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SONGS & LYRICS
OF ROBERT BURNS

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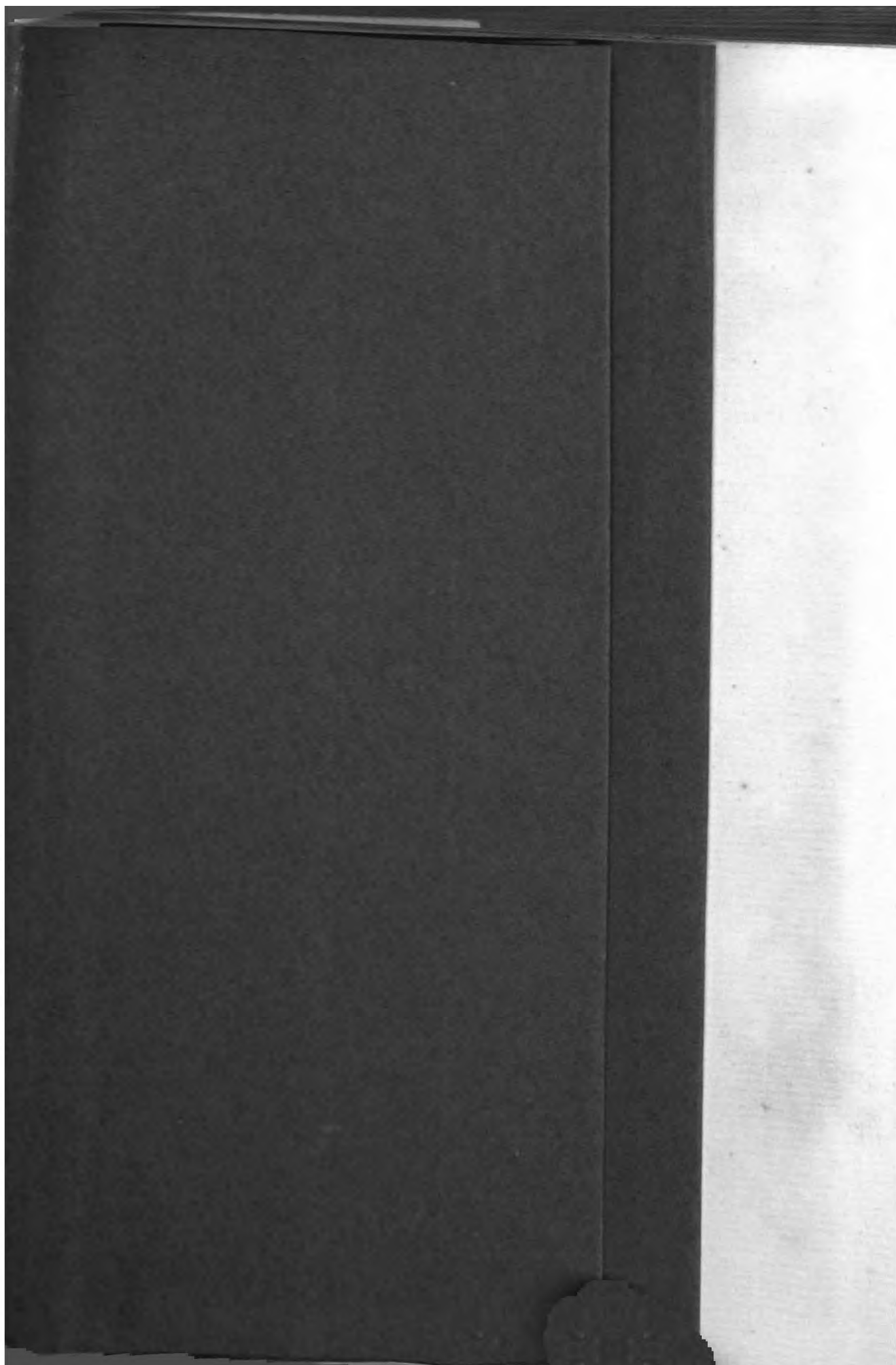


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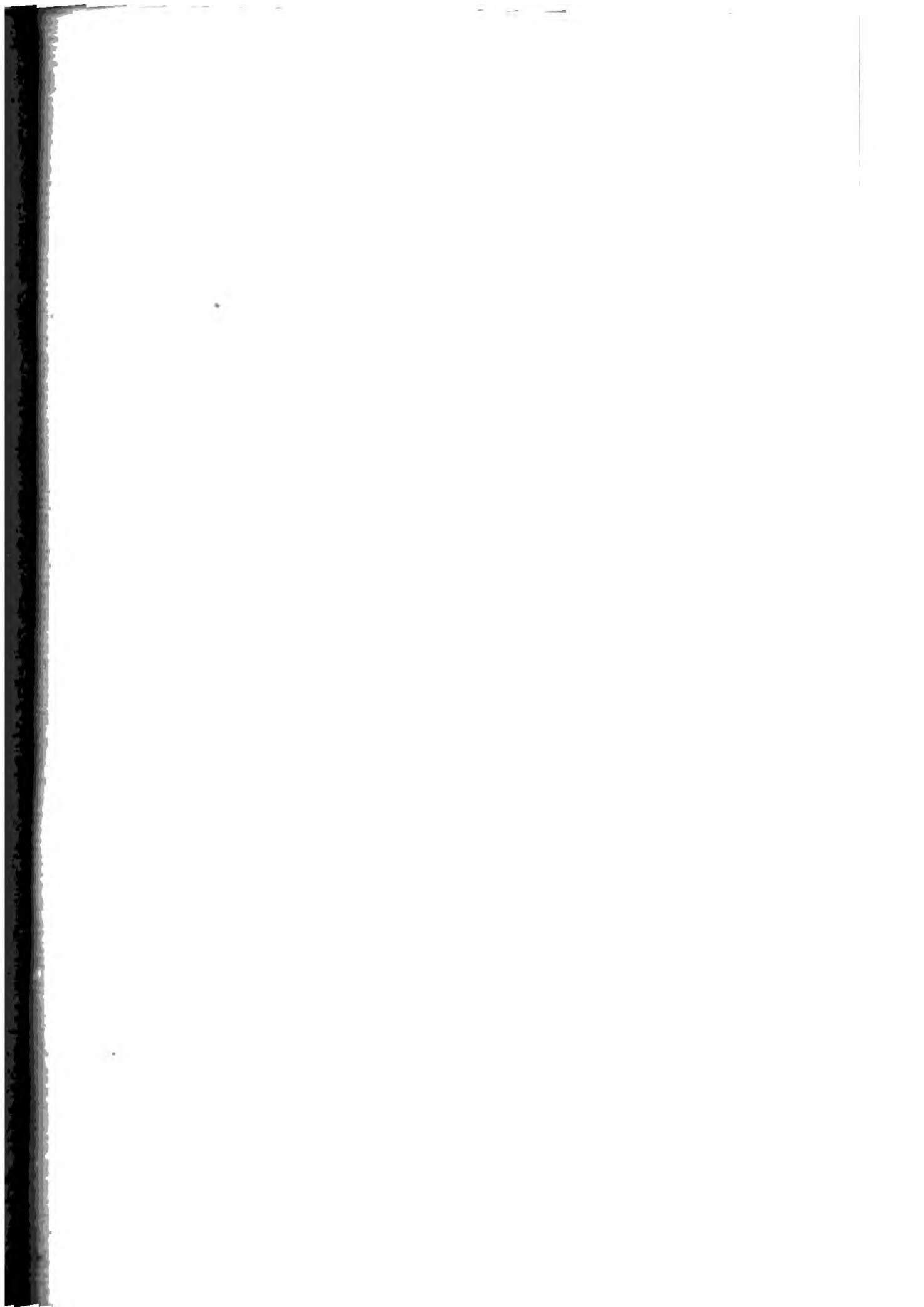
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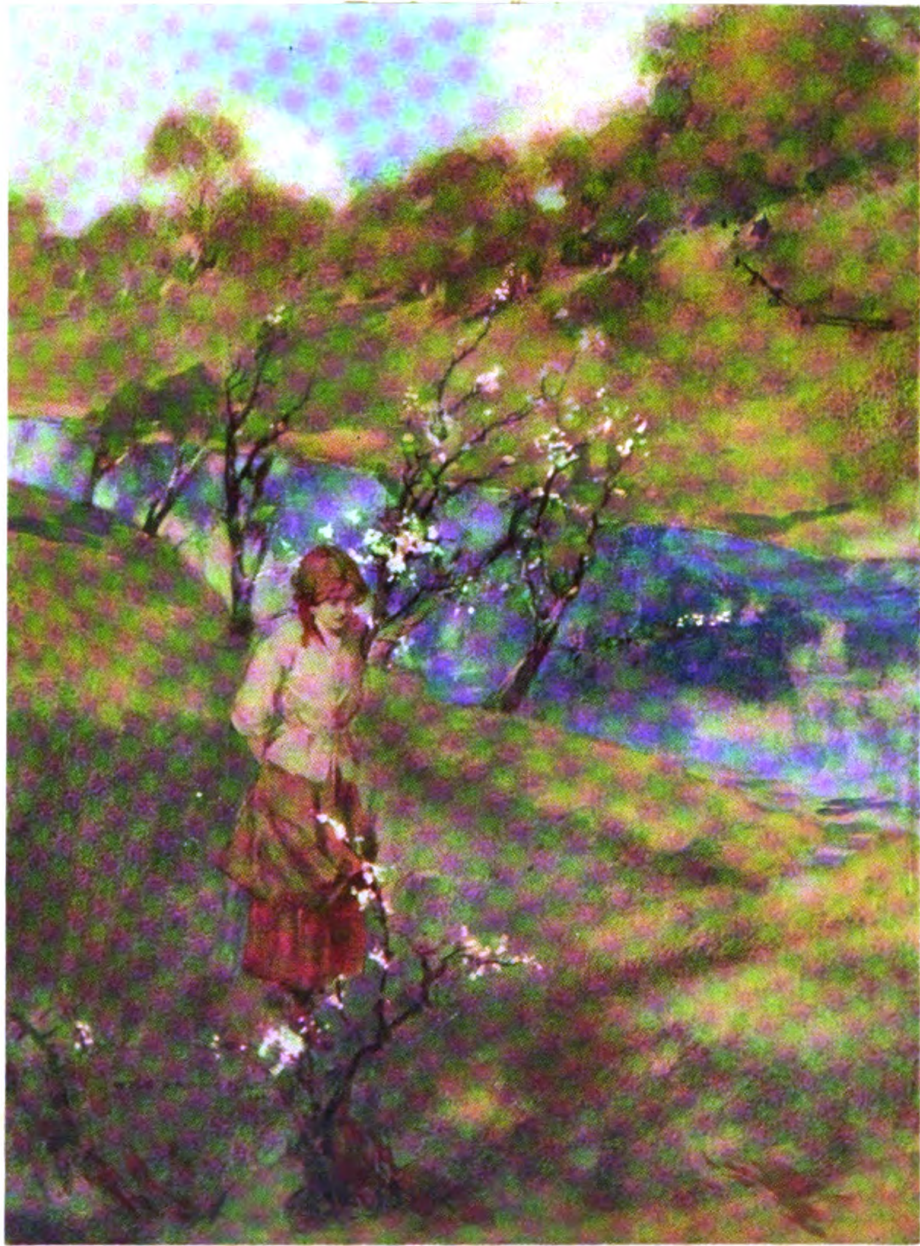




SONGS AND LYRICS
OF ROBERT BURNS



Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, oriented vertically on the right side of the page.



Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair ?

R. PURVE



PHILIP LEA
LONDON SECRET, W.



Turner, J.M.W. Rain, Steam, and Great Central Railway
1844. Oil on canvas. The Art Institute of Chicago.

SONGS AND LYRICS
OF ROBERT BURNS
SELECTED AND EDITED BY
WILLIAM MACDONALD, WITH
ILLUSTRATIONS BY W. RUSSELL
FLINT AND R. PURVES FLINT



LONDON: PHILIP LEE WARNER
7 GRAFTON STREET, W. MDCCCXI



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Introduction

“OF Burns, the man and poet, what is there left to be said?” Thus, some forty years ago, the author of *Dream-thorp*. It was a question unworthy of so acute a mind. Of Burns, the man and poet, there is everything still to be said, for a double reason. First, because a great poet, as he stands for ever in the view of mankind, becomes in effect a part of nature as it exists for each succeeding generation : unremoved as the sun from the heavens, and, like the sun, an eternal subject for remark. What was said of the world or the weather yesterday was good ; but to-day must speak for itself out of its own fullness, its own sense of being and receiving. Energy, beneficence, and beauty, in the natural and moral world alike, are a challenge essentially unprecedented wherever their presence is immediately felt ; and there can be no lack of novelty—or, better still, no need for it—in the answer of the heart, if sincerely phrased, to whatever touches it with life.

But, beyond the fact that explicit appraisement is the indefeasible ritual of response to certain kinds of experience, there is another reason why there can be no finality in our estimate of the works or life of a great genius. In the subject of discourse itself there is no finality ; and no fixity save a permanence of changing power. Here is a difference, advising us that we are in the presence of another order of reality than that to which

the term "natural" can be usefully applied. For there is a sense in which we may say that the sun and moon are very old. The first day and night sufficed to reveal them, and they showed the same face to Adam that has been looked on by all his posterity. But great poets, those heavenly lights of the mental world, endure without this sameness, and emit to later generations rays and influences that were unsuspected by the earlier. A genius may be discovered—may be descried and acclaimed—in a day; but is hardly to be found out or estimated in a thousand years. The bequeathment of great poets is a text only to be elucidated by the whole experience of the race. Therefore the history of criticism in regard to them is the record not so much of a continuous approximation as of many diverse approaches to what is never quite reached and never can be. As the race goes on evolving through new conditions of consciousness or states of mind—approaching experience in each epoch with a new kind of make-up or adjustment of its faculties, a new system of prepossessions, sensations, tendencies, and therefore aptitudes for perception—the former outlines of things dissolve, and new values, gradually or suddenly, become apparent in the classics long since ranged and estimated.

We say it is the result of a new way of looking at them, as though there were a particular virtue in our mental act, or we were better men than our fathers. But in this we partly deceive ourselves. We have little choice as to how we shall look at them; and might look at a billiard-ball a million different ways, or in as many moods, without adding to our knowledge. The truth is rather that the work of a great poet has from the first reserves of meaning and value to which almost no limit can be set. We

may say 'tis because infinity, timelessness, and transcendence are of its very essence, making it inexhaustibly implicit ; or because the incalculable intuition of the poet waives the accidents and amendments of common thinking and overleaps the slow process of experience to arrive at knowledge by the fiat of intelligence. Certain it is that the poet is always there in advance, waiting for the generations to come along and find him out a little further than has yet been done. But these reserves of meaning and value are not to be yielded up until the conditions for their effective appearance, for their proper play and functioning, have been instated. What history does, in relation to literature, is to instate these conditions. Then ensues, gradually or suddenly, our "new way of looking at the poet"—be it Homer or Dante, be it Shelley or Burns—which is but our recognition of the emergence of aspects, lineaments, virtues hitherto kept latent by the crowding of thoughts and prepossessions in us that could not co-exist with that particular way of perceiving the truth about these names, that particular compass of comprehension regarding them. The change may be more or less conscious and episodic, and may have a wider or narrower range. It may involve only an æsthetic difference, a difference in the sensations which the cultured of an age have in approaching a given poet ; in the anticipative connotation or keying of the mind for that encounter. But also it may involve an entire re-reading of text and man ; an intellectual reconstitution or re-orientation in which the Poet seems to be found afresh, or seen as it were for the first time—all pre-judgments regarding him magically put away—in his proper being and loneliness *sub specie æternitatis*.

If this be so : if the total value and significance of the

great poet is thus a changing function and goes on evolving through the generations out of the matrix of an unchanging text, then there is no poet to whom the observation can be more relevant than it must be to Burns. Manifestly, there are poets in whom the sheerly intellectual content to be exploited is greater and more various, and who, therefore, should have a longer course to run before they are overtaken by the uninspired mind in its pursuit of wisdom. Yet though their course be long, the track may, in a sense, be narrow. Their lives and works may present a simple issue, and lie within the placid marches of letters with a certain aloofness, a certain abstractness and destitution. Here, as so often, Shakespeare is the supreme example. His riches are infinite even in a numerical sense, and their appraisal may well be endless. Yet in their totality they are an uncomplicated fact of literature. There is nothing implicated in them of the scene and circumstances of their production ; of the humanity of an historical man ; of the tragedy of a life. Of the life of Shakespeare, indeed, nobody knows anything save his biographers, who have elaborated or created it for themselves by discussing in great detail and with exhaustive knowledge the prevailing absence of information on the subject. Therefore an estimate or interpretation of this Poet, which took cognizance of nothing outside of his works—which treated them as though they had been found in a dream, and barely assumed the historic fact of Christendom—would not at once appear to be leaving untouched any topic of pressing relevance, and might easily set the limits of our knowledge, our understanding of them and him, a little farther on.

But how different is the case of Burns! So far from

being an uncomplicated fact of literature, the works of this Poet were early immeshed in a very plexus of real life interest, commentary, adoption, misjudgment and enhancement, which is now an instant element of their connotation and almost a part of their substance. Across the singing voice of the Poet as we listen, and almost overbearing it, come the reverberated choruses of a million Burns Suppers and Commemorations, adding volume, but also confusion, to the song. Across the survey, in which we try to see his works with disinterested gaze, comes pointing the broad insistent finger of traditional emphasis upon what was of supreme interest to one body of readers long ago because the subject-matter was close to their own lives and *they* knew all about it, and to another body of readers because it was curious information about a distant social world, and even more worthy of remark than a fly in amber. Nor is this all. For not only is the national estimation in which he is held become a part of his works, entering into the mental context and determining the bias of attention, but works and estimation alike are invaded, darkened, and perplexed by the cloud of moral prepossessions and agitations which have wreaked themselves upon the subject of his life. To view Burns with detachment, and yet with understanding, is impossible; to be certain that we are viewing him at all is by no means easy. For the effect of all the nationalising fervour which has made him its own, and of all the moralising impertinence which has failed to apprehend him and yet refused to let him go, is to keep before our eyes an approved subject for a certain kind of discourse (also, alas! approved), but not the poetry in its essential power, and not the Poet in the human integrity of his nature, in the

true thought-and-feeling quality of his mortal days. In a case like this, therefore, history has another task to perform besides developing the values and relevancies implicit in a body of poetry. It has, as a condition precedent, to secure for that body of poetry the relative degree of detachment, of disencumbrance from real-life impositions and prejudgments, which belongs to every other supreme poetical bequest. It has to secure for the Poet and his poetry alike—since in this case the man and the singer, the singer and the song, are beyond all example one—such a deliverance from many things, beginning with the too engrossing spirit of locality, as would enable them to be seen in their true place and aspect among the universals of literature, unobscured at last by the falsifications of reflection and the crudities of accident.

That the poetry of Burns, thus liberated, must have its career of evolving value—that it is even now entering upon its clearer stages—hardly admits of intelligent doubt. It would be strange indeed if a genius so autochthonous, if a personality so powerful and so perilously charged, so real and yet symbolic, were to abide always where the first bewildered essays of opinion placed them. In truth, they have abided there too long. The most interesting life in Scotland has hitherto found no sufficient biographer. Lockhart's early sketch is still virtually un superseded, though it was historically impossible that Lockhart in 1828 could be more than provisionally excellent and honourably imperfect. In the way of interpretation nothing of any moment was done—nothing, that is, which did not leave the subject where it was before—till the appearance in 1896 of Henley's highly disturbing *Essay on Burns*; a masterpiece loudly execrated by fools, but a homage none

the less noble, and a service hardly the less great, for being a little warped in the rendering. And if it seem strange that the Peasant Poet (somewhat misleadingly so called) and the social rebel should be indebted to an Edinburgh lawyer and son of the manse for the most sympathetic and dignified telling of his life-story, it might seem stranger still that the patriotic and revolutionary spirit who wrote *Scots Wha Hae* and *A Man's a Man for a' That* should be indebted to an intransigent Englishman (and no lover of democrats and levellers, perdy!) not only for the first illuminating study of his literary origins and personal achievement, but for the first full sympathetic perception of the tragedy presented by his over-worked, under-nourished, playless, joyless, prospectless adolescence, with all its inspiration mute and waiting. But in Henley the man was even more abounding than the Englishman, and the man-of-letters was equal to both; and he found in Burns such true matter, of humanity and literature, as all his head and heart delighted to take hold of. So his work has done more to de-provincialise Burns—to dissipate, I mean, the subtly limiting and obscuring presupposition of provincialism with which many even of the worthy were wont to approach him—than all the annual panegyrics of the Poet's own countrymen, most of which, to be sure, have wrought to quite contrary effect. It off-sets with abundance the sad dereliction of Matthew Arnold, whose poor, pained, academic, and sniffy sensations in the presence of Burns and his world “of Scotch morals, Scotch religion and Scotch drink” is equalled, among the illustrious stupidities of great critics, only by Sainte-Beuve's inability to see in Balzac anything more than a vulgar

and voluminous writer of romances for the ruck of contemporary readers.

Only, the liberating process so powerfully initiated by Henley has farther to go. It is much to have Burns organically related to a vernacular literature centuries old, and shown as the destined, and in himself richly-endowed, heir of a great inheritance of song which was his to appropriate, re-express, glorify, and complete. It is much to have it established that while there was nothing accidental about his genius, save as all genius is an accident, so there was, in the final result and value, nothing local about his quality and work save as Pindar and Aristophanes were also local. But it still remains that for the aspirational, resistant, and prophetic spirit of Burns—for the positive forces of his thought and character, and for the moral, social, and political declarations laid up in his work—there should be effected a similar liberation from the prejudgments which localise, belittle, and obscure. It has yet to become a matter of common recognition that the appearance of Burns was more than an event in the history of Scottish national sentiment, or in the history of English literature ; that it was an event of moment in the history of human ideals. The lad who was born in Kyle had a message for all Europe, and a message that must reach Cathay in time. So far from being local, he stands among the figures of literature, boldly and in a kind of isolation, as more than any other that ever lived and sang, the sheer Man. By his contact with the primeval occupation, by the splendour of his spirit and the courage of his heart, not least by the final ruin of his life, he is indeed the symbol of Man inhabitant of the earth, as we contrast him with the gods, as we oppose him to Destiny. Standing

thus in the midst of Nature, yet with a clear inlook upon Society—as it were with one hand upon the plough and another on the pen—he saw that the supreme injustice of the world was not in its acts but its estimates ; not in the inequalities of worldly fortune, but in the accumulations of arrogance and the distribution of contempt. He had himself been delivered only by the blossoming of his genius from the doom which would have consigned him to obscurity as one of “ the common herd ” whose qualities are of no consequence ; and he resented the wrong for the sake of all those who have no genius to deliver them. He grudged no man his honours or his possessions. But he grudged that the exaltation of some should be made the debasement of many, and that worth in a poor man should be worth so little in the world’s view of him. Against the oceanic vulgar vice in which society welters, against the habitual easy refusal of respect, his heart was hot with generous protest, as against the spirit that denies and would make abject. And so his message is a claim, unique in its quality and power, that the man of independent mind is kingly in his degree, and that the man of good heart—“ the heart compassionate and kind ”—is the nearest image of God.

