant 'em:  
 If honestly they canna come,  
                                           Far better want 'em.

In gath'rin' votes you werena slack ;  
Now stand as tightly by your tack ;  
Ne'er claw your lug, and fidge your back,  
And hum and haw ;  
But raise your arm, and tell your crack  
Before them a'.

Paint Scotland greetin' owre her thrissle.  
Her mutchkin stoup as toom's a whistle ;  
And damn'd excisemen in a bussle,  
                Seizin' a stell,  
Triumphant crushin' 't like a mussel  
                Or lampit shell.



Then on the tither hand present her,  
A blackguard smuggler, right behint her,  
And cheek-for-chow a chuffie 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-blood rising hot,  
To see his poor auld mither's pot  
                    Thus dung in staves,  
And plunder'd o' her hindmost groat  
                    By gallows knaves ?

Alas ! I'm but a nameless wight,  
Tro'd i' the mire and out o' sight !  
But could I like Montgomeries fight.  
                    Or gab like Boswell,  
There's some sark-necks I wad draw tight,  
                    And tie some hose well.

God bless your honours, can ye see't,  
The kind, auld, cantie carlin greet,  
And no get warmly to your feet,  
                    And gar them hear it,  
And tell them wi' a patriot heat,  
                    Ye winna bear it ?

Some o' you nicely ken the laws,  
To round the period and pause,  
And wi' rhetoric clause on clause  
                    To make harangues ;  
Then echo through St. Stephen's wa's  
                    Auld Scotland's wrangs.

Dempster, a true-blue Scot I'se warran' ;  
 Thee, aith-detesting, chaste Kilkerran ;  
 And that glib-gabbet Highland baron,  
                     The Laird o' Graham ;  
 And ane, a chap that's damn'd auldfarran,  
                     Dundas his name.

Erskine, a spunkie Norland billie ;  
 True Campbells, Frederick and Ilay ;  
 And Livingstone, the bauld Sir Willie ;  
                     And mony ithers,  
 Whom auld Demosthenes or Tully  
                     Might own for brithers.

Thee, Sodger Hugh, my watchman stented,  
 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.

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

This while she's been in crankous mood,  
 Her lost militia fired her bluid ;  
 (Deil na they never mair do good,  
                     Play'd her that pliskie !)  
 And now she's like to rin red-wud  
                     About her whisky.

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

For God's sake, sirs, then speak her fair,  
And straik her cannie wi' the hair,  
And to the muckle House repair  
                    Wi' instant speed,  
And strive, wi' a' your wit and lear,  
                    To get remead.

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

Tell yon guid bluid o' auld Boconnock's  
I'll be his debt twa mashlum bannocks,  
And drink his health in auld Nanse Tinnock's  
                    Nine times a-week,  
If he some scheme, like tea and winnocks,  
                    Wad kindly seek.

Could he some commutation broach,  
I'll pledge my aith in guid braid Scotch,  
He needna fear their foul reproach  
                    Nor erudition,  
Yon mixtie-maxtie, queer hotch-potch,  
                    The coalition.  
                    F-f

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

And now, ye chosen Five-and-Forty,  
 May still your mother's heart support ye ;  
 Then though a minister grow dorty,  
                     And kick your place,  
 Ye'll snap your fingers, poor and hearty,  
                     Before his face.

God bless your honours a' your days  
 Wi' sowps o' kail and brats o' claes,  
 In spite o' a' the thievish kaes  
                     That haunt St. Jamie's !  
 Your humble poet sings and prays  
                     While Rab his name is.

POSTSCRIPT.

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

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

Their gun's a burthen on their shouter ;  
They downa bide the stink o' pouter ;  
Their bauldest thought's a hank'ring swither  
    To stan' or rin,  
Till skelp—a shot—they're aff, a' throu'ther,  
    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,  
    And 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 han' a welcome gies him ;  
    And when he fa's,  
His latest draught o' breathin' lea'es him  
    In faint huzzas !

Sages their solemn e'en may steek,  
And raise a philosophic reek,  
And 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 leather,  
Till whare ye sit, on craps o' heather,  
    Ye tine your dam ;  
Freedom and whisky gang thegither !—  
    Tak aff your dram !



## THE TARBOLTON LASSES.

**I**F ye gae up to yon hill-tap,  
Ye'll there see 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 dour and din, a deil within,  
But aiblins 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 hillside,  
Speir in for bonny Bessy ;  
She'll gie ye a beck, 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 of this—  
It's Bessy's ain opinion.

THE TARBOLTON LASSES.

**I**N 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 gree frae them a', man.

Their father's a laird, and weel he can spare't,  
Braid money to tocher them a', man,  
To proper young men, he'll clink in the hand  
Gowd guineas a hunder or twa, man.

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 towmond or twa, man ;  
The Laird o' the Ford will straught on a board,  
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 sonsy and sweet, sae fully complete,  
She steals our affections awa, man.

If I should detail the pick and the wale  
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 na, 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 crow, 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 hae twa, man,  
And stockings and pumps to put on my stumps,  
And ne'er a wrang steek in them a', man,

My sarks they are few, but five o' them new,  
Twa' hundred, 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 hunder or twa, man ;  
Nae weel-tocher'd aunts, to wait on their drants,  
And wish them in hell for it a', man.

I never was cannie for hoarding o' money,  
Or claughtin't together at a, man,  
I've little to spend, and naething to lend,  
But deevil a shilling I awe, man.

THE HOLY FAIR.

UPON a simmer Sunday morn,  
When Nature's face is fair,  
I walkèd forth to view the corn,  
And snuff the caller air.  
The rising sun owre Galston muirs,  
Wi' glorious light was glintin' ;  
The hares were hirplin down the furs,  
The lav'rocks they were chantin'  
Fu' sweet that day.

As lightsomely I glower'd 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' lyart lining ;  
The third, that gaed a-wee a-back,  
Was in the fashion shining  
Fu' gay that day.

The twa appear'd like sisters twin,  
In feature, form, and claes ;  
Their visage, wither'd, lang, and thin,  
And sour as ony slaes :  
The third cam up, hap-step-and-lowp,  
As light as ony lambie,  
And 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 bonny face,  
But yet I canna name ye."  
Quo' she, and laughin' as she spak,  
And taks me by the hands,  
"Ye, for my sake, hae gien the feck  
Of a' the ten commands  
A screed some day.

"My name is Fun—your crony dear,  
The nearest friend ye hae ;  
And this is Superstition here,  
And that's Hypocrisy.  
I'm gaun to Mauchline holy fair,  
To spend an hour in daffin' ;  
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 sark on,  
And meet you on the holy spot ;  
Faith, we'se hae fine remarkin' !"



Then I gaed hame at crowdie-time,  
And soon I made me ready ;  
For roads were clad, frae side to side,  
Wi' mony a weary body,  
In droves that day.

Here farmers gash, in ridin' graith,  
Gaed hoddin' by their cottars ;  
There, swankies young, in braw braid claith,  
Are springin' owre the gutters ;  
The lasses, skelpin' barefit, thrang,  
In silks and scarlet glitter ;  
Wi' sweet-milk cheese, in mony a whang,  
And farls, baked wi' butter,  
Fu' crump that day.

When by the plate we set our nose,  
Weel heap'd up wi' ha'pence,  
A greedy glower Black-bonnet throws,  
And we maun draw our tippence.  
Then in we go to see the show,  
On every side they're gath'rin',  
Some carrying dails, some chairs and stools,  
And some are busy bleth'rin'  
Right loud that day.

Here stands a shed to fend the showers,  
And screen our country gentry,  
There Racer Jess, and twa-three whores,  
Are blinkin' at the entry.  
Here sits a raw of tittlin' jades,  
Wi' heaving breast and bare neck,  
And there a batch o' wabster lads,  
Blackguarding frae Kilmarnock,  
For fun this day.

Here, some are thinkin' on their sins,  
And some upo' their claes ;  
Ane curses feet that fyled his shins,  
Anither sighs and prays :  
On this hand sits a chosen swatch,  
Wi' screwed-up, grace-proud faces ;  
On that a set o' chaps at watch,  
Thrang winkin' on the lasses  
To chairs that day.

Oh, happy is that man and 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 loof upon her bosom,  
Unkenn'd that day.

Now a' the congregation o'er  
Is silent expectation :  
For Moodie speels the holy door,  
Wi' tidings o' damnation.  
Should Hornie, as in ancient days,  
'Mang sons o' God present him,  
The very 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' and wi' thumpin' !  
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath,  
He's stampin' and he's jumpin' !

His lengthen'd chin, his turn'd-up snout,  
His eldritch squeal, and gestures,  
Oh, how they fire the heart devout,  
Like cantharidian plasters,  
On sic a day !

But, hark ! the tent has changed its voice !  
There's peace and rest nae langer :  
For a' the real judges rise,  
They canna sit for anger.  
Smith opens out his cauld harangues  
On practice and on morals ;  
And aff the godly pour in thrangs,  
To gie the jars and barrels  
A lift that day.

What signifies his barren shine  
Of moral powers and reason ?  
His English style, and 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 poison'd nostrum ;  
For Peebles, frae the Water-fit,  
Ascends the holy rostrum :  
See, up he's got the Word o' God,  
And meek and mim has view'd it,  
While Common Sense has taen the road,  
And's aff and up the Cowgate,  
Fast, fast, that day.

Wee Miller neist the guard relieves,  
And orthodoxy raibles,  
Though in his heart he weel believes  
And thinks it auld wives' fables :  
But, faith ! the birkie wants a manse,  
So, cannily he hums them ;  
Although his carnal wit and sense  
Like hafflins-ways o'ercomes him  
At times that day.

Now but and ben the change-house fills  
Wi' yill-caup commentators :  
Here's crying out for bakes and gills,  
And there the pint-stoup clatters ;  
While thick and thrang, and loud and lang,  
Wi' logic and 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 gies us mair  
Than either school or college :  
It kindles wit, it waukens lair,  
It pangs us fou o' knowledge.  
Be't whisky gill, or penny wheep,  
Or ony stronger potion,  
It never fails, on drinking deep,  
To kittle up our notion  
By night or day.

The lads and lasses, blithely bent,  
To mind baith saul and body,  
Sit round the table weel content,  
And steer about the toddy.

On this ane's dress, and that ane's leuk,  
They're making observations ;  
While some are cozie i' the neuk,  
And forming assignations  
To meet some day.

But now the Lord's ain trumpet touts,  
Till a' the hills are rarin',  
And echoes back return the shouts,  
Black Russell is na sparín' ;  
His piercing words, like Highland swords,  
Divide the joints and marrow ;  
His talk o' hell, whare devils dwell,  
Our vera sauls does harrow  
Wi' fright that day.

A vast, unbottom'd, boundless pit,  
Fill'd fu' o' lowin' brunstane,  
Whase ragin' flame, and scorchin' heat,  
Wad melt the hardest whunstane !  
The half-asleep start up wi' fear,  
And think they hear it roarin',  
When presently it does appear  
'Twas but some neibor snorin'  
Asleep that day.

'Twad be owre lang a tale to tell  
How mony stories past,  
And how they crowded to the yill  
When they were a' dismissit :  
How drink gaed round, in cogs and caups,  
Among the forms and benches :  
And cheese and bread, frae women's laps,  
Was dealt about in lunches,  
And dauds that day.



In comes a gaucie, gash guidwife,  
And sits down by the fire,  
Syne draws her kebbuck and 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,  
And gies them't like a tether,  
Fu' lang that day.

Waesucks ! for him that gets nae lass,  
Or lasses that hae naething !  
Sma' need has he to say a grace,  
Or melvie his braw claithing !  
O wives, be mindfu' ance yersel  
How bonny lads ye wanted,  
And dinna, for a kebbuck-heel,  
Let lasses be affronted  
On sic a day !

Now Clinkumbell, wi' rattlin' tow,  
Begins to jow and croon ;  
Some swagger hame, the best they dow,  
Some wait the afternoon,  
At slaps the billies halt a blink,  
Till lasses strip their shoon :  
Wi' faith and hope, and love and drink,  
They're a' in famous tune  
For crack that day.

How mony hearts this day converts  
O' sinners and o' lasses !  
Their hearts o' stane, gin night, are gane,  
As saft as ony flesh is.

*ON THE DEATH OF A DAUGHTER.* 95

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There's some are fou o' love divine ;  
There's some are fou o' brandy ;  
And mony jobs that day begin  
May end in houghmagandy  
Some ither day.

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ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE DAUGHTER.

**O**H, 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 daystar 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.

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.

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## DEATH AND DR. HORNBOOK.

### A TRUE STORY.

**S**OME books are lies fra end to end,  
And some great lies were never penn'd :  
E'en ministers, they hae been kenn'd,  
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 deil's in hell  
Or Dublin city :  
That e'er he nearer comes oursel  
'S a muckle pity.

The clachan yill had made me canty,  
I wasna fou, but just had plenty,

I stacher'd whyles, but yet took tent aye  
To free the ditches ;  
And hillocks, stanes, and bushes kenn'd aye  
Frae ghaists and 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 couldna tell.

I was come round about the hill,  
And toddlin' down on Willie's mill,  
Setting my staff wi' a' my skill,  
To keep me sicker :  
Though leeward whiles, against my will,  
I took a bicker.

I there wi' something did forgather,  
That put me in an eerie swither ;  
An awfu' scythe, out-owre ae shouther,  
Clear-dangling, hang ;  
A three-taed leister on the ither  
Lay large and lang.

Its stature seem'd lang Scotch ells twa,  
The queerest shape that e'er I saw,  
For fient a wame it had ava ;  
And then its shanks,  
They were as thin, as sharp and sma',  
As cheeks o' branks.  
G-g

"Guid-e'en," quo' I ; "friend, hae ye been mawin',  
When ither folk are busy sawin' ?"

It seem'd 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—"My name is Death ;  
But be na fley'd."—Quoth I, "Guid faith,  
Ye're maybe come to stap my breath ;

But tent me, billie ;

I red ye weel, tak care o' skaith,  
See, there's a gully !"

"Guidman," quo he, "put up your whittle,  
I'm no design'd to try its mettle ;  
But if I did, I wad be kittle

To be mislear'd,

I wad na mind it, no that spittle  
Out-owre my beard."

"Weel, weel," says I, "a bargain be't ;  
Come, gies your hand, and say we're gree't ;  
We'll ease our shanks and tak a seat—

Come, gies your news ;

This while ye hae been mony a gate,  
At mony a house."

"Ay, ay !" quo he, and shook his head,  
"It's e'en a lang, lang time indeed  
Sin' I began to nick the thread

And choke the breath :

Folk maun do something for their bread,  
And sae maun Death.



"Sax thousand years are near hand fled  
Sin' I was to the butchering bred,  
And mony a scheme in vain's been laid,  
                    To stap or scar me ;  
Till ane Hornbook's ta'en up the trade,  
                    And faith he'll waur me.

"Ye ken Jock Hornbook i' the clachan,  
Deil mak his king's-hood in a spleuchan !  
He's grown sae weel acquaint wi' Buchan  
                    And ither chaps,  
The weans haud out their fingers laughin',  
                    And pouk my hips.

"See, here's a scythe, and there's a dart,  
They hae pierced mony a gallant heart ;  
But Dr. Hornbook, wi' his art  
                    And cursèd skill,  
Has made then baith no worth a f—t,  
                    Damn'd haet they'll kill.

"'Twas but yestreen, nae further gaen,  
I threw a noble throw at ane ;  
Wi' less, I'm sure, I've hundreds slain ;  
                    But deil ma care,  
It just play'd dirl 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 hae pierced the heart  
                    O' a kail-runt.

“ I drew my scythe in sic a fury,  
 I near-hand cowpit wi’ my hurry,  
 But yet the bauld apothecary  
                                 Withstood the shock ;  
 I might as weel hae tried a quarry  
                                 O’ hard whin rock.

“ Even them he canna get attended,  
 Although their face he ne’er had kenn’d it,  
 Just sh—e in a kail-blade and send it,  
                                 As soon’s he smells’t,  
 Baith their disease and what will mend it  
                                 At ance he tells’t.

“ And then a’ doctor’s saws and whittles,  
 Of a’ dimensions, shapes, and metals,  
 A’ kinds o’ boxes, mugs, and bottles,  
                                 He’s sure to hae :  
 Their Latin names as fast he rattles  
                                 As A B C.

“ Calces o’ fossils, earths, and trees ;  
 True salmarinum o’ the seas ;  
 The farina of beans and peas,  
                                 He has’t in plenty ;  
 Aquafontis, what you please,  
                                 He can content ye.

“ Forbye some new uncommon weapons,  
 Urinus spiritus of capons ;  
 Or mite-horn shavings, filings, scrapings,  
                                 Distill’d *per se* ;  
 Salalkali o’ midge-tail clippings,  
                                 And mony mae.”

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“ Waes me for Johnnie Ged’s hole noo’,”  
Quo’ I, “ if that thae news be true !  
His braw calf-ward whare gowans grew,  
Sae white and bonny,  
Nae doubt they’ll rive it wi’ the plew ;  
They’ll ruin Johnnie ! ”

The creature grain’d an eldritch laugh,  
And says, “ Ye needna yoke the pleugh,  
Kirkyards will soon be till’d eneugh,  
Tak ye nae fear :  
They’ll a’ be trench’d wi’ mony a sheugh  
In twa-three year.

“ Whare I kill’d ane a fair strae death,  
By loss o’ blood or want o’ breath,  
This night I’m free to tak my aith,  
That Hornbook’s skill  
Has clad a score i’ their last claith,  
By drap and pill.

“ An honest wabster to his trade,  
Whase wife’s twa nieves were scarce weel-bred,  
Gat tippence-worth to mend her head  
When it was sair ;  
The wife slade cannie to her bed,  
But ne’er spak mair.

“ A country laird had ta’en the batts,  
Or some curmurring in his guts,  
His only son for Hornbook sets,  
And pays him well ;  
The lad, for twa guid gimmer-pets,  
Was laird himsel.

" A bonny lass, ye kenn'd 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 swatch o' Hornbook's way ;  
Thus goes he on from day to day,  
Thus does he poison, kill, and slay,  
                    An's weel paid for't ;  
Yet stops me o' my lawfu' prey,  
                    Wi' his damn'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 wad a groat,  
                    He gets his fairin' ! "

But just as he began to tell,  
The auld kirk-hammer strak the bell  
Some wee short hour ayont the twal,  
                    Which raised us baith :  
I took the way that pleased mysel,  
                    And sae did Death.

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## THE BRIGS OF AYR.

INSCRIBED TO JOHN BALLANTYNE, ESQ., AYR.

**T**HE 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 steel'd,  
And train'd 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,  
Skill'd in the secret, to bestow with grace ;  
When Ballantyne befriends his humble name,  
And hands the rustic stranger up to fame,  
With heart-felt throes his grateful bosom swells,  
The godlike bliss, to give, alone excels.