Those two affirmations are unique in their quality and power because they are unadulterated and underived ; and because his whole life, in other respects so casually conducted, maintained an unwavering simple loyalty to their spirit from beginning to end. His assertion of the sovereignty of free manhood, though made in vindication of the poor, was inspired by no ignoble envy of the rich ; nor was it conveyed from anybody’s scheme of political thinking. It was the natural forthright consequence of his

own vivid intuition of what it was to be a man, and of what were the inalienable moral properties that must go with that estate. Thus it had a broader groundwork of reason than philosophy can compass, and was a deliverance of truth not from an accumulation of examples, but from the very centre of mind. So, too, with his exaltation of the Kind Heart above all the crowd of formal virtues. It was no mere reaction from the religious teaching of his place and day, which scowled so darkly upon human nature and made merit in the sight of God—goodness it could hardly be called—consist in a preservative acidulation of the soul and a sacred lack of sympathy with sinners. It was a protest also against the moral system and judgments of society at large; which set a high value on the qualities by which a man gets and keeps, but leave out of estimate and precept alike the qualities in which humanity fulfils itself. From this it continually follows, and is everywhere to be seen, that the “respected citizen” may be a man in whom there is very little to respect and still less to like; nor is it for any other reason than this that the word respectability has come to mean a destitution of passions, sympathies and ideals, the salted dead-sea level of social safety and acceptance. But Burns, with his lot cast among simple people, stood where he could see the *primordia rerum* of the moral and social qualities at work in their essential character and aspect, and could judge more securely than the world judges of their worth and drift. Therefore it is with the observation of a peasant and the authority of a poet—of one, that is, whose sonship to Nature is an immediate reality, importing a command of secret sources and an added intellectual power—that he confronts the religious and the worldly

wise alike to tell them that neither in what the one chiefly inculcates nor in what the other chiefly rewards, but just in the primal kindness of heart that may be found among the simple and even among sinners, lies the superlative attribute and exercise of human nature: that in which it continues Nature's own beneficence: that in which it approaches the Divine: that without which it falls short of being human, for all its virtues.

By the valiance of those two thoughts animating, even when only implicitly presented, the whole body of his work—and by the convincing tragic token of a life which, whatever its confusions and faults, was always starkly independent and compassionately kind—Burns has made a contribution distinctly his own to the world's wealth of ideals, and of the memories that keep them alive. What makes the power of this ideal, and its distinctness as an historical event, is that it was so utterly personal and of the Poet himself: therefore, so inspired and authoritative. The message which he conveys comes to him with the sweep of his genius and the certainty of his imperishable song, and in its delivery he speaks as a chosen son of Nature for and to all mankind. In this sense he speaks as no other poet in the world has spoken. Standing in the new-ploughed earth, or following the occupations of seed-time or harvest, he seems to be at the beginning and at the centre; and has a consciousness of universal man, of the labours and seedtimes and harvests of the ages and the climes, denied to the poets, however great, for whom the world is primarily a scene of cities, and not of earth and sky and man, alone in the fields with the primal curse and solace. In this regard he stands nearer to Millet than any other name in Art or Poetry. Therefore it was fitting

that one who was so much and potently and generously a man should have written, near the close of his life and in a time of repression and alarm, that vindication—*A Man's a Man for a' That*—which (*pace* Mr. Henley) has been not inaptly called “the Marseillaise of Humanity.” Fitting also that he should have written, again near the close of his life, that song of human friendship and recollected childhood—*Auld Lang Syne*—which seems destined to become the common possession of the nations, as it is already the one thing in our literature which draws the hearts of all English-speaking people throughout the world, and not seldom their tears.

And of course the ideal has its other aspect: “I bring not peace, but a sword.” With the judgment which saw those two truths clear, he was empowered to put upon its trial the existing system, in as far as it denied them. Being very sure of the essentials, he could look upon the good and evil in current practice with the nihilistic audacity of the great saints or the great sinners, of those who have nothing further to gain or nothing further to lose. Hence the unsurpassed energy of his satire, an energy only possible to a mind working with consummate detachment, a mind that sat very loose to all the dead-horse ideas on which the creatures of convention get carried safely through life. But of this particular splendour and peril of his powers the less need here be said because few of the poems in the present selection have been taken from among those which illustrate it. Enough to know that the spirit of Burns remains in the world, as both a glory and a defence; and that many usurping polities will crumble, and many moral incrustations dissolve, when required to meet the challenge of those two

conceptions of the sovereignty of the man whose soul is free and the supremacy of kindness. Nor can we doubt that as time goes on, and the idea of his life emerges more clearly out of the chaos in which we see it now, he will be recognised as not only an apparitional personality and a great lyric poet, but as a largely symbolic being also, expressing and embodying the powers in the world which for ever save and for ever beneficently destroy : one of whom it will seem but sense to say—

A Poet, he was brought to birth
By Nature's self or Mother Earth,
And had for his prophetic sire
The Force that sets the Sun on fire.

Meanwhile, something may be said of the present selection, if only to explain it. The title *Songs and Lyrics* has been chosen in preference to *Songs and Poems*, that the reader, having been warned, might have no cause for feeling aggrieved at the absence of a number of pieces which are constants in other collections, however variously made up. The term "lyric" has, by one notable example of its use and by subsequent custom, become the accepted general name for poems of many kinds having for their common characters only the quality of expressing feeling or reflection (or the quality, in the case of an anecdote or incident, of producing feeling or reflection) and comparative brevity. It includes readily *O Were I on Parnassus Hill* and the *Lament for Glencairn* ; that astonishing rapture of words and humour and gusto the *Address to a Haggis*, and that wise and tender yet withal scathing *Address to the Unco Guid*. But it cannot be made to cover such an exact description of local custom as *Halloween* ; such a satirical and controversial description of local

events as *The Holy Fair* and others of its kind ; nor even *Death and Doctor Hornbook*, effective though it is and instinct with the poet's humorous malice. These things are splendid as literature, are indeed unequalled of their kind ; but their quality is mainly intellectual rather than poetical in the more absolute sense, and the interest which they appeal to (and appeal powerfully) is not mainly our interest in poetry. In any case they are in all the collections, and I have considered that by their omission on this occasion it would be possible to render a service to Burns, and to lovers of poetry, which has not yet been rendered. A selection, I have thought, might be made in which the Poet himself, and not the social scenery of which he was a curious observer, nor the alien matters with which he took up, should be the pervading presence in the book, making it continuously lyrical, personal, and human. This, it was obvious, would mean some uncustomary omissions. But experiment has proved that it means also a sudden enlargement of the range of choice among things truly and beautifully poetical. The poetic wealth of Burns seems, indeed, not diminished but enriched by the surrender of that part which issues rather from the general energy of his genius than from those faculties of the soul in which he is distinctively a poet. Certainly there is no dearth, either of value or variety, the range of Burns over the different forms and occasions of poetry being, upon the whole, unique. Shakespeare implicitly contains everything, yet he has contributed to but a few of the forms ; while the moderns (like Wordsworth) who have attempted to exemplify the different varieties of poetical composition are lyrically or morally monotonous. *Cælum non animum mutant.*

But Burns is as vivid and variable as Nature, and at full power in a wide variety of domains and achievements. Within the domain of Song alone (his peculiar and unquestioned kingdom) his variety is almost as astonishing as his wealth. All the moods of love especially are his: the wistful subjection of soul in *Mary Morison*, the lover's complaint against fortune and the world in *Poortith Cauld*, or against the harder fate of a mistress's disdain in *Maun I still on Menie doat* (these two with exquisite touches of humour on the way!); the grief of parting in *Æ Fond Kiss*, with its unutterable regret, and in *Go, Bring to Me* with the tumult of the future sounding in it; or again, love's sense of its own nobility and security rising even above that grief in *My Love is Like a Red Red Rose* (the greatest love song, which is really a *song*, in literature), or the glossing preoccupation of the enamoured heart, to which every natural beauty is but an illustration and reminder, in *Of a' the Airts* (than which there is nothing in the world of song more single, perfect and sincere), or the unanswerable argument of maidens' reasons when they love in *Tam Glen* and *The Gallant Weaver*, or the comedy of courtship in *Duncan Gray* and *Last May a Braw Wooer*, and whatever of joyous and equivocal there might be in the idyll of *Duncan Davison*, so realistic and so reticent. These are but samples of a stock to which only a long catalogue would do representative justice. The reader will at once think of *The Rigs of Barley* so triumphant and *The Lea Rig* so trusting, and of *Bonnie Doon*, with the sadness which has ensued from such trust—how often!—and of the echoing *Fareweel to Ballochmyle* with its atmosphere so large and lonely. But beyond these there is another order of love-song; of the love that has stood

the test of life and has increased in kindness as it has emerged from passion. Here we think of *John Anderson, my Jo*, a song for which every good man must bow his head to the memory of Burns. And near to it will be found in these pages a lyric with the same consecration—*The Cardin' o't*—not less perfect though less known. It summarises the human epic as lowly and kind folk know it, and is like “the still sad music of humanity,” telling of its affections, its toils, and the little wrongs that mean so much. And beyond these, again, there is another order of love song, in which the destinies enacted or the sorrows endured seem outside the limits of the world. Of this disembodied and metaphysical quality—rare in all literature outside of Shakespeare—are *Open the Door to Me, Oh*, in which we feel the presence of Nature and Time only as spectators of a human woe; and *Ay Waukin'*, with its haunting repetition, its immeasurable sense of want and waiting, and of the endless desolation that there may be for the soul within one summer day. But of the songs of Burns it is impossible to speak adequately, and I have spoken only of the love songs. There are others. Those devoted to convivial joy touch a point of glory in letters quite equalling that ever reached by the true devotee in life. *Willie Brewed a Peck o' Maut* tells of the escape of three mortal men, for the space of one night, from the dominion of Fate and from the common ignoble respect for the solar system; while in *Rattlin' Roarin' Willie* there are heroic reverberations, and the last verse shows us Willie seated on high—“at yon board en'”—in a mist of glory as though the guid companie were the gods themselves, and he in Asgard! As for the graver national theme, Burns's love of Scotland was so implicit and pervading,

that he rarely wrote upon it—apart from incidental allusions—even as a man, among all the things that he does for his wife and thinks for her, may rarely think of saying that he loves her. But *when* he wrote it was *Scots Wha Hae*; and that Jacobite lyric, *It was a' for our Rightfu' King*, in which the romantic and adventurous spirit of old Scotland, and its proscribed loyalties and lost causes early and late, quintessentialise into the immortal formula of heroic defeat :

Now a' is done that men can do
And a' is done in vain.

Of the Lyrics (other than songs) there is no room to speak at length, but the preceding argument renders this less necessary. They all converge to illustrate Burns's kindness and his love of all who were kind, his manly independence and his respect for that character in others. His kindness, indeed, passes beyond his own species to embrace all life, from the Daisy to the Devil, and even as a farmer he has no animosity against the Field Mouse. The Devil, indeed, he would not publicly encourage, though he would like him to escape the extreme penalty; but the Daisy and the Mouse he brings for good within the sympathies and almost within the circuit of human nature. They are fellow-travellers with him on the strange road of life and stand equally within the menace of calamity. We see the same humane, dissolving, imaginative aptitude in *The Farmer's Salutation* and the *Death of Poor Mailie*, pieces in which there is, however, a richness of humanity, involving many qualities besides sympathy, hardly to be described. The knowledge, the moral and social inwardness of the former, and in the latter the finely balanced

play of humour, never for an instant excessive where excess would have been easy and spoilt all, have hardly been equalled even by himself. The impulse which made him compassionate towards his fellow-creatures ranged him against those who habitually, and on peculiarly insufficient warrant, judged them harshly. Hence the *Address to the Unco Guid*, which would not have remained unwritten even had he never come personally within the range and shot of their malice. Hence also, in part, *Scotch Drink*, that plenary libation of soul in honour of those cordials, especially the supreme national one, which are as a divine fuel nourishing the glow of happiness when friend meets friend. The epistles to David Sillar and Lapraik and Simpson (to which I have affixed titles for this occasion)¹ admit us directly

¹ Namely, *The Riches of the Poor*, *An Offer of Friendship*, *An Exhortation to Davie*, *Poets for ever!* and *The Bards of Ayr*. A book of selections being in its nature an anthology, in which all the contents are there upon their individual merits as poetry, it seems right that each should have a title that carries some reference to its subject-matter. I have ventured upon this innovation in one or two other cases, with results which, I hope, will commend themselves to the judicious.

And here a word may be said about the arrangement of the contents, which is not chronological, yet anything but haphazard. The intention has rather been to make it lyrical and vital. I conceive that a collection like this, which is virtually an anthology gathered from the domain of a single poet, should as nearly as possible be itself a poem. That is, it should be so composed, so put together, that the reader may pass from number to number in the sequence as easily and naturally as he would pass from verse to verse of a single poem: even more easily and naturally, perhaps, from a continually renewed sense of refreshment, of slightly changed animation. But this effect is not to be achieved without taking pains. An editor who aims at it must be keenly and even anxiously observant of many values—of values constituted by metrical quality, subject matter, moral mood and so forth—in all the varieties of each and in their interactions. He must try to maintain continuity (the continuity of unflagging animation, interest and enjoyment in the act of reading) through variety and relief, and even through the occasional

into the presence of Burns in his familiar intercourse as the "social, friendly, honest man" beyond measure abundant. These were written while he was still an unprinted local poet, a man of mark among his neighbours, but marked also for misfortune and disgrace, and the future prospectless enough. But though he is cheering

sudden contrast which may express either a natural reaction and subsidence of mood, or an impetus of the poetic soul in fresh directions. Finally, while disregarding the mere time-order of composition (since the poem which best speaks the truth for a man's forty-sixth year may well have been written at twenty-one) he must yet try to suggest something of the tone of the poet's different life-periods, and these in their right order. If the attempt is at all successful, the resulting arrangement should not only do justice to each individual poem by a sympathetic setting, but should compass a general effect of unity and of personality. How far the series from *There was a Lad* to *Auld Lang Syne* realises this ideal it is not for me to say. Other things besides the ideal had claims to be considered, such as the proposed scope of the book and the need to distribute the illustrations reasonably through the volume. But I may say that from point to point it has only been after many re-readings and searching comparisons that I have finally decided whether *this* or *this* or *this* poem would most happily and economically follow *that* one; regard being also had to others that were yet to come. Felicity in the metrical transition was, it will be seen, the value predominantly considered in the earlier pages, while towards the close (I speak of the *Songs and Lyrics* section) there has been more conscious grouping of poems reinforcing one another in the expression or suggestion of a mood or colour-tone of the mind. I say predominantly; for both principles of arrangement, as well as those of relief and contrast, have been used throughout. Thus *Lassie wi' the Lint-White Locks*, *The Posie*, *My Lady's Gown*, and *The Daisy* (pp. 41-4) have an element in common—a certain refinement and gentleness of feeling—which brings them within the same moral key, diverse as they are. They breathe of flowers, independently of speaking of them. But naturally the principle of grouping has been more particularly used to suggest what I have called the colour-tone of the poet's mind at certain stages of his life, especially the later ones. And I permit myself to hope that the more the reader knows (understandingly) of Burns, the more will he find of what is essential and quintessential to any true account of the poet's later days suggested or recalled by the successive groupings with which our first and main section draws to a close.

others on, and dauntless himself, we can divine that it is fast becoming the dauntlessness of desperation, the indifference of pride. What Nature has given him renders him more keenly conscious of what his lot in life denies, and the gifts and the lack between them are working together to sink this splendid misplaced being, half Apollo and half Pan, among the waste of humanity in whom the light of purpose has gone out. Then came the Edinburgh triumph, and it saved him at least from that. It opened new vistas, and promised a large future. The vistas closed and the promise was not kept ; but in the course of being disappointed—in the course of encountering the successive misfortunes of the ten years remaining to him, who was then only twenty-seven—he added to his achievement nearly one-half of the whole. He wrote not only *Tam o' Shanter* and the thrice-noble *Lament for Glencairn*, but also the great bulk of his song work. And the result? Surely it is this: that all who read these pages to the end, to where the Muse of Scottish Song leaves him dreaming in the spence, must feel that the light in which she “fled away” has not itself fled, but remains for ever in his book, and he in the midst of it with the lyric crown still fresh from her hands.

WILLIAM MACDONALD.

[*Note.*—The following pages have been set up from the text of the Oxford Edition, for kind permission to use which thanks are due, and are heartily tendered, to Mr. Henry Frowde of the Oxford University Press].

Songs and Lyrics

THERE WAS A LAD

THERE was a lad was born in Kyle,
But what'n a day o' what'n a style
I doubt it's hardly worth the while
To be sae nice wi' Robin.

Robin was a rovin' boy,
Rantin' rovin', rantin' rovin';
Robin was a rovin' boy,
Rantin' rovin' Robin.

Our monarch's hindmost year but ane
Was five-and-twenty days begun,
'Twas then a blast o' Janwar win'
Blew hansel in on Robin.

The gossip keekit in his loof,
Quo' scho, Wha lives will see the proof,
This waly boy will be nae coof,
I think we'll ca' him Robin.

He'll hae misfortunes great and sma',
But aye a heart aboon them a';
He'll be a credit till us a',
We'll a' be proud o' Robin.

Poems of Robert Burns

But sure as three times three mak nine,
 I see by ilka score and line,
 This chap will dearly like our kin',
 So leeze me on thee, Robin.

Robin was a rovin' boy,
 Rantin' rovin', rantin' rovin';
 Robin was a rovin' boy,
 Rantin' rovin' Robin.

MARY MORISON

O MARY, at thy window be,
 It is the wish'd, the trysted hour!
 Those smiles and glances let me see,
 That make the miser's treasure poor:
 How blythely wad I bide the stoure,
 A weary slave frae sun to sun,
 Could I the rich reward secure,
 The lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
 The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
 To thee my fancy took its wing,
 I sat, but neither heard nor saw:
 Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
 And yon the toast of a' the town,
 I sigh'd, and said amang them a',
 'Ye are na Mary Morison.'

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
 Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?
 Or canst thou break that heart of his,
 Whase only faut is loving thee?

The Birks of Aberfeldy

3

If love for love thou wilt na gie,
At least be pity to me shown!
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison.

THE BIRKS OF ABERFELDY

Now simmer blinks on flowery braes,
And o'er the crystal streamlet plays,
Come let us spend the lightsome days
In the Birks of Aberfeldy.

Bonnie lassie, will ye go,
Will ye go, will ye go,
Bonnie lassie, will ye go
To the Birks of Aberfeldy?

While o'er their heads the hazels hing,
The little birdies blythely sing,
Or lightly flit on wanton wing
In the Birks of Aberfeldy.

The braes ascend like lofty wa's
The foaming stream deep-roaring fa's,
O'erhung wi' fragrant spreading shaws—
The Birks of Aberfeldy.

The hoary cliffs are crown'd wi' flowers,
White o'er the linns the burnie pours,
And rising, weets wi' misty showers
The Birks of Aberfeldy.

Poems of Robert Burns

Let fortune's gifts at random flee,
 They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me,
 Supremely blest wi' love and thee,
 In the Birks of Aberfeldy.

Bonnie lassie, will ye go,
 Will ye go, will ye go,
 Bonnie lassie, will ye go
 To the Birks of Aberfeldy?

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

WEE, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
 O what a panic 's in thy breastie!
 Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
 Wi' bickering brattle!
 I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee
 Wi' murd'ring pattle!

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

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may 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!

To a Mouse

5

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

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

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble !
Now thou 's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
 But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
 An' cranreuch cauld !

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain :
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
 Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain
 For promis'd joy.

Still thou art blest compar'd wi' me !
The present only toucheth thee :
But oh ! I backward cast my e'e
 On prospects drear !
An' forward tho' I canna see,
 I guess an' fear !

GO FETCH TO ME A PINT O' WINE

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
 An' fill it in a silver tassie ;
 That I may drink, before I go,
 A service to my bonnie lassie.
 The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith,
 Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the ferry,
 The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
 And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
 The glittering spears are rankèd ready ;
 The shouts o' war are heard afar,
 The battle closes thick and bloody ;
 But it's no the roar o' sea or shore
 Wad mak me langer wish to tarry ;
 Nor shout o' war that's heard afar,
 It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary.

MY LOVE IS LIKE A RED RED ROSE

My love is like a red red rose
 That's newly sprung in June :
 My love is like the melodie
 That's sweetly play'd in tune.

So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
 So deep in love am I :
 And I will love thee still, my dear,
 Till a' the seas gang dry.



seen by the back of their
heads and upon a hill.

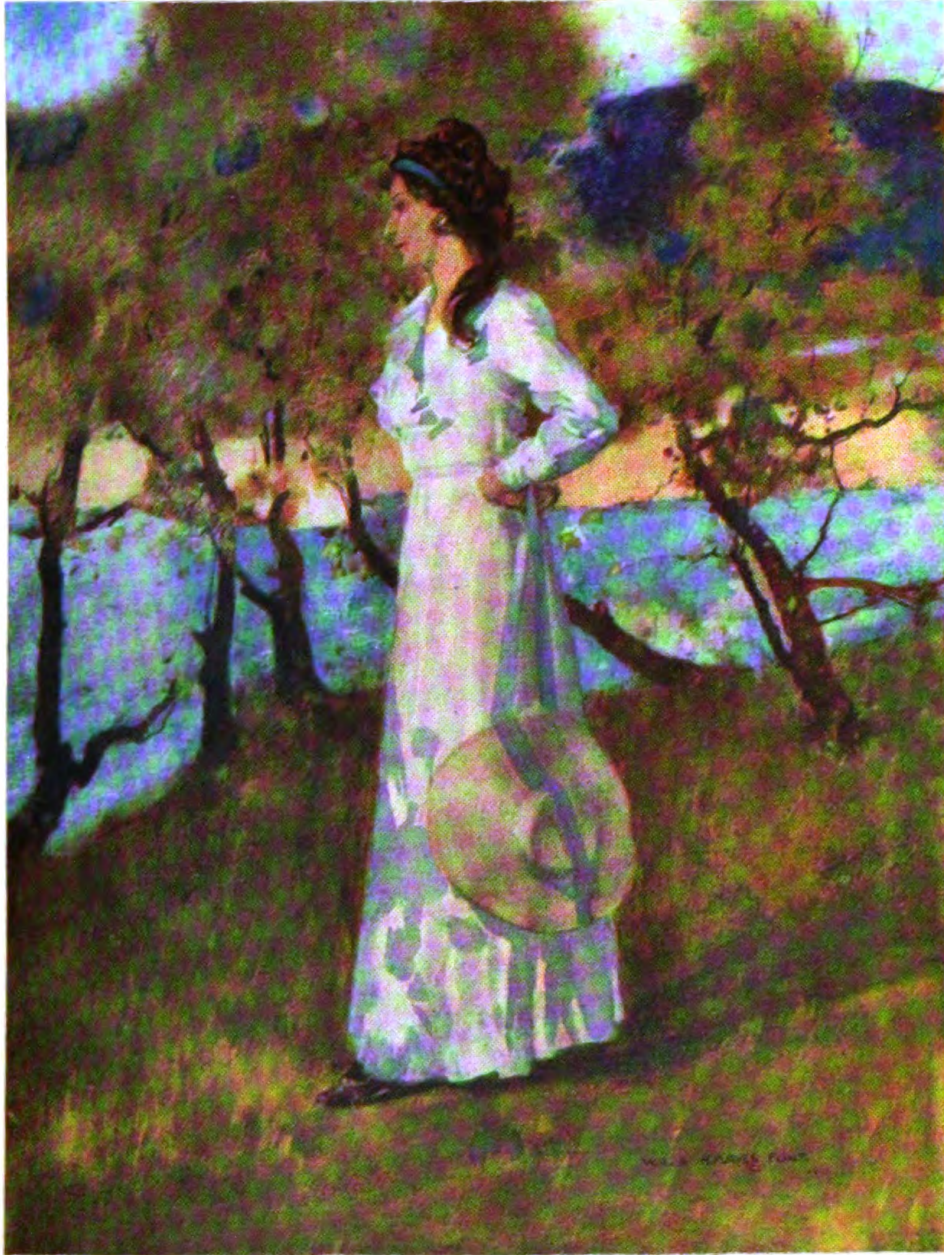
180

My love is like a red red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
My love is like the melody
That's sweetly play'd in tune.
So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I,
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

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So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I:
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.



She tripped by the banks of Earn
As light's a bird upon a thorn.

Blythe and Merry

7

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun :
And I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.
And fare thee weel, my only love,
And fare thee weel awhile !
And I will come again, my love,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

BLYTHE AND MERRY

By Ochtertyre there grows the aik,
On Yarrow banks the birken shaw ;
But Phemie was a bonnier lass
Than braes o' Yarrow ever saw.

Blythe, blythe and merry was she,
Blythe was she but and ben :
Blythe by the banks of Earn,
And blythe in Glenturit glen.