'Twas when the stacks get on their winter-hap,  
And thack and rape secure the toil-won crap ;  
Potato-bings are snuggèd up frae skaith  
O' coming Winter's biting, frosty breath ;



The bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils,  
Unnumber'd buds' and flowers' delicious spoils,  
Seal'd up with frugal care in massive waxen piles,  
Are doom'd by man, that tyrant o'er the weak,  
The death o' devils, smoor'd wi' brimstone reek :  
The thundering guns are heard on every side,  
The wounded coveys, reeling, scatter wide ;  
The feather'd 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 gossamer 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 wi' care,  
He left his bed, and took his wayward route,  
And down by Simpson's wheel'd the left about :  
(Whether impell'd by all-directing Fate,  
To witness what I after shall narrate ;  
Or penitential pangs for former sins,  
Led him to rove by quondam Merran Dins ;  
Or whether, rapt in meditation high,  
He wander'd out, he knew not where nor why)  
The drowsy Dungeon clock had number'd two,  
And Wallace Tower had sworn the fact was true :

The tide-swoln Firth, wi' sullen sounding roar,  
Through the still night dash'd hoarse along the shore.  
All else was hush'd 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 listening bard,  
The clanging sugh of whistling wings is heard ;  
Two dusky forms dart through the midnight air,  
Swift as the gos drives on the wheeling hare ;  
Ane on the Auld Brig his airy shape uprears,  
The ither flutters o'er the rising piers :  
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 even the very deils they brawly ken them.)  
Auld Brig appear'd o' ancient Pictish race,  
The very wrinkles Gothic in his face :  
He seem'd as he wi' Time had warstled lang,  
Yet, teughly doure, he bade an unco bang.  
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,  
Wi' virls 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 neibor took his e'e,  
And e'en a vex'd and angry heart had he !  
Wi' thieveless sneer to see his modish mien,  
He, down the water, gies him this guid e'en :—

## AULD BRIG.

I doubt na, frien', ye'll think ye're nae sheepshank,  
Ance ye were streekit owre frae bank to bank !  
But gin ye be a brig as auld as me—  
Though, faith, that date I doubt ye'll never see—  
There'll be, if that date come, I'll wad a boddle,  
Some fewer whigmaleeries 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 ruin'd, formless bulk o' stane and lime,  
Compare wi' bonny brigs o' modern time ?  
There's men o' taste would tak the Ducat Stream,  
Though they should cast the very sark and swim,  
Ere they would grate their feelings wi' the view  
O' sic an ugly Gothic hulk as you.

## AULD BRIG.

Conceited gowk ! puff'd up wi' windy pride !  
This mony a year I've stood the flood and tide ;  
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 and spotting thowes,  
In mony a torrent down his snaw-broo rowes ;  
While crashing ice, borne on the roaring spate,  
Sweeps dams, and mills, and brigs, a' to the gate ;  
And from Glenbuck, down to the Ratton-key,  
Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd tumbling sea—  
Then down ye'll hurl, deil nor ye never rise !  
And dash the gumlie jaups 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 o't,  
The Lord be thankit that we've tint the gate o't !  
Gaunt, ghastly, ghaist-alluring edifices,  
Hanging, with threatening jut, like precipices ;  
O'erarching, 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 worshipp'd 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 cuifs of later times wha held the notion  
That sullen gloom was sterling true devotion ;  
Fancies that our guid brugh denies protection !  
And soon may they expire, unblessed with resurrection !



## AULD BRIG.

O ye, my dear-remember'd ancient yealings,  
Were ye but here to share my wounded feelings !  
Ye worthy proveses, and mony a bailie,  
Wha in the paths o' righteousness did toil aye ;  
Ye dainty deacons, and ye douce conveyners,  
To whom our moderns are but causey-cleaners !  
Ye godly councils wha hae blest this town ;  
Ye godly brethren o' the sacred gown,  
Wha meekly gae your hurdies to the smiters ;  
And (what would now be strange) ye godly writers ;  
A' ye douce folk I've borne aboon the broo,  
Were ye but here, what would ye say or do !  
How would your spirits groan in deep vexation  
To see each melancholy alteration ;  
And, agonising, curse the time and place  
When ye begat the base, degenerate 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, corky-headed, graceless gentry,  
The herryment and ruin of the country ;  
Men three parts made by tailors and by barbers,  
Wha waste your weel-hain'd gear on damn'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 ;  
That's aye a string auld doited grey-beards harp on,  
A topic for their peevishness to carp on.  
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 ;  
No difference but bulkiest or tallest,  
With comfortable dulness in for ballast ;  
Nor shoals nor currents need a pilot's caution,  
For regularly slow, they only witness motion ;  
Men wha grew wise prigg'in' owre hops and raisins,  
Or gather'd liberal views in bonds and seisins,  
If haply Knowledge, on a random tramp,  
Had shored them wi' a glimmer of his lamp,  
And would to Common Sense for once betray'd them,  
Plain, dull Stupidity stept kindly in to aid them.

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What further clishmaclaver might been said,  
What bloody war, if sprites had blood to shed,  
No man can tell ; but all before their sight,  
A fairy train appear'd 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'Lachlan, thairm-inspiring sage,  
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,  
When through his dear strathspeys they bore with  
Highland 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 even his matchless hand with finer touch inspired !  
No guess could tell what instrument appear'd,  
But all the soul of Music's self was heard ;  
Harmonious concert rung in every part,  
While simple melody pour'd moving on the heart.

The Genius of the stream in front appears,  
A venerable chief advanced in years ;  
His hoary head with water-lilies crown'd,  
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, crown'd 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 follow'd Courage, with his martial stride,  
From where the Feal wild-woody coverts hide ;  
Benevolence, with mild, benignant air,  
A female form came from the towers of Stair :  
Learning and Worth 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 forgot their kindling  
wrath.

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THE ORDINATION.

**K**ILMARNOCK wabsters, fidge and claw,  
And pour your creeshie nations ;  
And ye who leather rax and draw,  
Of a' denominations,  
Swaith to the Laigh Kirk, ane and a',  
And there tak up your stations ;  
Then aff to Begbie's in a raw,  
And pour divine libations  
For joy this day.

Curst Common Sense, that imp o' hell,  
Cam in wi' Maggie Lauder ;  
But Oliphant aft made her yell,  
And Russell sair misca'd her ;  
This day Mackinlay tak's the flail,  
And he's the boy will blaud her !  
He'll clap a shangan on her tail,  
And set the bairns to daud her  
Wi' dirt this day.

Mak haste and turn king David owre,  
And lilt wi' holy clangor ;  
O' double verse come gie us four,  
And skirl up the Bangor :  
This day the Kirk kicks up a stoure,  
Nae mair the knaves shall wrang her,  
For Heresy is in her power,  
And gloriously she'll whang her  
Wi' pith this day.

Come, let a proper text be read,  
And touch it aff wi' vigour,  
How graceless Ham leugh at his dad,  
Which made Canaan a nigger ;  
Or Phinehas drove the murdering blade,  
Wi' whore-abhorring rigour ;  
Or Zipporah, the scauldin' jade,  
Was like a bluidy tiger  
I' the inn that day.

There, try his mettle on the creed,  
And bind him down wi' caution,  
That stipend is a carnal weed  
He taks but for the fashion ;  
And gie him owre the flock to feed,  
And punish each transgression ;  
Especial, rams that cross the breed,  
Gie them sufficient threshin',  
Spare them nae day.

Now, auld Kilmarnock, cock thy tail,  
And toss thy horns fu' canty ;  
Nae mair thou'lt rowte out-owre the dale,  
Because thy pasture's scanty ;  
For lapfu's large o' gospel kail  
Shall fill thy crib in plenty,  
And runts o' grace the pick and wale,  
No gien 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' cheep,  
And o'er the thairms be tryin';  
Oh, rare to see our elbucks wheep,  
And a' like lamb-tails flyin'  
Fu' fast this day!

Lang, Patronage, wi' rod o' airn,  
Has shored the Kirk's undoin',  
As lately Fenwick, sair forfairn,  
Has proven to its ruin:  
Our patron, honest man! Glencairn,  
He saw mischief was brewin';  
And, like a godly elect bairn,  
He's waled us out a true ane,  
And sound this day.

Now, Robinson, harangue nae mair,  
But stick your gab for ever:  
Or try the wicked town of Ayr,  
For there they'll think you clever!  
Or, nae reflection on your lear,  
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 did the Laigh Kirk watch,  
Just like a winkin' baudrons:  
H-h



And 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-tail'd cat she plays !  
I vow its 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 and fell,  
As ane were peelin' onions !  
Now there—they're packèd aff to hell,  
And banish'd our dominions  
Henceforth this day.

O happy day ! rejoice, rejoice !  
Come bouse about the porter !  
Morality's demure decoys  
Shall here nae mair find quarter :  
Mackinlay, Russell, are the boys  
That Heresy can torture,  
They'll gie her on a rape a hoyse,  
And cove her measure shorter  
By the head some day.

Come, bring the tither mutchkin in,  
 And here's, for a conclusion,  
 To every New-Light mother's son,  
 From this time forth, Confusion :  
 If mair they deave us wi' their din,  
 Or patronage intrusion,  
 We'll light a spunk, and, every skin,  
 We'll rin them aff in fusion,  
 Like oil some day.

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SKETCH.

INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HON. C. J. FOX.

**H**OW 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 the 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 miss'd 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 call'd 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-honour'd 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.

THE CALF.

TO THE REV. MR. JAMES STEVEN.

**R**IGHT, sir ! your text I'll prove it true,  
Though heretics may laugh ;  
For instance ; there's yoursel just now,  
God knows, an unco calf !

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 great a stirk.

But if the lover's raptured hour  
Shall ever be your lot,  
Forbid it, every heavenly power,  
You e'er should be a stot !

Though, when some kind connubial dear  
Your but-and-ben adorns,  
The like has been that you may wear  
A noble head of horns.

And in your lug, most reverend James,  
To hear you roar and rowte,  
Few men o' sense will doubt your claims  
To rank amang the nowte.

And when ye're number'd wi' the dead,  
Below a grassy hillock,  
Wi' justice they may mark your head—  
“Here lies a famous bullock !”

---

TO CLARINDA.

ON THE POET'S LEAVING EDINBURGH.

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.

**F**AIR 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 ! ”

“ 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.

**B**EFORE I saw Clarinda's face,  
My heart was blithe and gay,  
Free as the wind, or feather'd 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.

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

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.

---

TO CLARINDA.

“ **I** BURN, I burn, as when through ripen'd corn,  
By driving winds, the crackling flames are borne !”  
Now maddening, wild, I curse that fatal night ;  
Now bless the hour which charm'd my guilty sight.  
In vain the laws their feeble force oppose ;  
Chain'd at his feet they groan, Love's vanquish'd foes :  
In vain Religion meets my shrinking eye ;  
I dare not combat—but I turn and fly :  
Conscience in vain upbraids the unhallow'd fire ;  
Love grasps its scorpions—stifled 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 !

---

*ADDRESS TO THE DEIL.*

**O** THOU ! whatever title suit thee,  
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie,  
Wha in yon cavern grim and sootie,  
Closed under hatches,  
Spairges about the brunstane cootie,  
To scaud poor wretches !

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

Great is thy power, and great thy fame ;  
Far kenn'd and noted is thy name :  
And though yon lowin' heugh's thy hame,  
Thou travels far :  
And, faith ! thou's neither lag nor lame,  
Nor blate nor scaur.

Whyles ranging like a roaring lion  
For prey a' holes and corners tryin' :  
Whyles on the strong-wing'd tempest flyin',  
                    Tirlin' the kirks ;  
Whyles in the human bosom pryin',  
                    Unseen thou lurks.

I've heard my reverend grannie say,  
In lanely glens ye like to stray :  
Or where auld ruin'd castles, grey,  
                    Nod to the moon,  
Ye fright the nightly wanderer's way  
                    Wi' eldritch croon.

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

Ae dreary, windy, winter night,  
The stars shot down wi' sklentint' light,  
Wi' you, mysel, I gat a fright  
                    Ayont the lough ;  
Ye, like a rash-bush, stood in sight,  
                    Wi' waving sough.

The cudgel in my nieve did shake,  
Each bristled hair stood like a stake,  
When wi' an eldritch stoor, quaick, quaick,  
                    Amang the springs,  
Awa' ye squatter'd, like a drake,  
                    On whistlin' wings.

When thowes dissolve the snawy hoord,  
And float the jinglin' icy-boord,  
Then water-kelpies haunt the foord,  
By your direction ;  
And 'nighted travellers are allured  
To their destruction.

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

Let warlocks grim, and wither'd hags,  
Tell how wi' you, on ragweed nags,  
They skim the muirs and dizzy crags,  
Wi' wicked speed ;  
And in kirkyards renew their leagues  
Owre howkit dead.

Thence countra wives, wi' toil and pain,  
May plunge and plunge the kirk in vain :  
For, oh ! the yellow treasure's taen  
By witching skill ;  
And dawtit twal-pint hawkie's gaen  
As yell's the bill.

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



When mason's mystic word and grip  
In storms and 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 bonny yard,  
When youthfu' lovers first were pair'd,  
And all the soul of love they shared,  
The raptured hour,  
Sweet on the fragrant flowery sward,  
In shady bower.

Then you, ye auld sneck-drawing dog !  
Ye came to Paradise incog.,  
And play'd on man a curs'd brogue,  
(Black be your fa' !)  
And gied the infant warld a shog,  
'Maist ruin'd a'.

D'ye mind that day, when in a bizz,  
Wi' reekit duds, and reestit gizz,  
Ye did present your smoutie phiz  
'Mang better folk,  
And sklented on the man of Uzz  
Your spitefu' joke ?

And how ye gat him i' your thrall,  
And brak him out o' house and hall,  
While scabs and blotches did him gall,  
Wi' bitter claw,  
And lows'd his ill-tongued, wicked scrawl,  
Was warst ava ?

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

And 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',  
And cheat you yet.

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

---

LINES

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

**K**IND sir, I've read your paper through,  
And, faith, to me 'twas really new !  
How guess'd ye, sir, what maist I wanted ?  
This mony a day I've gran'd and gaunted

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 collieshangie works  
Atween the Russians and the Turks ;  
Or if the Swede, before he halt,  
Would play anither Charles the Twalt :  
If Denmark, anybody spak o't ;  
Or Poland, wha had now the tack o't ;  
How cut-throat Prussian blades were 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 Sleekit Chatham Will was livin',  
Or glaikit Charlie got his nieve in ;  
How Daddie Burke the plea was cookin',  
If Warren Hastings' neck was yeukin' ;  
How cesses, stents, and fees were rax'd,  
Or if bare a—s yet were tax'd ;  
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 douser,  
And no a perfect kintra cooser.  
A' this and mair I never heard of,  
And but for you I might despair'd of.  
So gratefu', back your news I send you,  
And pray, a' guid things may attend you !

TO A KISS.

**H**UMID 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 !

---

THE DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF POOR  
MAILIE,

THE AUTHOR'S ONLY PET YOWE.

**A**S Mailie and her lambs thegither  
Was ae day nibbling on the tether,  
Upon her cloot she coost a hitch,  
And owre she warsled in the ditch :  
There, groaning, dying, she did lie,  
When Hughoc he cam doytin' by.  
Wi' glowring een, and lifted han's,  
Poor Hughoc like a statue stan's ;  
He saw her days were near-hand ended,  
But, waes my heart ! he couldna 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,  
And 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,  
And let them wander at their will ;  
So may his flock increase, and grow  
To scores o' lambs, and packs o' woo' !

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

“ Oh, bid him save their harmless lives  
Frae dogs, and tods, and butchers' knives !  
But gie them guid cow-milk their fill,  
Till they be fit to fend themsel :  
And tent them duly, e'en and morn,  
Wi' teats o' hay, and ripps o' corn.

“ And may they never learn the gaets  
Of ither vile, wanrestfu' pets !  
To slink through slaps, and reave and steal  
At stacks o' peas or stocks o' kail,  
So may they, like their great forbears,  
For mony a year come through the shears :  
So wives will gie them bits o' bread,  
And bairns greet for them when they're dead.

“ My poor toop-lamb, my son and heir,  
Oh, bid him breed him up wi' care !



And if he live to be a beast,  
To pit some havins in his breast !  
And warn him, what I winna name,  
To stay content wi' yowes at hame :  
And no to rin and wear his clouts,  
Like ither menseless, graceless brutes.

“ And neist my yowie, silly thing,  
Guid keep thee frae a tether string !  
Oh, may thou ne'er forgather up  
Wi' ony blastit, moorland toop,  
But aye keep mind to moop and mell  
Wi' sheep o' credit like thysel !

“ And now, my bairns, wi' my last breath  
I lea'e my blessin' wi' you baith :  
And 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 ;  
And bid him burn this cursèd tether,  
And, for thy pains, thou's get my blether.”  
This said, poor Mailie turn'd her head,  
And closed her een amang the dead.

THE 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, wear  
The mourning weed :  
He's lost a friend and neibor dear  
In Mailie dead.

Through a' the toun she trotted by him ;  
A lang half-mile she could descry him ;  
Wi' kindly bleat, when she did spy him,  
She ran wi' speed :  
A friend mair faithfu' ne'er cam nigh him  
Than Mailie dead.

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

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

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

Wae worth the man wha first did shape  
That vile, wanchancie thing—a rape !  
It makes guid fellows girn and gape,  
                    Wi' chokin' dread ;  
And Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape,  
                    For Mailie dead.

Oh, a' ye bards on bonny Doon !  
And 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.

---

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH.

**D**EAR SMITH, the sleest, paukie thief,  
That e'er attempted stealth or rief,  
Ye surely hae some warlock breef  
                    Owre human hearts ;  
For ne'er a bosom yet was prief  
                    Against your arts.

For me, I swear by sun and moon,  
And every star that blinks aboon,  
Ye've cost me twenty pair o' 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 turn'd 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 :  
Hae ye a leisure moment's time  
To hear what's comin' !

Some rhyme a neibor's name to lash ;  
Some rhyme (vain thought ! ) for needfu' cash ;  
Some rhyme to court the country clash,  
And raise a din ;  
For me, an ain I never fash ;  
I rhyme for fun.

The star that rules my luckless lot  
Has fated me the russet coat,  
And damn'd my fortune to the groat ;  
But in requit,  
Has blest me wi' a random shot  
O' country 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,  
Ye'll shaw your folly.

“ There’s ither poets much your betters,  
Far seen in Greek, deep men o’ letters,  
Hae thought they had insured their debtors  
                    A’ future ages ;  
Now moths deform in shapeless tatters  
                    Their unknown pages.”

Then fareweel hopes o’ laurel-boughs,  
To garland my poetic brows !  
Henceforth I’ll rove where busy ploughs  
                    Are whistling thrang,  
And teach the lanely heights and howes  
                    My rustic sang.

I’ll wander on, with tentless heed  
How never-halting moments speed,  
Till Fate shall snap the brittle thread ;  
                    Then, all unknown,  
I’ll lay me with the 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,  
Make hours like minutes, hand in hand,  
                    Dance by fu’ light.



The magic wand then let us wield ;  
For, once that five-and-forty's speel'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' ;  
And fareweel cheerfu' tankards foamin',  
                    And social noise ;  
And fareweel, dear deluding woman !  
                    The joy of joys !

O Life ! how pleasant is thy morning,  
Young Fancy's rays the hills adorning !  
Cold-pausing Caution's lesson scorning,  
                    We frisk away,  
Like schoolboys, at the expected warning,  
                    To joy and play.

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 toil'd or 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 and straining—  
But truce with peevish, poor complaining !  
Is Fortune's fickle Luna waning ?  
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,  
Aye rowth o' rhymes.

" Gie dreeping roasts to country lairds,  
Till icicles hing frae their beards ;  
Gie fine braw claes to fine life-guards,  
And maids of honour ;  
And yill and whisky gie to cairds,  
Until they sconner.

"A title, Dempster merits it ;  
A garter gie to Willie Pitt ;  
Gie wealth to some be-ledger'd cit,  
                                    In cent. per cent. ;  
But gie 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,  
                                    Wi' cheerfu' 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 jonk beneath Misfortune's blows  
                                    As weel's I may ;  
Sworn foe to Sorrow, Care, and Prose,  
                                    I rhyme away.

O ye douce folk, that live by rule,  
Grave, tideless-blooded, calm and cool,  
Compared wi' you—O fool ! fool ! fool !  
                                    How much unlike !  
Your hearts are just a standing pool,  
                                    Your lives a dike !

Nae harebrain'd, sentimental traces,  
In your unletter'd, 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 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 ony where—  
Then, Jamie, I shall say nae mair,  
But quat my sang,  
Content wi' you to mak a pair,  
Whare'er I gang.

---

*A DREAM.*

**G**UID-MORNIN' to your Majesty !  
May Heaven augment your blisses,  
On every new birthday 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,  
Amang thae birthday dresses  
Sae fine this day.

I see ye're complimented thrang,  
By many a lord and lady ;  
"God save the king" 's a cuckoo sang  
That's unco easy said aye ;

The poets, too, a venal gang,  
Wi' rhymes weel-turn'd and ready,  
Wad gar ye trow ye ne'er do wrang,  
But aye unerring steady,  
On sic a day.

For me, before a monarch's face,  
Even 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 aiblins ane been better  
Than you this day.

'Tis very true, my sovereign king,  
My skill may weel be doubted :  
But facts are chiels that winna ding,  
And downa be disputed :  
Your royal nest, beneath your wing,  
Is e'en right reft and clouted,  
And now the third part of the string,  
And 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'd their station  
Than courts yon day.



And now ye've gien auld Britain peace,  
Her broken shins to plaister ;  
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 boost to pasture  
I' the craft some day.

I'm no mistrusting Willie Pitt,  
When taxes he enlarges  
(And Will's a true guid fallow's get,  
A name not envy spairges),  
That he intends to pay your debt,  
And lessen a' your charges ;  
But, God's-sake ! let nae saving fit  
Abridge your bonny barges  
And boats this day.

Adieu, my liege ! may Freedom geck  
Beneath your high protection ;  
And may you rax Corruption's neck,  
And gie 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 and subjection  
This great birthday.

Hail, Majesty Most Excellent !  
While nobles strive to please ye,  
Will ye accept a compliment  
A simple poet gies ye ?

Thae bonnie bairn-time, Heaven has lent,  
Still higher may they heeze 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,  
And curse your folly sairly,  
That e'er ye brak Diana's pales,  
Or rattled dice wi' Charlie.  
By night or day.

Yet aft a ragged cowte's been known  
To mak a noble aiver ;  
So, ye may doucely fill a throne,  
For a' their clishmaclaver ;  
There, him at Agincourt wha shone,  
Few better were or braver :  
And yet, wi' funny, queer Sir John,  
He was an unco shaver  
For mony a day.

For you, right reverend Osnaburg,  
Nane sets the lawn-sleeve sweeter,  
Although a ribbon at your lug  
Wad been a dress completer :  
As ye disown yon paughty dog  
That bears the keys o' Peter,  
Then, swith ! and get a wife to hug,  
Or, trouth ! ye'll stain the mitre  
Some luckless day.

Young, royal Tarry Brecks, I learn,  
Ye've lately come athwart her ;  
A glorious galley, stem and stern,  
Weel rigg'd for Venus' barter ;  
But first hang out, that she'll discern,  
Your hymeneal charter,  
Then heave aboard your grapple-airn,  
And large upon her quarter  
Come full that day.

Ye, lastly, bonny blossoms a',  
Ye royal lasses dainty,  
Heaven mak ye guid as weel as braw,  
And gie you lads a-plenty :  
But sneer na British boys awa',  
For kings are unco scant aye ;  
And German gentles are but sma',  
They're better just than want aye  
On ony day.

God bless you a' ! consider now  
Ye're unco muckle daudit ;  
But ere the course of life be through,  
It may be bitter saudit :  
And I hae seen their coggie fu',  
That yet hae tarrow't at it ;  
But or the day was done, I trow,  
The laggen they hae clautit  
Fu' clean that day.

---

## TO A PAINTER.

**D**EAR —, I'll gie 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.

## HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER.

**O** THOU, wha in the heavens dost dwell,  
 Wha, as it pleases best thyself,  
 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,  
 When thousands thou hast left in night,  
 That I am here afore thy sight,  
                                 For gifts and grace,  
 A burnin' and a shinin' light  
                                 To a' this place.

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,  
Thou might hae plunged me into hell,  
To gnash my gums, to weep and wail,  
In burning lake,  
Where damnèd devils roar and yell,  
Chain'd 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 Lord, 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 Lord ! confess I must,  
At times I'm fash'd wi' fleshly lust ;  
And sometimes, too, wi' warldly trust  
Vile self gets in ;  
But thou remembers we are dust,  
Defiled in sin.

O Lord ! yestreen, thou kens, wi' Meg—  
Thy pardon I sincerely beg,



Oh, 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, Lord, that Friday I was fou'  
                                When I cam near her,  
Or else, thou kens, thy servant true  
                                Wad ne'er hae steer'd her.

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.

Lord, bless thy chosen in this place,  
For here thou hast a chosen race :  
But God confound their stubborn face,  
                                And blast their name,  
Wha bring thy elders to disgrace  
                                And public shame.

Lord, mind Gaw'n Hamilton's deserts,  
He drinks and swears, and plays at cartes,  
Yet has sae mony taking arts,  
                                Wi' grit and sma'.  
Frae God's ain priests the people's hearts  
                                He steals awa'.

And when we chastened him therefore,  
Thou kens how he bred sic a splore,

As set the world in a roar  
O' laughin' at us—  
Curse thou his basket and his store,  
Kail and potatoes.

Lord, hear my earnest cry and prayer  
Against the presbyt'ry of Ayr;  
Thy strong right hand, Lord, mak it bare  
Upo' their heads,  
Lord, weigh it down, and dinna spare,  
For their misdeeds.

O Lord, my God, that glib-tongued Aiken,  
My very heart and saul are quakin',  
To think how we stood groanin', shakin',  
And swat wi' dread,  
While he, wi' hingin' lip and snakin',  
Held up his head.

Lord, in the day of vengeance try him,  
Lord, 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.

But, Lord, remember me and mine,  
Wi' mercies temp'ral and divine,  
That I for gear and grace may shine,  
Excell'd by nane,  
And a' the glory shall be thine,  
Amen, Amen !

## EPITAPH ON HOLY WILLIE.

**H**ERE Holy Willie's sair worn clay  
Taks 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 hae nane !  
Justice, alas ! has gien him o'er,  
And mercy's day is gane.

But hear me, sir, deil as ye are,  
Look something to your credit ;  
A coof like him wad stain your name,  
If it were kent ye did it.



## ON A WAG IN MAUCLINE.

LAMENT him, Mauchline husbands a',  
 He often did assist ye ;  
 For had ye staid whole years awa',  
 Your wives they ne'er had missed ye.  
 Ye Mauchline bairns, as on ye pass  
 To school in bands thegither,  
 Oh, tread ye lightly on his grass—  
 Perhaps he was your father.

## THE VISION.

## DUAN FIRST.

THE sun had closed the winter day,  
 The curlers quat their roaring play,  
 And hunger'd maukin ta'en her way  
                     To kail-yards green,  
 While faithless snaws ilk step betray  
                     Whare she has been.

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

There, lanely, by the ingle-cheek,  
 I sat and eyed the spewing reek,

That fill'd, wi' hoast-provoking smee,  
The auld clay biggin' ;  
And 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,  
And done naething,  
But stringin' blethers 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, and clerkit  
My cash-account :  
While here, half-mad, half-fed, half-sarkit,  
Is a' th' amount.

I started, muttering, Blockhead ! coof !  
And heaved on high my wauket loof,  
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 sneck did draw,  
And, jee ! the door gaed to the wa' ;  
And by my ingle-lowe I saw,  
Now bleezin' bright,  
A tight, outlandish hizzie, braw,  
Come full in sight.

Ye needna doubt, I held my whisht ;  
The infant aith, half-form'd, was crusht ;



I glower'd as eerie's I'd been dusht  
                                    In some wild glen ;  
When sweet, like modest worth, she blusht,  
                                    And steppèd ben.

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

A "hare-brain'd, sentimental trace"  
Was strongly markèd in her face ;  
A wildly-witty, rustic grace  
                                    Shone full upon her ;  
Her eye, e'en turn'd on empty space,  
                                    Beam'd keen with Honour.

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

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

Here, rivers in the sea were lost ;  
There, mountains to the skies were tost :

Here, tumbling billows mark'd the coast,  
    With surging foam ;  
There, distant shone Art's lofty boast,  
    The lordly dome.

Here, Doon pour'd down his far-fetch'd floods ;  
There, well-fed Irwine stately thuds :  
Auld hermit Ayr staw through his woods,  
    On to the shore ;  
And many a lesser torrent scuds,  
    With seeming roar.

Low, in a sandy valley spread,  
An ancient Borough rear'd her head :  
Still, as in Scottish story read,  
    She boasts a race  
To every nobler virtue bred,  
    And polish'd grace.

By stately tow'r or palace fair,  
Or ruins pendent in the air,  
Bold stems of heroes, here and there,  
    I could discern ;  
Some seem'd to muse, some seem'd to dare,  
    With features stern.

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

His COUNTRY'S SAVIOUR, mark him well !  
Bold Richardton's heroic swell ;

The Chief on Sark who glorious fell,  
                                    In high command ;  
And he whom ruthless fates expel  
                                    His native land.

There, where a sceptred Pictish shade  
Stalk'd round his ashes lowly laid,  
I mark'd a martial race, portray'd  
                                    In colours strong ;  
Bold, soldier-featur'd, undismay'd  
                                    They strode along.

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

With deep-struck, reverential awe  
The learned sire and son I saw,  
By 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 ward I well could spy,  
Beneath old Scotia's smiling eye :  
Who call'd on Fame, low standing by,  
                                    To hand him on,  
Where many a patriot name on high  
                                    And hero shone.

## DUAN SECOND.

WITH musing-deep, astonish'd stare,  
I view'd 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 thee 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 tunefu' art.

“ '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 assign'd  
The humbler ranks of humankind,  
The rustic bard, the labouring 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 labourer'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.

“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 mark’d thy embryo-tuneful flame,  
Thy natal hour.

“With future hope, I oft would gaze,  
Fond, on thy little early ways,  
Thy rudely-caroll’d, 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 cherish’d every flow’ret’s birth,  
And joy and music pouring forth  
In every grove,  
I saw thee eye the general mirth  
With boundless love.

“ When ripen’d fields, and azure skies,  
Call’d 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 soothe 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 the unrivall'd 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 nor 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 polish'd leaves, and berries red,  
Did rustling play ;  
And, like a passing thought, she fled  
In light away.



## LINES

WRITTEN IN FRIARS' CARSE HERMITAGE, ON THE  
BANKS OF THE NITH.

*(First Version.)*

**T**HOU 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.  
Day, how rapid in its flight—  
Day, how few must see the night ;  
Hope not sunshine every hour,  
Fear not clouds will always lower.  
Happiness is but a name,  
Make content and ease thy aim ;  
Ambition is a meteor gleam ;  
Fame an idle, restless dream :  
Pleasures, insects on the wing  
Round Peace, the tenderest flower of Spring !  
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 whatever 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.  
 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 !  
 Quoth the beadsman of Nithside.

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LINES

WRITTEN IN FRIARS' CARSE HERMITAGE, ON NITHSIDE.

*(Second Version.)*

**T**HOU 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 meridian 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-pinion'd, bold,  
Soar around each cliffy hold,  
While cheerful Peace, with linnet song,  
Chants the lowly dells among.

As the shades of evening close,  
Beckoning thee to long repose;  
As life itself becomes disease,  
Seek the chimney-neuk of ease,  
There ruminate with sober thought  
On all thou'st seen, and heard, and wrought;  
And teach the sportive youngsters 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?  
Wast thou cottager or king?  
Peer or peasant?—no such thing!  
Did many talents gild thy span?  
Or frugal Nature grudge thee one?  
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 resign'd 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 !  
Quoth the beadsman of Nithside.

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ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID, OR THE  
RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS.

**O** YE wha are sae guid yoursel,  
Sae pious and sae holy,  
You've nought to do but mark and tell  
Your neibour's fauts and folly !  
Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill,  
Supplied wi' store o' water,  
The heapet happer's ebbing still,  
And still the clap plays clatter.

Hear me, ye venerable core,  
As counsel for poor mortals,  
That frequent pass douce Wisdom's door  
For glaikit Folly's portals ;

I, for their thoughtless, careless sakes,  
Would here propone defences,  
Their donsie tricks, their black mistakes,  
Their failings and mischances.

Ye see your state wi' theirs compared,  
And shudder at the niffer,  
But cast a moment's fair regard,  
What maks 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 teeth o' baith to sail,  
It makes an unco lee-way.

See social life and glee sit down,  
All joyous and unthinking,  
Till, quite transmugrified, they're grown  
Debauchery and drinking:  
Oh would they stay to calculate  
The 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 ;  
 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.

---

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY.

**H**AS auld Kilmarnock seen the deil ?  
 Or great Mackinlay thrawn his heel ?  
 Or Robinson 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 sab, and greet her lane,  
And cleed her bairns, man, wife, and wean,  
                    In mournin' weed ;  
To Death, she's dearly paid the kane—  
                    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 gien the lodge an unco devel—  
                    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' gleesome 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 saumon sail,  
And trout be-dropp'd wi' crimson hail,  
And eels weel kenn'd for souple tail,  
                    And geds for greed,  
Since dark in Death's fish-creel we wail  
                    Tam Samson dead !



Rejoice, ye birring paitricks a' ;  
 Ye cootie moorcocks, crouselly craw ;  
 Ye maukins, cock your fud fu' braw,  
     Withouten dread ;  
 Your mortal fae is now awa'—  
     Tam Samson's dead !

That waefu' morn be ever mourn'd  
 Saw him in shooting graith adorn'd,  
 While pointers round impatient burn'd,  
     Frae couples freed ;  
 But, och ! he gaed and ne'er return'd !  
     Tam Samson's dead !

In vain auld age his body batters ;  
 In vain the gout his ankles fetters ;  
 In vain the burns cam' down like waters,  
     An acre braid !  
 Now every auld wife, greetin', clatters,  
     Tam Samson's dead !

Owre mony a weary hag he limpit,  
 And aye the tither shot he thumpit,  
 Till coward Death behind him jumpit,  
     Wi' deadly feide ;  
 Now he proclaims, wi' tout o' trumpet,  
     Tam Samson's dead !

When at his heart he felt the dagger,  
 He reel'd his wonted bottle-swagger,  
 But yet he drew the mortal trigger  
     Wi' weel-aim'd heed ;  
 " Lord, five ! " he cried, and owre did stagger—  
     Tam Samson's dead !



## PER CONTRA.

Go, Fame, and canter like a filly,  
 Through a' the streets and neuks o' Killie,  
 Tell every social, honest billie  
     To cease his grievin',  
 For yet, unskaited by Death's gleg gullie,  
     Tam Samson's leevin' !

## HALLOWEEN.

**U**PON that night, when fairies light  
     On Cassilis Downans dance,  
 Or owre the lays, in splendid blaze,  
     On sprightly coursers prance ;  
 Or for Colean the route is ta'en,  
     Beneath the moon's pale beams ;  
 There, up the cove, to stray and rove,  
     Among the rocks and streams  
         To sport that night.

Among the bonny winding banks  
     Where Doon rins, wimplin', clear,  
 Where Bruce ance ruled the martial ranks,  
     And shook his Carrick spear,  
 Some merry, friendly, country-folks  
     Together did convene,  
 To burn their nits, and pou their stocks,  
     And haud their Halloween  
         Fu' blithe that night.

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

Then, first and foremost, through the kail,  
Their stocks maun a' be sought ance ;  
They steek their een, and graip and wale,  
For muckle anes and straught anes.  
Poor hav'rel Will fell aff the drift,  
And wander'd through the bow-kail,  
And pou't, for want o' better shift,  
A runt was like a sow-tail,  
Sae bow't that night.

Then, straught or crooked, yird or nane,  
They roar and cry a' throu'ther ;  
The very wee things, toddlin', rin,  
Wi' stocks out-owre their shouther ;  
And gif the custoc's sweet or sour,  
Wi' joctelegs they taste them ;  
Syne cosily, aboon the door,  
Wi' cannie care, they've placed them  
To lie that night.

The lasses staw frae 'mang them a'  
To pou their stalks o' corn :  
But Rab slips out, and jinks about,  
Behint the muckle thorn :

He grippet Nelly hard and fast ;  
Loud skirl'd a' the lasses ;  
But her tap-pickle maist was lost,  
When kitlin' in the fause-house  
Wi' him that night.

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

Jean slips in twa wi' tentie e'e ;  
Wha 'twas she wadna tell ;  
But this is Jock, and 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,  
And Jean had e'en a sair heart  
To see't that night.

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



Nell had the fause-house in her min',  
She pits hersel and Rob in ;  
In loving bleeze they sweetly join,  
Till white in ase they're sobbin' ;  
Nell's heart was dancin' at the view,  
She whisper'd Rob to leuk for't :  
Rob, stowlins, prie'd her bonny mou',  
Fu' cosie in the neuk for't,  
Unseen that night.

But Merran sat behint their backs,  
Her thoughts on Andrew Bell ;  
She lea'es them gashin' at their cracks,  
And slips out by hersel :  
She through the yard the nearest taks,  
And to the kiln she goes then,  
And darklins graipit for the bauks,  
And in the blue-clue throws then,  
Right fear't that night.

And aye she win't, and aye she swat,  
I wat she made nae jaukin',  
Till something held within the pat,  
Guid Lord ! but she was quakin' !  
But whether 'twas the deil himsel,  
Or whether 'twas a bauk-en',  
Or whether it was Andrew Bell,  
She didna wait on talkin'  
To speir that night.

Wee Jenny to her grannie says,  
" Will you go wi' me, grannie ?  
I'll eat the apple at the glass  
I gat frae Uncle Johnnie : "

She fuff't her pipe wi' sic a lunt,  
In wrath she was sae vap'rin',  
She notic't na, an aizle brunt  
Her braw new worset apron  
Out through that night.

"Ye little skelpie-linmer's face !  
I daur you try sic sportin',  
As seek the foul thief ony place,  
For him to spae your fortune ;  
Nae doubt but ye may get a sight !  
Great cause ye hae to fear it ;  
For mony a ane has gotten a fright,  
And lived and died deleeret  
On sic a night.

"Ae hairst afore the Sherramoor—  
I mind't as weel's yestreen,  
I was a gilpey then, I'm sure  
I wasna past fifteen ;  
The simmer had been cauld and wat,  
And stuff was unco green ;  
And aye a rantin' kirk we gat,  
And just on Halloween  
It fell that night.

"Our stibble-rig was Rab M'Graen,  
A clever, sturdy fallow :  
His son gat Eppie Sim wi' wean,  
That lived in Achmacalla :  
He gat hemp-seed, I mind it weel,  
And he made unco light o't ;  
But mony a day was by himsel,  
He was sae sairly frightened  
That very night."

Then up gat fechtin' Jamie Fleck,  
And he swore by his conscience,  
That he could saw hemp-seed a peck ;  
For it was a' but nonsense.  
The auld guidman raught down the pock,  
And out a handfu' gied him ;  
Syne bade him slip frae 'mang the folk,  
Some time when nae ane see'd him,  
And try't that night.

He marches through amang the stacks,  
Though he was something sturtin ;  
The graip he for a harrow tak,  
And hauls it at his curpin ;  
And every now and then he says,  
" Hemp-seed, I saw thee,  
And her that is to be my lass,  
Come after me, and draw thee  
As fast this night."