Her looks were like a flower in May,
Her smile was like a simmer morn ;
She trippèd by the banks of Earn
As light's a bird upon a thorn.

Her bonnie face it was as meek
As ony lamb's upon a lea ;
The evening sun was ne'er sae sweet
As was the blink o' Phemie's e'e.

The Highland hills I've wander'd wide,
And o'er the Lowlands I hae been ;
But Phemie was the blythest lass
That ever trod the dewy green.

HIGHLAND MARY

YE banks, and braes, and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasp'd her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow, and lock'd embrace,
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But oh! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft have kiss'd sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance,
That dwelt on me sae kindly!

Afton Water

9

And mould'ring now in silent dust,
That heart that lo'ed me dearly !
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

AFTON WATER

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise ;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Thou stock-dove whose echo resounds thro' the glen,
Ye wild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,
Thou green-crested lapwing, thy screaming forbear,
I charge you disturb not my slumbering fair.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighbouring hills,
Far mark'd with the courses of clear winding rills ;
There daily I wander as noon rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow ;
There oft as mild ev'ning weeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk shades my Mary and me.

Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides,
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides ;
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As gathering sweet flow'rets she stems thy clear wave.

Poems of Robert Burns

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays ;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

DAINTY DAVIE

Now rosy May comes in wi' flowers,
To deck her gay, green spreading bowers ;
And now comes in my happy hours,
To wander wi' my Davie.

Meet me on the warlock knowe,
Dainty Davie, dainty Davie,
There I'll spend the day wi' you,
My ain dear dainty Davie.

The crystal waters round us fa',
The merry birds are lovers a',
The scented breezes round us blaw,
A wandering wi' my Davie.

When purple morning starts the hare,
To steal upon her early fare,
Then through the dews I will repair,
To meet my faithfu' Davie.

When day, expiring in the west,
The curtain draws o' Nature's rest,
I flee to his arms I lo'e best,
And that's my ain dear Davie.

Poems of Robert Burns

When day is gane, and night is come,
 And a' folk boune to sleep,
 I think on him that's far awa',
 The lee-lang night, and weep,
 My dear,
 The lee-lang night, and weep.

WHEN I THINK ON THE HAPPY DAYS

WHEN I think on the happy days
 I spent wi' you, my dearie ;
 And now what lands between us lie,
 How can I be but eerie !

How slow ye move, ye heavy hours,
 As ye were wae and weary !
 It was na sae ye glinted by
 When I was wi' my dearie.

THERE'LL NEVER BE PEACE TILL
JAMIE COMES HAME

By yon castle wa', at the close of the day,
 I heard a man sing, tho' his head it was grey :
 And as he was singing, the tears down came—
 'There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

'The church is in ruins, the state is in jars,
 Delusions, oppressions, and murderous wars ;
 We dare na weel say 't, but we ken wha's to blame—
 There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

Kenmure's On and Awa

13

' My seven braw sons for Jamie drew sword,
And now I greet round their green beds in the yerd ;
It brak the sweet heart o' my faithfu' auld dame—
There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

' Now life is a burden that bows me down,
Sin' I tint my bairns, and he tint his crown ;
But till my last moment my words are the same—
There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.'

KENMURE'S ON AND AWA

O KENMURE'S on and awa, Willie !
O Kenmure's on and awa !
And Kenmure's lord's the bravest lord
That ever Galloway saw.

Success to Kenmure's band, Willie !
Success to Kenmure's band ;
There's no a heart that fears a Whig
That rides by Kenmure's hand.

Here's Kenmure's health in wine, Willie !
Here's Kenmure's health in wine ;
There ne'er was a coward o' Kenmure's blude,
Nor yet o' Gordon's line.

O Kenmure's lads are men, Willie !
O Kenmure's lads are men ;
Their hearts and swords are metal true—
And that their faes shall ken.

Poems of Robert Burns

They'll live or die wi' fame, Willie !
 They'll live or die wi' fame ;
 But soon, wi' sounding victorie,
 May Kenmure's lord come hame !

Here's him that's far awa, Willie !
 Here's him that's far awa ;
 And here's the flower that I love best—
 The rose that's like the snaw !

TO MARY IN HEAVEN

THOU lingering star, with lessening ray,
 Thou lov'st to greet the early morn,
 Again thou usherest in the day
 My Mary from my soul was torn.
 O Mary ! dear departed shade !
 Where is thy place of blissful rest ?
 Seest thou thy lover lowly laid ?
 Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast ?
 That sacred hour can I forget ?
 Can I forget the hallow'd grove,
 Where by the winding Ayr we met,
 To live one day of parting love ?
 Eternity will not efface
 Those records dear of transports past ;
 Thy image at our last embrace—
 Ah ! little thought we 'twas our last !
 Ayr gurgling kiss'd his pebbled shore,
 O'erhung with wild woods, thickening green ;
 The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
 Twin'd amorous round the raptur'd scene.



Ayr gurgling kiss'd his pebbled shores,
O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning & treeless.

"The love that's in my heart,
 I'll never give thee up, whilst
 I breathe, and thou art true;
 And when I'm laid in earth,
 My heart shall still be true,
 And in thy grave shall lie,
 Till I am laid to rest
 In some sweet place of rest."

THE VISION IN HEAVEN

"The light of heaven's blessing ray,
 The sun of glory's golden beam,
 The music of the angels' choir,
 The voice of thy dear soul was to
 My heart's sweet memory's shade!
 Where's thy place of blissful rest?
 In some thy lover lowly laid?
 Hast thou on the greens that rend his breast?
 That sacred hour can I forget?
 Can I forget the hallow'd grove,
 Where by the winding Ayr we met,
 To live one day of parting love?
 Eternity will not efface
 Those records dear of transports past;
 Thy image at our last embrace—
 Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!
 Ayr's gurgling kiss'd his pebbled shore,
 O'erhung with wild woods, thickening green;
 The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
 'Twon'd amorous round the raptur'd scene."



Ayr gurgling kiss'd his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thickening green.

Logan Braes

15

The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on ev'ry spray,
Till too too soon, the glowing west
Proclaim'd the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care !
Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary, dear departed shade !
Where is thy blissful place of rest ?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid ?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast ?

LOGAN BRAES

O LOGAN, sweetly didst thou glide
That day I was my Willie's bride ;
And years sinsyne hae o'er us run,
Like Logan to the simmer sun.
But now thy flow'ry banks appear
Like drumlie winter, dark and drear,
While my dear lad maun face his faes,
Far, far frae me and Logan Braes.

Again the merry month o' May
Has made our hills and valleys gay ;
The birds rejoice in leafy bowers,
The bees hum round the breathing flowers ;
Blithe morning lifts his rosy eye,
And evening's tears are tears of joy :
My soul, delightless, a' surveys,
While Willie's far frae Logan Braes.

Poems of Robert Burns

Within yon milk-white hawthorn bush,
 Amang her nestlings, sits the thrush ;
 Her faithfu' mate will share her toil,
 Or wi' his song her cares beguile :
 But I wi' my sweet nurslings here,
 Nae mate to help, nae mate to cheer,
 Pass widow'd nights and joyless days,
 While Willie's far frae Logan Braes.

O wae upon you, men o' state,
 That brethren rouse to deadly hate !
 As ye mak mony a fond heart mourn,
 Sae may it on your heads return !
 How can your flinty hearts enjoy
 The widow's tears, the orphan's cry ?
 But soon may peace bring happy days,
 And Willie hame to Logan Braes !

ON THE BATTLE OF SHERIFFMUIR

BETWEEN THE DUKE OF ARGYLE AND THE EARL OF MAR

'O CAM ye here the fight to shun,
 Or herd the sheep wi' me, man ?
 Or were you at the Sherra-muir,
 And did the battle see, man ?'
 I saw the battle, sair and teugh,
 And reeking-red ran mony a sheugh ;
 My heart, for fear, gae sough for sough,
 To hear the thuds, and see the cluds
 O' clans frae woods, in tartan duds,
 Wha glaum'd at kingdoms three, man.

On the Battle of Sheriffmuir

17

The red-coat lads, wi' black cockades,
To meet them were na slaw, man ;
They rush'd and push'd, and blude out-gush'd,
And mony a bouk did fa', man :
The great Argyle led on his files,
I wat they glancèd twenty miles :
They hough'd the clans like nine-pin kyles,
They hack'd and hash'd, while broadswords clash'd,
And thro' they dash'd, and hew'd and smash'd,
Till fey men died awa, man.

But had you seen the philibegs,
And skyrin tartan trews, man,
When in the teeth they dar'd our whigs,
And covenant true blues, man ;
In lines extended lang and large,
When baig'nets overpower'd the targe,
And thousands hasten'd to the charge,
Wi' Highland wrath they frae the sheath
Drew blades o' death, till, out of breath,
They fled like frightened doos, man.

'O how deil, Tam, can that be true ?
The chase gaed frae the north, man :
I saw mysel, they did pursue
The horsemen back to Forth, man ;
And at Dumblane, in my ain sight,
They took the brig wi' a' their might,
And straught to Stirling wing'd their flight ;
But, cursèd lot ! the gates were shut,
And mony a huntit, poor red-coat,
For fear amaist did swarf, man.'

Poems of Robert Burns

My sister Kate cam up the gate
 Wi' crowdie unto me, man ;
 She swore she saw some rebels run
 Frae Perth unto Dundee, man :
 Their left-hand general had nae skill,
 The Angus lads had nae guid-will,
 That day their neibors' blood to spill ;
 For fear, by foes, that they should lose
 Their cogs o' brose, they scared at blows,
 And hameward fast did flee, man.

They've lost some gallant gentlemen
 Amang the Highland clans, man ;
 I fear my lord Panmure is slain,
 Or fallen in whiggish hands, man :
 Now wad ye sing this double fight,
 Some fell for wrang, and some for right ;
 But mony bade the world guid-night ;
 Then ye may tell, how pell and mell,
 By red claymores, and muskets' knell,
 Wi' dying yell, the tories fell,
 And whigs to hell did flee, man.

DUNCAN GRAY

DUNCAN GRAY came here to woo,
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't,
 On blythe Yule night when we were fou,
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
 Maggie coost her head fu' heigh,
 Look'd asklent and unco skeigh,
 Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh ;
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan Gray

19

Duncan fleech'd, and Duncan pray'd ;

Ha, ha, the wooing o't,

Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig,

Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan sigh'd baith out and in,

Grat his een baith bleer't and blin',

Spak o' lowpin o'er a linn ;

Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Time and chance are but a tide,

Ha, ha, the wooing o't,

Slighted love is sair to bide,

Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Shall I, like a fool, quoth he,

For a haughty hizzie die ?

She may gae to—France for me !

Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

How it comes let doctors tell,

Ha, ha, the wooing o't,

Meg grew sick as he grew haill,

Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Something in her bosom wrings,

For relief a sigh she brings ;

And O, her een they spak sic things !

Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan was a lad o' grace,

Ha, ha, the wooing o't,

Maggie's was a piteous case,

Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan couldna be her death,

Swelling pity smoor'd his wrath ;

Now they're crouse and cantie baith !

Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Poems of Robert Burns

MY NANNIE O

BEHIND yon hills where Lugar flows,
 'Mang moors an' mosses many O,
 The wintry sun the day has clos'd,
 And I'll awa' to Nannie O.

The westlin wind blaws loud an' shill,
 The night's baith mirk and rainy O ;
 But I'll get my plaid, an' out I'll steal,
 An' owre the hill to Nannie O.

My Nannie's charming, sweet, and young :
 Nae artfu' wiles to win ye O :
 May ill befa' the flattering tongue
 That wad beguile my Nannie O.

Her face is fair, her heart is true,
 As spotless as she's bonnie O :
 The opening gowan, wat wi' dew,
 Nae purer is than Nannie O.

A country lad is my degree,
 An' few there be that ken me O ;
 But what care I how few they be,
 I'm welcome aye to Nannie O.

My riches a's my penny-fee,
 An' I maun guide it cannie O ;
 But warl's gear ne'er troubles me,
 My thoughts are a' my Nannie O.

Our auld Guidman delights to view
 His sheep an' kye thrive bonnie O :
 But I'm as blythe that hauds his pleugh,
 An' has nae care but Nannie O.

The Rigs o' Barley

21

Come weel, come woe, I care na by,
I'll tak what Heav'n will send me O ;
Nae ither care in life have I,
But live, an' love my Nannie O.

THE RIGS O' BARLEY

It was upon a Lammas night,
When corn rigs are bonnie,
Beneath the moon's unclouded light
I held awa to Annie :
The time flew by wi' tentless heed,
Till 'tween the late and early,
Wi' sma' persuasion she agreed
To see me thro' the barley.

The sky was blue, the wind was still,
The moon was shining clearly ;
I set her down wi' right good will
Amang the rigs o' barley ;
I kent her heart was a' my ain ;
I loved her most sincerely ;
I kissed her owre and owre again
Amang the rigs o' barley.

I locked her in my fond embrace ;
Her heart was beating rarely ;
My blessings on that happy place,
Amang the rigs o' barley !
But by the moon and stars so bright,
That shone that hour so clearly,
She aye shall bless that happy night
Amang the rigs o' barley.

Poems of Robert Burns

I hae been blythe wi' comrades dear ;
 I hae been merry drinking ;
 I hae been joyfu' gatherin' gear ;
 I hae been happy thinking :
 But a' the pleasures e'er I saw,
 Tho' three times doubled fairly,
 That happy night was worth them a',
 Among the rigs o' barley.

Corn rigs, an' barley rigs,
 An' corn rigs are bonnie :
 I'll ne'er forget that happy night,
 Among the rigs wi' Annie.

GREEN GROW THE RASHES

THERE 's nought but care on ev'ry han',
 In ev'ry hour that passes O ;
 What signifies the life o' man,
 An' 'twere na for the lasses O.

Green grow the rashes O,
 Green grow the rashes O ;
 The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
 Are spent among the lasses O !

The warly race may riches chase,
 An' riches still may fly them O ;
 An' tho' at last they catch them fast,
 Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them O.

But 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 !

A Winter Night

23

For you sae douce, ye sneer at this,
Ye're nought but senseless asses O :
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,
He dearly lov'd the lasses O.

Auld nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes O ;
Her prentice han' she tried on man,
An' then she made the lasses O.

A WINTER NIGHT

WHEN biting Boreas, fell and dour,
Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bow'r ;
When Phœbus gies a short-liv'd glow'r,
Far south the lift,
Dim-dark'ning thro' the flaky show'r
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, thro' the mining outlet bocked,
Down headlong hurl ;

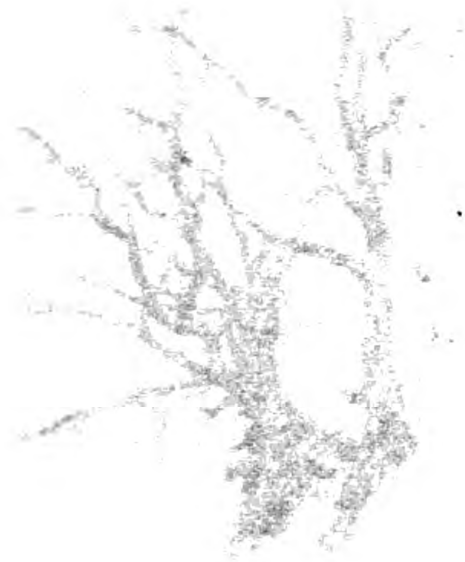
List'ning the doors an' winnocks rattle,
I thought me on the ourie cattle,
Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle
O' winter war,
And thro' the drift, deep-lairing, sprattle
Beneath a scar.

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 cow'r thy chittering wing,
 An' close thy e'e ?

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

Now Phœbe, in her midnight reign,
 Dark muff'd, 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 heav'n-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 !



When biting Boreas, fell and fell,
Sharp shivers thro' his bones grow'd.

Poems of Robert Burns

 'Ye hae a hame, wee, h!; less thing!
 Ye hae a hame, merry months o' spring,
 Ye hae a hame to hear thee sing,
 What comes o' thee?
 Ye hae a hame, wee, h!; less thing!
 Ye hae a hame, merry months o' spring,
 Ye hae a hame to hear thee sing,
 What comes o' thee?
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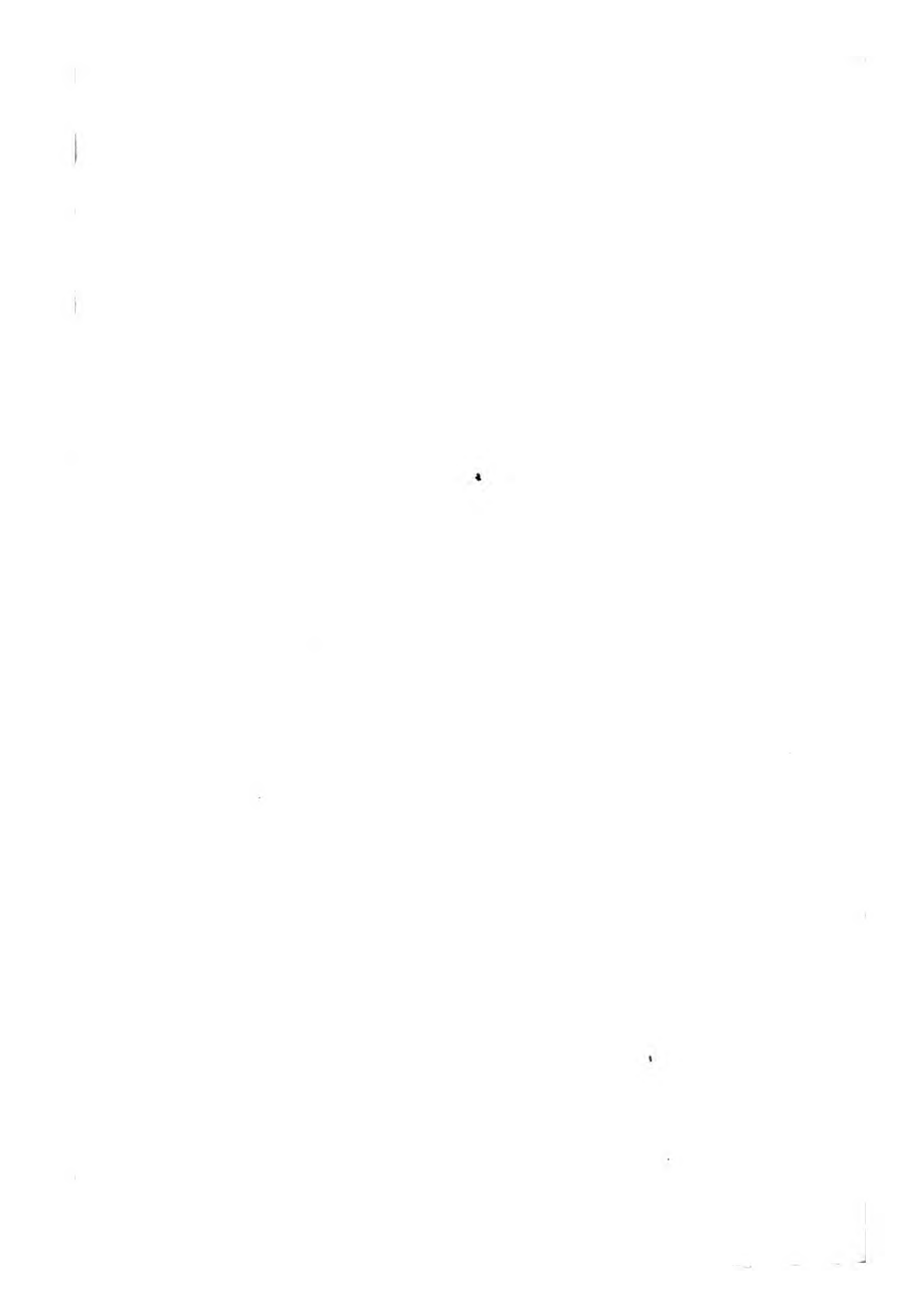
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 Ye hae a hame, merry months o' spring,
 Ye hae a hame to hear thee sing,
 What comes o' thee?

 Ye hae a hame, wee, h!; less thing!
 Ye hae a hame, merry months o' spring,
 Ye hae a hame to hear thee sing,
 What comes o' thee?
 Ye hae a hame, wee, h!; less thing!
 Ye hae a hame, merry months o' spring,
 Ye hae a hame to hear thee sing,
 What comes o' thee?

 '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 heave'n-illumina'd man on brother man bestows!
 See how Oppression's iron grip,
 Grievous Ambition's gory hand,
 See how they like blood-hounds from the slip,
 Vex, want, and murder o'er a land!



When biting Boreas, fell and dour,
Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bow'r.



A Winter Night

25

Ev'n in the peaceful rural vale,
Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale
How pamper'd Luxury, Flatt'ry by her side,
The parasite empoisoning her ear,
With all the servile wretches in the rear,
Looks o'er proud property, extended wide ;
And eyes the simple rustic hind,
Whose toil upholds the glitt'ring show,
A creature of another kind,
Some coarser substance, unrefin'd,
Plac'd for her lordly use thus far, thus vile, below.

Where, where is Love's fond, tender throe,
With lordly Honour's lofty brow,
The pow'rs 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 pray'rs !
Perhaps this hour, in mis'ry's squalid nest,
She strains your infant to her joyless breast,
And with a mother's fears shrinks at the rocking blast !

Oh ye ! who, sunk in beds of down,
Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
Think, for a moment, on his wretched fate,
Whom friends and fortune quite disown !
Ill satisfied keen nature's clam'rous call,
Stretch'd on his straw he lays himself to sleep,

While thro' the ragged roof and chinky wall,
 Chill o'er his slumbers piles the drift heap !
 Think on the dungeon's grim confine,
 Where guilt and poor misfortune pine !
 Guilt, erring man, relenting view !
 But shall thy legal rage pursue
 The wretch, already crushèd low,
 By cruel fortune's undeservèd blow ?
 Affliction's sons are brothers in distress ;
 A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss !'

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

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

THE RICHES OF THE POOR

(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.

The Riches of the Poor

27

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 an' snug ;
I tent less, and want less
Their roomy fire-side ;
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' chiels are whyles in want,
While coofs on countless thousands rant,
And ken na how to wair 't :
But, Davie, lad, ne'er fash your head,
Tho' 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 craz'd, and bluid is thin,
Is, doubtless, great distress !
Yet then content could mak us blest ;
Ev'n 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 :

Poems of Robert Burns

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 tho', like commoners of air,
 We wander out, we know not where,
 But either house or hal' ?
 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 done.

It's no in titles nor in rank ;
 It's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
 To purchase peace and rest ;
 It's no in making muckle, mair :
 It's no in books, it's no in lear,
 To make us truly blest :
 If happiness hae 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.

The Riches of the Poor

29

Think ye, that sic as you and I,
Wha drudge and drive thro' wet an' 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 oft 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 heav'n 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 mak us see the naked truth,
 The real guid and ill.
 Tho' 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 flatt'ry I detest)
This life has joys for you and I ;

Poems of Robert Burns

And joys that riches ne'er could buy ;
 And joys the very best.
 There's a' the pleasures o' the heart,
 The lover an' the frien' ;
 Ye 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 !

O all ye pow'rs who rule above !
 O Thou, whose very self art love !
 Thou know'st my words sincere !
 The life-blood streaming thro' 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,
 O hear my fervent pray'r ;
 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 ;

Tho' Cruel Fate

31

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.

O, 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 glowrin' owre my pen.
My spavied Pegasus will limp,
Till ance he's fairly het ;
And then he'll hilch, and stilt, and jimp,
An' rin an unco fit :
But lest then the beast then
Should rue this hasty ride,
I'll light now, and dight now
His sweaty wizen'd hide.

THO' CRUEL FATE

Tho' cruel fate should bid us part,
Wide as the pole and line ;
Her dear idea round my heart
Should tenderly entwine.

Tho' mountains rise and deserts howl,
And oceans roar between ;
Yet, dearer than my deathless soul,
I still would love my Jean.

TAM GLEN

My heart is a-breaking, dear Tittie,
 Some counsel unto me come len',
 To anger them a' is a pity ;
 But what will I do wi' Tam Glen ?

I'm thinking, wi' sic a braw fellow,
 In poortith I might mak a fen' ;
 What care I in riches to wallow,
 If I maunna marry Tam Glen ?

There's Lowrie the laird o' Dumeller,
 'Guid-day to you, brute !' he comes ben :
 He brags and he blaws o' his siller,
 But when will he dance like Tam Glen ?

My minnie does constantly deave me,
 And bids me beware o' young men ;
 They flatter, she says, to deceive me ;
 But wha can think sae o' Tam Glen ?

My daddie says, gin I'll forsake him,
 He'll gie me guid hunder marks ten :
 But, if it's ordain'd I maun take him,
 O wha will I get but Tam Glen ?

Yestreen at the Valentines' dealing,
 My heart to my mou gied a sten :
 For thrice I drew ane without failing,
 And thrice it was written, Tam Glen.

For the Sake of Somebody

33

The last Halloween I was waukin'
My droukit sark-sleeve, as ye ken ;
His likeness came up the house stalkin'—
And the very grey breeks o' Tam Glen !

Come, counsel, dear Tittie, don't tarry ;
I'll gie you my bonnie black hen,
Gif ye will advise me to marry
The lad I lo'e dearly, Tam Glen.

FOR THE SAKE OF SOMEBODY

My heart is sair, I dare na tell,
My heart is sair for somebody ;
I could wake a winter night,
For the sake o' somebody !
Oh-hon ! for somebody !
Oh-hey ! for somebody !
I could range the world around,
For the sake o' somebody.

Ye powers that smile on virtuous love,
O, sweetly smile on somebody !
Frae ilka danger keep him free,
And send me safe my somebody.
Oh-hon ! for somebody !
Oh-hey ! for somebody !
I wad do—what wad I not ?
For the sake o' somebody !

O, FOR ANE AN' TWENTY, TAM!

AN' O for ane an' twenty, Tam!
 An' hey, sweet ane an' twenty, Tam!
 I'll learn my kin a rattlin' sang,
 An I saw ane an' twenty, Tam.

They snool me sair, and haud me down,
 An' gar me look like bluntie, Tam!
 But three short years will soon wheel roun',
 An' then comes ane an' twenty, Tam.

A gleib o' lan', a claut o' gear,
 Was left me by my auntie, Tam;
 At kith or kin I need na spier,
 An I saw ane and twenty, Tam.

They'll hae me wed a wealthy coof,
 Tho' I mysel' hae plenty, Tam;
 But hear'st thou, laddie? there's my loof,
 I'm thine at ane and twenty, Tam!

O, WAT YE WHA'S IN YON TOWN?

O, WAT ye wha's in yon town,
 Ye see the e'enin sun upon?
 The dearest maid's in yon town,
 That e'enin sun is shining on.

Now haply down yon gay green shaw,
 She wanders by yon spreading tree:
 How blest ye flow'rs that round her blaw,
 Ye catch the glances o' her e'e!

O, Wat ye wha's in Yon Town? 35

How blest ye birds that round her sing,
And welcome in the blooming year!
And doubly welcome be the spring,
The season to my Jeanie dear!

The sun blinks blithe on yon town,
And on yon bonnie braes sae green;
But my delight in yon town,
And dearest pleasure, is my Jean.

Without my love, not a' the charms
O' Paradise could yield me joy;
But gie me Jeanie in my arms,
And welcome Lapland's dreary sky!

My cave wad be a lover's bower,
Tho' raging winter rent the air;
And she a lovely little flower,
That I wad tent and shelter there.

O sweet is she in yon town,
Yon sinkin sun's gane down upon;
A fairer than's in yon town,
His setting beam ne'er shone upon.

If angry fate is sworn my foe,
And suffering I am doom'd to bear;
I careless quit all else below,
But spare, O spare me Jeanie dear.

For while life's dearest blood is warm,
Ae thought frae her shall ne'er depart,
And she—as fairest is her form,
She has the truest, kindest heart.

O THIS IS NO MY AIN LASSIE

I SEE a form, I see a face,
 Ye weel may wi' the fairest place :
 It wants, to me, the witching grace,
 The kind love that's in her e'e.

O this is no my ain lassie,
 Fair tho' the lassie be ;
 O weel ken I my ain lassie,
 Kind love is in her e'e.

She's bonnie, blooming, straight, and tall,
 And lang has had my heart in thrall ;
 And aye it charms my very saul,
 The kind love that's in her e'e.

A thief sae pawkie is my Jean,
 To steal a blink, by a' unseen ;
 But gleg as light are lovers' e'en,
 When kind love is in the e'e.

It may escape the courtly sparks,
 It may escape the learnèd clerks ;
 But weel the watching lover marks
 The kind love that's in her e'e.

I'LL AYE CA' IN BY YON TOWN

I'LL aye ca in by yon town,
 And by yon garden green again ;
 I'll aye ca' in by yon town,
 And see my bonnie Jean again.

The Farmer's New-Year Salutation 37

There's nane sall ken, there's nane sall guess,
What brings me back the gate again,
But she, my fairest faithfu' lass,
And stownlins we sall meet again.

She'll wander by the aiken tree
When trystin-time draws near again ;
And when her lovely form I see,
O haith, she's doubly dear again !

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

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

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

Tho' now thou's dowie, stiff, an' crazy,
An' thy auld hide's as white's a daisie,
I've seen thee dappled, sleek an' glaizie,
A bonnie gray :
He should been tight that daur't to raize thee,
Ance in a day.

Poems of Robert Burns

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

In cart or car thou never reestit ;
 The steyst brae thou wad hae faced it ;
 Thou never lap, an' stenned, 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 an' twa,
 The very warst.

Mony a sair darg we twa hae wrought,
 An' wi' the weary warl' fought !
 An' 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',
 An' thy auld days may end in starvin' ;
 For my last fou,
 A heapit stimpert I'll reserve ane
 Laid by for you.

Lassie wi' the Lint-White Locks

41

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,
Where ye may nobly rax your leather,
 Wi' sma' fatigue.

LASSIE WI' THE LINT-WHITE LOCKS

Now nature cleeds the flowery lea,
And a' is young and sweet like thee ;
O wilt thou share its joys wi' me,
And say thou 'lt be my dearie O ?

Lassie wi' the lint-white locks,
Bonnie lassie, artless lassie,
Wilt thou wi' me tent the flocks ?
Wilt thou be my dearie O ?

The primrose bank, the wimpling burn,
The cuckoo on the milk-white thorn,
The wanton lambs at early morn
Shall welcome thee, my dearie O.

And when the welcome simmer-shower
Has cheer'd ilk drooping little flower,
We'll to the breathing woodbine bower
At sultry noon, my dearie O.

When Cynthia lights, wi' silver ray,
The weary shearer's hameward way,
Thro' yellow waving fields we'll stray,
And talk o' love, my dearie O.

Poems of Robert Burns

And when the howling wintry blast
 Disturbs my lassie's midnight rest ;
 Enclaspèd to my faithfu' breast,
 I'll comfort thee, my dearie O.

THE POSIE

O LUVE will venture in, where it daur na weel be seen,
 O luvè will venture in, where wisdom ance has been ;
 But I will down yon river rove, amang the wood sae green,
 And a' to pu' a Posie to my ain dear May.

The primrose I will pu', the firstling o' the year,
 And I will pu' the pink, the emblem o' my dear,
 For she's the pink o' womankind, and blooms without a peer :
 And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

I'll pu' the budding rose, when Phœbus peeps in view,
 For it's like a baumy kiss o' her sweet bonny mou ;
 The hyacinth 's for constancy, wi' its unchanging blue,
 And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

The lily it is pure, and the lily it is fair,
 And in her lovely bosom I'll place the lily there ;
 The daisy 's for simplicity and unaffected air,
 And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

The hawthorn I will pu', wi' its locks o' siller grey,
 Where, like an aged man, it stands at break o' day,
 But the songster's nest within the bush I winna tak away ;
 And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

My Lady's Gown

43

The woodbine I will pu' when the e'ening star is near,
And the diamond drops o' dew shall be her een sae clear :
The violet's for modesty which weel she fa's to wear,
And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

I'll tie the Posie round wi' the silken band o' luve,
And I'll place it in her breast, and I'll swear by a' above,
That to my latest draught o' life the band shall ne'er remove,
And this will be a Posie to my ain dear May.

MY LADY'S GOWN THERE 'S GAIRS UPON 'T

My lord a-hunting he is gane,
But hounds or hawks wi' him are nane,
By Colin's cottage lies his game,
If Colin's Jenny be at hame.

My lady's gown there 's gairs upon 't,
And gowden flowers sae rare upon 't ;
But Jenny's jimps and jirkinet,
My lord thinks muckle mair upon 't.

My lady's white, my lady's red,
And kith and kin o' Cassillis' blude,
But her ten-pund lands o' tocher guid
Were a' the charms his lordship lo'ed.

Out o'er yon muir, out o'er yon moss,
Where gor-cocks thro' the heather pass,
There wons auld Colin's bonnie lass,
A lily in a wilderness.

Poems of Robert Burns

Sae sweetly move her genty limbs,
 Like music notes o' lover's hymns :
 The diamond dew in her een sae blue,
 Where laughing love sae wanton swims.

My lady's dink, my lady's drest,
 The flower and fancy o' the west ;
 But the lassie that a man lo'es best,
 O that's the lass to make him blest.

My lady's gown there's gairs upon 't,
 And gowden flowers sae rare upon 't ;
 But Jenny's jimps and jirkinet,
 My lord thinks muckle mair upon 't.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH
 IN APRIL, 1786

WEE modest crimson-tippèd flow'r,
 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 pow'r,
 Thou bonnie gem.

Alas ! it's no thy neibor sweet,
 The bonnie lark, companion meet,
 Bending thee 'mang the dewy weat
 Wi' spreckl'd breast,
 When upward springing, blythe to greet
 The purpling east.



We, modest crimson-tipped flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour.

Poems of Robert Burns

As sweetly as ye heard it in a
 The music notes a' ye've heard
 In a clarn o' fow in her cell, or in
 Where laughing, ye saw her own

"O, lady's sake, my love's a' gane,
 The mair and I ne'er shall meet;
 But the less that a man's a' gane,
 O, that's the lass to make him a' gane."

My lady's gown there's pair's upon't,
 And gowden flowers sae rare upon't;
 But Jenny's jimps and ginknet,
 My lord thinks muckle mair upon't.

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 The purpling east.



Wee modest crimson-tippèd flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour.

To a Mountain Daisy

45

Cauld 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 flow'rs our gardens yield
High shelt'ring 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 snawy 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 flow'ret 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 whelm him o'er !

Poems of Robert Burns

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,
 Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
 By human pride or cunning driv'n
 To mis'ry's brink,
 Till wrench'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,
 He, ruin'd, sink !

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

THOUGHTS IN WINTER

THE wintry wast extends his blast,
 And hail and rain does blaw ;
 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'erblast,
 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 !

Contented wi' Little

47

Thou Pow'r 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.

CONTENTED WI' LITTLE

CONTENTED wi' little, and cantie wi' mair,
Whene'er I forgather wi' sorrow and care,
I gie them a skelp, as they're creepin' along,
Wi' a cog o' gude swats, and an auld Scottish sang.

I whyles claw the elbow o' troublesome thought ;
But man is a sodger, and life is a faught :
My mirth and gude humour are coin in my pouch,
And my freedom's my lairdship nae monarch dare touch.

A towmond o' trouble, should that be my fa',
A night o' gude fellowship sowthers it a' ;
When at the blythe end of our journey at last,
Wha the deil ever thinks o' the road he has past ?

Blind Chance, let her snapper and stoyte on her way,
Be 't to me, be 't frae me, e'en let the jad gae :
Come ease or come travail, come pleasure or pain,
My warst word is—' Welcome, and welcome again !'

JOHN BARLEYCORN

A BALLAD

THERE was three Kings into the east,
Three Kings both great and high,
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn should die.

They took a plough and plough'd him down,
Put clods upon his head,
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn was dead.

But the cheerfu' Spring came kindly on,
And show'rs began to fall ;
John Barleycorn got up again,
And sore surpris'd them all.

The sultry suns of Summer came,
And he grew thick and strong,
His head weel arm'd wi' pointed spears,
That no one should him wrong.

The sober Autumn enter'd mild,
When he grew wan and pale ;
His bending joints and drooping head
Show'd he began to fail.

His colour sicken'd more and more,
He faded into age ;
And then his enemies began
To shew their deadly rage.

John Barleycorn

49

They've ta'en a weapon, long and sharp,
And cut him by the knee ;
Then tied him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgerie.

They laid him down upon his back,
And cudgell'd him full sore ;
They hung him up before the storm,
And turn'd him o'er and o'er.

They fillèd up a darksome pit
With water to the brim,
They heavèd in John Barleycorn,
There let him sink or swim.

They laid him out upon the floor,
To work him farther woe,
And still, as signs of life appear'd,
They toss'd him to and fro.

They wasted, o'er a scorching flame,
The marrow of his bones ;
But a miller us'd him worst of all,
For he crush'd him between two stones.

And they hae ta'en his very heart's blood,
And drank it round and round ;
And still the more and more they drank,
Their joy did more abound.

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise,
For if you do but taste his blood,
'Twill make your courage rise ;

E

Poems of Robert Burns

'Twill make a man forget his woe ;
 'Twill heighten all his joy :
 'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
 Tho' the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
 Each man a glass in hand ;
 And may his great posterity
 Ne'er fail in old Scotland !

WILLIE BREWED

O WILLIE brew'd a peck o' maut,
 And Rob and Allan cam to see ;
 Three blyther hearts, that lee-lang night,
 Ye wad na found in Christendie.

We are na fou', we're no that fou,
 But just a drappie in our e'e ;
 The cock may craw, the day may daw,
 And aye we'll taste the barley bree.

Here are we met, three merry boys,
 Three merry boys, I trow, are we ;
 And mony a night we've merry been,
 And mony mae we hope to be !

It is the moon, I ken her horn,
 That's blinkin' in the lift sae hie ;
 She shines sae bright to wyle us hame,
 But, by my sooth ! she'll wait a wee.

Rattlin', Roarin' Willie

51

Wha first shall rise to gang awa,
A cuckold, coward loun is he !
Wha first beside his chair shall fa',
He is the King among us three !

COUNT THE LAWIN

GANE is the day, and mirk 's the night,
But we'll ne'er stray for faut o' light,
For ale and brandy 's stars and moon,
And bluid-red wine 's the risin sun.

Then guidwife, count the lawin,
The lawin, the lawin,
Then guidwife, count the lawin,
And bring a coggie mair.

There's wealth and ease for gentlemen,
And semple-folk maun fecht and fen',
But here we're a' in ae accord,
For ilka man that 's drunk's a lord.

My coggie is a haly pool,
That heals the wounds o' care and dool ;
And pleasure is a wanton trout,
An' ye drink it a' ye'll find him out.

RATTLIN', ROARIN' WILLIE

O RATTLIN', roarin' Willie
O, he held to the fair,
An' for to sell his fiddle,
And buy some other ware ;

Poems of Robert Burns

But parting wi' his fiddle,
 The saut tear blin't his e'e ;
 And rattlin', roarin' Willie,
 Ye're welcome hame to me !

O Willie, come sell your fiddle,
 O sell your fiddle sae fine ;
 O Willie, come sell your fiddle,
 And buy a pint o' wine !
 If I should sell my fiddle,
 The warl' would think I was mad ;
 For mony a rantin' day
 My fiddle and I hae had.

As I cam by Crochallan,
 I cannily keekit ben—
 Rattlin', roarin' Willie
 Was sitting at yon board en' ;
 Sitting at yon board en',
 And amang guid companie ;
 Rattlin', roarin' Willie,
 Ye're welcome hame to me !

AN OFFER OF FRIENDSHIP

(TO JOHN LAPRAIK, AN OLD SCOTTISH BARD)

WHILE briers an' woodbines budding green,
 An' paitricks scaichin' loud at e'en,
 An' morning poussie whiddin' seen,
 Inspire my Muse,
 This freedom, in an unknown frien',
 I pray excuse.

An Offer of Friendship

53

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

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

I've scarce heard ough describ'd sae weel,
What gen'rous, 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 spier'd ;
Then a' that kenn'd him round declar'd
 He had ingine,
That nane excell'd it, few cam near't,
 It was sae fine.

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

Poems of Robert Burns

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

But, first an' foremost, I should tell,
 Amaist as soon as I could spell,
 I to the crambo-jingle fell ;
 Tho' rude an' rough,
 Yet crooning to a body's sel,
 Does weel eneugh.

I am nae poet, in a sense,
 But just a rhymer, like, by chance,
 An' 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 an' stools ;
 If honest nature made you fools,
 What sairs your grammars ?
 Ye'd better ta'en up spades and shools,
 Or knappin'-hammers.

An Offer of Friendship

55

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

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

O for a spunk o' Allan's glee,
Or Fergusson's, the bauld an' 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,
Tho' real friends, I b'lieve, are few,
Yet, if your catalogue be fou,
I'se no insist,
But gif ye want ae friend that's true,
I'm on your list.

I winna blaw about mysel,
As ill I like my fauts to tell ;
But friends, an' folks that wish me well
They sometimes roose me ;
Tho' I maun own, as mony still
As far abuse me.

Poems of Robert Burns

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,
 An' hae a swap o' rhymin'-ware
 Wi' ane anither.

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

Awa, ye selfish warly race,
 Wha think that havins, sense, an' grace,
 Ev'n love an' 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 !

The Cardin' o't

57

But to conclude my lang epistle,
As my auld pen's worn to the gristle ;
Twa lines frae you wad gar me fistle,
 Who am, most fervent,
While I can either sing, or whistle,
 Your friend and servant.

THE CARDIN' O'T

I COFT a stane o' haslock woo',
 To make a coat to Johnny o't ;
For Johnny is my only jo,
 I lo'e him best of ony yet.
 The cardin' o't, the spinnin' o't ;
 The warpin' o't, the winnin' o't ;
When ilka ell cost me a groat,
 The tailor staw the linin' o't.

For though his locks be lyart gray,
 And though his brow be beld aboon ;
Yet I hae seen him on a day,
 The pride of a' the parishen.
 The cardin' o't, the spinnin' o't,
 The warpin' o't, the winnin' o't ;
When ilka ell cost me a groat,
 The tailor staw the linin' o't.

Poems of Robert Burns

JOHN ANDERSON MY JO

JOHN ANDERSON my jo, John,
 When we were first acquent,
 Your locks were like the raven,
 Your bonnie brow was brent ;
 But now your brow is beld, John,
 Your locks are like the snow ;
 But blessings on your frosty pow,
 John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
 We clamb the hill thegither ;
 And mony a canty day, John,
 We've had wi' ane anither :
 Now we maun totter down, John,
 And hand in hand we'll go,
 And sleep thegither at the foot,
 John Anderson, my jo.

AND MAUN I STILL ON MENIE DOAT

AGAIN rejoicing nature sees
 Her robe assume its vernal hues,
 Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,
 All freshly steep'd in morning dews.

And maun I still on Menie doat,
 And bear the scorn that's in her e'e ?
 For it's jet, jet black, an' it's like a hawk,
 An' it winna let a body be !

And Maun I Still on Menie Doat 59

In vain to me the cowslips blaw,
In vain to me the violets spring ;
In vain to me, in glen or shaw,
The mavis and the lintwhite sing.

The merry ploughboy cheers his team,
Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks,
But life to me 's a weary dream,
A dream of ane that never wauks.

The wanton coot the water skims,
Amang the reeds the ducklings cry,
The stately swan majestic swims,
And every thing is blest but I.

The shepherd steeks his faulding slap,
And owre the moorlands whistles shrill,
Wi' wild, unequal, wand'ring step
I meet him on the dewy hill.

And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Blythe waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts and sings on flitting wings,
A woe-worn ghaist I hameward glide.

Come, Winter, with thine angry howl,
And raging bend the naked tree ;
Thy gloom will soothe my cheerless soul,
When Nature all is sad like me !

And maun I still on Menie doat,
And bear the scorn that 's in her e'e ?
For it 's jet, jet black, an' it 's like a hawk,
An' it winna let a body be !

Poems of Robert Burns

DUNCAN DAVISON

THERE was a lass, they ca'd her Meg,
And she held o'er the moors to spin ;
There was a lad that follow'd her,
They ca'd him Duncan Davison.
The moor was driegh, and Meg was skiegh,
Her favour Duncan could na win ;
For wi' the rock she wad him knock,
And ay she shook the temper-pin.

As o'er the moor they lightly foor,
A burn was clear, a glen was green,
Upon the banks they eased their shanks,
And aye she set the wheel between :
But Duncan swore a haly aith,
That Meg should be a bride the morn ;
Then Meg took up her spinnin' graith,
And flung them a' out o'er the burn.

We'll big a house—a wee, wee house,
And we will live like King and Queen,
Sae blythe and merry we will be
When ye set by the wheel at e'en.
A man may drink and no be drunk ;
A man may fight and no be slain ;
A man may kiss a bonnie lass,
And aye be welcome back again.

AN EXHORTATION TO DAVIE

NOT TO FORSAKE THE MUSE

AULD NEIBOR . . .

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 gray hairs.

But Davie, lad, I'm red ye're glaikit ;
I'm tauld the Muse ye hae negleckit ;
An' gif it's sae, ye sud be lickit
 Until ye fyke ;
Sic hauns as you sud ne'er be faikit,
 Be hain't wha like.

For me, I'm on Parnassus' brink,
Rivin' the words to gar them clink ;
Whyles dazed wi' love, whyles dazed wi' drink,
 Wi' jads or masons ;
An' whyles, but aye owre late, I think
 Braw sober lessons.

Of a' the thoughtless sons o' man,
Commend me to the Bardie clan ;
Except it be some idle plan
 O' rhymin' clink,
The devil-haet, that I sud ban,
 They ever think.

Poems of Robert Burns

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

Leeze me on rhyme! it's aye a treasure,
 My chief, amaist my only pleasure;
 At hame, a-fiel', at wark, or leisure,
 The Muse, poor hizzie!
 Tho' rough an' raploch be her measure,
 She's seldom lazy.

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

WHISTLE, AND I'LL COME TO YOU, MY LAD

O WHISTLE, and I'll come to you, my lad;
 O whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad:
 Tho' father and mither and a' should gae mad,
 O whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad.

But warily tent, when ye come to court me,
 And come na unless the back-yett be a-jee;
 Syne up the back-stile, and let naebody see,
 And come as ye were na comin' to me,
 And come as ye were na comin' to me.

The Rantin' Dog the Daddie o't 63

At kirk, or at market, whene'er ye meet me,
Gang by me as tho' that ye car'd na a flee :
But steal me a blink o' your bonnie black e'e—
Yet look as ye were na lookin' at me,
Yet look as ye were na lookin' at me.

Aye vow and protest that ye care na for me,
And whiles ye may lightly my beauty a wee ;
But court na anither' tho' jokin' ye be,
For fear that she wyle your fancy frae me,
For fear that she wyle your fancy frae me.

THE RANTIN' DOG THE DADDIE O'T

O WHA my babie-clouts will buy ?
Wha will tent me when I cry ?
Wha will kiss me whare I lie ?
The rantin' dog the daddie o't.

Wha will own he did the faut ?
Wha will buy my groanin' maut ?
Wha will tell me how to ca't ?
The rantin' dog the daddie o't.

When I mount the creepie-chair,
Wha will sit beside me there ?
Gie me Rob, I seek nae mair,
The rantin' dog the daddie o't.

Wha will crack to me my lane ?
Wha will mak me fidgin' fain ?
Wha will kiss me o'er again ?
The rantin' dog the daddie o't.

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN

WHEN chill November's surly blast
 Made fields and forests bare,
 One ev'ning 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 rev'rend sage ;
 'Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
 Or youthful pleasure's 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,
 Out-spreading far and wide,
 Where hundreds labour to support
 A haughty lordling's pride—
 I've seen yon weary winter-sun
 Twice forty times return,
 And ev'ry time has added proofs
 That man was made to mourn.

'O man ! while in thy early years,
 How prodigal of time !
 Mis-spending all thy precious hours,
 Thy glorious youthful prime !