He whistled up Lord Lennox' march  
To keep his courage cheery ;  
Although his hair began to arch,  
He was say fley'd and eerie :  
Till presently he hears a squeak,  
And then a grane and gruntle ;  
He by his shouther gae a keek,  
And tumbled wi' a wintle  
Out-owre that night.

He roar'd a horrid murder-shout,  
In dreadfu' desperation !  
And young and auld cam rinnin' out  
To hear the sad narration :

He swore 'twas hilchin Jean M'Craw,  
Or crouchie Merran Humphie,  
Till, stop! she trotted through them a'—  
And wha was it but grumphia  
Asteer that night!

Meg fain wad to the barn hae gaen,  
To win three wechts o' naething!  
But for to meet the deil her lane,  
She pat but little faith in:  
She gies the herd a pickle nits,  
And twa red-cheekit apples,  
To watch, while for the barn she sets,  
In hopes to see Tam Kipples  
That very nicht.

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

They hoy't out Will, wi' sair advice;  
They hecht him some fine brow ane;  
It chanced the stack he faddom't thrice,  
Was timmer-propt for thrawin';  
He taks a swirlie, auld moss-oak,  
For some black, grousome carlin;  
And loot a winze, and drew a stroke,  
Till skin in blypes cam haurlin'  
Aff's nieves that night.

A wanton widow Leezie was,  
As canty as a kittlin ;  
But, och ! that night, amang the shaws,  
She got a fearfu' settlin' !  
She through the whins, and by the cairn,  
And owre the hill gaed serievin,  
Whare three lairds' lands met at a burn,  
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 scaur it strays ;  
Whyles in a wiel it dimpl't ;  
Whyles glitter'd to the nightly rays,  
Wi' bickering, dancing dazzle ;  
Whyles cookit underneath the braes,  
Below the spreading hazel,  
Unseen that night.

Amang the brackens, on the brae,  
Between her and the moon,  
The deil, or else an outler quey,  
Gat up an gae a croon :  
Poor Leezie's heart maist lap the hool !  
Near lav'rock-height she jumpit ;  
But mist a fit, and in the pool  
Out-owre the lugs she plumpit,  
Wi' a plunge that night.

In order, on the clean hearth-stane,  
The luggies three 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 year did desire,  
Because he gat the toom dish thrice,  
He heaved them on the fire  
In wrath that night.

Wi' merry sangs, and friendly cracks,  
I wat they didna weary ;  
And unco tales, and funny jokes,  
Their sports were cheap and cheery ;  
Till butter'd so'ns, wi' fragrant lunt,  
Set a' their gabs a-steerin' ;  
Syne, wi' a social glass o' strunt,  
They parted aff careerin'  
Fu' blythe that night.

---

## CASTLE-GORDON.

**S**TREAMS that glide in orient plains,  
Never bound by Winter's chains !  
Glowing here on golden sands,  
There commix'd 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.

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.

INSCRIPTION ON THE TOMBSTONE ERECTED  
BY BURNS TO THE MEMORY  
OF FERGUSSON.

“ Here lies Robert Fergusson, Poet, born 5th Sept. 1751.  
Died 16th October 1774.”

**N**O sculp'ur'd 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.



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 rip to thy auld baggie :  
Though thou's howe-backit now and knaggie,  
I've seen the day  
Thou could hae gaen like ony staggie  
Out-owre the lay.

Though now thou's dowie, stiff, and crazy,  
And thy auld hide's as white's a daisy,  
I've seen thee dappl't, sleek, and glazie,  
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, and swank,  
And set weel down a shapely shank,  
As e'er tread yird ;  
And could hae flown out-owre a stank,  
Like ony bird.

It's now some nine-and twenty year,  
Sin' thou was my guid father's meer :  
He gied me thee, o' tocher clear,  
And fifty mark ;  
Though it was sma', twas weel-won gear,  
And thou was stark.

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

That day ye pranced wi' muckle pride  
When ye bure hame my bonnie bride :  
And sweet and gracefu' she did ride,  
Wi' maiden air !  
Kyle-Stewart I could hae bragg'd wide  
For sic a pair.

Though now ye dow but hoyte and hobble,  
And wintle like a saumont-coble,  
That day ye was a jinker noble,  
For heels and win' !  
And ran them till they a' did wauble,  
Far, far, behin' !

When thou and I were young and skeigh,  
And stable-meals at fairs were dreigh,  
How thou would prance, and snore, and skreigh,  
And tak the road !  
Town's bodies ran, and stood abeigh,  
And ca't thee mad.

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

The sma' droop-rumpl't, hunter cattle,  
Might aiblins waur't thee for a brattle ;  
But sax Scotch miles thou try't their mettle,  
And gar't them whaizle :  
Nae whup nor spur, but just a wattle  
O' saugh or hazel.

Thou was a noble fittie-lan',  
As e'er in tug or tow was drawn !  
Aft thee and I, in aught hours' gann,  
In guid March weather,  
Hae turn'd sax rood beside our han',  
For days thegither.

Thou never braindg't, and fech't, and fliskit,  
But thy auld tail thou wad hae whiskit,  
And spread abreed thy well-fill'd brisket,  
Wi' pith and power,  
'Till spritty knowes wad rair't and risket,  
And slypet owre.

When frosts lay lang, and snaws were deep,  
And threaten'd labour back to keep,  
I gied thy cog a wee bit heap  
Aboon the timmer ;  
I kenn'd my Maggie wadna sleep  
For that, or simmer.

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



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

Mony a sair darg we twa hae wrought,  
And wi' the weary warl' fought !  
And mony 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',  
That now perhaps thou's less deservin',  
And thy auld days may end in starvin',  
                    For my last fou,  
A heapit stimpart, I'll reserve ane  
                    Laid by for you.

We've worn to crazy years thegither ;  
We'll toyte about wi' ane anither ;  
Wi' tentie care I'll flit thy tether  
                    To some hain'd rig,  
Whare ye may nobly rax your leather,  
                    Wi' sma' fatigue.



TO A MOUSE,  
ON TURNING UP HER NEST WITH THE PLOUGH,  
NOVEMBER, 1785.

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

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

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

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

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,  
And weary winter comin' fast,

And cosie 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 !  
Now thou's turn'd out for a' thy trouble,  
                    But house or hauld,  
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,  
                    And cranreuch cauld !

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,  
In proving foresight may be vain :  
The best laid schemes o' mice and men  
                    Gang aft a-gley,  
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 !

---

*A WINTER NIGHT.*

**W**HEN biting Boreas, fell and doure,  
Sharp shivers through the leafless bower ;  
When Phœbus gies a short-lived glower  
                    Far south the lift,  
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,  
Down headlong hurl.

List'ning the doors and winnocks rattle,  
I thought me on the ourie cattle,  
Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle  
O' winter war,  
And through the drift, deep-lairing sprattle,  
Beneath a scaur.

Ilk happing 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 chattering wing,  
And close thy e'e ?

Even you, on murdering errands toil'd,  
Lone from your savage homes exiled,  
The blood-stain'd roost, and sheep-cot spoil'd,  
My heart forgets,  
While pitiless the tempest wild  
Sore on you beats.

Now Phœbe, in her midnight reign,  
Dark muffled, view'd the dreary plain ;  
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-illumin'd man on brother man bestows !

“ See stern Oppression's iron grip,  
Or mad Ambition's gory hand,  
Sending, like blood-hounds from the slip,  
Woe, Want, and Murder o'er a land !  
Even in the peaceful rural vale,  
Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale,  
How pamper'd Luxury, Flattery by her side,  
The parasite poisoning 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 !

“O 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 clamorous call,  
Stretch'd 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 na mair, for chanticleer  
Shook off the pouthery snaw,  
And hail'd the morning wi' a cheer—  
A cottage-rousing crow.

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

---

VERSES TO AN OLD SWEETHEART AFTER  
HER MARRIAGE.

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

ONCE fondly loved, and still remember'd 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.

---

EPISTLE TO DAVIE,

A BROTHER POET.

WHILE winds frae aff Ben Lomond blaw,  
And bar the doors wi' driving snaw,  
And hing us owre the ingle,  
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,  
I grudge a wee the great folk's gift,  
That live sae bien and snug :

I tent less, and want less  
Their roomy fireside ;  
But hanker and canker  
To see their cursèd pride.

It's hardly in a body's pow'r  
To keep, at times, frae being sour,  
To see how things are shar'd ;  
How best o' chieels are whiles in want,  
While coofs on countless thousands rant,  
And ken na how to wair't ;  
But, Davie, lad, ne'er fash your head,  
Though we hae little gear,  
We're fit to win our daily bread,  
As lang's we're hale and fier :  
"Mair spier na, nor fear na,"  
Auld age ne'er mind a feg,  
The last o't, the warst o't,  
Is only but 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 :  
On braes, when we please, then,  
We'll sit and sowth a tune :  
Syne rhyme till't, we'll time till't,  
And sing't when we hae dune.

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,  
To make us truly blest :  
If happiness has 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 and dry.  
Wi' never-ceasing toil ;

Think ye, are we less blest than they  
Wha scarcely tent 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 gie 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.

But tent me, 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 and the frien' ;  
Ye hae your Meg, 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 !

Oh, 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 number'd 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 !

Oh, how that name inspires my style !  
The words come skelpin', rank and file,  
Amaist before I ken !  
The ready measure rins as fine  
As Phœbus and the famous Nine  
Were glowerin' owre my pen.  
My spaviet Pegasus will limp,  
Till ance he's fairly het ;  
And then he'll hilch, and stilt, and jimp,  
And rin an unco fit :  
But lest then, the beast then,  
Should rue this hasty ride,  
I'll light now, and dight now  
His sweaty, wizen'd hide.

### LAMENT,

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

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, unwarming 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 agonising thrill  
For ever bar returning peace !

No idly-feign'd poetic 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 wish'd 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 pass'd,  
Enraptured more, the more enjoy'd,  
Your dear remembrance in my breast,  
My fondly-treasured thoughts employ'd.  
That breast, how dreary now, and void,  
For her too scanty once of room !  
Even every ray of hope destroy'd,  
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 Phœbus, low,  
Shall kiss the distant, western main.

And when my nightly couch I try,  
Sore harass'd 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 :  
Even day, all-bitter, brings relief,  
From such a horror-breathing night.

O ! 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 !  
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.

DESPONDENCY :

AN ODE.

**O**PPRESS'D with grief, oppress'd with care,  
 A burden more than I can bear,  
 I set 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 !

N-n



Even when the wishèd end's denied,  
Yet while the busy means are plied,  
They bring their own reward :  
Whilst I, a hope-abandon'd 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 his humble cell,  
The cavern wild with tangling roots,  
Sits o'er his newly-gather'd 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, wand'ring, meand'ring,  
He views the solemn sky.

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 maze,  
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 !

VERSES TO MY BED.

**T**HOU 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 bordering upon *woe*.

---

WINTER :

## A DIRGE.

**T**HE 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,"  
The joyless winter day,  
Let others fear, to me more dear  
Than all the pride of May :  
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 (oh, do Thou grant  
This one request of mine !)  
Since to enjoy Thou dost deny,  
Assist me to resign.

---

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.

A DIRGE.

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

“ Young stranger, whither wand'rest thou ? ”

Began the reverend sage ;

“ Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,

Or youthful pleasures rage ?

Or, haply, prest 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,

Outspreading 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 carest ;  
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 numerous 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'erlabour'd 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 design'd yon lordling's slave—  
By nature's law design'd—  
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 last !  
 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 aged 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 ! ”

---

*ON THE ILLNESS OF A FAVOURITE CHILD.*

**N**OW 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 !

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 !

If I have wander'd 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 form'd me  
With passions wild and strong ;  
And listening 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 err'd,  
No other plea I have,  
But, Thou art good ; and goodness still  
Delighteth to forgive.

---

## STANZAS

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

WHY am I loath 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 mourn'd, 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 even me,  
Those headlong furious passions to confine,  
For all unfit I feel my powers to be,  
To rule their torrent in the allow'd line :  
Oh, aid me with Thy help, Omnipotence Divine !

A PRAYER,

LEFT BY THE AUTHOR AT A REVEREND FRIEND'S HOUSE,  
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 filial little 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 every 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 wanderer lost,  
A family in heaven !



## THE FIRST PSALM.

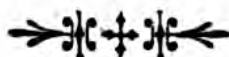
**T**HE man, in life wherever placed,  
Hath happiness in store,  
Who walks not in the wicked's ways  
Nor learns their guilty lore !

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.

But he whose blossom buds in guilt  
Shall to the ground be cast,  
And, like the rootless stubble, tost  
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.



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 distress ;  
 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 resolve,  
 To bear and not repine !

VERSES WRITTEN UNDER VIOLENT GRIEF.

A CCEPT 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 !

---

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 givest 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 array'd ;  
But long ere night cut down, it lies  
All wither'd and decay'd.

---

TO A YOUNG LADY IN CHURCH.

**F**AIR maid, you need not take the hint,  
Nor idle texts pursue ;  
'Twas *guilty sinners* that he meant,  
Not *angels* such as you !

## 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 stoure  
Thy slender stem :  
To spare thee now is past my power,  
Thou bonny gem.

Alas ! it's no thy neibor sweet,  
The bonny lark, companion meet,  
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,  
Wi' speckled breast,  
When upward springing, blithe, to greet  
The purpling east

Could blew the bitter-biting north  
Upon thy early, humble, birth ;  
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth  
Amid the storm,  
Scarce rear'd above the parent earth  
Thy tender form.

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

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,  
Thy snawie bosom sun-ward 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 floweret of the rural shade !  
By love's simplicity betray'd,  
                    And guileless trust,  
Till she, like thee, all soil'd, is laid  
                    Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,  
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd !  
Unskilful he to note the card  
                    Of prudent lore,  
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,  
                    And overwhelm 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 misery's brink,  
Till, wrench'd of every stay but Heaven,  
                    He, ruin'd, sink !

Even 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, crush'd beneath the furrow's weight,  
                    Shall be thy doom !

## ODE TO RUIN.

**A**LL 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 thick'ning and black'ning,  
Round my devoted head.

And thou grim power, by life abhorr'd,  
While life a pleasure can afford,  
Oh ! hear a wretch's prayer !  
No more I shrink appall'd, 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 throbbings cease,  
Cold mouldering in the clay ?  
No fear more, no tear more,  
To stain my lifeless face ;  
Enclaspèd, and graspèd  
Within thy cold embrace !

---

VERSES

ON THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WOODS NEAR DRUMLANRIG.

**A**S on the banks o' wandering Nith  
 Ae smiling summer morn I stray'd,  
 And traced its bonny howes and haughs,  
 Where linties sang and lambkins play'd,  
 I sat me down upon a craig,  
 And drank my fill o' fancy's dream,  
 When, from the eddy deep below,  
 Uprose the genius of the stream.

Dark, like the frowning rock, his brow,  
 And troubled like his wintry wave,  
 And deep, as sighs 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,  
 Ye might hae 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;

"When glinting through the trees appear'd  
 The wee white cot aboon the mill,  
 And peacefu' rose its ingle reek,  
 That slowly curlèd up the hill.

But now the cot is bare and cauld,  
Its branchy shelter's lost and gane,  
And scarce a stunted birk is left  
To shiver in the blast its lane."

"Alas!" said I, "what ruefu' chance  
Has twin'd ye o' your stately trees?  
Has laid your rocky bosom bare?  
Has stripp'd the cleeding o' your braes?  
Was it the bitter eastern blast,  
That scatters blight in early spring?  
Or was't the wil'-fire scorch'd 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 sigh'd—  
As through the cliffs he sank him down—  
"The worm that gnaw'd my bonny trees,  
That reptile wears a ducal crown!"

---

TO MISS LOGAN,

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

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

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 !

---

*EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND.*

**I** LANG hae 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 fu' soon, my lad,  
And, Andrew dear, believe me,  
You'll find mankind an unco' squad,  
And muckle they may grieve ye :  
For care and trouble set your thought,  
Even when your end's attain'd ;  
And a' your views may come to nought,  
Where every nerve is strain'd.

I'll no say men are villains a' ;  
The real, harden'd wicked,  
Wha hae nae check but human law,  
Are to a few restricked :



But, och ! mankind are unco weak,  
And 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 shouldna censure,  
For still the important end of life  
They equally may answer ;  
A man may hae an honest heart,  
Though poortith hourly stare him ;  
A man may tak a neibor's part,  
Yet hae nae cash to spare him.

Aye free, aff-han' your story tell,  
When wi' a bosom crony ;  
But still keep something to yoursel  
Ye scarcely tell to ony.  
Conceal yoursel as weel's ye can  
Frae critical dissection ;  
But keek through every other man,  
Wi' sharpen'd, sly inspection.

The sacred lowe o' weel-placed love,  
Luxuriantly indulge it ;  
But never tempt the illicit rove,  
Though naething should divulge it :  
I waive the quantum o' the sin,  
The hazard o' 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 haud the wretch in order ;  
But where you feel your honour grip,  
Let that aye be your border :  
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 even the rigid feature :  
Yet ne'er with wits profane to range,  
Be complaisance extended ;  
An athiest-laugh's a poor exchange  
For Deity offended !

When ranting round in Pleasure's ring,  
Religion may be blinded ;  
Or if she gie a random sting,  
It may be little minded ;  
But when on life we're tempest-driven,  
A conscience but a canker—  
A correspondence fix'd 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 reck the rede  
 Than ever did th' adviser !

---

VERSES ON A SCOTCH BARD,  
 GONE TO THE WEST INDIES.

A' YE wha live by sowps o' drink,  
 A' ye wha live by crambo-clink,  
 A' ye wha live and never think,  
                     Come mourn wi' me !  
 Our billie's gien us a' a jink,  
                     And owre the sea.

Lament him a' ye rantin' core,  
 Wha dearly like a random-splore,  
 Nae mair he'll join the merry roar  
                     In social key ;  
 For now he's taen anither shore,  
                     And owre the sea !

The bonny lasses weel may wiss him,  
 And in their dear petitions place him ;  
 The widows, wives, and 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 bumle,

Wha can do nought but fyke and fumble,  
                    'Twad been nae plea ;  
But he was gleg as ony wumble,  
                    That's owre the sea !

Auld, cantie Kyle may weepers wear,  
And stain them wi' the saut, saut tear ;  
'Twill make her puir auld heart, I fear,  
                    In flinders flee ;  
He was her laureate mony a year,  
                    That's owre the sea !

He saw misfortune's cauld nor'-west  
Lang mustering up a bitter blast ;  
A jillet 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,  
On scarce a bellyfu' o' drummock,  
Wi' his proud, independent stomach,  
                    Could ill agree ;  
So, row't his hurdies in a hammock,  
                    And owre the sea.

He ne'er was gien to great misguiding,  
Yet coin his pouches wadna 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,  
And hap him in a cozie biel ;

Ye'll find him aye a dainty chiel,  
                                 And fu' o' glee ;  
 He wadna wrang the very deil,  
                                 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 hindmost gillie  
                                 Tho' owre the sea !

---

TO A HAGGIS.

**F**AIR fa' your honest, sonsie face,  
                                 Great chieftain o' the puddin' race !  
 Aboon them a' ye tak your place,  
                                 Painch, tripe, or thairm :  
 Weel are ye worthy o' a grace  
                                 As lang's my arm.

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,  
 And cut you up wi' ready slight,



Trenching your gushing entrails bright  
Like ony ditch ;  
And then, oh, what a glorious sight,  
Warm-reekin', rich !