Man was Made to Mourn

65

Alternate follies take the sway ;
Licentious passions burn ;
Which tenfold force give 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-match'd 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 ev'ry land
All wretched and forlorn,
Thro' weary life this lesson learn—
That man was made to mourn.

‘ Many and sharp the num'rous ills
Inwoven with our frame !
More pointed still we make ourselves
Regret, remorse, and shame !
And man, whose heaven-erected face
The smiles of love adorn—
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn !

Poems of Robert Burns

‘ 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 tho’ 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 pow’r
To make his fellow mourn ?

‘ Yet let not this too much, my son,
Disturb thy youthful breast ;
This partial view of human-kind
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 agèd limbs
Are laid with thee at rest !

The Gloomy Night

67

The great, the wealthy, fear thy blow,
From pomp and pleasure torn ;
But oh ; a blest relief to those
That weary-laden mourn.'

THE GLOOMY NIGHT

THE gloomy night is gathering fast,
Loud roars the wild inconstant blast,
Yon murky cloud is foul with rain,
I see it driving o'er the plain ;
The hunter now has left the moor,
The scatter'd coveys meet secure,
While here I wander, prest with care,
Along the lonely banks of Ayr.

The Autumn mourns her ripening corn
By early Winter's ravage torn ;
Across her placid azure sky,
She sees the scowling tempest fly :
Chill runs my blood to hear it rave,
I think upon the stormy wave,
Where many a danger I must dare,
Far from the bonnie banks of Ayr.

'Tis not the surging billow's roar,
'Tis not that fatal, deadly shore ;
Tho' death in ev'ry shape appear,
The wretched have no more to fear :
But round my heart the ties are bound,
That heart transpierc'd with many a wound :
These bleed afresh, those ties I tear,
To leave the bonnie banks of Ayr.

Poems of Robert Burns

Farewell, old Coila's hills and dales,
 Her heathy moors and winding vales ;
 The scenes where wretched fancy roves,
 Pursuing past unhappy loves !
 Farewell, my friends ! Farewell, my foes !
 My peace with these, my love with those ;
 The bursting tears my heart declare,
 Farewell, the bonnie banks of Ayr !

THE HIGHLAND LADDIE

THE bonniest lad that e'er I saw,
 Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie,
 Wore a plaid and was fu' braw,
 Bonnie Highland laddie.
 On his head a bonnet blue,
 Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie,
 His royal heart was firm and true,
 Bonnie Highland laddie.

Trumpets sound and cannons roar,
 Bonnie lassie, Lawland lassie,
 And a' the hills wi' echoes roar,
 Bonnie Lawland lassie.
 Glory, Honour, now invite,
 Bonnie lassie, Lawland lassie,
 For Freedom and my King to fight,
 Bonnie Lawland lassie.

The sun a backward course shall take,
 Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie,
 Ere aught thy manly courage shake,
 Bonnie Highland laddie.

Address to Edinburgh

69

Go, for yoursel procure renown,
Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie,
And for your lawful King his crown,
Bonnie Highland laddie !

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH

EDINA ! Scotia's darling seat,
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs.
From marking wildly-scatter'd flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing lone the ling'ring hours,
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

Here Wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy trade his labours 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 enlarg'd, their lib'ral 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 !

Poems of Robert Burns

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn,
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptur'd 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, gray in arms,
And mark'd with many a seamy scar :
The pond'rous 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,
Fam'd heroes, had their royal home ;
Alas, how chang'd the times to come !
Their royal name low in the dust,
Their hapless race wild-wand'ring roam ;
Tho' rigid law cries out 'twas just !

Wild beats my heart to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Thro' hostile ranks and ruin'd gaps
Old Scotia's bloody lion bore.



Figure 1. Soil texture and
water content of the soil.

Poems of Robert Burns

Thou art gliters bright thy walls, as if
As the gilded summer sky,
As the dewy milk-white corn,
As the raptur'd thrill of joy,
Fair Burnet strikes th' adorning bow,
Heaven's beauties on my face, show;
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own his work indeed on earth.

Thou'rt watching high the beacon fire,
Thy rough rude fortress, built so far;
It's some bold veteran's great defence,
And mark'd with many a soldier's scar:
The peat-rous wall and mossy tower,
Girt rising o'er the river's roar,
Have oft withstood as many a war,
And oft repell'd th' invader's shock.

With awe-struck thought, and pitying tear,
I view that lofty stately tower,
Where Scotia's kings of olden years,
Fam'd heroes, had their royal home;
Alas, how chang'd the times to come!
Their royal name low in the dust,
Their hapless race wild wandering roam,
Tho' rigid laws cry out 'twas just!

Wald beats my heart to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Tho' hostile rocks and ruin'd gaps
Still Scotia's bloody lion bore.



Edina ! Scotia' a darling seat,
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs.

Bonnie Lesley

71

Ev'n 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 tow'rs,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs !
From marking wildly-scatter'd flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing lone the ling'ring hours,
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

BONNIE LESLEY

O SAW ye bonnie Lesley
As she gaed o'er the border ?
She's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever ;
For Nature made her what she is,
And never made anither !

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we, before thee :
Thou art divine, fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee.

Poems of Robert Burns

The Deil he could na scaith thee,
 Or aught that wad belang thee ;
 He'd look into thy bonnie face,
 And say, ' I canna wrang thee.'

The Powers aboon will tent thee ;
 Misfortune sha'na steer thee ;
 Thou'rt like themselves sae lovely,
 That ill they 'll ne'er let near thee.

Return again, fair Lesley,
 Return to Caledonie !
 That we may brag we hae a lass
 There's nane again sae bonnie.

AH, CHLORIS

AH, Chloris, since it may na be,
 That thou of love wilt hear ;
 If from the lover thou maun flee,
 Yet let the friend be dear.

Altho' I love my Chloris mair
 Than ever tongue could tell ;
 My passion I will ne'er declare,
 I'll say I wish thee well :

Tho' a' my daily care thou art,
 And a' my nightly dream,
 I'll hide the struggle in my heart,
 And say it is esteem.

AE FOND KISS

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever !
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever !
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that fortune grieves him
While the star of hope she leaves him ?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy ;
But to see her was to love her,
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never lov'd sae kindly,
Had we never lov'd sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest !
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest !
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure.
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever ;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever ;
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

MY NANNIE'S AWA

Now in her green mantle blythe Nature arrays,
 And listens the lambkins that bleat o'er the braes,
 While birds warble welcomes in ilka green shaw ;
 But to me it's delightless—my Nannie's awa.

The snaw-drap and primrose our woodlands adorn,
 And violets bathe in the weet o' the morn :
 They pain my sad bosom, sae sweetly they blaw,
 They mind me o' Nannie—and Nannie's awa.

Thou laverock that springs frae the dew's o' the lawn
 The shepherd to warn o' the grey-breaking dawn,
 And thou, mellow mavis, that hails the night-fa',
 Gie over for pity—my Nannie's awa.

Come autumn sae pensive, in yellow and gray,
 And soothe me wi' tidings o' nature's decay ;
 The dark, dreary winter, and wild-driving snaw,
 Alane can delight me—now Nannie's awa.

MACPHERSON'S FAREWELL

FAREWELL, ye dungeons dark and strong,
 The wretch's destinie :
 Macpherson's time will not be long
 On yonder gallows tree.

Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
 Sae dauntingly gaed he ;
 He played a spring and danced it round,
 Below the gallows tree.

Braw Lads

75

Oh, what is death but parting breath ?
On mony a bloody plain
I've dared his face, and in this place
I scorn him yet again !

Untie these bands from off my hands,
And bring to me my sword,
And there's no a man in all Scotland,
But I'll brave him at a word.

I've lived a life of sturt and strife ;
I die by treacherie :
It burns my heart I must depart
And not avengèd be.

Now farewell light, thou sunshine bright,
And all beneath the sky !
May coward shame distain his name,
The wretch that dares not die !

Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he ;
He played a spring and danced it round,
Below the gallows tree.

BRAW LADS

BRAW braw lads on Yarrow braes,
Ye wander thro' the blooming heather ;
But Yarrow braes nor Ettrick shaws
Can match the lads o' Gala Water.

Poems of Robert Burns

But there is ane, a secret ane,
 Aboon them a' I lo'e him better ;
 And I'll be his, and he'll be mine,
 The bonnie lad o' Gala Water.

Altho' his daddie was nae laird,
 And tho' I hae nae meikle tocher,
 Yet rich in kindest, truest love,
 We'll tent our flocks by Gala Water.

It ne'er was wealth, it ne'er was wealth,
 That coft contentment, peace or pleasure ;
 The bands and bliss o' mutual love,
 O that 's the chiefest warld's treasure !

IN A FRIEND'S CAUSE

("FOR WILLIE CHALMERS.")

Wi' 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.

In a Friend's Cause

77

Your bonnie face sae mild and sweet,
His honest heart enamours,
And faith ye'll no be lost a whit,
Tho' 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 host up some palaver.
My bonnie maid, before ye wed
Sic clumsy-witted hammers,
Seek Heaven for help, and barefit skelp
Awa' wi' Willie Chalmers.

Scotch Drink

79

Let husky wheat the haughs adorn,
An' aits set up their awnie horn,
An' pease an' beans at een 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 boiling flood
 Wi' kail an' beef ;
But when thou pours thy strong heart's blood,
 There thou shines chief.

Food fills the wame, an' keeps us livin' ;
Tho' life 's a gift no worth receivin',
When heavy-dragg'd wi' pine an' 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.

Scotch Drink

81

When neibors anger at a plea,
An' 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 weasan'
 Wi' liquors nice,
An' hardly, in a winter's season,
 E'er spier her price.

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

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

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

Another of the Same

83

Or, hounded forth, dishonour arms
In hungry droves.

Their gun's a burden on their shouther ;
They downa bide the stink o' powther ;
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,
An' there's the foe !'
He has nae thought but how to kill
Twa at a blow.

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

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

A BOUSING CATCH

My love she 's but a lassie yet ;
 My love she 's but a lassie yet ;
 We 'll let her stand a year or twa,
 She 'll no be half sae saucy yet.
 I rue the day I sought her, O,
 I rue the day I sought her, O ;
 Wha gets her needs na say she 's woo'd,
 But he may say he 's bought her, O !

Come, draw a drap o' the best o't yet ;
 Come, draw a drap o' the best o't yet ;
 Gae seek for pleasure where ye will,
 But here I never miss'd it yet.
 We're a' dry wi' drinking o't,
 We're a' dry wi' drinking o't ;
 The minister kiss'd the fiddler's wife,
 An' could na preach for thinkin' o't.

THE MALTWORM'S RUNE

O GUID ale comes, and guid ale goes,
 Guid ale gars me sell my hose,
 Sell my hose, and pawn my shoon ;
 Guid ale keeps my heart aboon.

I had sax owsen in a pleugh,
 And they drew a' weel enough,

Poets for Ever !

85

I sell'd them a' just ane by ane ;
Guid ale keeps the heart aboon.

Guid ale hauds me bare and busy,
Gars me moop wi' the servant hizzie,
Stand i' the stool when I hae done ;
Guid ale keeps the heart aboon.

POETS FOR EVER !

(SECOND EPISTLE TO THE OLD SCOTTISH BARD)

WHILE new-ca'd kye rowte at the stake,
An' pownies reek in pleugh or braik,
This hour on e'enin's edge I take,
 To own I'm debtor,
To honest-hearted auld Lapraik,
 For his kind letter.

Forjeskit sair, with weary legs,
Rattlin' the corn out-owre the rigs,
Or dealing thro' amang the naigs
 Their ten-hours' bite,
My awkward Muse sair pleads and begs
 I would na write.

The tapetless, ramfeezl'd hizzie,
She's saft at best, and something lazy,
Quo' she 'Ye ken we've been sae busy,
 This month an' mair,
That trowth my head is grown quite dizzie,
 An' something sair.'

Poems of Robert Burns

Her dowff excuses pat me mad ;
 'Conscience,' says I, 'ye thowless jad !
 I'll write, an' that a hearty blaud,
 This very night ;
 So dinna ye affront your trade,
 But rhyme it right.

'Shall bauld Lapraik, the king o' hearts,
 Tho' 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,
 An' thank him kindly ?'

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

Sae I've begun to scrawl, but whether
 In rhyme, or prose, or baith thegither,
 Or some hotch-potch that's rightly neither,
 Let time mak proof ;
 But I shall scribble down some blether
 Just clean aff-loof.

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

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

Now comes the sax-an'-twentieth simmer
 I've seen the bud upo' the timmer,
 Still persecuted by the limmer,
 Frae year to year :
 But yet, despite the kittle kimmer,
 I, Rob, am here.

Do ye envy the city gent,
 Behind a kist to lie an' sklent,
 Or purse-proud, big wi' cent per cent
 An' muckle wame,
 In some bit brugh to represent
 A bailie's name ?

Or is't the paughty feudal thane,
 Wi' ruff'd sark an' glancing cane,
 Wha thinks himsel nae sheep-shank bane,
 But lordly stalks,
 While caps and bonnets aff are taen,
 As by he walks ?

'O Thou wha gies us each guid gift !
 Gie me o' wit an' sense a lift,
 Then turn me, if Thou please, adrift,
 Thro' Scotland wide ;
 Wi' cits nor lairds I wadna shift,
 In a' their pride !'

Poems of Robert Burns

Were this the charter of our state,
 'On pain o' hell be rich an' great,'
 Damnation then would be our fate,
 Beyond remead ;
 But, thanks to Heaven ! that's no the gate
 We learn our creed.

For thus the royal mandate ran,
 When first the human race began,
 'The social, friendly, honest man,
 Whate'er he be,
 'Tis he fulfils great Nature's plan,
 And none but he !'

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

Tho' here they scrape, an' squeeze, an' growl,
 Their worthless nievefu' of a soul
 May in some future carcase howl,
 The forest's fright ;
 Or in some day-detesting owl
 May shun the light.

Then may Lapraik and Burns arise,
 To reach their native kindred skies,
 And sing their pleasures, hopes, an' joys,
 In some mild sphere,
 Still closer knit in friendship's ties
 Each passing year !

THE BONNIE LAD THAT'S FAR AWA

O how can I be blithe and glad,
Or how can I gang brisk and braw,
When the bonnie lad that I lo'e best
Is o'er the hills and far awa?

It's no the frosty winter wind,
It's no the driving drift and snaw ;
But aye the tear comes in my e'e,
To think on him that's far awa.

My father pat me frae his door,
My friends they hae disown'd me a' :
But I hae ane will tak my part,
The bonnie lad that's far awa.

A pair o' gloves he bought to me,
And silken snoods he gae me twa ;
And I will wear them for his sake,
The bonnie lad that's far awa.

O weary winter soon will pass,
And spring will cleed the birken shaw :
And my young babie will be born,
And he'll be hame that's far awa.

Poems of Robert Burns

OF A' THE AIRTS

OF a' the airts the wind can blaw,
 I dearly like the west,
 For there the bonnie lassie lives,
 The lassie I lo'e best :
 There's wild woods grow, and rivers row,
 And mony a hill between ;
 But day and night my fancy's flight
 Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
 I see her sweet and fair :
 I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
 I hear her charm the air :
 There's not a bonnie flower that springs
 By fountain, shaw, or green ;
 There's not a bonnie bird that sings,
 But minds me o' my Jean.

IT IS NA, JEAN, THY BONNIE FACE

IT is na, Jean, thy bonnie face,
 Nor shape that I admire,
 Although thy beauty and thy grace
 Might weel awake desire.

Something, in ilka part o' thee,
 To praise, to love, I find ;
 But dear as is thy form to me,
 Still dearer is thy mind.



It's not wild water, for us, and never, too. But it's and night me to be a fight
An. You'll find it too. I over w. my Jean.



I Hae a Wife

91

Nae mair ungenerous wish I hae,
Nor stronger in my breast,
Than if I canna mak thee sae,
At least to see thee blest.

Content am I, if Heaven shall give
But happiness to thee :
And as wi' thee I'd wish to live,
For thee I'd bear to die.

I HAE A WIFE

I HAE a wife o' my ain,
I'll partake wi' naebody ;
I'll tak cuckold frae nane,
I'll gie cuckold to naebody.

I hae a penny to spend,
There—thanks to naebody ;
I hae naething to lend,
I'll borrow frae naebody.

I am naebody's lord,
I'll be slave to naebody ;
I hae a guid braid sword,
I'll tak dunts frae naebody.

I'll be merry and free,
I'll be sad for naebody ;
Naebody cares for me,
I care for naebody.

Poems of Robert Burns

UP IN THE MORNING

UP in the morning 's no' for me,
 Up in the morning early ;
 When a' the hills are covered wi' snaw,
 I'm sure it's winter fairly.

Cauld blaws the wind frae east to wast,
 The drift is driving sairly ;
 Sae loud and shrill 's I hear the blast,
 I'm sure it's winter fairly.

The birds sit chittering in the thorn,
 A' day they fare but sparely ;
 And lang 's the night frae e'en to morn,
 I'm sure it's winter fairly.

O WERE I ON PARNASSUS HILL

O WERE I on Parnassus hill,
 Or had o' Helicon my fill,
 That I might catch poetic skill,
 To sing how dear I love thee !
 But Nith maun be my Muse's well,
 My Muse maun be thy bonnie sel',
 On Corsincon I'll glow'r and spell,
 And write how dear I love thee.

Then come, sweet Muse, inspire my lay !
 For a' the lee-lang simmer's day
 I couldna sing, I couldna say,
 How much, how dear, I love thee.

My Wife's a Winsome Wee Thing 93

I see thee dancing o'er the green,
Thy waist sae jimp, thy limbs sae clean,
Thy tempting lips, thy roguish e'en—
By Heaven and Earth I love thee!

By night, by day, a-field, at hame,
The thoughts o' thee my breast inflame :
And aye I muse and sing thy name—
I only live to love thee.

Tho' I were doom'd to wander on,
Beyond the sea, beyond the sun,
Till my last weary sand was run,
Till then—and then—I'd love thee!

MY WIFE'S A WINSOME WEE THING

SHE is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

I never saw a fairer,
I never lo'ed a dearer,
And neist my heart I'll wear her,
For fear my jewel tine.

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

The world's wrack, we share o't,
The warstle and the care o't ;
Wi' her I'll blythely bear it,
And think my lot divine.

THE DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF
POOR MAILIE, THE AUTHOR'S
ONLY PET YOWE

As Mailie, an' her lambs thegither,
Was ae day nibbling on the tether,
Upon her cloot she coost a hitch,
An' owre she warsled in the ditch ;
There, groaning, dying, she did lie,
When Hughoc he cam doytin by.

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

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

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

The Death of Poor Mailie

95

An' aye was guid to me an' mine ;
An' now my dying charge I gie him,
My helpless lambs, I trust them wi' him.

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

'An' may they never learn the gates
Of ither vile wanrestfu' pets—
To slink thro' slaps, an' reave an' steal,
At stacks o' pease, or stocks o' kail.
So may they, like their great forbears,
For mony a year come thro' the shears ;
So wives will gie them bits o' bread,
An' bairns greet for them when they're dead.

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

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

'And now, my bairns, wi' my last breath
I lea'e my blessin wi' you baith ;

Poems of Robert Burns

An' when you think upo' your mither,
Mind to be kind to ane anither.

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

This said, poor Mailie turn'd her head,
An' closed her een amang the dead !

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY

LAMENT in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi' saut tears tricklin' 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.

Thro' 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.

Poor Mailie's Elegy

97

I wat she was a sheep o' sense,
An' could behave hersel wi' mense ;
I'll say 't, she never brak a fence
 Thro' 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,
An' down the briny pearls rowe
 For Mailie dead.

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

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

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

THE BARDS OF AYR

To W. SIMPSON, 1785

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

My senses wad be in a creel,
 Should I but dare a hope to speel,
 Wi' Allan, or wi' Gilbertfield,
 The braes o' fame ;
 Or Fergusson, the writer-chiel,
 A deathless name.

Yet when a tale comes i' my head,
 Or lasses gie my heart a screed,
 As whiles they're like to be my dead,
 (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.

The Bards of Ayr

99

Nae poet thought her worth his while,
To set her name in measur'd style ;
She lay like some unkenn'd-of isle,
Beside New Holland,
Or where wild-meeting oceans boil
Besouth Magellan.

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

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

We'll sing auld Coila's plains an' fells,
Her moors red-brown wi' heather bells,
Her banks an' braes, her dens an' dells,
Where glorious Wallace
Aft bure the gree, 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.

Poems of Robert Burns

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

Ev'n winter bleak has charms to me
 When winds rave thro' the naked tree ;
 Or frost on hills of Ochiltree
 Are hoary gray ;
 Or blinding drifts wild-furious flee,
 Dark'ning the day !

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

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

The warly race may drudge an' drive,
 Hog-shouther, jundie, stretch, an' strive ;
 Let me fair Nature's face describe,
 And I, wi' pleasure,

Last May a Braw Wooer

101

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 an' taxes ;
While moorlan' herds like guid fat braxies ;
While Terra Firma, on her axis,
Diurnal turns,
Count on a friend, in faith an' practice,
In Robert Burns.

LAST MAY A BRAW WOOER

LAST May a braw wooer cam down the lang glen,
And sair wi' his love he did deave me :
I said there was naething I hated like men—
The deuce gae wi'm to believe me, believe me,
The deuce gae wi'm to believe me.

He spak o' the darts in my bonnie black een,
And vow'd for my love he was dying ;
I said he might die when he liked for Jean :
The Lord forgie me for lying, for lying,
The Lord forgie me for lying !

A weel-stockèd mailen, himsel' for the laird,
And marriage aff-hand were his proffers :

I never loot on that I kend it, or car'd ;
 But thought I might hae waur offers, waur offers,
 But thought I might hae waur offers.

But what wad ye think ? in a fortnight or less,
 The deil tak his taste to gae near her !
 He up the lang loan to my black cousin Bess,
 Guess ye how, the jad ! I could bear her, could bear her,
 Guess ye how, the jad ! I could bear her.

But a' the niest week as I fretted wi' care,
 I gaed to the tryst o' Dalgarnock ;
 And wha but my fine fickle lover was there ?
 I glowr'd as I'd seen a warlock, a warlock.
 I glowr'd as I'd seen a warlock.

But owre my left shouther I gae him a blink,
 Lest neebors might say I was saucy ;
 My wooer he caper'd as he'd been in drink,
 And vow'd I was his dear lassie, dear lassie,
 And vow'd I was his dear lassie.

I spier'd for my cousin fu' couthy and sweet,
 Gin she had recover'd her hearin',
 And how her new shoon fit her auld shachl't feet—
 But, heavens ! how he fell a swearin', a swearin',
 But, heavens ! how he fell a swearin'.

He beggèd for Gudesake I wad be his wife,
 Or else I wad kill him wi' sorrow :
 So e'en to preserve the poor body in life,
 I think I maun wed him to-morrow, to-morrow,
 I think I maun wed him to-morrow.

I'M OWRE YOUNG TO MARRY YET

I AM my mammie's ae bairn,
Wi' unco folk I weary, Sir ;
And lying in a man's bed,
I'm fley'd wad mak me eerie, Sir.

I'm owre young, I'm owre young,
I'm owre young to marry yet ;
I'm owre young, 'twad be a sin
To tak me frae my mammie yet.

My mammie coft me a new gown,
The kirk maun hae the gracing o't ;
Were I to lie wi' you, kind Sir,
I'm fear'd ye'd spoil the lacing o't.

Hallowmas is come and gane,
The nights are lang in winter, Sir ;
And you an' I in ae bed,
In troth I dare na venture, Sir.

Fu' loud and shrill the frosty wind
Blaws thro' the leafless timmer, Sir ;
But if ye come this gate again,
I'll aulder be gin simmer, Sir.

I'm owre young, I'm owre young,
I'm owre young to marry yet ;
I'm owre young, 'twad be a sin
To tak me frae my mammie yet.

WHAT CAN A YOUNG LASSIE DO
WI' AN AULD MAN?

WHAT can a young lassie, what shall a young lassie,
What can a young lassie do wi' an auld man?
Bad luck on the penny that tempted my minnie
To sell her poor Jenny for siller an' lan'!