Then horn for horn they stretch and strive,  
Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,  
Till a' their weel-swallow'd kytes belyve  
Are bent like drums ;  
Then auld guidman, maist like to rive,  
" Bethankit " hums.

Is there that owre his French ragoût,  
Or olio that wad staw a sow,  
Or fricassee wad mak her spew  
Wi' perfect scunner,  
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view  
On sic a dinner ?

Poor devil ! see him owre his trash,  
As feckless as a wither'd rash,  
His spindle-shank a guid whip-lash,  
His nieve 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 wallee nieve a blade,  
He'll mak it whistle ;  
And legs, and arms, and heads will sned,  
Like taps o' thrissle.

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

Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware  
                                     That jaups in luggies ;  
 But if ye wish her gratefu' prayer,  
                                     Gie her a haggis !

---

A DEDICATION TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

**E**XPECT na, sir, in this narration,  
     A fleechin', fleth'rin' Dedication,  
 To rouse you up, and ca you guid,  
 And sprung o' great and 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 folks for a wamefu' ;  
 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, and that's nae flatterin',  
 Its just sic Poet, and sic Patron.

The Poet, some guid angel help him,  
 Or else, I fear some ill ane skelp him !  
 He may do weel for a' he's done yet,  
 But only—he's no just begun yet.

The Patron (sir, ye maun forgie me,  
I winna lie, come what will o' me),  
On every hand it will allow'd 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 break it ;  
Ought he can lend he'll no refus't,  
Till aft his guidness is abused ;  
And rascals whyles that do him wrang,  
Even that, he doesna mind it lang :  
As master, landlord, husband, father,  
He doesna fail his part in either.

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 damnation ;  
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 ;  
Abuse a brother to his back ;  
Steal through a winnock frae a whore,  
But point the rake that taks the door ;  
Be to the poor like ony whunstane,  
And haud their noses to the grunstone,  
Ply every art o' legal thieving ;  
No matter, stick to sound believing.

Learn three-mile prayers, and half-mile graces,  
Wi' weel-spread looves, and lang, wry faces ;  
Grunt up a solemn, lengthen'd 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 o' Calvin,  
For gumlie dubs 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 gies him ;  
While o'er the harp pale Misery moans,  
And strikes the ever-deepening tones,  
Still louder shrieks, and heavier groans !

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 needna tak it ill)  
I thought them something like yoursel.

Then patronise them wi' your favour,  
And your petitioner shall ever——  
I had amaist said, ever *pray* ;  
But that's a word I needna say :  
For prayin' I hae little skill o't ;  
I'm baith dead-sweer, and 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 growling 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-honour'd name  
Lang beat his hymeneal flame,  
Till Hamiltons, at least a dizzen,  
Are frae their nuptial labours risen !  
Five bonny 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 curlie John's ier-oe,  
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 wi' 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,  
 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 recognise my master dear,  
 If friendless, low, we meet together,  
 Then, sir, your hand—my friend and brother !

---

TO A LOUSE,

ON SEEING ONE ON A LADY'S BONNET AT CHURCH.

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

Ye ugly, creepin', blastit wonner,  
 Detested, shunn'd, by saunt and 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, in some beggar's haffet squattle ;  
 There ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle  
 Wi' ither kindred, jumping cattle,  
                     In shoals and nations ;  
 Whare horn nor bane ne'er daur unsettle  
                     Your thick plantations.

Now haud you there, ye're out o' sight,  
 Below the fatt'rils, snug and tight ;  
 Na, faith ye yet ! ye'll no be right  
                     Till ye've got on it,  
 The very tapmost, towering height  
                     O' Miss's bonnet.

My sooth ! right bauld ye set your nose out,  
 As plump and grey as ony grozet :  
 Oh for some rank, mercurial rozet,  
                     Or fell, red smeddum,  
 I'd gie you sic a hearty doze o't,  
                     Wad dress your droddum !

I wadna been surprised to spy  
 You on an auld wife's flannen toy :  
 Or aiblins some bit duddie boy,  
                     On's wyliecoat ;  
 But Miss's fine Lunardi ! fie !  
                     How daur ye do't ?  
                     P-p

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

Oh wad some Power the giftie gie us  
 To see oursels as others see us,  
 It wad frae mony a blunder free us,  
                                     And foolish notion :  
 What airs in dress and gait wad lea'e us,  
                                     And even devotion !

---

LINES

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL OVER THE CHIMNEYPiece IN  
 THE PARLOUR OF THE INN AT KENMORE, TAYMOUTH.

**A**DMIRING 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 covey'd 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 scatter'd, clothe their ample sides,  
 Th' outstretching lake, embosom'd '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 lighten'd 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.

---

## ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

**E**DINA ! 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 stray'd,  
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,  
I shelter in thy honour'd 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 !

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 mark'd 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 repell'd 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 ruin'd 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 stray'd,  
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,  
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

---

**EPISTLE TO JOHN LAPRAIK,**

**AN OLD SCOTTISH BARD.**

**W**HILE briers and woodbines budding green,  
And paitricks sraichin' loud at e'en,  
And morning poussie whiddin seen,  
Inspire my Muse,  
This freedom in an unknown frien'  
I pray excuse.

On Fasten-e'en we had a rockin',  
To ca' the crack and weave our stockin' ;  
And there was muckle fun and jokin',  
Ye needna doubt ;  
At length we had a hearty yokin'  
At sang about.

There was ae sang, amang the rest,  
Aboon them a' it pleased me best,  
That some kind husband had addrest  
To some sweet wife :  
It thirl'd the heart-strings through the breast,  
A' to the life.

I've scarce heard ought described sae weel,  
What generous, manly bosoms feel :  
Thought I, " Can this be Pope, or Steele,  
Or Beattie's wark ? "  
They tauld me 'twas an odd kind chiel  
About Muirkirk.

It pat me fidgin-fain to hear't,  
And sae about him there I speirt ;  
Then a' that kent him round declared  
He had ingine ;  
That nane excell'd it, few cam near't,  
It was sae fine ;

That, set him to a pint of ale,  
And either douce or merry tale,  
Or rhymes and sangs he'd made himsel,  
Or witty catches :  
'Tween Inverness and Teviotdale  
He had few matches.

Then up I gat, and swore an aith,  
Though I should pawn my pleugh and graith,  
Or died a cadger pownie's death,  
                    At some dyke-back,  
A pint and gill I'd gie them baith  
                    To hear your crack.

But, first and foremost, I should tell,  
Amaist as soon as I could spell,  
I to the crambo-jingle fell,  
                    'Though rude and rough :  
Yet crooning to a body's sel  
                    Does weel enough.

I am nae Poet, in a sense,  
But just a Rhymer like, by chance,  
And hae 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 leaves, my learnèd foes,  
                    Ye're maybe wrang.

What's a' your jargon o' your schools,  
Your Latin names for horns and stools ;  
If honest nature made you fools,  
                    What sairs your grammars ?  
Ye'd better ta'en up spades and shools,  
                    Or knappin'-hammers.

A set o' dull, conceited hashies,  
Confuse their brains in college classes !  
They gang in stirks, and come out asses,  
Plain truth to speak ;  
And syne they think to climb Parnassus  
By dint o' Greek !

Gie me a spark o' Nature's fire !  
That's a' the learning I desire ;  
Then, though I drudge through dub and mire  
At pleugh or cart,  
My Muse, though hamely in attire,  
May touch the heart.

Oh, for a spunk o' Allan's 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 !

Now, sir, if ye hae friends enow,  
Though real friends, I b'lieve, are few,  
Yet, if your catalogue be fu',  
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 fauts to tell ;  
But friends and folk that wish me well,  
They sometimes roose me ;  
Though I maun own, as mony still  
As far abuse me.

There's ae wee faut they whiles lay to me,  
I like the lasses—Gude forgie me !  
For mony a plack they wheedle frae me,  
At dance or fair ;  
Maybe some ither thing they gie me,  
They weel can spare.

But Mauchline race, or Mauchline fair,  
I should be proud to meet you there ;  
We'se gie ae night's discharge to Care,  
If we forgather,  
And hae a swap o' rhymin' ware  
Wi' ane anither.

The four-gill chap, we'se gar him clatter,  
And kirsen him wi' reekin' water ;  
Syne we'll sit down and tak our whitter,  
To cheer our heart ;  
And faith, we'se be acquainted better  
Before we part.

There's naething like the honest nappy !  
Whar'll ye e'er see men sae happy,  
Or women sonsie, saft, and sappy  
'Tween morn and morn,  
As them wha like to taste the drappy  
In glass or horn !

I've seen me dais't upon a time,  
I scarce could wink, or see a styme ;  
Just ae half-mutchkin does me prime,  
Aught less is little,  
Then back I rattle on the rhyme,  
As gleg's a whittle !



Awa' ye selfish, warly race,  
 Wha think that havins, sense, and grace,  
 E'en love and friendship, should give place  
     To catch-the-plack !  
 I dinna like to see your face,  
     Nor hear your crack.

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 would gar me fizzle,  
     Who am, most fervent,  
 While I can either sing or whistle,  
     Your friend and servant.

---

*SECOND EPISTLE TO LAPRAIK.*

**W**HILE new-ca'd kye rowte at the stake,  
 And 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.

Forjesket sair, wi' weary legs,  
 Rattlin' the corn out-owre the rigs,

*SECOND EPISTLE TO LAPRAIK.* 235

---

Or dealing through amang the naigs  
                    Their ten-hours' bite,  
My awkward Muse sair pleads and begs  
                    I wouldna write.

The tapetless, ramfeezled hizzie,  
She's saft at best, and something lazy,  
Quo' she, "Ye ken, we've been sae busy,  
                    This month and mair,  
That, trouth, my head is grown right dizzy  
                    And something sair."

Her dowff excuses pat me mad :  
"Conscience," says I, "ye thowless jad !  
I'll write, and 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 you sae weel for your deserts,  
                    In terms sae friendly,  
Yet ye'll neglect to shaw your parts,  
                    And thank him kindly ?"

Sae I gat paper in a blink,  
And down gaed stumpie in the ink :  
Quoth I, "Before I sleep a wink,  
                    I vow I'll close it ;  
And if ye winna mak it clink,  
                    By Jove, I'll prose it !"

Sae I've begun to scrawl, but whether  
In rhyme, or prose, or baith thegither,

236 *SECOND EPISTLE TO LAPRAIK.*

---

Or some hotch-potch that's rightly neither,  
Let time mak proof;  
But I shall scribble down some blether  
Just clean aff-loof.

My worthy friend, ne'er grudge and carp,  
Though Fortune use you hard and sharp;  
Come, kittle up your moorland-harp  
Wi' gleesome touch!  
Ne'er mind how Fortune waft and warp;  
She's but a bitch.

She's gien me mony a jirt and fleg,  
Sin' I could striddle owre a rig;  
But, by the Lord, though I should beg  
Wi' lyart pow,  
I'll laugh, and sing, and shake my leg,  
As lang's I dow!

Now comes the sax-and-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,  
I, Rob, am here.

Do ye envy the city gent,  
Behind a kist to lie and sklent,  
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, feudal thane,  
Wi' ruffled sark and glancing cane,

*SECOND EPISTLE TO LAPRAIK.* 237

---

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 gies us each guid gift !  
Gie me o' wit and 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 and 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,  
And none but he !"

O mandate glorious and divine !  
The ragged followers o' the Nine,  
Poor, thoughtless devils ! yet may shine  
In glorious light,  
While sordid sons o' Mammon's line  
Are dark as night.

Tho' here they scrape, and squeeze, and growl,  
Their worthless nievefu' o' 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, and joys,  
                                     In some mild sphere,  
 Still closer knit in friendship's ties  
                                     Each passing year !

---

### EXTEMPORE ON TWO LAWYERS.

LORD ADVOCATE.

**H**E clench'd his pamphlets in his fist,  
 He quoted and he hinted,  
 Till in a declamation mist  
     His argument he tint o't ;  
 He gapèd for't, he grapèd for't,  
     He found it was awa', man ;  
 But what his common sense cam short  
     He ekèd out wi' law, man.

DEAN OF FACULTY.

Collected, Harry stood a wee,  
 Then open'd 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 owre a linn, man ;  
 The Bench, sae wise, lift up their eyes,  
     Half-waken'd wi' the din, man.



VERSE

TO THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE WHERE BURNS HAD  
BEEN ENTERTAINED.

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.

EPISTLE TO WILLIAM SIMPSON,  
OCHILTREE.

I GAT your letter, winsome Willie ;  
Wi' gratefu' heart I thank you brawlie,  
Tho' I maun say't, I wad be silly,  
And unco vain,  
Should I believe, my coaxin' billie,  
Your flatt'rin' strain.

But I'se believe ye kindly meant it,  
I sud be laith to think ye hinted  
Ironie satire, sidelins sklentend  
On my poor Musie ;  
Though in sic phraisin' terms ye penn'd it,  
I scarce excuse ye.

My senses wad be in a creel,  
Should I but dare a hope to speel,  
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 !  
My curse upon your whunstane hearts,  
Ye E'nbrugh gentry !  
The tithe o' what ye waste at cartes  
Wad stow'd his pantry !)

Yet when a tale comes i' my head,  
Or lasses gie my heart a screed,  
As whiles they're like to be my deed,  
(O sad disease !)  
I kittle up my rustic reed ;  
It gies me ease.

Auld Coila now may fidge fu' fain,  
She's gotten poets o' her ain,  
Chiels wha their chanters winna hain,  
But tune their lays,  
Till echoes 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 unkenn'd-of isle  
Beside New Holland,  
Or where wild-meeting oceans boil  
Besouth Magellan.

Ramsay and famous Fergusson  
Gied Forth and Tay a lift aboon ;  
Yarrow and Tweed, to mony a tune,  
Owre Scotland rings,  
While Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, and Doon,  
Naebody sings.

---

Th' Illissus, Tiber, Thames, and Seine,  
Glide sweet in mony a tunefu' line !  
But, Willie, set your fit to mine,  
And cock your crest,  
We'll gar our streams and burnies shine  
Up wi' the best.

We'll sing auld Coila's plains and fells,  
Her moors red-brown wi' heather-bells,  
Her banks and braes, her dens and dells,  
Where glorious Wallace  
Aft bare the gree, as story tells,  
Frae southron billies.

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,  
Or glorious died.

Oh, sweet are Coila's haughs and woods,  
When lintwhites chant amang the buds,  
And jinkin' hares, in amorous whids,  
Their loves enjoy,  
While through the braes the cushat croods  
Wi' wailfu' cry !

Even 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,  
Dark'ning the day !  
Q-q

O Nature ! a' thy shows and forms,  
To feeling, pensive hearts hae charms !  
Whether the summer kindly warms  
    Wi' life and light,  
Or winter howls, in gusty storms,  
    The lang, dark night !

The Muse, nae poet ever fand her,  
Till by himsel he learn'd to wander,  
Adown some trotting burn's meander,  
    And no think lang ;  
Oh sweet, to stray and pensive ponder  
    A heart-felt sang !

The war'ly race may drudge and drive,  
Hog-shouter, jundie, stretch, and strive—  
Let me fair Nature's face describe,  
    And I, wi' pleasure,  
Shall let the busy, grumbling hive  
    Bum owre their treasure.

Fareweel, " my rhyme-composing brither ! "  
We've been owre lang unkenn'd to ither :  
Now let us lay our heads thegither,  
    In love fraternal :  
May Envy wallop in a tether,  
    Black fiend, infernal !

While Highlandmen hate tolls and taxes ;  
While moorlan' herds like guid, fat braxies,  
While *terra firma* on her axis  
    Diurnal turns,  
Count on a friend, in faith and practice,  
    IN ROBERT BURNS.

POSTSCRIPT.

My memory's no worth a preen :  
 I had amaist forgotten clean  
 Ye bade me write you what they mean  
     By this New Light,  
 'Bout which our herds sae aft hae been  
     Maist like to fight.

In days when mankind were but callans  
 At grammar, logic, and sic talents,  
 They took nae pains their speech to balance,  
     Or rules to gie,  
 But spak their thoughts in plain, braid Lallans,  
     Like you or me.

In thae auld times, they thought the moon  
 Just like a sark, or pair of shoon,  
 Wore by degrees, till her last roon  
     Gaed past their viewing,  
 And shortly after she was done,  
     They gat a new one.

This pass'd for certain—undisputed :  
 It ne'er cam i' their heads to doubt it,  
 Till chiels gat up and wad confute it,  
     And ca'd it wrang ;  
 And muckle din there was about it,  
     Baith loud and lang.

Some herds, weel learn'd upo' the beuk,  
 Wad threap auld folk the thing misteuk ;  
 For 'twas the auld moon turn'd a neuk,  
     And out o' sight,  
 And backlins-comin', to the leuk  
     She grew mair bright.



This was denied—it was affirm'd ;  
The herds and hirsels were alarm'd ;  
The reverend grey-beards raved and storm'd,  
That beardless laddies  
Should think they better were inform'd  
Than their auld daddies.

Frae less to mair it gaed to sticks ;  
Frae words and aiths to clours and nicks ;  
And mony a fallow gat his licks,  
Wi' hearty crunt :  
And some, to learn them for their tricks,  
Were hang'd and brunt.

This game was play'd in mony lands,  
And Auld-Light caddies bure sic hands  
That, faith, the youngsters took the sands  
Wi' nimble shanks,  
Till lairds forbade, by strict commands,  
Sic bluidy pranks.

But New-Light herds gat sic a cowe,  
Folk thought them ruin'd stick and stowe,  
Till now amaist on every knowe  
Ye'll find ane placed ;  
And some their New-Light fair avow,  
Just quite barefaced.

Nae doubt the Auld-Light flocks are bleatin' ;  
Their zealous herds are vex'd and sweatin' ;  
Mysel, I've even seen them greetin'  
Wi' girnin' spite,  
To hear the moon sae sadly lied on,  
By word and write.

---

But shortly they will cove the loons !  
 Some Auld-Light herds in neibor towns  
 Are mind't, in things they ca' balloons,  
     To tak a flight,  
 And stay ae month amang the moons,  
     And see them right.

Guid observation they will gie them ;  
 And when the auld moon's gaun to lea'e them,  
 The hindmost shaird, they'll fetch it wi' them,  
     Just i' their pouch,  
 And when the New-Light billies see them,  
     I think they'll crouch !

Sae, ye observe that a' this clatter  
 Is naething but a "moonshine matter ;"  
 But though dull prose-folk Latin splatter  
     In logic tulzie,  
 I hope we bardies ken some better  
     Than mind sic brulzie.

EPISTLE TO JOHN RANKINE,

ENCLOSING SOME POEMS.

**O** ROUGH, rude, ready-witted Rankine,  
 The wale o' cocks for fun and drinkin' !  
 There's mony godly folks are thinkin'  
     Your dreams and tricks  
 Will send you, Korah-like, a sinkin',  
     Straught to auld Nick's.

Ye hae sae mony cracks and cants,  
 And in your wicked, drucken rants,

Ye mak a devil o' the saunts,  
                    And fill them fou ;  
And then their failings, flaws, and wants,  
                    Are a' seen through.

Hypocrisy, in mercy spare it !  
That holy robe, oh, dinna tear it !  
Spare't for their sakes wha often 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,  
It's just the blue-gown badge and claithing  
O' saunts ; tak that, ye lea'e them naething  
                    To ken them by,  
Frae ony unregenerate heathen  
                    Like you or I.

I've sent you here some rhyiming ware,  
A' that I bargain'd for, and mair ;  
Sae, when ye hae an hour to spare,  
                    I will expect  
Yon sang, ye'll sen't wi' cannie care,  
                    And no neglect.

Though, faith, sma' heart hae I to sing !  
My Muse dow scarcely spread her wing !  
I've play'd mysel a bonny spring,  
                    And danced my fill !  
I'd better gaen and sair't the king,  
                    At Bunker's Hill.

'Twas ae night lately, in my fun,  
I gaed a roving wi' the gun,

And brought a paitrick to the grun',  
                                     A bonny hen ;  
 And, as the twilight was begun,  
                                     Thought nane wad ken.

The poor wee thing was little hurt ;  
 I straikit it a wee for sport,  
 Ne'er thinking they wad fash me for't ;  
                                     But, diel-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 scorn'd to lie ;  
 So gat the whistle o' my groat,  
                                     And pay't the fee.

But, by my gun, o' guns the wale,  
 And by my pouter and my hail,  
 And by my hen, and by her tail,  
                                     I vow and swear !  
 The game shall pay, o'er moor and dale,  
                                     For this, neist year.

As soon's the clockin'-time is by,  
 And the wee pouts begun to cry,  
 Lord, I'se hae sportin' by and by,  
                                     For my gowd guinea :  
 Though I should herd the buckskin kye  
                                     For't, in Virginia.

Trouth, they had muckle for to blame !  
 'Twas neither broken wing nor limb,

But twa-three drops about the wame  
                                 Scarce through the feathers !  
 And baith a yellow George to claim  
                                 And thole their blethers !

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,  
                                 Your most obedient.

ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON,  
 A GENTLEMAN WHO HELD THE PATENT FOR HIS HONOURS  
 IMMEDIATELY FROM ALMIGHTY GOD.

O DEATH ! thou tyrant fell and bloody !  
     The meikle devil wi' a woodie  
 Haur! thee hame to his black smiddie,  
                                 O'er hurcheon 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 æ 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,  
 That proudly cock your cresting cairns !



Ye cliffs, the haunts of sailing years,  
                    Where Echo slumbers !  
Come join, ye Nature's sturdiest bairns,  
                    My wailing numbers !

Mourn, ilka grove the cushat kens !  
Ye haz'lly shaws and briery dens !  
Ye burnies, wimplin' down your glens,  
                    Wi' toddlin' din,  
Or foaming strang, wi' hasty stens,  
                    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 its head,  
At even, when beans their fragrance shed,  
                    I' the rustling gale,  
Ye maukins whiddin' 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 ;  
                    Ye whistling plover ;  
And mourn, ye whirring paitrick 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 at close o' day,  
'Mang fields o' flowering clover gay ;  
And when ye wing your annual way  
                                Frae our cauld shore,  
Tell thae far warlds wha lies in clay,  
                                Wham we deplore.

Ye houlets, 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 e'en the drapping rains  
                                Maun ever flow.

Mourn, Spring, thou darling of the year !  
Ilk cowslip cup shall kep 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 taen his flight,  
Ne'er to return.

O Henderson ! the man—the brother !  
And art thou gone, and gone for ever !  
And hast thou cross'd 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 o' worth !  
And weep the ae best fellow's fate  
E'er lay in earth.

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 spurn'd 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 kind 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.

---

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, ON  
THE APPROACH OF SPRING.

**N**OW 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 weary 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 wild, wi' mony 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' bonny France,  
Where happy I hae been ;  
Fu' lightly rase 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 the balm that draps on wounds of woe  
Frae woman's pitying e'e.

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 !

Oh ! 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 !

---

## ODE :

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF MRS. OSWALD.

DWELLER in yon dungeon dark,  
Hangman of creation ! mark  
Who in widow-weeds appears,  
Laden with unhonour'd years,  
Noosing with care a bursting purse,  
Baited with many a deadly curse !

## STROPHE.

View the wither'd 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 these hands, ne'er stretch'd 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, hurl'd from upper skies ;  
'Tis thy trusty quondam mate,  
Doom'd to share thy fiery fate,  
She, tardy, hellward plies.

EPODE.

And are they of no more avail,  
 Ten thousand glittering pounds a-year ?  
 In other worlds can Mammon fail,  
 Omnipotent as he is here ?  
 Oh, 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.

---

EPISTLE TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ. OF FINTRY.

**W**HEN Nature her great masterpiece design'd,  
 And framed her last, best work, the human  
 mind,

Her eye intent upon the mazy plan,  
 She form'd of various parts the various man.

Then first she calls the useful many forth ;  
 Plain plodding industry and sober worth :  
 Thence peasants, farmers, native sons of earth,  
 And merchandise' whole genus take their birth :  
 Each prudent cit a warm existence finds,  
 And all mechanics' many-apron'd 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 sublimes th' Aurora of the poles,  
The flashing elements of female souls.

The order'd 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 form'd 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.

But honest Nature is not quite a Turk,  
She laugh'd 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,  
Attach'd him to the generous truly great,  
A title, and the only one I claim,  
To lay strong hold for help on bounteous Graham.

R-r

Pity the tuneful Muses' hapless train,  
 Weak, timid landmen 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, proverb'd, 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 etch'd on base alloy !

But come, ye who the godlike pleasure know,  
 Heaven's attribute distinguish'd—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, abash'd 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, patronise 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 eighteenpence 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 wish'd-for height,  
Where, man and nature fairer in her sight,  
My Muse may imp her wing for some sublimer flight.

---

TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ. OF FINTRY.

**L**ATE crippled of an arm, and now a leg,  
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, heark'ning to her tale,)  
And hear him curse the light he first survey'd,  
And doubly curse the luckless rhyming trade ?  
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' envenom'd wasp, victorious, guards his cell ;  
Thy minions, kings, defend, control, devour,  
In all th' omnipotence of rule and power.  
Foxes and statesmen subtle wiles insure ;  
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 ;  
Even silly woman has her warlike arts,  
Her tongue and eyes—her dreaded spear and darts.

But, oh ! thou bitter stepmother 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 opening 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 olfactory, 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 :  
Vampire booksellers drain him to the heart,  
And scorpion critics cureless venom dart.

Critics !—appall'd 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 :  
Foil'd, bleeding, tortured, in the 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.

O Dulness ! portion of the truly blest !  
Calm shelter'd 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 Dissappointment 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' mad-cap 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 !

---

LAMENT FOR JAMES, EARL OF GLENCAIRN.

THE wind blew hollow frae the hills,  
 By fits the sun's departing beam  
 Look'd on the fading yellow woods  
 That waved o'er Lugar's winding stream :  
 Beneath a craigy steep, a bard,  
 Laden with years and meikle pain,  
 In loud lament bewail'd his lord,  
 Whom death had all untimely ta'en.

He lean'd him to an ancient aik,  
 Whose trunk was mouldering down with years ;  
 His locks were bleachèd 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 scatter’d birds that faintly sing  
The reliques of the vernal quire !  
Ye woods that shed on a’ the winds  
The honours of the agèd 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.

“ I am a bending, agèd tree,  
That long has stood the wind and rain ;  
But now has come a cruel blast,  
And my last hold 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 bare 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 amang 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 evernair !  
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 turn’d 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 early prime ?  
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, BART., OF WHITEFOORD,  
WITH THE FOREGOING POEM.

**T**HOU, 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 valued'st, 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.

VERSES

INTENDED TO BE WRITTEN BELOW A NOBLE EARL'S  
PICTURE.

**W**HOSE is that noble dauntless brow ?  
And whose that eye of fire ?  
And whose that generous princely mien  
Even 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 inspire.

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 mayst discern ;  
 Mark Scotia's fond returning eye—  
 It dwells upon Glencairn.

---

### VERSES

ON CAPTAIN GROSE'S PEREGRINATIONS THROUGH SCOT-  
 LAND COLLECTING ANTIQUITIES OF THAT KINGDOM.

**H**EAR, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,  
 Frae Maidenkirke to John o' Groats ;  
 If there's a hole in a' your coats,  
     I rede you tent it :  
 A chiel's amang ye, takin' notes,  
     And, faith, he'll prent it !

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

By some auld, houlet-haunted biggin',  
 Or kirk deserted by its riggin',

It's ten to ane ye'll find him snug in  
Some eldritch part,  
Wi' deils, they say, Lord save's ! colleaguin  
At some black art.

Ilk ghaist that haunts auld ha' or chaumer,  
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 !

It's tauld he was a sodger bred,  
And ane wad rather fa'n than fled ;  
But now he's quat the spurtle-blade  
And dog-skin wallet,  
And ta'en the—antiquarian trade,  
I think they call it.

He has a fouth o' auld nick-nackets,  
Rusty airn caps and jinglin' jackets,  
Wad haud the Lothians three in tackets  
A townmond guid ;  
And parritch-pats, and auld saut-buckets,  
Afore the flood.

Of Eve's first fire he has a cinder ;  
Auld Tubal Cain's fire-shool and fender ;  
That which distinguished the gender  
O' Balaam's ass ;  
A broomstick o' the witch o' Endor,  
Weel shod wi' brass.

Forbye, he'll shape you aff, fu' gleg,  
The cut of Adam's philabeg :

268 *VERSES ON A WOUNDED HARE.*

---

The knife that nicked Abel's craig  
                    He'll prove you fully,  
It was a faulding jocteleg,  
                    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 !

---

VERSES

ON SEEING A WOUNDED HARE LIMP BY ME, WHICH A  
FELLOW HAD JUST SHOT.

**I**NHUMAN 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.

Oft 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.

---

ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON,  
ON CROWNING HIS BUST AT EDNAM, ROXBURGHSHIRE,  
WITH BAYS.

**W**HILE virgin Spring, by Eden's flood,  
Unfolds her tender mantle green,  
Or pranks the sod in frolic mood,  
Or tunes Æolian 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 !

---

## TO MISS CRUIKSHANK,

A VERY YOUNG LADY. WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF  
OF A BOOK PRESENTED TO HER BY THE AUTHOR.

**B**EAUTEUS rosebud, young and gay,  
Blooming in the early May,  
Never mayst thou, lovely flower,  
Chilly shrink in sleety shower !  
Never Boreas' hoary path,  
Never Eurus' poisonous breath,  
Never baleful stella 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 !  
Mayst 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.

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.

**S**AD 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 form'd,  
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 !

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.

---

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER

TO THE NOBLE DUKE OF ATHOLE.

**M**Y lord, I know your noble ear  
 Woe ne'er assails in vain ;  
 Embolden'd 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-jumpin', glowrin' 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 so 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,  
 Even as I was he shored 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 bonny, spreading bushes.  
Delighted doubly, then, my lord,  
You'll wander on my banks,  
And listen mony a grateful bird  
Return you tuneful thanks.

The sober laverock, warbling wild,  
Shall to the skies aspire ;  
The gowdspink, Music's gayest child,  
Shall sweetly join the choir ;  
The blackbird strong, the lintwhite clear,  
The mavis mild and mellow ;  
The robin pensive autumn cheer,  
In all her locks of yellow.

This, too, a covert shall insure,  
To shield them from the storms ;  
And coward maukins sleep secure  
Low in their grassy forms :

S-s



The shepherd here shall 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,  
The 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 !  
Let fragrant birks in woodbines dress  
My craggy cliffs adorn ;  
And, for the little songster's 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 honour'd 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 !"

---

THE TWA HERDS ; OR, THE HOLY TULZIE.

O H, a' ye pious godly flocks,  
Weel fed on pastures orthodox,  
Wha now will keep you frae the fox,  
Or worrying tykes,  
Or wha will tent the waifs and crocks,  
About the dikes ?

The twa best herds in a' the wast,  
That e'er gae gospel horn a blast,  
These five-and-twenty simmers past,  
Oh, dool to tell !  
Hae had a bitter black outcast  
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 hae min'.

Oh, sirs ! whae'er wad hae expeckit,  
Your duty ye wad sae negleckit,

Ye wha were ne'er by lairds respeckit,  
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 poison'd sour Arminian stank  
He let them taste;  
Frae Calvin's well, aye clear, they drank—  
Oh, sic a feast!

The thummart, wil'-cat, brock, and tod,  
Weel kenn'd 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 tell'd his tale,  
His voice was heard through muir and dale,  
He kenn'd the Lord's sheep, ilka tail,  
O'er a' the height,  
And saw gin they were sick or hale,  
At the first sight.

He fine a mangy sheep could scrub,  
Or nobly swing the gospel-club,  
And New-Light herds could nicely drub,  
Or pay their skin;  
Could shake them owre the burning dub,  
Or heave them in.

Sic twa—oh! do I live to see't—  
Sic famous twa should disagree't,

And names like "villain," "hypocrite,"  
    Ilk ither gi'en,  
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,  
But chiefly thou, apostle Auld,  
    We trust in thee,  
That thou wilt work them, het 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.

Dalrymple has been lang our fae,  
M'Gill has wrought us meikle wae,  
And that cursèd rascal ca'd M'Quhae,  
    And baith the Shaws,  
That aft hae made us black and blae,  
    Wi' vengefu' paws.

Auld Wodrow lang has hatch'd 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 ;  
    I meikle dread him.

And mony a ane that I could tell,  
Wha fain would openly rebel,

278 *ADDRESS TO THE TOOTHACHE.*

---

Forbye turn-coats amang oursel ;  
                                There's Smith for ane,  
I doubt he's but a grey-nick quill,  
                                And that ye'll fin'.

Oh ! 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 themsels  
                                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 banish'd o'er the sea to France :  
                                Let him bark there.

Then Shaw's and D'rymple'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.

---

*ADDRESS TO THE TOOTHACHE.*

WRITTEN WHEN THE AUTHOR WAS GRIEVOUSLY  
TORMENTED BY THAT DISORDER.

**M**Y curse upon thy venom'd stang,  
That shoots my tortured gums alang ;  
And through my lugs gies mony a twang,  
                                Wi' gnawing vengeance ;



*ADDRESS TO THE TOOTHACHE.* 279

---

Tearing my nerves wi' bitter pang,  
Like wracking engines !

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

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

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

Where'er that place be priests ca'd 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 townmond's toothache !

ON THE BIRTH OF A POSTHUMOUS CHILD,  
BORN IN PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF FAMILY  
DISTRESS.

SWEET flow'ret, pledge o' meikle love,  
And ward o' mony a prayer,  
What heart o' stane would thou na move,  
Sae helpless, sweet, and fair !

November hirkles 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 show'r,  
The bitter frost and snaw !

May He, the friend of woe and want,  
Who heal's life's various stounds,  
Protect and guard the mother plant,  
And heal her cruel wounds.

But late she flourish'd, rooted fast,  
Fair on the summer morn :  
Now, feebly bends she in the blast,  
Unshelter'd and forlorn.

Blest be thy bloom, thou lovely gem,  
Unscathed by ruffian hand !  
And from thee many a parent stem  
Arise to deck our land.

LINES

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL, STANDING BY THE FALLS  
OF FYERS, NEAR LOCH NESS.

**A**MONG 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, astonish'd, 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.

---

SECOND EPISTLE TO DAVIE,

A BROTHER POET.

AULD NEIBOR,

**I**'M three times doubly o'er your debtor,  
For your auld-farrant, frien'ly letter ;  
Though I maun say't, I doubt ye flatter,  
Ye speak sae fair,  
For my puir, silly, rhyming clatter  
Some less maun sair.

Hale be your heart, hale be your fiddle ;  
Lang may your elbuck jink 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 ye're glaikit ;  
I'm tauld the Muse ye hae negleckit ;  
And gif it's sae, ye sud be licket  
                    Until ye fyke ;  
Sic hauns as you sud ne'er be faiket,  
                    Be haint wha like.

For me, I'm on Parnassus' brink  
Rivin' the words to gar them clink ;  
Whiles dais't wi' love, whiles dais't wi' drink,  
                    Wi' jads or masons ;  
And whiles, 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 ban,  
                    They ever think.

Nae thought, nae view, nae scheme o' livin',  
Nae cares to gie us joy or grievin' ;  
But just the pouchie put the nieve in,  
                    And while ought's there,  
Then hiltie, skiltie, we gae scrievin',  
                    And fash nae mair.

Leeze me on rhyme ! it's aye a treasure,  
My chief, amais't my only pleasure,  
At hame, a-fiel, at wark, or leisure,  
                    The Muse, poor hizzie !  
Though rough and raplock be her measure,  
                    She's seldom lazy.

Hand to the Muse, my dainty Davie :  
The warl' may play you mony a shavie ;  
But for the Muse, she'll never leave ye,  
                    Though e'er so puir,  
Na, even though limpin' wi' the spavie  
                    Frae door to door.

---

*THE HERMIT.*

WRITTEN ON A MARBLE SIDEBOARD IN THE HERMITAGE  
BELONGING TO THE DUKE OF ATHOLE, IN THE WOOD  
OF ABERFELDY.

**W**HOE'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-will'd 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 encrusted ;  
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.

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 marr'd 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 !

---

 THE INVENTORY.

IN ANSWER TO THE USUAL MANDATE SENT BY A  
 SURVEYOR OF TAXES, REQUIRING A RETURN OF  
 THE NUMBER OF HORSES, SERVANTS, ETC., KEPT.

**S**IR, 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.

*Imprimis*, then, for carriage cattle,  
 I hae four brutes o' gallant mettle,  
 As ever drew afore a pettle ;  
 My han'-afore's a guid auld *has-been*,  
 And wight and wilfu' a' his days been ;  
 My han'-ahin's a weel-gaun filly,  
 That aft has borne me hame frae Killie,  
 And your auld boro' mony a time,  
 In days when riding was nae crime—

But ance, whan in my wooing pride,  
I, like a blockhead, boost to ride,  
The wilfu' creature sae I pat to,  
(Lord, pardon a' my sins, and that too !)  
I play'd my filly sic a shavie,  
She's a' bedevil'd wi' the spavie.  
My fur-ahin's a worthy beast,  
As e'er in tug or tow was traced.  
The fourth's a Highland Donald hastie,  
A damn'd red-wud Kilburnie blastie !  
Forbye a cowte, o' cowte's the wale,  
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 feckly new ;  
An auld wheelbarrow, mair for token,  
Ae leg and both 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 hauds the nowte in fother.  
I rule them, as I ought, discreetly,  
And aften labour them completely ;  
And aye on Sundays duly, nightly,  
I on the question targe them tightly,  
Till, faith, wee Davoc's turned sae gleg,  
Though scarcely langer than my leg,  
He'll screed you aff Effectual Calling  
As fast as ony in the dwelling:

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 clutch 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, smirking, dear-lought Bess,  
She stares her daddy in the face,  
Enough of ought ye 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 piddle,  
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 wrote it,  
The day and date as undernoted ;  
Then know ye all whom it concerns,  
*Subscripsi hinc,* ROBERT BURNS.

## THE WHISTLE.

**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, 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 conquerer still,  
And blew on the whistle his requiem shrill.

Till Robert, the lord of the Cairn and the Skair,  
Unmatch’d at the bottle, unconquer’d in war,  
He drank his poor godship as deep as the sea,  
No tide of the Baltic e’er drunker than he.

Thus Robert, victorious, the trophy has gain’d;  
Which now in his house has for ages remain’d;  
Till three noble chieftains, and all of his blood,  
The jovial contest again have renew’d.

Three joyous good fellows, with hearts clear of flaw:  
Craigdarroch, so famous for wit, worth, and law;  
And trusty Glenriddel, so skill’d 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,  
And bumper his horn with him twenty times o'er."

Sir Robert, a soldier, no speech would pretend,  
But he ne'er turn'd 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 ere 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 wish'd that Parnassus a vineyard had been.