He's always compleenin' frae mornin' to e'enin',
He hosts and he hirples the weary day lang:
He's doylt and he's dozin, his bluid it is frozen,
O, dreary's the night wi' a crazy auld man!

He hums and he hankers, he frets and he cankers,
I never can please him do a' that I can;
He's peevish, and jealous of a' the young fellows:
O, dool on the day I met wi' an auld man!

My auld auntie Katie upon me takes pity,
I'll do my endeavour to follow her plan;
I'll cross him and rack him, until I heart-break him,
And then his auld brass will buy me a new pan.

TO THE WEAVERS GIN YE GO

MY heart was ance as blythe and free
As simmer days were lang,
But a bonnie westlin weaver lad
Has gart me change my sang.

To the Weavers Gin Ye Go

105

To the weavers gin ye go, fair maids,
To the weavers gin ye go ;
I rede you right gang ne'er at night,
To the weavers gin ye go.

My mither sent me to the town,
To warp a plaiden wab ;
But the weary, weary warpin o't
Has gart me sigh and sab.

A bonnie westlin weaver lad
Sat working at his loom ;
He took my heart as wi' a net,
In every knot and thrum.

I sat beside my warpin-wheel,
And aye I ca'd it roun' ;
But every shot and every knock,
My heart it gae a stoun.

The moon was sinking in the west
Wi' visage pale and wan
As my bonnie westlin weaver lad
Convoy'd me through the glen.

But what was said, or what was done,
Shame fa' me gin I tell ;
But oh ! I fear the kintra soon
Will ken as weel's mysel.

To the weavers gin ye go, fair maids,
To the weavers gin ye go ;
I rede you right gang ne'er at night,
To the weavers gin ye go.

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID, OR
THE RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS

*My son, these maxims make a rule,
And lump them aye thegither :
The rigid righteous is a fool,
The rigid wise anither :
The cleanest corn that e'er was dight,
May hae some pyles o' caff in ;
So ne'er a fellow-creature slight
For random fits o' daffin.*

SOLOMON (Eccles. vii. 16).

O YE wha are sae guid yoursel,
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
Your neighbour's fauts and folly !
Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill,
Supplied wi' store o' water :
The heapèd 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 compar'd,
And shudder at the niffer ;
But cast a moment's fair regard—
What maks the mighty differ ?

Address to the Unco Guid

107

Discount what scant occasion gave
That purity ye pride in,
And (what 's aft mair than a' the lave)
Your better art o' hidin'.

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 maks an unco leeway.

See Social life and Glee sit down,
All joyous and unthinking,
Till, quite transmogrified, they're grown
Debauchery and Drinking :
O would they stay to calculate
Th' eternal consequences ;
Or your more dreaded hell to state,
Damnation of expenses !

Ye high, exalted, virtuous Dames,
Tied up in godly laces,
Before ye gie poor Frailty names,
Suppose a change o' cases ;
A dear lov'd lad, convenience snug,
A treacherous inclination—
But, let me whisper i' your lug,
Ye're aiblins nae temptation.

Poems of Robert Burns

Then gently scan your brother man,
 Still gentler sister woman ;
 Tho' 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.

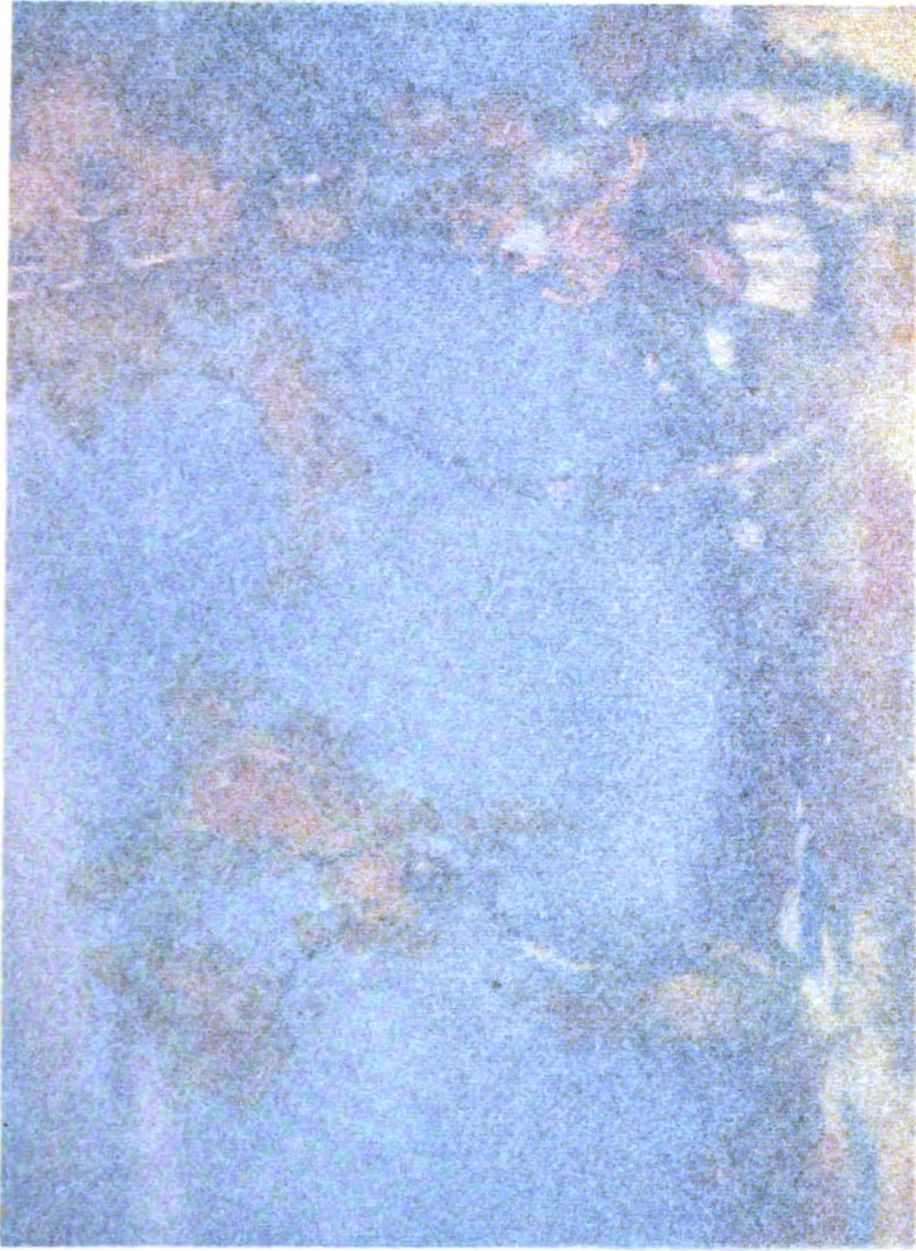
Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
 Decidedly can try us ;
 He knows each chord, its various tone,
 Each spring, its various bias.
 Then at the balance let's be mute,
 We never can adjust it ;
 What's done we partly may compute,
 But know not what's resisted.

CA' THE YOWES TO THE KNOWES

HARK ! the mavis' e'ening sang,
 Sounding Clouden's woods amang ;
 Then a-faulding let us gang,
 My bonnie dearie.

Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
 Ca' them where the heather grows,
 Ca' them where the burnie rowes,
 My bonnie dearie.

We'll gae down by Clouden side,
 Thro' the hazels, spreading wide,



Poems of Robert Burns

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman ;
That they may gang a kennin wrang,
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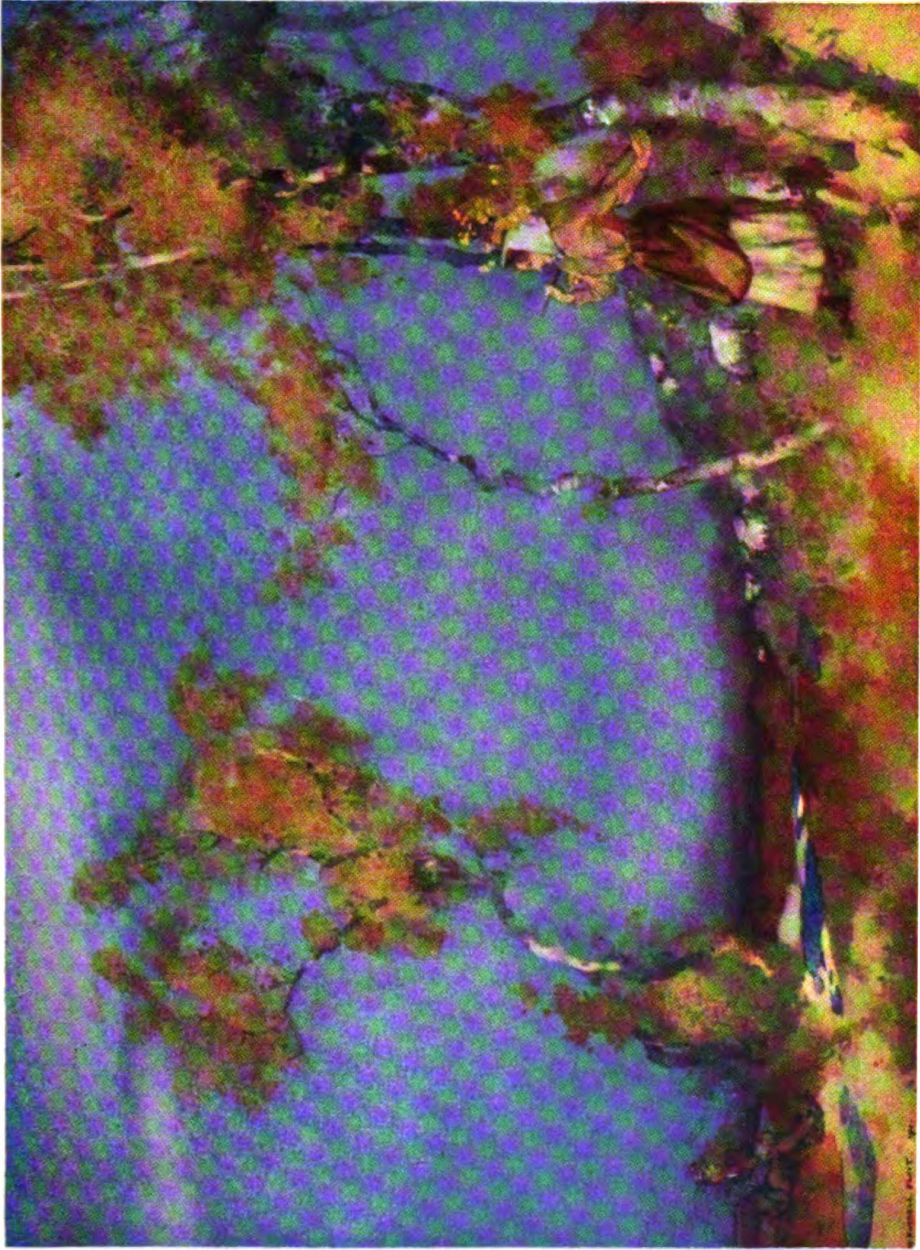
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Decidedly can try us ;
He knows each chord, its various tone,
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Then at the balance let's be mute,
We never can adjust it ;
What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted.

CA' THE YOWES TO THE KNOWES

HARK ! the mavis' c'ening sang,
Sounding Clouden's woods amang ;
Then a-faulding let us gang,
My bonnie dearie.

Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
Ca' them where the heather grows,
Ca' them where the burnie rowes,
My bonnie dearie.

We'll gae down by Clouden side,
Thro' the hazels, spreading wide,



Hark! the mavis' e'ning sang,
Sounding Clouden's woods amang.

Aye She Wrought

109

O'er the waves that sweetly glide,
To the moon sae clearly.

Ca' the yowes, etc.

Yonder's Clouden's silent towers,
Where at moonshine midnight hours,
O'er the dewy bending flowers,
Fairies dance sae cheery.

Ca' the yowes, etc.

Ghaist nor bogle shalt thou fear ;
Thou'rt to love and Heav'n sae dear,
Nocht of ill may come thee near,
My bonnie dearie.

Ca' the yowes, etc.

Fair and lovely as thou art,
Thou hast stown my very heart ;
I can die—but canna part,
My bonnie dearie.

Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
Ca' them where the heather grows,
Ca' them where the burnie rowes,
My bonnie dearie.

AYE SHE WROUGHT HER MAMMIE'S WARK

THERE was a lass, and she was fair,
At kirk and market to be seen ;
When a' the fairest maids were met,
The fairest maid was bonnie Jean.

Poems of Robert Burns

And aye she wrought her mammie's wark,
And aye she sang sae merrily :
The blythest bird upon the bush
Had ne'er a lighter heart than she.

But hawks will rob the tender joys
That bless the little lintwhite's nest ;
And frost will blight the fairest flowers,
And love will break the soundest rest.

Young Robie was the brawest lad,
The flower and pride of a' the glen ;
And he had owsen, sheep and kye,
And wanton naigies nine or ten.

He gaed wi' Jeanie to the tryst,
He danc'd wi' Jeanie on the down ;
And lang ere witless Jeanie wist,
Her heart was tint, her peace was stown.

As in the bosom o' the stream
The moon-beam dwells at dewy e'en ;
So trembling, pure, was tender love
Within the breast o' bonnie Jean.

And now she works her mammie's wark,
And aye she sighs wi' care and pain ;
Yet wistna what her ail might be,
Or what wad mak her weel again.

But didna Jeanie's heart loup light,
And didna joy blink in her e'e,
As Robie tauld a tale o' love,
Ae e'enin' on the lily lea ?

Open the Door to Me, oh !

111

The sun was sinking in the west,
The birds sang sweet in ilka grove ;
His cheek to hers he fondly prest,
And whisper'd thus his tale o' love :

' O Jeanie fair, I lo'e thee dear ;
O canst thou think to fancy me ?
Or wilt thou leave thy mammie's cot,
And learn to tent the farms wi' me ?

' At barn or byre thou shaltna drudge,
Or naething else to trouble thee ;
But stray amang the heather-bells,
And tent the waving corn wi' me.'

Now what could artless Jeanie do ?
She had nae will to say him na :
At length she blush'd a sweet consent,
And love was aye between them twa.

OPEN THE DOOR TO ME, OH !

' OH, open the door, some pity to shew,
Oh, open the door to me, oh !
Tho' thou hast been false, I'll ever prove true,
Oh, open the door to me, oh !

' Cauld is the blast upon my pale cheek,
But caulder thy love for me, oh !
The frost that freezes the life at my heart,
Is nought to my pains frae thee, oh !

ROWTH O' RHYMES THE POET'S RICHES

(EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH, 1786)

DEAR Smith, the sleeest pawkie 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 an' moon,
 And ev'ry star that blinks aboon,
 Ye've cost me twenty pair o' shoon
 Just gaun to see you ;
 And ev'ry ither pair that's done,
 Mair taen 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 ev'ry feature,
 She's wrote 'The Man.'

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

Rowth o' Rhymes

115

The star that rules my luckless lot,
Has fated me the russet coat,
An' damn'd my fortune to the groat ;
 But, in requit,
Has blest me with a random shot
 O' country wit.

This while my notion's taen a sklent,
To try my fate in guid, black prent ;
But still the mair I'm that way bent,
 Something cries ' Hoolie !
I red 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 ensured 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,
An' teach the lanely heights an' howes
 My rustic sang.

I'll wander on, wi' tentless heed
How never-halting moments speed,
Till fate shall snap the brittle thread ;
 Then, all unknown,
I'll lay me with th' inglorious dead,
 Forgot and gone !

Poems of Robert Burns

But why o' death begin a tale ?
 Just now we're living sound and hale ;
 Then top and maintop crowd the sail,
 Heave Care o'er 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,
 Maks hours like minutes, hand in hand,
 Dance by fu' light.

The magic wand then let us wield :
 For, ance that five-an'-forty 's speel'd,
 See, crazy, weary, joyless Eild,
 Wi' wrinkled face,
 Comes hoastin', hirplin' owre the field,
 Wi' creepin' pace.

When ance life's day draws near the gloamin'
 Then fareweel vacant careless roamin' ;
 An' fareweel cheerfu' tankards foamin',
 An' social noise ;
 An' fareweel dear deluding woman,
 The joy of joys !

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

Rowth o' Rhymes

117

We wander there, we wander here,
We eye the rose upon the brier,
Unmindful that the thorn is near,
 Among the leaves :
And tho' the puny wound appear,
 Short while it grieves.

Some, lucky, find a flow'ry spot,
For which they never toil'd nor swat ;
They drink the sweet and eat the fat,
 But care or pain ;
And, haply, eye the barren hut
 With high disdain.

With steady aim, some Fortune chase ;
Keen hope does ev'ry sinew brace ;
Thro' fair, thro' 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 an' starvin',
 They often groan.

Alas ! what bitter toil an' straining—
But truce wi' 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.

Poems of Robert Burns

My pen I here fling to the door,
 And kneel 'Ye Pow'rs!' and warm implore,
 'Tho' 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 an' 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 jouk beneath misfortune's blows
 As weel's I may;
 Sworn foe to sorrow, care, and prose,
 I rhyme away.

The Kirk of Lamington

119

O ye douce folk, that live by rule,
Grave, tideless-blooded, calm, and cool,
Compar'd wi' you—O fool ! fool ! fool !

How much unlike !
Your hearts are just a standing pool,
Your lives a dyke !

Nae hare-brain'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 tho' ye do despise
The hairum-scairum, ram-stam boys,

The rattlin' 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 with You to mak a pair,
Where'er I gang.

THE KIRK OF LAMINGTON

As cauld a wind as ever blew,
A cauld kirk, and in 't but few ;
As cauld a minister's ever spak—
Ye 'se a' be het or I come back !

Poems of Robert Burns

YE BANKS AND BRAES

YE banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
 How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair?
 How can ye chant, ye little birds,
 And I sae weary fu' o' care?

Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
 That wantons thro' the flowering thorn:
 Thou minds me o' departed joys,
 Departed never to return.

Aft hae I rov'd by bonnie Doon,
 To see the rose and woodbine twine;
 And ilka bird sang o' its love,
 And fondly sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
 Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree;
 And my fause lover stole my rose,
 But ah! he left the thorn wi' me.

NOW WESTLIN WINDS

Now westlin winds and slaughtering guns
 Bring autumn's pleasant weather;
 The moorcock springs, on whirring wings,
 Amang the blooming heather:
 Now waving grain, wide o'er the plain,
 Delights the weary farmer;
 And the moon shines bright, when I rove at night
 To muse upon my charmer.

The partridge loves the fruitful fells;
 The plover loves the mountains;

Now Westlin Winds

121

The woodcock haunts the lonely dells ;
The soaring hern the fountains :
Thro' lofty groves the cushat roves,
The path of man to shun it ;
The hazel bush o'erhangs the thrush,
The spreading thorn the linnet.

Thus ev'ry kind their pleasure find,
The savage and the tender ;
Some social join, and leagues combine ;
Some solitary wander ;
Avaunt, away ! the cruel sway,
Tyrannic man's dominion ;
The sportsman's joy, the murdering cry,
The fluttering, gory pinion !

But, Peggy dear, the ev'ning's clear,
Thick flies the skimming swallow ;
The sky is blue, the fields in view,
All fading-green and yellow :
Come let us stray our gladsome way,
And view the charms of nature ;
The rustling corn, the fruited thorn,
And every happy creature.

We'll gently walk, and sweetly talk,
Till the silent moon shine clearly ;
I'll grasp thy waist, and, fondly prest,
Swear how I love thee dearly :
Not vernal show'rs to budding flow'rs,
Not autumn to the farmer,
So dear can be as thou to me,
My fair, my lovely charmer !

Poems of Robert Burns

AULD ROB MORRIS

THERE'S auld Rob Morris that wons in yon glen,
 He's the king o' gude fellows and wale of auld men ;
 He has gowd in his coffers, he has owsen and kine,
 And ae bonnie lassie, his darling and mine.

She's fresh as the morning, the fairest in May ;
 She's sweet as the ev'ning amang the new hay ;
 As blythe and as artless as the lamb on the lea,
 And dear to my heart as the light to my e'e.

But oh ! she's an heiress, auld Robin's a laird,
 And my daddie has nought but a cot-house and yard ;
 A wooer like me maunna hope to come speed,
 The wounds I must hide that will soon be my dead.

The day comes to me, but delight brings me nane ;
 The night comes to me, but my rest it is gane :
 I wander my lane, like a night-troubled ghaist,
 And I sigh as my heart it wad burst in my breast.

O had she but been of a lower degree,
 I then might hae hoped she wad smiled upon me ;
 O how past describing had then been my bliss,
 As now my distraction no words can express !

POORTITH CAULD

O POORTITH cauld, and restless love,
 Ye wreck my peace between ye ;
 Yet poortith a' I could forgive,
 An' 'twere na for my Jeanie.

Tibbie, I Hae Seen the Day

123

O why should fate sic pleasure have
Life's dearest bands untwining ?
Or why sae sweet a flower as love
Depend on Fortune's shining ?

This warld's wealth when I think on,
Its pride, and a' the lave o't,—
O fie on silly coward man,
That he should be the slave o't.

Her een sae bonnie blue betray
How she repays my passion ;
But prudence is her o'erword aye,
She talks of rank and fashion.

O wha can prudence think upon,
And sic a lassie by him ?
O wha can prudence think upon,
And sae in love as I am ?

How blest the simple cotter's fate !
He woos his artless dearie ;
The silly bogles, wealth and state,
Can never make him eerie.

O why should fate, etc.

TIBBIE, I HAE SEEN THE DAY

O TIBBIE, I hae seen the day
Ye would na been sae shy ;
For laik o' gear ye lightly me,
But, trowth, I care na by.

Poems of Robert Burns

Yestreen I met you on the moor,
 Ye spak na, but gaed by like stoure :
 Ye geck at me because I'm poor,
 But fient a hair care I.

I doubt na, lass, but ye may think,
 Because ye hae the name o' clink,
 That ye can please me at a wink,
 Whene'er ye like to try.

But sorrow tak him that's sae mean,
 Altho' his pouch o' coin were clean,
 Wha follows ony saucy quean
 That looks sae proud and high.

Altho' a lad were e'er sae smart,
 If that he want the yellow dirt,
 Ye'll cast your head anither airt,
 And answer him fu' dry.

But if he hae the name o' gear,
 Ye'll fasten to him like a brier,
 Tho' hardly he, for sense or lear,
 Be better than the kye.

But, Tibbie, lass, tak my advice,
 Your daddy's gear maks you sae nice ;
 The deil a ane wad spier your price,
 Were ye as poor as I.

There lives a lass in yonder park,
 I would na gie her in her sark,
 For you wi' a' your thousand mark ;
 Ye need na look sae high.

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL

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

Hear me, auld Hangie, for a wee,
 An' let poor damnèd bodies be ;
 I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
 Ev'n to a deil,
 To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me,
 An' hear us squeal !

Great is thy pow'r, an' great thy fame ;
 Far kenn'd an' noted is thy name ;
 An', tho' yon lowin heugh's thy hame,
 Thou travels far ;
 An' faith ! thou's neither lag nor lame,
 Nor blate nor scaur.

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

Poems of Robert Burns

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

When twilight did my grannie summon
 To say her pray'rs, douce, honest woman !
 Aft yont the dyke she 's heard you bummin',
 Wi' eerie drone ;
 Or, rustlin', thro' the boortrees 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-buss 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.

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

Address to the Deil

127

Thence country wives, wi' toil an' pain,
May plunge an' plunge the kirk in vain ;
For oh ! the yellow treasure 's taen
 By witchin' skill ;
An' dawtit twal-pint Hawkie 's gane
 As yell 's the bill.

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

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

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

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

Poems of Robert Burns

Lang syne, in Eden's bonnie yard,
 When youthfu' lovers first were pair'd,
 And all the soul of love they shar'd,
 The raptur'd hour,
 Sweet on the fragrant flow'ry swaird,
 In shady bow'r ;

Then you, ye auld snick-drawing dog !
 Ye cam to Paradise incog.
 An' play'd on man a cursed brogue,
 (Black be you fa !)
 An' gied the infant warld a shog,
 'Maist ruin'd a'.