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 witness'd so joyous a core,  
And vow'd that to leave them he was quite forlorn,  
Till Cynthia hinted he'd see them next morn.

Six bottles apiece had well wore out the night,  
When gallant Sir Robert, to finish the fight,  
Turn'd o'er in one bumper a bottle of red,  
And swore 'twas the way that their ancestors did.

T-t

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 shall perish in light ;  
So up rose bright Phœbus—and down fell the knight.

Next up rose our bard, like a prophet in drink :  
“ Craigdarroch, thou’lt soar when creation shall sink !  
But if thou wouldst 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 ! ”

---

*EPISTLE TO DR. BLACKLOCK.*

**W**OW, but your letter made me vauntie !  
And are ye hale, and weel, and cantie ?  
I kenn’d 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 Heron south !  
And never drink be near his drouth !

He tauld mysel, by word o' mouth,  
                                  He'd tak my letter ;  
I lippen'd to the chiel in trouth,  
                                  And bade nae better.

But aiblins honest Master Heron  
Had at the time some dainty fair one,  
To ware his theologic care on,  
                                  And holy study ;  
And tired o' souls to waste his lear on,  
                                  E'en tried the body.

But what d'ye think, my trusty fier,  
I'm turn'd a gauger—Peace be here !  
Parnassian queans, I fear, I fear,  
                                  Ye'll now disdain me !  
And then my fifty pounds a year  
                                  Will little gain me.

Ye glaikit, gleesome, dainty dammies,  
Wha, by Castalia's wimplin' streamies  
Loup, sing, and lave your pretty limbies,  
                                  Ye ken, ye ken,  
That strang necessity supreme is  
                                  'Mang sons o' men.

I hae a wife and twa wee laddies,  
They maun hae brose and brats o' duddies ;  
Ye ken yoursels my heart right proud is—  
                                  I needna vaunt,  
But I'll sned besoms—thraw saugh woodies,  
                                  Before they want.

Lord, help me through this warld o' care !  
I'm weary sick o't late and air !

Not but I hae 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-hemp in man !  
 And let us mind, faint heart ne'er wan  
                                   A lady fair ;  
 Wha does the utmost that he can,  
                                   Will whiles 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 Lucky,  
 I wat she is a daintie chuckie,  
                                   As e'er tread clay !  
 And gratefully, my guid auld cockie,  
                                   I'm yours for aye,  
                                   ROBERT BURNS.

### LINES ON FERGUSSON.

**I**LL-FATED genius ! Heaven-taught Fergusson !  
 What heart that feels and will not yield a tear,  
 To think life's sun did set ere well begun  
 To shed its influence on thy bright career.

Oh, why should truest worth and genius pine  
Beneath the iron grasp of Want and Woe,  
While titled knaves and idiot greatness shine  
In all the splendour Fortune can bestow !

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN AT THE THEATRE, DUMFRIES, ON NEW-YEAR'S  
DAY EVENING, 1790.

**N**O song nor dance I bring from yon 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 cough'd, 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 flush'd 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.

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.

---

ELEGY ON MISS BURNET OF MONBODDO.

LIFE ne'er exulted in so rich a prize  
As Burnet, lovely from her native skies ;  
Nor envious Death so triumph'd 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 !

*INVITATION TO A GENTLEMAN.* 295

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Ye healthy wastes, inmix'd 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 aged tree ;  
So from it ravish'd, leaves it bleak and bare.

---

*INVITATION TO A MEDICAL GENTLEMAN*

TO A MASONIC ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

**F**RIDAY first's the day appointed  
By our Right Worshipful appointed  
To hold our grand procession ;  
To get a blade o' Johnny'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' skaith, then,  
 Some mortal heart is hechtin',  
 Inform him, and storm him,  
 That Saturday ye'll fecht him.

---

L I N E S

ON MEETING WITH LORD DAER.

**T**HIS wot ye all whom it concerns,  
 I, Rhymer Robin, alias Burns,  
 October twenty-third,  
 A ne'er-to-be-forgotten day !  
 Sae far I spraghled up the brae,  
 I dinner'd wi' a lord.

I've been at drucken writers' feasts,  
 Nay, been bitch fou 'mang godly priests ;  
 (Wi' rev'rence be it spoken !)  
 I've even join'd the honour'd 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,  
                     And how he stared and stammer'd !  
 When goavan, as if led wi' branks,  
 And stumpin' on his ploughman shanks,  
                     He in the parlour hammer'd.

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 !  
 My knees on ane anither knoited,  
                     As faltering I gaed ben !

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

I watch'd 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.

## THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN,

AN OCCASIONAL ADDRESS SPOKEN BY MISS FONTENELLE  
ON HER BENEFIT NIGHT.

**W**HILE 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' intermix'd 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.

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 die before he'd wrong it—'tis Decorum.  
There was, indeed, in far less polish'd 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 ! those Gothic times are fled ;  
Now, well-bred men—and ye are all well bred !—  
Most justly think (and we are much the gainers)  
Such conduct neither spirit, wit, nor manners.

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 a 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 !

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## ADDRESS

SPOKEN BY MISS FONTENELLE ON HER BENEFIT NIGHT.

**S**TILL 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 slily 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 enjoy’d.

Thou man of crazy care and ceaseless sigh,  
Still under bleak Misfortune’s blasting eye :  
Doom’d 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 :  
Wouldst 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.

## TO THE GUIDWIFE OF WAUCHOPE HOUSE.

GUIDWIFE,

I mind it weel, in early date,  
When I was beardless, young, and blate,  
And first could thrash the barn,  
Or haud a yokin' at the pleugh ;  
And though forfoughten sair enough,  
Yet unco proud to learn :  
When first amang the yellow corn  
A man I reckon'd was,  
And wi' the lave ilk merry morn  
Could rank my rig and lass,  
Still shearing and clearing  
The tither stookèd raw,  
Wi' clavers, and havers,  
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,  
The rough burr-thistle, spreading wide  
Amang the bearded bear,  
I turn'd 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 hairst I said before,  
My partner in the merry core,  
She roused the forming strain :  
I see her yet, the sonsie quean,  
That lighted up my jingle,  
Her witching smile, her pauky een,  
That gart my heart strings tingle !  
I firèd, inspirèd,  
At every kindling keek ;  
But bashing, and dashing,  
I fearèd aye to speak.

Health to the sex ! ilk guid chiel 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, who hate the name,  
Be mindfu' o' your mither :  
She, honest woman, may think shame  
That ye're connected with her.  
Ye're wae men, ye're nae men,  
That slight the lovely dears ;  
To shame ye, disclaim ye,  
Ilk honest birkie swears.

For you, no bred to barn and byre,  
Wha sweetly tune the Scottish lyre,  
Thanks to you for your line :

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*THIRD EPISTLE TO LAPRAIK.* 303

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The marled plaid ye kindly spare  
By me should gratefully be ware ;  
    'Twad please me to the Nine.  
I'd be mair vauntie o' my hap,  
    Douce hingin' 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 hallan ca' !

---

*THIRD EPISTLE TO JOHN LAPRAIK.*

**G**UID speed and further to you, Johnny,  
Guid health, hale han's, and weather bonnie ;  
Now when ye're nickin' down fu' canny  
    The staff o' bread,  
May ye ne'er want a stoup o' bran'y  
    To clear your head.

May Boreas never thrash your rigs,  
Nor kick your rickles aff their legs,  
Sendin' the stuff o'er muirs and haggs  
    Like drivin' wrack ;  
But may the tapmast grain that wags  
    Come to the sack.

I'm busy too, and skelpin' at it,  
But bitter, daudin' showers hae wat it,  
Sae my auld stumpie pen I gat it,  
    Wi' muckle wark,



And took my jocteleg and 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 deil a hair yoursel ye're better,  
But mair profane.

But let the kirk-folk ring their bells,  
Let's sing about our noble sels ;  
We'll cry nae jads frae heathen hills  
To help or roose us,  
But browster wives and whisky stills,  
They are the Muses.

Your friendship, sir, I winna quat it,  
And if ye mak objections at it,  
Then han' in nieve some day we'll knot it,  
And witness take,  
And when wi' usquebae we've wat it,  
It winna break.

But if the beast and branks be spared  
Till kye be gaun without the herd,  
And a' the vittel in the yard,  
And theekit right,  
I mean your ingle-side to guard  
Ae winter night.

Then muse-inspirin' aqua-vitæ  
Shall make us baith sae blithe and witty,  
Till ye forget ye're auld and gatty,  
And be as canty

---

As ye were nine year less than thretty,  
Sweet ane-and-twenty !

But stooks are cowpit wi' the blast,  
And now the sun keeks in the west,  
Then I maun rin amang the rest,  
And quat my chanter ;  
Sae I subscribe myself, in haste,  
Yours, RAB THE RANTER.

---

*EPISTLE TO THE REV. JOHN M'MATH.*

**W**HILE at the stook the shearers cow'r  
To shun the bitter, blaudin' show'r,  
Or in gulravage rinnin' scower  
To pass the time,  
To you I dedicate the hour  
In idle rhyme.

My Musie, tired wi' mony a sonnet  
On gown, and ban', and douce black bonnet,  
Is grown right eerie now she's done it,  
Lest they should blame her,  
And rouse their holy thunder on it,  
And anathem her.

I own 'twas rash, and 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.  
U-u

But I gae mad at their grimaces,  
Their sighin', cantin', grace-proud faces,  
Their three-mile prayers, and half-mile graces,  
                    Their raxin' conscience,  
Whase greed, revenge, and pride disgraces  
                    Waur nor their nonsense.

There's Gawn, 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 ;  
And 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 and deed,  
And shall his fame and honour bleed  
                    By worthless skellums,  
And no a Muse erect her head  
                    To cove the blellums ?

O Pope, had I thy satire's darts,  
To gie the rascals their deserts,  
I'd rip their rotten, hollow hearts,  
                    And tell aloud  
Their jugglin', hocus-pocus arts,  
                    To cheat the crowd.

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.



308 *EPISTLE TO GAVIN HAMILTON.*

---

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, renown'd,  
And manly preachers.

Sir, in that circle you are named ;  
Sir, in that circle you are famed ;  
And some, by whom your doctrine's blamed  
(Which gies you honour),  
Even, sir, by them your heart's esteem'd,  
And winning manner.

Pardon this freedom I have ta'en,  
And if impertinent I've been,  
Impute it not, good sir, in ane  
Whase heart ne'er wrang'd ye,  
But to his utmost would befriend  
Ought that belang'd ye.

---

EPISTLE TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.,  
RECOMMENDING A BOY.

I HOLD it, sir, my bounden duty  
To warn you how that Master Tootie,  
Alias, Laird M'Gaun,  
Was here to hire yon lad away  
'Bout whom ye spak the tither day,  
And wad hae done't aff-han' ;



*EPISTLE TO GAVIN HAMILTON.* 309

---

But lest he learn the callan tricks,  
As, faith, I muckle doubt him,  
Like scrapin' out auld Crummie's 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.

Although I say't, he's gleg 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 shore him weel wi' hell ;  
And gar 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 hae gien,  
In Paisley John's, that night at e'en,  
To meet the world's worm ;  
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,  
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.

---

## EPISTLE TO MR. M'ADAM OF CRAIGENGILLAN.

**S**IR, o'er a gill I gat your card,  
I trow it made me proud ;  
"See wha taks notice o' the bard !"  
I lap and cried fu' loud.

Now deil-ma-care about their jaw,  
The senseless, gawky million ;  
I'll cock my nose aboon them a'—  
I'm roos'd by Craigengillan !

'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 tub  
Match'd Macedonian Sandy !  
On my ain legs, through dirt and dub,  
I independent stand aye.

And when those legs to guid warm kail  
Wi' welcome canna bear me,  
A lee dike-side, a sybow tail,  
And barley scone shall cheer me.

Heaven spare you lang to kiss the breath  
O' mony flowery simmers !  
And bless your bonnie lasses baith—  
I'm tauld they're lo'esome kimmers !

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.

---

TO CAPTAIN RIDDEL OF GLENRIDDEL.

EXTEMPORE LINES ON RETURNING A NEWSPAPER.

**Y**OUR 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  
Bestow'd 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 !

---

## VERSES

TO JOHN MAXWELL OF TERRAUGHTY, ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

**H**EALTH to the Maxwells' veteran chief !  
Health, aye unsour'd by care or grief :  
Inspired, I turn'd Fate's sybil leaf  
This natal morn ;  
I see thy life is stuff o' prief,  
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 ilka poet)  
On thee a tack o' seven times seven  
Will yet bestow it.

If envious buckies view wi' sorrow  
Thy lengthen'd days on this blest morrow,  
May Desolation's lang-teeth'd harrow,  
Nine miles an hour,  
Rake them, like Sodom and Gomorrrah,  
In brunstane stoure !

But for thy friends, and they are mony,  
Baith honest men and lasses bonnie,  
May couthie Fortune, kind and canny,  
In social glee,  
Wi' mornings blithe and e'enings funny,  
Bless them and thee !

Fareweel, auld birkie ! Lord be near ye,  
And then the deil 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 !

---

### THE VOWELS :

#### A TALE.

'T WAS 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 enter'd A, a grave, broad, solemn wight,  
But, ah ! deform'd, dishonest to the sight !  
His twisted head look'd backward on his way,  
And flagrant from the scourge, he grunted *ai* !

Reluctant, E stalk'd 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 assign'd.



The cobweb'd Gothic dome resounded Y !  
 In sullen vengeance, I disdain'd reply :  
 The pedant swung his felon cudgel round,  
 And knock'd the groaning vowel to the ground !

In rueful apprehension enter'd O,  
 The wailing minstrel of despairing woe ;  
 The inquisitor of Spain the most expert  
 Might there have learnt new mysteries of his art :  
 So grim, deform'd, with horrors entering, U  
 His dearest friend and brother scarcely knew !

As trembling U stood staring all aghast,  
 The pedant in his left hand clutch'd him fast ;  
 In helpless infants' tears he dipp'd his right,  
 Baptised him *eu*, and kick'd him from his sight.

---

PROLOGUE,

FOR MR. SUTHERLAND'S BENEFIT NIGHT, DUMFRIES.

**W**HAT needs this din about the town o' Lon'on,  
 How this new play and that new sang is comin' ?  
 Why is outlandish stuff sae meikle courted ?  
 Does nonsense mend like whisky, when imported ?  
 Is there nae poet, burning keen for fame,  
 Will try to gie 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 unsheath'd the sword  
'Gainst mighty England and her guilty lord ;  
And after mony a bloody, deathless doing,  
Wrench'd 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 arms.  
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 Douglasses 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 patronise, 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 o' 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 ony speir,  
“ Wha’s aught thae chieles maks 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, shore 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.

---

### ELEGY ON THE YEAR 1788.

#### A SKETCH.

**F**OR lords or kings I dinna mourn,  
E’en let them die—for that they’re born !  
But oh ! prodigious to reflec’ !  
A towmont, sirs, is gane to wreck !  
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 tint a head,  
And my auld toothless Bawtie’s dead ;  
The tulzie’s 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 claw'd a midden.

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

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

Observe the very nowte and sheep,  
How dowf and dowie now they creep;  
Nay, even the yirth itsel does cry,  
For Embrugh wells are grutten 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 hand-cuff'd, 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.

---

## DELIA.—AN ODE.

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

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-enamour'd busy bee  
The rosy banquet loves to sip ;  
Sweet the streamlet's limpid lapse  
To the sun-brown'd 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 parch'd with love !

---

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF SIR JAMES  
HUNTER BLAIR.

**T**HE lamp of day, with ill-presaging glare,  
Dim, cloudy, sunk beneath the western wave ;  
The inconstant blast howl'd through the darkening air,  
And hollow whistled in the rocky cave.

Lone as I wander'd by each cliff and dell,  
Once the loved haunts of Scotia's royal train ;



Or mused where limpid streams, once hallow'd, well,  
Or mouldering ruins mark the sacred fane.

The increasing blast roar'd round the beetling rocks,  
The clouds, swift-wing'd, 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 mix'd her wailings with the raving storm.

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

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

" My patriot son fills an untimely grave ! "  
With accents wild and lifted arms she cried ;  
" Low lies the hand that oft was stretch'd to save,  
Low lies the heart that swell'd 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 vanish'd with the sleeping blast.

---

#### THE POET'S WELCOME TO HIS ILLEGITIMATE CHILD.

**T**HOU'S welcome, wean ! mishanter 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  
Ti-ta or daddy.

Wee image of my bonny Betty,  
I fatherly will kiss and daut 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 o' hell.

What though they ca' me fornicator,  
And tease my name in kintra clatter :

---

The mair they talk I'm kenn'd the better,  
                                           E'en let them clash !  
 An auld wife's tongue's a feckless matter  
                                           To gie ane fash.

Sweet fruit o' mony a merry dint,  
 My funny toil is now a' tint,  
 Sin thou came to the world asklent,  
                                           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 hae thee,  
 And tak the counsel I shall gie 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,  
 And thy poor worthless daddy's spirit,  
                                           Without his failin's ;  
 'Twill please me mair to hear and see't,  
                                           Than stockit mailins.

---

EPISTLE TO JOHN GOUDIE, KILMARNOCK,  
 ON THE PUBLICATION OF HIS ESSAYS.

**O** GOUDIE ! terror of the Whigs,  
 Dread of black coats and reverend wigs,  
 Sour Bigotry, on her last legs,  
                                           Girnin', looks back,  
                                           X-x

Wishin' the ten Egyptian plagues  
Wad seize you quick.

Poor gapin', glowerin' Superstition,  
Waes me ! she's in a sad condition ;  
Fie ! bring Black Jock, her state physician,  
To see her water :  
Alas ! there's ground o' great suspicion  
She'll ne'er get better.

Auld Orthodoxy long did grapple,  
But now she's got an unco ripple :  
Haste, gie her name up i' the chapel,  
Nigh unto death ;  
See how she fetches at the thrapple,  
And 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 gies strong presumption  
Death soon will end her.

'Tis you and Taylor are the chief  
Wha are to blame for this mischief ;  
But gin the Lord's ain folk gat leave,  
A toom tar-barrel  
And twa red peats wad send relief,  
And end the quarrel.

---

## EPISTLE TO JAMES TAIT OF GLENCONNER.

**A**ULD 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 !  
Smith, wi' his sympathetic feeling,  
And Reid, to common sense appealing.  
Philosophers have fought and wrangled,  
And meikle Greek and Latin mangled,  
Till wi' their logic-jargon tired,  
And in the depth of science mired,  
To common sense they now appeal,  
What wives and wabsters see and feel.  
But, hark ye, frien' ! I charge you strictly,  
Peruse them, and return them quickly,  
For now I'm grown sae cursèd douce  
I pray and ponder butt the house ;  
My shins, my lane, I there sit roastin',  
Perusing Bunyan, Brown, and Boston ;  
Till by-and-by, if I haud on,  
I'll grunt a real gospel-groan :  
Already I begin to try it,  
To cast my e'en up like a pyet,  
When by the gun she tumbles o'er,  
Fluttering and gasping in her gore :  
Sae shortly you shall see me bright,  
A burning and a shining light.

My heart-warm love to guid auld Glen,  
The ace and wale 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,  
And views beyond the grave comfort him.  
His worthy family, far and near,  
God bless them a' wi' grace and gear !