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

An' how ye gat him i' your thrall,
 An' brak him out o' house an' hal',
 While scabs an' blotches did him gall
 Wi' bitter claw,
 An' lows'd his ill-tongu'd wicked scawl,
 Was warst ava ?

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

O May, Thy Morn

129

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

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

O MAY, THY MORN

O MAY, thy morn was ne'er sae sweet,
As the mirk night o' December ;
For sparkling was the rosy wine,
And private was the chamber ;
And dear was she I dare na name,
But I will aye remember.

And here's to them, that, like oursel,
Can push about the jorum !
And here's to them that wish us weel,
May a' that's guid watch o'er them !
And here's to them we dare na tell,
The dearest o' the quorum !

PEG-A-RAMSEY

CAULD is the e'enin' blast
 O' Boreas o'er the pool,
 And dawin' it is dreary
 When birks are bare at Yule.

O bitter blaws the e'enin' blast
 When bitter bites the frost,
 And in the mirk and dreary drift
 The hills and glens are lost.

Ne'er sae murky blew the night
 That drifted o'er the hill,
 But bonnie Peg-a-Ramsey
 Gat grist to her mill.

WHISTLE OWRE THE LAVE O'T

FIRST when Maggy was my care,
 Heaven, I thought, was in her air ;
 Now we're married—spier nae mair—
 Whistle owre the lave o't.

Meg was meek, and Meg was mild,
 Bonnie Meg was nature's child—
 Wiser men than me's beguil'd ;
 Whistle owre the lave o't.

How we live, my Meg and me,
 How we love and how we 'gree,
 I care na by how few may see—
 Whistle owre the lave o't.

Husband, Cease Your Strife

131

Wha I wish were maggots' meat,
Dish'd up in her winding sheet,
I could write—but Meg may see 't ;
Whistle owre the lave o't.

HUSBAND, HUSBAND, CEASE YOUR STRIFE

HUSBAND, husband, cease your strife,
Nor longer idly rave, sir ;
Tho' I am your wedded wife,
Yet I am not your slave, sir.

'One of two must still obey,
Nancy, Nancy ;
Is it man or woman, say,
My spouse Nancy ?'

If 'tis still the lordly word,
Service and obedience ;
I'll desert my sov'reign lord,
And so good-bye allegiance !

'Sad shall I be, so bereft,
Nancy, Nancy !
Yet I'll try to make a shift,
My spouse Nancy.'

My poor heart then break it must,
My last hour I'm near it :
When you lay me in the dust,
Think how you will bear it.

'I will hope and trust in Heaven,
Nancy, Nancy ;

Poems of Robert Burns

Strength to bear it will be given,
My spouse Nancy.'

Well, sir, from the silent dead
Still I'll try to daunt you ;
Ever round your midnight bed
Horrid sprites shall haunt you.

'I'll wed another, like my dear
Nancy, Nancy ;
Then all hell will fly for fear,
My spouse Nancy.'

HEY FOR A LASS WI' A TOCHER

AWA wi' your witchcraft o' beauty's alarms,
The slender bit beauty you grasp in your arms :
O, gie me the lass that has acres o' charms,
O, gie me the lass wi' the weel-stockit farms.

Then hey, for a lass wi' a tocher, then hey, for a lass
wi' a tocher,

Then hey, for a lass wi' a tocher—the nice yellow
guineas for me !

Your beauty's a flower in the morning that blows,
And withers the faster, the faster it grows ;
But the rapturous charm o' the bonnie green knowes !
Ilk spring they're new deckit wi' bonnie white yowes.

And e'en when this beauty your bosom has blest,
The brightest o' beauty may cloy, when possess ;
But the sweet yellow darlings wi' Geordie imprest—
The langer ye hae them, the mair they're carest.

SIC A WIFE AS WILLIE HAD

WILLIE WASTLE dwalt on Tweed,
 The spot they ca'd it Linkumdoddie ;
 Willie was a wabster guid,
 Could stown a clue wi' ony body :
 He had a wife was dour and din,
 O Tinkler Maidgie was her mither ;
 Sic a wife as Willie had,
 I wad na gie a button for her !

She has an e'e, she has but ane,
 The cat has twa the very colour ;
 Five rusty teeth, forbye a stump,
 A clapper tongue wad deave a miller ;
 A whiskin beard about her mou',
 Her nose and chin they threaten ither ;
 Sic a wife as Willie had,
 I wad na gie a button for her !

She's bow-hough'd, she's hein-shinn'd,
 Ae limpin leg a hand-breed shorter ;
 She's twisted right, she's twisted left,
 To balance fair in ilka quarter :
 She has a hump upon her breast,
 The twin o' that upon her shouther ;
 Sic a wife as Willie had,
 I wad na gie a button for her !

Auld baudrons by the ingle sits,
 An' wi' her loof her face a-washin ;
 But Willie's wife is nae sae trig,
 She dights her grunzie wi' a hushion :

Poems of Robert Burns

Her walie nieves like midden-creels,
 Her face wad fyle the Logan Water ;
 Sic a wife as Willie had,
 I wad na gie a button for her !

O LASSIE, ART THOU SLEEPING YET ?

O LASSIE, art thou sleeping yet ?
 Or art thou wakin', I would wit ?
 For love has bound me hand and foot,
 And I would fain be in, jo.

O let me in this ae night,
 This ae, ae, ae night ;
 For pity's sake this ae night,
 O rise and let me in, jo.

Thou hear'st the winter wind and weet,
 Nae star blinks thro' the driving sleet ;
 Tak pity on my weary feet,
 And shield me frae the rain, jo.

The bitter blast that round me blows,
 Unheeded howls, unheeded fa's ;
 The cauldness o' thy heart's the cause
 Of a' my grief and pain, jo.

HER ANSWER

O TELL na me o' wind and rain,
 Upbraid na me wi' cauld disdain !
 Gae back the gait ye cam again,
 I winna let you in, jo.

The Humble Petition of Bruar Water 135

I tell you now this ae night,
This ae, ae, ae night ;
And ance for a' this ae night,
I winna let you in, jo.

The snellest blast, at mirkest hours,
That round the pathless wand'rer pours,
Is nocht to what poor she endures,
That's trusted faithless man, jo.

The sweetest flower that deck'd the mead,
Now trodden like the vilest weed ;
Let simple maid the lesson read,
The weird may be her ain, jo.

The bird that charm'd his summer-day
Is now the cruel fowler's prey ;
Let witless, trusting woman say
How aft her fate's the same, jo.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER
TO THE NOBLE DUKE OF ATHOLE

My 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-jumping glowrin' trouts,
That thro' my waters play,

Poems of Robert Burns

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 shor'd me ;
But had I in my glory been,
He, kneeling, wad ador'd 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, altho' 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' tow'ring trees,
And bonnie spreading bushes.
Delighted doubly then, my Lord,
You'll wander on my banks,
And listen mony a grateful bird
Return you tuneful thanks.

The Humble Petition of Bruar Water 137

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 ensure,
To shield them from the storm ;
And coward maukin sleep secure,
Low in her grassy form :
Here shall the shepherd make his seat,
To weave his crown of flow'rs ;
Or find a sheltering safe retreat
From prone-descending show'rs.

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

Here haply too, at vernal dawn,
Some musing bard may stray,
And eye the smoking dewy lawn,
And misty mountain gray ;
Or, by the reaper's nightly beam,
Mild-chequering thro' the trees,

Poems of Robert Burns

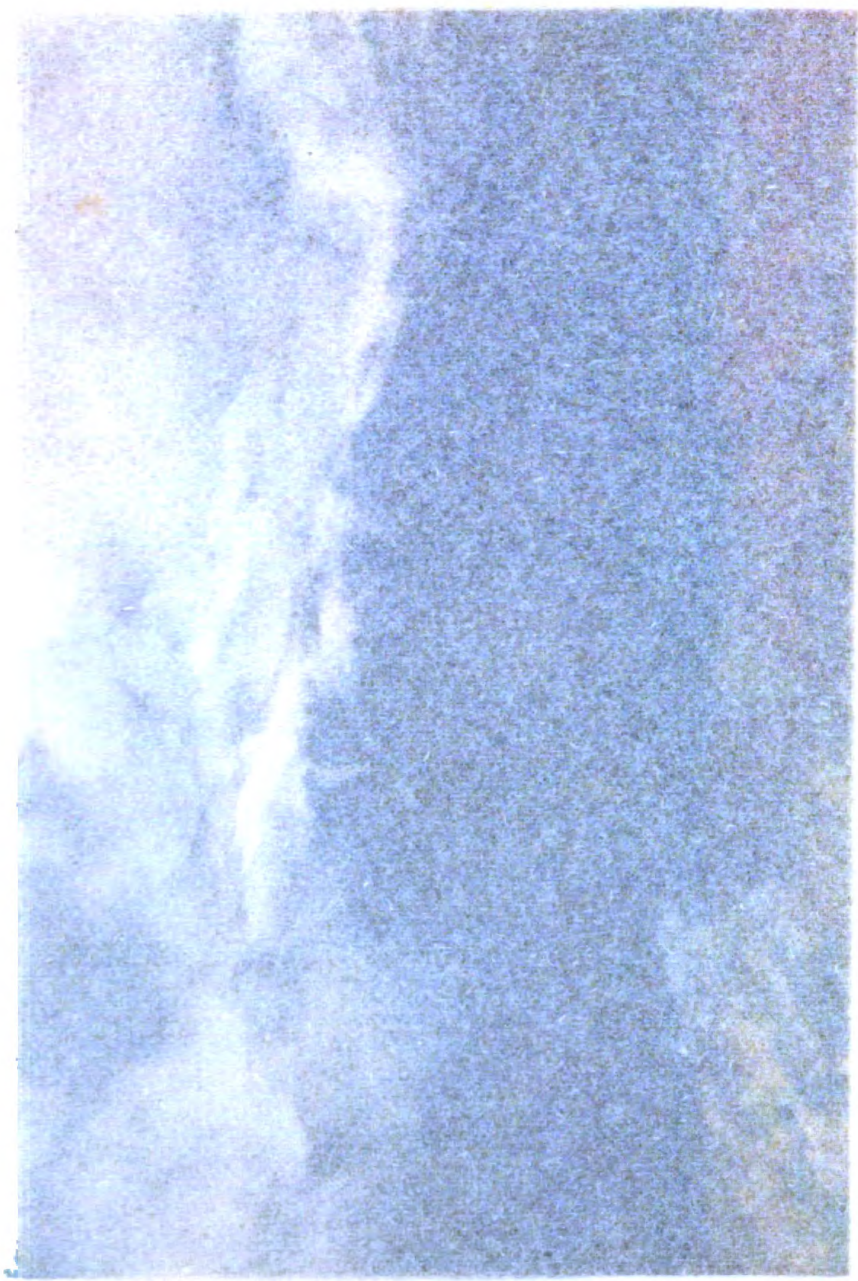
Rave to my darkly dashing stream,
Hoarse-swelling on the breeze.

Let lofty firs, and ashes cool,
My lowly banks o'erspread,
And view, deep-bending in the pool,
Their shadows' wat'ry bed !
Let fragrant birks in woodbines drest
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 thro' Albion's farthest ken,
To social-flowing glasses
The grace be—' Athole's honest men,
And Athole's bonnie lasses !'

YOUNG HIGHLAND ROVER

LOUD blaw the frosty breezes,
The snaws the mountains cover ;
Like winter on me seizes,
Since my young Highland Rover
Far wanders nations over.
Where'er he go, where'er he stray,
May Heaven be his warden,
Return him safe to fair Strathspey,
And bonnie Castle-Gordon !



Poems of Robert Burns

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 o' the pool,
Their shadows' wat'ry bed.
Let fragrant birks in wa'ithroon
My craggy cliffs adorn;
And, for the little sea-yeats' tune,
The close em'owling thron.

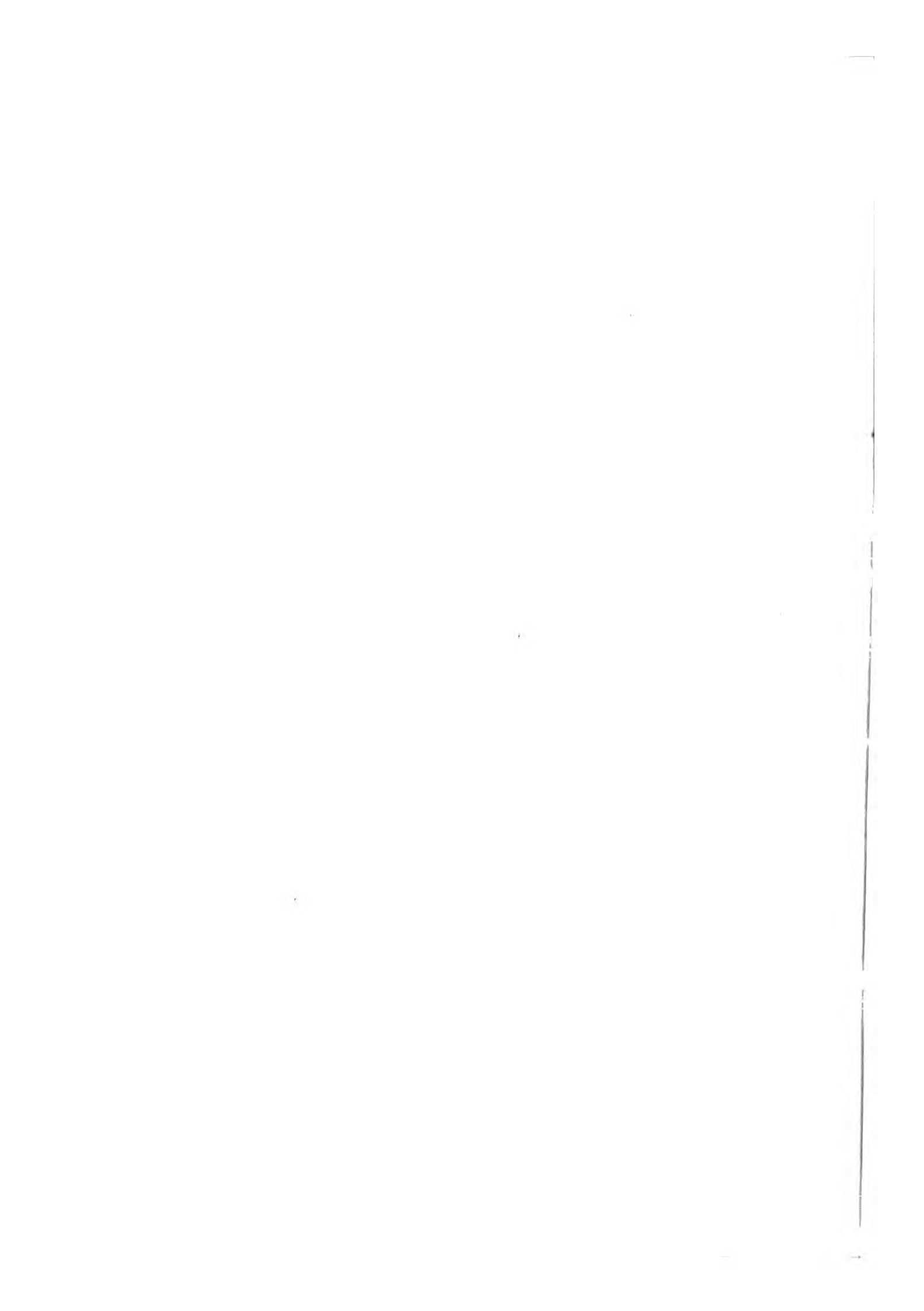
So may Old Scotia's daisy-creeps,
Your little angel-baird,
Spring, like their flowers, in prop
Their honour'd native laird.
So may thro' Albion's forest-ken,
To social-flowing glens,
The grace be — 'Athol's best of men,
And Athole's bonnie lass.

YOUNG HIGHLAND LAD

Loud blaw the frosty breeze,
The snaws the mountains ever;
Like winter on me seas,
Since my young Highland Laver
Far wanders nation o'er,
Where'er he go, where'er he stay,
May Heaven be his reward,
Return him safe to fair Strathroy,
And bonnie Castle-Gordon.



Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.



My Heart's in the Highlands

139

The trees, now naked groaning,
Shall soon wi' leaves be hinging,
The birdies, dowie moaning,
Shall a' be blythely singing,
And every flower be springing:
Sae I'll rejoice the lee-lang day,
When, by his mighty warden,
My youth's return'd to fair Strathspey
And bonnie Castle-Gordon.

MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here ;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer ;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go !

Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
The birth-place of valour, the country of worth !
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

Farewell to the mountains, high cover'd with snow ;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below ;
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods ;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods !

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here ;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer ;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go !

THE LOVELY LASS OF INVERNESS

THE lovely lass o' Inverness,
 Nae joy nor pleasure can she see ;
 For e'en and morn she cries, ' alas !'
 And aye the saut tear blins her ee :
 ' Drumossie moor, Drumossie day,
 A waefu' day it was to me ;
 For there I lost my father dear,
 My father dear, and brethren three.

 ' Their winding-sheet the bluidy clay,
 Their graves are growing green to see ;
 And by them lies the dearest lad
 That ever blest a woman's ee !
 Now wae to thee, thou cruel lord,
 A bluidy man I trow thou be ;
 For mony a heart thou hast made sair,
 That ne'er did wrang to thine or thee.'

O, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST

O, WERT thou in the cauld blast,
 On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
 My plaidie to the angry airt,
 I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee.
 Or did misfortune's bitter storms
 Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
 Thy bield should be my bosom,
 To share it a', to share it a'.

 Or were I in the wildest waste,
 Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,

The Lass o' Ballochmyle

141

The desert were a paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there.
Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my crown
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

THE LASS O' BALLOCHMYLE

'TWAS even—the dewy fields were green,
On every blade the pearls hang ;
The Zephyrs wanton'd round the bean,
And bore its fragrant sweets along :
In every glen the Mavis sang,
All nature listening seem'd the while :
Except where green-wood echoes rang,
Among the braes o' Ballochmyle.

With careless step I onward stray'd,
My heart rejoiced in nature's joy,
When musing in a lonely glade,
A maiden fair I chanced to spy ;
Her look was like the morning's eye,
Her hair like nature's vernal smile ;
Perfection whisper'd, passing by,
Behold the lass o' Ballochmyle !

Fair is the morn in flowery May,
And sweet is night in Autumn mild,
When roving thro' the garden gay,
Or wandering in the lonely wild :
But Woman, Nature's darling child !
There all her charms she does compile ;

Poems of Robert Burns

Ev'n there her other works are foil'd
By the bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

O had she been a country maid,
And I the happy country swain,
Tho' shelter'd in the lowest shed
That ever rose on Scotland's plain !
Thro' weary winter's wind and rain,
With joy, with rapture, I would toil ;
And nightly to my bosom strain
The bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

Then pride might climb the slippery steep,
Where fame and honours lofty shine ;
And thirst of gold might tempt the deep,
Or downward seek the Indian mine :
Give me the cot below the pine,
To tend the flocks or till the soil,
And every day have joys divine,
With the bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

ELEGY ON CAPT. MATTHEW HENDERSON

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

HE'S gane, he's gane ! he's frae us torn,
The ae best fellow e'er was born !
Thee, Matthew, Nature's sel' shall mourn
By wood and wild,
Where, haply, Pity strays forlorn,
Frae man exil'd.

Elegy on Capt. Henderson

143

Ye hills, near neibors o' the starns,
That proudly cock your cresting cairns !
Ye cliffs, the haunts of sailing earns,
 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 bow'rs ;
Ye roses on your thorny tree,
 The first o' flow'rs.

At dawn when ev'ry grassy blade
Droops with a diamond at his head,
At ev'n when beans their fragrance shed
 I' th' rustling gale,
Ye maukins, whiddin' thro' the glade,
 Come join my wail.

Mourn, ye wee songsters o' the wood ;
Ye grouse that crap the heather bud ;
Ye curlews calling thro' a clud ;
 Ye whistling plover ;
And mourn, ye whirring paitrick brood—
 He's gane for ever !

Poems of Robert Burns

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, clamouring 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 bow'r
 In some auld tree, or eldritch tow'r,
 What time the moon wi' silent glow'r
 Sets up her horn,
 Wail thro' the dreary midnight hour
 Till waukrife morn !

O rivers, forests, hills, and plains !
 Oft have ye heard my canty strains ;
 But now, what else for me remains
 But tales of woe ?
 And frae my een the drapping rains
 Maun ever flow.

Mourn, Spring, thou darling of the year !
 Ilk cowslip cup shall kep a tear :
 Thou, Simmer, while each corny spear
 Shoots up its head,
 Thy gay green flow'ry tresses shear
 For him that's dead !

My Ain Kind Dearie O

145

Thou, Autumn, wi' thy yellow hair,
In grief thy sallow mantle tear !

Thou, Winter, hurling thro' the air
The roaring blast,
Wide o'er the naked world declare
The worth we've lost !

Mourn him, thou sun, great source of light !
Mourn, empress of the silent night !
And you, ye twinkling starnies bright,
My Matthew mourn !
For through your orbs he's ta'en his flight,
Ne'er to return.

O Henderson ! the man ! the brother !
And art thou gone, and gone for ever ?
And hast thou crost that unknown river,
Life's dreary bound ?
Like thee, where shall I find another,
The world around ?

Go to your sculptur'd tombs, ye great,
In a' the tinsel trash o' state !
But by thy honest turf I'll wait,
Thou man of worth !
And weep the ae best fellow's fate
Eer lay in earth.

MY AIN KIND DEARIE O

WHEN o'er the hill the eastern star
Tells bughtin-time is near, my jo ;
And owsen frae the furrow'd field
Return sae dowf and wearie O ;

Poems of Robert Burns

Down by the burn, where scented birks
 Wi' dew are hanging clear, my jo,
 I'll meet thee on the lea-rig,
 My ain kind dearie O.

In mirkest glen, at midnight hour,
 I'd rove, and ne'er be eerie O,
 If thro' that glen I gaed to thee,
 My ain kind dearie O.
 Altho' the night were ne'er sae wild,
 And I were ne'er sae wearie O,
 I'd meet thee on the lea-rig,
 My ain kind dearie O.

The hunter lo'es the morning sun,
 To rouse the mountain deer, my jo ;
 At noon the fisher seeks the glen,
 Along the burn to steer, my jo ;
 Gie me the hour o' gloamin grey,
 It maks my heart sae cheery O,
 To meet thee on the lea-rig,
 My ain kind dearie O.

BESSY AND HER SPINNIN' WHEEL

O LEEZE me on my spinnin' wheel,
 O leeze me on my rock and reel ;
 Frae tap to tae that cleeds me bien,
 And haps me fiel and warm at e'en !
 I'll set me down and sing and spin,
 While laigh descends the simmer sun,
 Blest wi' content, and milk and meal—
 O leeze me on my spinnin' wheel.

The Gallant Weaver

147

On ilka hand the burnies trot,
And meet below my theekit cot ;
The scented birk and hawthorn white
Across the pool their arms unite,
Alike to screen the birdie's nest,
And little fishes' caller rest :
The sun blinks kindly in the biel',
Where blythe I turn my spinnin' wheel.

On lofty aiks the cushats wail,
And echo cons the doolfu' tale ;
The lintwhites in the hazel braes,
Delighted, rival ither's lays ;
The craik amang the claver hay,
The pairrick whirrin' o'er the ley,
The swallow jinkin' round my shiel,
Amuse me at my spinnin' wheel.

Wi' sma' to sell, and less to buy,
Aboon distress, below envy,
O wha wad leave this humble state,
For a' the pride of a' the great ?
Amid their flaring, idle toys,
Amid their cumbrous, dinsome joys,
Can they the peace and pleasure feel
Of Bessy at her spinnin' wheel ?

THE GALLANT WEAVER

WHERE Cart rins rowin' to the sea,
By mony a flower and spreading tree,
There lives a lad, the lad for me,
He is a gallant weaver.

Poems of Robert Burns

Oh I had wooers aught or nine,
 They gied me rings and ribbons fine ;
 And I was fear'd my heart would tine,
 And I gied it to the weaver.