My auld school-fellow, preacher Willie,  
The manly tar, my Mason Billie,  
And Auchebay, I wish him joy ;  
If he's a parent, lass or boy,  
May he be dad, and Meg the mither,  
Just five-and-forty years thegither !  
And no forgetting Wabster Charlie,  
I'm tauld he offers very fairly.  
And, Lord, remember Singing Sannock,  
Wi' hale-breeks, saxpence, and a bannock.  
And next my auld acquaintance, Nancy,  
Since she is fitted to her fancy ;  
And her kind stars hae airted till her  
A good chiel wi' a pickle siller.  
My kindest, best respects I sen' it,  
To cousin Kate and sister Janet ;  
Tell them, frae me, wi' chiels 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.  
And lastly, Jamie, for yoursel,  
May guardian angels tak a spell,  
And steer you seven miles south o' hell :  
But first, before you see heaven's glory,  
May ye get mony a merry story,  
Mony a laugh, and mony a drink,  
And aye eneugh o' needfu' clink.

Now fare ye weel, and joy be wi' you ;  
For my sake this I beg it o' you,  
Assist poor Simson a' ye can,  
Ye'll find him just an honest man :  
Sae I conclude, and quat my chanter.  
Yours, saint or sinner,

ROB THE RANTER.

---

EPISTLE FROM ESOPUS TO MARIA.

**F**ROM 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 poll'd,  
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 tartan'd lines,  
For other wars, where he a hero shines ;  
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, 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 call'd 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 unmix'd his eager pen—  
And pours his vengeance in the burning line,  
Who christen'd thus Maria's lyre divine ;  
The idiot strum of vanity bemused,  
And even the abuse of poesy abused ;  
Who call'd her verse a parish workhouse, made  
For motley, foundling fancies, stolen or stray'd ?)

A workhouse ! ha, that sound awakes my woes,  
And pillows on the thorn my rack'd 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 vermin'd gipsies litter'd 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 these 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 deciphering defy,  
And thy still matchless tongue, that conquers all  
reply.

---

## THE FAREWELL.

**F**AREWELL, 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 heart-rending throe !  
Farewell, my Bess ! 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 !

---



EPISTLE TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ. OF FINTRY,  
ON THE CLOSE OF THE DISPUTED ELECTION BETWEEN  
SIR JAMES JOHNSTON AND CAPTAIN MILLER, FOR  
THE DUMFRIES DISTRICT OF BOROUGHES.

**F**INTRY, 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 Drumlanrig bears,  
Wha left the all-important cares  
Of princes and their darlin's ;  
And, bent on winning borough touns,  
Came shaking hands wi' wabster louns,  
And kissing barefit carlins.

Combustion through our boroughs rode,  
Whistling his roaring pack abroad,  
Of mad, unmuzzled lions ;  
As Queensberry "buff and blue" unfurl'd,  
And Westerha' and Hopetoun hurl'd  
To every Whig defiance.

But cautious Queensberry left the war,  
The unmanner'd dust might soil his star ;  
Besides, he hated bleeding :  
But left behind him heroes bright,  
Heroes in Cæsarean fight,  
Or Ciceronian pleading.

Oh, for a throat like huge Mons-Meg,  
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'Murdo and his lovely spouse  
(Th' enamour'd laurels kiss her brows !)  
    Led on the Loves and Graces :  
She won each gaping burgess' heart,  
While he, all-conquering, play'd his part  
    Among their wives and lasses.

Craigdarroch led a light-arm'd corps ;  
Tropes, metaphors, and figures pour,  
    Like Hecla streaming thunder :  
Glenriddel, skill'd in rusty coins,  
Blew up each Tory's dark designs,  
    And bared the treason under.

In either wing two champions fought,  
Redoubted Staig, who set at nought  
    The wildest savage Tory :  
And Welsh, who ne'er yet flinch'd his ground,  
High-waved his magnum-bonum round  
    With Cyclopean fury.

Miller brought up the artillery ranks,  
The many-pounders of the Banks,  
    Resistless desolation !  
While Maxwellton, that baron bold,  
Mid Lawson's port entrench'd his hold,  
    And threaten'd worse damnation.

To these, what Tory hosts opposed ;  
With these, what 'Tory warriors closed,  
          Surpasses my discribing :  
Squadrons extended long and large,  
With furious speed rush'd 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 grinn'd—pale Terror roar'd  
As Murther at his thrapple shored,  
          And Hell mix'd in the brulzie !

As Highland crags by thunder cleft,  
When lightnings fire the stormy lift,  
          Hurl 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 Bullers.

Lo, from the shades of Death's deep night,  
Departed Whigs enjoy the fight,  
          And think on former daring :  
The muffled murderer of Charles  
The Magna-Charta flag unfurls,  
          All deadly gules its bearing.

Nor wanting ghosts of Tory fame,  
 Bold Scrimgeour follows gallant Grahame,  
     Auld Covenanters shiver.  
 (Forgive, forgive, much-wrong'd Montrose !  
 While death and hell engulf thy foes,  
     Thou liv'st on high for ever !)

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 !

Oh, that my een were flowing burns !  
 My voice a lioness that mourns  
     Her darling cub's 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 Hopetoun falls, the generous brave !  
     And Stewart, 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.

Additional verse in Closeburn MS.—

Now for my friends' and brethren's sakes,  
And for my dear-loved Land o' Cakes,  
          I pray with holy fire :  
Lord, send a rough-shod troop o' hell,  
O'er a' wad Scotland buy or sell,  
          To grind them in the mire !

---

*EPISTLE TO MAJOR LOGAN.*

**H**AIL, thairm-inspirin', rattlin' Willie !  
Though Fortune's road be rough and hilly,  
To every fiddling, rhyming billie,  
          We never heed,  
But tak it like the unback'd filly,  
          Proud o' her speed.

When idly goavan whiles we saunter,  
Yirr Fancy barks, awa' we canter,  
Up hill, down brae, till some mischanter,  
          Some black bog-hole,  
Arrests us, then the scaith and banter  
          We're forced to thole.



Hale be your heart ! hale be your fiddle !  
Long may your elbuck jink and diddle,  
To cheer you through the weary widdle  
O' this wild warl',  
Until you on a cummock driddle  
A grey-hair'd carl.

Come wealth, come poortith, late or soon,  
Heaven send your heart-strings aye in tune,  
And screw your temper-pins aboon,  
A fifth or mair,  
The melancholious, lazy croon  
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 clegs o' feeling stang  
Are wise or fool !

My hand-waled curse keep hard in chase  
The harpy, hoodock, purse-proud race,  
Wha count on poortith as disgrace—  
Their tuneless hearts !  
May fireside discords jar a base  
To a' their parts !

But come, your hand, my careless brither,  
I' th' ither warl'—if there's anither,  
And that there is I've little swither  
About the matter—  
We cheek for chow shall jog thegither,  
I'se ne'er bid better.

We've faults and failings—granted clearly,  
We're frail backsliding mortals merely,  
Eve's bonnie squad, priests wyte them sheerly  
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,  
The witching, curs'd, delicious blinkers  
Hae put me hyte,  
And gart me weet my waukrife winkers,  
Wi' girnin' spite.

But by yon moon !—and that's high swearin'—  
And every star within my hearin' !  
And by her een wha was a dear ane !  
I'll ne'er forget ;  
I hope to gie the jads a clearin'  
In fairplay yet.

My loss I mourn, but not repent it,  
I'll seek my pursie whare I tint it,  
Ance to the Indies I were wonted,  
Some cantrip hour,  
By some sweet elf I'll yet be dinted,  
Then, *Vive l'amour !*

*Faites mes baise-mains respectueuses,*  
 To sentimental sister Susie,  
 And honest Lucky ; no to roose 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.

### ADDRESS OF BEELZEBUB

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY.

**L**ONG life, my Lord, and health be yours,  
 Unscaith'd by hunger'd Highland boors ;  
 Lord grant nae duddie desperate beggar,  
 Wi' dirk, claymore, or rusty trigger,  
 May twin 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  
 Than 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 cowe the rebel generation,  
And save the honour o' the nation ?  
They and be damn'd ! what right hae they  
To meat or sleep, or light o' day ?  
Far less to riches, power, or freedom,  
But what your Lordship likes to gie them ?

But hear, my Lord ! Glengarry, hear !  
Your hand's owre light on them, I fear ;  
Your factors, grieves, trustees, and bailies,  
I canna say but they do gaylies ;  
They lay aside a' tender mercies,  
And tirl the hallions to the birses ;  
Yet while they're only poind't and herriet,  
They'll keep their stubborn Highland spirit ;  
But smash them ! crash them a' to spails !  
And rot the dyvors i' the jails !  
The young dogs, swinge them to the labour ;  
Let wark and hunger mak them sober !  
The hizzies, if they're aughtlins fawsont,  
Let them in Drury Lane be lesson'd !  
And if the wives and dirty brats  
E'en thigger at your doors and yetts,  
Flaffan wi' duds and grey wi' beas',

Y-y

Frichtin' awa' your deucks and geese,  
 Get out a horsewhip or a jowler,  
 The langest thong, the fiercest growler,  
 And gar the tatter'd gypsies pack  
 Wi' a' their bastarts 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' assign'd your seat,  
 'Tween Herod's hip and Polycrate—  
 Or if you on your station tarro,  
 Between Almagro and Pizarro,  
 A seat, I'm sure ye're weel deservin't ;  
 And till ye come—Your humble servant,  
BEELEZEBUB.

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## EPISTLE TO HUGH PARKER.

**I**N this strange land, this uncouth clime,  
 A land unknown to prose or rhyme ;  
 Where words ne'er crost the Muse's heckles,  
 Nor limpet in poetic shackles ;  
 A land that Prose did never view it,  
 Except when drunk he stachert through it ;  
 Here, ambush'd by the chimla 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,  
 Enhuskèd 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 kenn'd face but Jenny Geddes.  
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 howes or hillocks never stumbled,  
And late or early never grumbled ?  
Oh, had I power like inclination,  
I'd heeze thee up a constellation,  
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' thy 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 weet our whistle,  
Tak this excuse for nae epistle.

ROBERT BURNS.

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## POETICAL INVITATION TO MR. J. KENNEDY.

NOW, Kennedy, if foot or horse  
E'er bring you in by Mauchline Corse,  
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 callant bring me news  
That you are there ;  
And if we dinna haud a bouze  
I'se ne'er drink mair.

It's no I like to sit and swallow,  
Then like a swine to puke and wallow ;  
But gie me just a true good fallow,  
Wi' right ingine,  
And spunkie, ance to make us mellow,  
And then we'll shine.

Now, if ye're ane o' warld's folk,  
Wha rate the wearer by the cloak,  
And sklent on poverty their joke,  
Wi' bitter sneer,  
Wi' you no friendship will I troke,  
Nor cheap nor dear.

But if, as I'm informèd weel,  
Ye hate, as ill's the very deil,  
The flinty heart that canna feel—  
Come, sir, here's tae you !  
Hae, there's my haun', I wiss you weel,  
And guid be wi' you.

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

LATE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF SESSION.

**L**ONE 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, abandon'd 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, distain'd 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-wrong'd Misery pours the 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.

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### THE KIRK'S ALARM.

A SATIRE.

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, Doctor Mac,  
 You 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 John is still deaf  
To the Church's relief,  
And Orator Bob is its ruin.

D'rymple mild, 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 and twa.

Rumble John, Rumble John,  
Mount the steps wi' a groan,  
Cry the book is wi' heresy cramm'd ;  
Then lug out your ladle,  
Deal brimstone like adle,  
And roar every note of the damn'd.

Simper James, 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 soon lead,  
For puppies like you there's but few.

Singet Sawney, Singet Sawney,  
Are ye herding the penny,  
Unconscious what evil awaits ?  
Wi' a jump, yell, and howl,  
Alarm every soul,  
For the foul thief is just at your gates.



Daddy Auld, Daddy Auld,  
There's a tod in the fauld,  
A tod meikle waur than the clerk ;  
Though ye downa do skaith,  
Ye'll be in at the death,  
And if ye canna bite, ye can bark.

Davie Bluster, Davie Bluster,  
For a saunt if ye muster,  
The corps is no nice of recruits ;  
Yet to worth let's be just,  
Royal blood ye might boast,  
If the ass were the king of the brutes.

Jamie Goose, Jamie Goose,  
Ye hae made but toom roose,  
In hunting the wicked lieutenant ;  
But the doctor's your mark,  
For the Lord's haly ark  
He has cooper'd and ca'd a wrang pin in't.

Poet Willie, Poet Willie,  
Gie 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——

Andro Gouk, 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 hae a calf's head o' sma' value.

Barr Steenie, Barr Steenie,  
What mean ye, what mean ye ?  
If ye'll meddle nae mair wi' the matter,  
Ye may hae some pretence  
To havins and sense,  
Wi' people wha ken ye nae better.

Irvine side, Irvine side,  
Wi' your turkey-cock pride,  
Of manhood but sma' is your share ;  
Ye've the figure, 'tis true,  
Even your faes will allow,  
And your friends they daur grant ye nae mair.

Muirland Jock, Muirland Jock,  
When the Lord 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, Holy Will,  
There was wit i' your skull  
When ye pilfer'd 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 storehouses o' lead.

Poet Burns, Poet Burns,  
 Wi' your priest-skelping turns,  
 Why desert ye your auld native shire,  
 Your Muse is a gipsy—  
 E'en though she were tipsy,  
 She could ca' us nae waur than we are.

---

## WILLIE CHALMERS.

MADAM—

**W**I' braw new branks, in mickle pride,  
 And eke a braw new brechan,  
 My Pegasus I'm got astride,  
 And up Parnassus pechin ;  
 Whiles owre a bush, wi' downward crush,  
 The doited beastie stammers ;  
 Then up he gets, and off he sets,  
 For sake o' Willie Chalmers.

I doubt na, lass, that weel-kenn'd name  
 May cost a pair o' blushes ;  
 I am nae stranger to your fame,  
 Nor his warm-urgèd wishes.  
 Your bonnie face, sae mild and sweet,  
 His honest heart enamours,  
 And, faith, ye'll no be lost a whit,  
 Though waired on Willie Chalmers.

Auld Truth hersel might swear ye're fair,  
 And Honour safely back her,  
 And Modesty assume your air,  
 And ne'er a ane mistak' her :

And sic twa love-inspiring een  
Might fire even holy palmers ;  
Nae wonder, then, they've fatal been  
To honest Willie Chalmers.

I doubt na Fortune may you shore  
Some mim-mou'd pouter'd priestie,  
Fu' lifted up wi' Hebrew lore,  
And band upon his breastie :  
But oh ! what signifies to you  
His lexicons and grammars :  
The feeling heart's the royal blue,  
And that's wi' Willie Chalmers.

Some gapin', glowrin' country laird  
May warsle for your favour ;  
May claw his lug, and straik his beard,  
And hoast up some palaver.  
My bonnie maid, before ye wed  
Sic clumsy-witted hammers,  
Seek Heaven for help, and barefit skelp  
Awa' wi' Willie Chalmers.

Forgive the bard ! my fond regard  
For ane that shares my bosom  
Inspires my Muse to gie'm his dues,  
For deil a hair I roose him.  
May powers aboon unite you soon,  
And fructify your amours—  
And every year come in mair dear  
To you and Willie Chalmers.

---

## ELEGY ON PEG NICHOLSON.

**P**EG Nicholson was a good bay mare  
As ever trod on airn ;  
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 even the skin.

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 oppress'd and bruised she was,  
As priest-rid cattle are.

## REMORSE.

## A FRAGMENT.

**O**F 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, worser far, the pangs of keen remorse—  
The torturing, gnawing consciousness of guilt—  
Of guilt, perhaps, where we've involved others,  
The young, the innocent, who fondly lov'd 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 agonising throbs;  
And, after proper purpose of amendment,  
Can firmly force his jarring thoughts to peace?  
Oh, happy, happy, enviable man!  
Oh, glorious magnanimity of soul!

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## VERSES

ON AN EVENING VIEW OF THE RUINS OF LINCLUDEN  
ABBAY.

**Y**E 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,  
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-arch'd 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 breeds the pile around ?  
'Tis the soft-chanted choral song,  
Whose tones the echoing aisles prolong :  
Till, thence return'd, 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 moon's beam,  
Suspend their dashing oars to hear  
The holy anthem, loud and clear ;  
Each worldly thought a while forbear,  
And mutter forth a half-form'd prayer.  
But, as I gaze, the vision fails,  
Like frost-work touch'd by southern gales ;

The altar sinks, the tapers fade,  
And all the splendid scene's decay'd.  
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 drown'd amid the mournful scream,  
That breaks the magic of my dream :  
Roused by the sound, I start and see  
The ruin'd, sad reality !

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## TO THE OWL.

**S**AD bird of night, what sorrow calls thee forth,  
To vent thy plaints thus in the midnight hour ?  
Is it some blast that gathers in the north,  
Threat'ning to nip the verdure of thy bower ?  
Is it, sad owl, that Autumn strips the shade,  
And leaves thee here, unshelter'd and forlorn ?  
Or fear that Winter will thy nest invade ?  
Or friendless Melancholy bids thee mourn ?  
Shut out, lone bird, from all the feather'd train,  
To tell thy sorrows to th' unheeding gloom ;  
No friend to pity when thou dost complain,  
Grief all thy thought, and solitude thy home.  
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, unskill'd, 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, oppress'd with misery,  
Lending his ear to some condoling tale.

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### TRAGIC FRAGMENT.

**A**LL devil as I am, a damnèd wretch,  
A harden'd, 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, despis'd, abandon'd vagabonds,  
 Whom Vice, as usual, has turn'd 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 endow'd 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.

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 PROLOGUE,

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

**W**HEN 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 impassion'd 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—

Z-z



Hail, CALEDONIA ! name for ever dear !  
Before whose sons I'm honour'd 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 Empire's fluctuating course ;  
Here Douglas forms wild Shakespeare into plan,  
And Harley rouses all the god in man.  
When well-form'd 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.

O Thou, dread Power ! whose empire-giving hand  
Has oft been stretch'd to shield the honour'd 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 !

*ADAM A—'S PRAYER.*

**G**UDE pity me, because I'm little,  
For though I am an elf o' mettle,  
And can, like ony wabster's shuttle,  
Jink there or here ;  
Yet, scarce as lang's a guid kail whittle,  
I'm unco queer.

And now thou kens our woefu' case,  
For Geordie's jurr we're in disgrace,  
Because we've stang'd her through the place,  
And hurt her spleuchan,  
For which we daurna show our face  
Within the clachan.

And now we're dern'd in glens and hollows,  
And hunted, as was William Wallace,  
Wi' constables, those blackguard fellows,  
And sodgers baith ;  
But gude preserve us frae the gallows,  
'That shamefu' death !

Auld, grim, black-bearded Geordie's sel,  
Oh, shake him o'er the mouth o' hell,  
There let him hing, and roar, and yell,  
Wi' hideous din,  
And if he offers to rebel,  
Just heave him in.

When Death comes in, wi' glimmering blink,  
And tips auld drunken Nanse the wink,  
May Hornie gie her doup a clink  
Ahint his yett,  
And fill her up wi' brimstone drink,  
Red, reeking, het.

There's Jockie and the haveril Jenny,  
Some devils seize them in a hurry,

356 *ELEGY ON ROBERT RUISSEAU.*

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And waff them in the infernal wherry  
Straught through the lake,  
And gie their hides a noble curry,  
Wi' oil of aik.

As for the jurr, poor worthless body,  
She's got mischief enough already ;  
Wi' stangèd hips, and buttocks bluidy,  
She's suffered sair ;  
But may she wintle in a woodie  
If she whore mair.

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*ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT RUISSEAU.*

**N**OW Robin lies in his last lair,  
He'll gabble rhyme nor sing nae mair,  
Could 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 learn'd and clark,  
Ye roosed him than !