My daddie sign'd my tocher-band,
 To gie the lad that has the land ;
 But to my heart I'll add my hand,
 And gie it to the weaver.

While birds rejoice in leafy bowers ;
 While bees rejoice in opening flowers ;
 While corn grows green in simmer showers,
 I'll love my gallant weaver.

EPPIE ADAIR

AN' O ! my Eppie,
 My jewel, my Eppie !
 Wha wadna be happy
 Wi' Eppie Adair ?
 By love, and by beauty,
 By law, and by duty,
 I swear to be true to
 My Eppie Adair !

An' O ! my Eppie,
 My jewel, my Eppie !
 Wha wadna be happy
 Wi' Eppie Adair ?
 A' pleasure exile me,
 Dishonour defile me,
 If e'er I beguile thee,
 My Eppie Adair !

FOR WEANS AND WIFE

(TO DR. BLACKLOCK)

Wow, 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. . . .

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 glaiket, gleesome, dainty damies,
Wha by Castalia's wimplin' streamies,
Lowp, 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 need na vaunt,
But I'll sned besoms—thraw saugh woodies,
 Before they want.

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

Poems of Robert Burns

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 whyles do mair.

But to conclude my silly rhyme
 (I'm scant o' verse, and scant o' time)—
 To make a happy fire-side clime
 To weans and wife,
 That 's the true pathos and sublime
 Of human life.

CROWDIE EVER MAIR

O THAT I had ne'er been married,
 I wad never had nae care ;
 Now I've gotten wife and bairns,
 An' they cry "crowdie !" ever mair.

 Ance crowdie, twice crowdie,
 Three times crowdie in a day ;
 Gin ye crowdie ony mair,
 Ye'll crowdie a' my meal away.

Waefu want and hunger fley me,
 Glowrin' by the hallen en' ;
 Sair I fecht them at the door,
 But aye I'm eerie they come ben.

Braw Sober Lessons

151

'BRAW SOBER LESSONS'

(EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND)

I LANG hae thought, my youthfu' friend,
A something to have sent you,
Tho' it should serve nae ither end
Than just a kind memento ;
But how the subject theme may gang,
Let time and chance determine ;
Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

Ye'll try the world soon, my lad,
And, Andrew dear, believe me,
Ye'll find mankind an unco squad,
And muckle they may grieve ye :
For care and trouble set your thought,
Ev'n when your end's attained ;
And a' your views may come to nought,
Where ev'ry nerve is strained.

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 oh ! mankind are unco weak,
An' little to be trusted ;
If self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted !

Yet they wha fa' in fortune's strife,
Their fate we shouldna censure ;
For still th' important end of life
They equally may answer.

Poems of Robert Burns

A man may hae an honest heart,
 Tho' 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 thro' ev'ry other man
 Wi' sharpen'd sly inspection.

The sacred lowe o' weel-plac'd love,
 Luxuriantly indulge it ;
 But never tempt th' illicit rove,
 Tho' naething should divulge it :
 I wae the quantum o' the sin,
 The hazard of concealing ;
 But oh ! it hardens a' within,
 And petrifies the feeling !

To catch dame Fortune's golden smile,
 Assiduous wait upon her ;
 And gather gear by ev'ry 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 ye 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 ev'n the rigid feature :
 Yet ne'er with wits profane to range
 Be complaisance extended ;
 An atheist 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-driv'n,
 A conscience but a canker—
 A correspondence fix'd wi' Heav'n
 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 ye better reck the rede
 Than ever did th' adviser !

TO A HAGGIS

FAIR 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 wordy 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 thro' your pores the dews distil
 Like amber bead.

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

Then, horn for horn they stretch an' 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 o'er his French ragout,
 Or olio that wad staw a sow,
 Or fricassee wad mak her spew
 Wi' perfect sconner,

Bannocks o' Barley

155

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 :
Thro' bloody flood or field to dash,
O how unfit !

But mark the Rustic, haggis-fed—
The trembling earth resounds his tread !
Clap in his walie nieve a blade,
He'll mak it whistle ;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will sned,
Like taps o' thrissle.

Ye Pow'rs, 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 !

BANNOCKS O' BARLEY

BANNOCKS o' bear meal,
Bannocks o' barley ;
Here 's to the Highlandman's
Bannocks o' barley.
Wha in a brulzie
Will first cry a parley ?
Never the lads wi'
The bannocks o' barley.

Poems of Robert Burns

Bannocks o' bear meal,
 Bannocks o' barley ;
 Here 's to the lads wi'
 The bannocks o' barley ;
 Wha in his wae-days
 Were loyal to Charlie ?
 Wha but the lads wi'
 The bannocks o' barley.

COMING THROUGH THE RYE

JENNY's a' wat, poor body ;
 Jenny's seldom dry ;
 She draiglet a' her petticoatie,
 Coming through the rye.

Coming through the rye, poor body,
 Coming through the rye,
 She draiglet a' her petticoatie,
 Coming through the rye.

Gin a body meet a body
 Coming through the rye ;
 Gin a body kiss a body,
 Need a body cry ?

Gin a body meet a body
 Coming through the glen ;
 Gin a body kiss a body,
 Need the world ken ?

Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn 157

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 taen.

He lean'd him to an ancient aik,
Whose trunk was mould'ring down with years ;
His locks were bleachèd white wi' time,
His hoary cheek was wet wi' tears ;
And as he touch'd his trembling harp,
And as he tun'd his doleful sang,
The winds, lamenting thro' 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 others plant them in my room.

'I've seen so many changefu' years,
On earth I am a stranger grown ;
I wander in the ways of men,
Alike unknowing and unknown :
Unheard, unpitied, unreliev'd,
I bear alane my lade o' care,
For silent, low, on beds of dust,
Lie a' that would my sorrows share.

'And last (the sum of a' my griefs !)
My noble master lies in clay ;
The flow'r 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 evermair !
And thou, my last, best, only friend,
That fillest an untimely tomb,
Accept this tribute from the bard
Thou brought from fortune's mirkest gloom.

A Prayer in the Prospect of Death 159

'In poverty's low barren vale,
Thick mists obscure involv'd me round ;
Though oft I turn'd the wistful eye,
No 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.

'O why has worth so short a date
While villains ripen grey with time ?
Must thou, the noble, gen'rous, great,
Fall in bold manhood's hardy prime ?
Why did I live to see that day,
A day to me so full of woe ?
O 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 !'

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 !

Poems of Robert Burns

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

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

Where with intention I have 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 ;

A Bard's Epitaph

161

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,
And still the tumult of the raging sea :
With that controlling pow'r assist ev'n me
Those headlong furious passions to confine,
For all unfit I feel my powers to be,
To rule their torrent in th' allowèd line ;
O, aid me with Thy help, Omnipotence Divine !

A BARD'S EPITAPH

Is there a whim-inspirèd fool,
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
Owre blate to seek, owre proud to snool,
Let him draw near ;
And owre this grassy heap sing dool,
And drap a tear.

Is there a bard of rustic song,
Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,
That weekly this area throng,
O, pass not by !
But, with a frater-feeling strong,
Here heave a sigh.

Poems of Robert Burns

Is there a man whose judgment clear,
 Can others teach the course to steer,
 Yet runs, himself, life's mad career,
 Wild as the wave ;
 Here pause—and, thro' the starting tear,
 Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below
 Was quick to learn and wise to know,
 And keenly felt the friendly glow,
 And softer flame ;
 But thoughtless follies laid him low,
 And stain'd his name !

Reader, attend ! whether thy soul
 Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
 Or darkling grubs this earthly hole,
 In low pursuit ;
 Know prudent cautious self-control
 Is wisdom's root.

THE BRAES O' BALLOCHMYLE

THE Catrine woods were yellow seen,
 The flowers decayed on Catrine lee,
 Nae lav'rock sang on hillock green,
 But nature sickened on the e'e.
 Thro' faded groves Maria sang,
 Hersel in beauty's bloom the whyle,
 And aye the wild-wood echoes rang,
 ' Fareweel the braes o' Ballochmyle !
 ' Low in your wintry beds, ye flowers,
 Again ye 'll flourish fresh and fair ;



Poem of Robert Burns

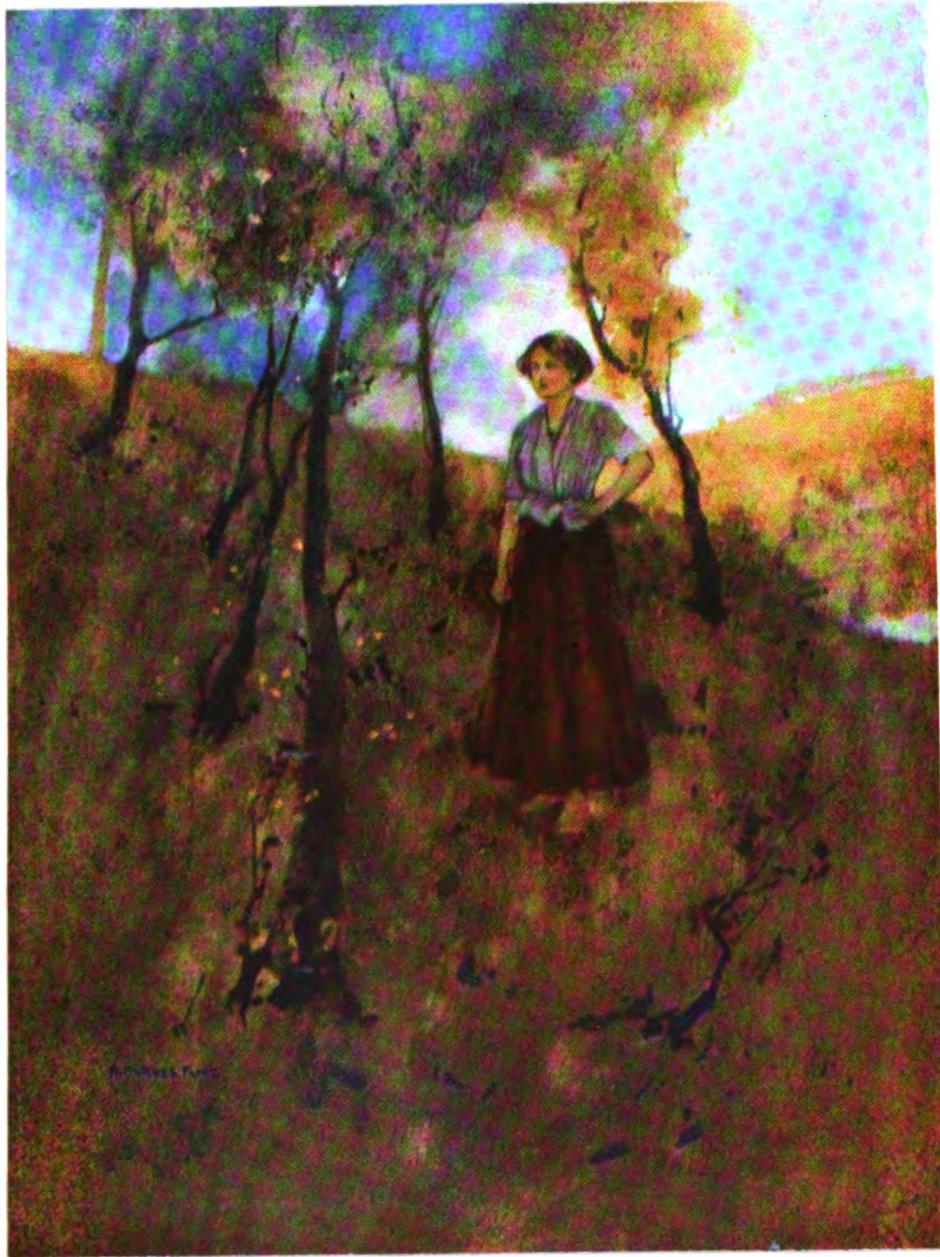
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 Again ye'll flourish fresh and fair;



Thro' faded groves Maria sang,
Fareweel the braes o' Ballochmyle.

Ay Waukin, O

163

Ye birdies dumb, in withering bowers,
Again ye 'll charm the vocal air.
But here, alas ! for me nae mair
Shall birdie charm, or floweret smile ;
Fareweel, the bonnie banks of Ayr,
Fareweel, fareweel, sweet Ballochmyle !'

AY WAUKIN, O

SIMMER's a pleasant time,
Flow'rs of ev'ry colour ;
The water rins o'er the heugh,
And I long for my true lover.

Ay waukin, O,
Waukin still and wearie :
Sleep I can get nane
For thinking on my dearie.

When I sleep I dream,
When I wauk I'm eerie ;
Sleep I can get nane
For thinking on my dearie.

Lanely night comes on,
A' the lave are sleepin',
I think on my bonnie lad,
And I bleer my een wi' greetin'.

Ay waukin, O,
Waukin still and wearie :
Sleep I can get nane
For thinking on my dearie.

IN EVIL DAYS

(FROM A LETTER TO GRAHAM OF FINTRY, 1791)

I DREAD thee, Fate, relentless and severe,
 With all a poet's, husband's, father's fear!
 Already one strong-hold of hope is lost,
 Glencairn, the truly noble, lies in dust—
 Fled, like the sun eclips'd as noon appears,
 And left us darkling in a world of tears.
 Oh! hear my ardent, grateful, selfish pray'r!
 Fintry, my other stay, long bless and spare!
 Thro' a long life his hopes and wishes crown,
 And bright in cloudless skies his sun go down!

THE POETIC DAYSPRING

(FRAGMENT FROM A LETTER)

I MIND it weel, in early date,
 When I was beardless, young and blate,
 An' first could thresh the barn,
 Or haud a yokin' at the pleugh,
 An' tho' forfoughten sair eneugh,
 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 stoked raw,
 Wi' claivers, an' haivers,
 Wearing the day awa,—

The Poetic Dayspring

165

Ev'n 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 bur-thistle, spreading wide
Amang the bearded bear,
I turn'd the weeder-clips aside,
An' spar'd 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 an' wrang,
Wild floated in my brain ;
Till on that hairst I said before,
My partner in the merry core,
She rous'd 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 ev'ry kindling keek,
But bashing, and dashing,
I fearèd aye to speak . . .

Poems of Robert Burns

SCOTS WHA HAE

ROBERT BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY, BEFORE
THE BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victorie.

Now 's the day, and now 's the hour ;
See the front o' battle lour !
See approach proud Edward's power—
Chains and slaverie !

Wha will be a traitor knave ?
Wha can fill a coward's grave ?
Wha sae base as be a slave ?
Let him turn and flee !

Wha for Scotland's King and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or freeman fa' ?
Let him follow me !

By oppression's woes and pains !
By your sons in servile chains !
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free !

Lay the proud usurpers low !
Tyrants fall in every foe !
Liberty's in every blow !
Let us do or die !

FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT

Is there, for honest poverty,
 That hangs his head, and a' that ?
 The coward-slave, we pass him by,
 We dare be poor for a' that !
 For a' that, and a' that,
 Our toils obscure, and a' that ;
 The rank is but the guinea stamp ;
 The man 's the gowd for a' that.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
 Wear hodden-gray, and a' that ;
 Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
 A man 's a man for a' that.
 For a' that, and a' that,
 Their tinsel show, and a' that ;
 The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
 Is King o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,
 Wha struts, and stares, and a' that ;
 Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
 He 's but a coof for a' that :
 For a' that, and a' that,
 His riband, star, and a' that,
 The man of independent mind,
 He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
 A marquis, duke, and a' that ;
 But an honest man 's aboon his might,
 Guid faith he mauna fa' that !

Poems of Robert Burns

For a' that, and a' that,
 Their dignities, and a' that,
 The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
 Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
 As come it will for a' that ;
 That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
 May bear the gree, and a' that.
 For a' that and a' that,
 It's coming yet, for a' that,
 That man to man the warld o'er,
 Shall brothers be for a' that.

HERE'S A HEALTH TO THEM THAT'S AWA

HERE'S a health to them that's awa,
 Here's a health to them that's awa ;
 And wha winna wish guid luck to our cause,
 May never guid luck be their fa' !

It's guid to be merry and wise,
 It's guid to be honest and true,
 It's guid to support Caledonia's cause,
 And bide by the buff and the blue.

May liberty meet wi' success !
 May prudence protect her frae evil !
 May tyrants and tyranny tine in the mist,
 And wander their way to the devil !

Here's a health to them that's awa,
 Here's a health to them that's awa ;
 Here's a health to Tammie, the Norland laddie,
 That lives at the lug o' the law !

Does Haughty Gaul

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Here's freedom to him that wad read,
Here's freedom to him that wad write !
There's nane ever fear'd that the truth should be heard,
But they wham the truth wad indite.

Here's a health to them that's awa,
Here's a health to them that's awa,
Here's Chieftain M'Leod, a Chieftain worth gowd,
Tho' bred among mountains o' snaw !

DOES HAUGHTY GAUL

DOES haughty Gaul invasion threat ?
Then let the loons beware, Sir,
There's wooden walls upon our seas,
And volunteers on shore, Sir.
The Nith shall run to Corsincon,
And Criffel sink in Solway,
Ere we permit a foreign foe
On British ground to rally !

O let us not like snarling tykes
In wrangling be divided,
Till, slap ! come in an unco loon
And wi' a rung decide it.
Be Britain still to Britain true,
Amang oursels united ;
For never but by British hands
Maun British wrangs be righted !

The kettle o' the kirk and state,
Perhaps a clout may fail in 't ;
But deil a foreign tinkler loon
Shall ever ca' a nail in 't.

Poems of Robert Burns

Our father's blude the kettle bought,
 An' wha wad dare to spoil it?
 By heavens! the sacrilegious dog
 Shall fuel be to boil it!

The wretch that would a tyrant own,
 And the wretch, his true-sworn brother,
 Who'd set the mob aboon the throne,—
 May they be damned together!
 Who will not sing *God save the King!*
 Shall hang as high's the steeple;
 But while we sing *God save the King!*
 We'll not forget the people!

AULD LANG SYNE

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,
 And never brought to min'?
 Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
 And auld lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear.
 For auld lang syne,
 We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
 For auld lang syne.

We twa hae run about the braes,
 And pu'd the gowans fine;
 But we've wander'd mony a weary foot
 Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidled i' the burn,
 From morning sun till dine;
 But seas between us braid hae roar'd
 Sin' auld lang syne.

Auld Lang Syne

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And there's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gie's a hand o' thine ;
And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught,
For auld lang syne.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I'll be mine ;
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

For auld lang syne, my dear.
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

Longer Poems

THE TWA DOGS

'Twas in that place o' Scotland's Isle,
That bears the name o' auld King Coil,
Upon a bonnie day in June,
When wearin' 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 Caesar,
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,
Shew'd him the gentleman and scholar ;
But though he was o' high degree,
The fient a pride, nae pride had he ;
But wad hae spent ane hour caressin'
E'en wi' a tinkler-gipsy's messan :
At kirk or market, mill or smiddie,
Nae tawted tyke, though e'er sae duddie,

The Twa Dogs

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But he wad stand as glad to see him,
An' stroan'd on stanes an' hillocks wi' him.

The tither was a ploughman's collie,
A rhyming, ranting, raving 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 an' faithfu' tyke,
As ever lap a sheugh or dyke ;
His honest, sonsie, bawsent face
Aye gat him friends in ilka place.
His breast was white, his tousie back
Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black ;
His gawsie 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 of the creation.

CAESAR

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

Our Laird gets in his rackèd rents,

Poems of Robert Burns

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, where, 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 sic like 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' ;
 An' what poor cot-folk pit their painch in,
 I own it's past my comprehension.

LUATH

Trowth, Caesar, whyles they're fash'd eneugh ;
 A cottar howkin' in a sheugh,
 Wi' dirty stanes biggin' a dyke,
 Baring a quarry, and sic like ;
 Himsel', a wife, he thus sustains,
 A smytrie o' wee duddy 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 ;

The Twa Dogs

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But how it comes I never kent yet,
They're maistly wonderfu' contented ;
An' buirdly chiels and clever hizzies
Are bred in sic a way as this is.

CAESAR

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

I've noticed, on our Laird's court-day,
An' mony a time my heart's been wae,
Poor tenant bodies, scant o' cash,
How they 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,
An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble !
I see how folk live that hae riches ;
But surely poor folk maun be wretches !

LUATH

They're 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 gi'es them little fright.

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

The dearest comfort o' their lives,

Poems of Robert Burns

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

And whyles twalpenny-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 rantin' 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 gude-will ;
 The canty auld folk crackin' crouse,
 The young anes ranting 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,

The Twa Dogs

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Wha thinks to knit himsel the faster
In favour wi' some gentle master,
Wha, aiblins, thrang a-parliamentin',
For Britain's gude his saul indentin—

CAESAR

Haith, lad, ye little ken about it ;
For Britain's gude !—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 make a tour, an' tak a whirl,
To learn *bon ton* an' see the worl'.

There, at Vienna, or Versailles,
He rives his father's auld entails ;
Or by Madrid he takes the rout,
To thrum guitars and fecht wi' nowt ;
Or down Italian vista startles,
Whore-hunting amang groves o' myrtles ;
Then bouses drumly German water,
To make himsel' look fair and fatter,
And clear the consequential sorrows,
Love-gifts of Carnival signoras.
For Britain's gude !—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 ?

N

Poems of Robert Burns

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

But will ye tell me, Master Caesar ?
 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.

CAESAR

Lord, man, were ye but whyles where I am,
 The gentles ye wad ne'er envý 'em,
 It's true, they needna starve or sweat,
 Thro' winter's cauld or simmer's heat ;
 They've nae sair wark to craze their banes,
 An' fill auld age wi' grips an' granes :
 But human bodies are sic fools,
 For a' their colleges and schools,
 That when nae real ills perplex them,
 They make enow themselves to vex them,
 An' 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 lassie at her wheel,
 Her dizzens done, she's unco weel ;
 But gentlemen, an' ladies warst,
 Wi' ev'ndown want o' wark are curst.

The Twa Dogs

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They loiter, lounging, lank, and lazy ;
Though de'il 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 de'ils 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 picture beuks ;
Stake on a chance a farmer's stack-yard,
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 gloamin 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 COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

NOVEMBER chill blaws loud wi' angry sough ;
 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 Cotter 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 agèd tree ;
 Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin', stacher through
 To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin' noise an' glee.
 His wee bit ingle, blinkin bonnilie,
 His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
 The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
 Does a' his weary kiaugh and care beguile,
 An' makes him quite forget his labour an' 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 cannie 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 shew a braw new gown,
 Or deposite her sair-won penny-fee,
 To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.



The toil-worn Cotter frae his labour goes,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.



The Cotter's Saturday Night

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

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

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 wily 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 takes the mother's eye ;
Blythe 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 laithfu', scarce can weel behave ;
 The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
 What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave ;
 Weel-pleas'd 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 perjur'd arts, dissembling smooth !
 Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exil'd ?
 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 sowpe 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 good ;
 The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell
 How 'twas a towmond auld sin' lint was i' the bell.

The Cotter's Saturday Night

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The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face
They round the ingle form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-bible, ance his father's pride :
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin an' 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 heav'nward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays :
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame ;
The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise ;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

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

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed ;
How He who bore in Heaven the second name
Had not on earth whereon to lay His head ;
How His first followers and servants sped ;

The precepts sage they wrote to many a land :
 How he, was 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 Heav'n 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.

The Cotter's Saturday Night 185

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 a lordling's pomp ? a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refin'd !

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

O Thou ! who poured the patriotic tide
That streamed thro' 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 !)
O never, never, Scotia's realm desert ;
But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard,
In bright succession rise, her ornament and guard !

THE BRIGS OF AYR

'Twas when the stacks got on their winter-hap,
 And thack and rape secure the toil-worn crap ;
 Potatoe-bings are snuggèd up frae skaith
 O' coming Winter's biting, frosty breath ;
 The bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils,
 Unnumber'd buds an' 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 thund'ring guns are heard on ev'ry 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 flow'r in field or meadow springs ;
 Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
 Except perhaps the Robin's whistling glee,
 Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree :
 The hoary morns precede the sunny days,
 Mild, calm, serene, wide spreads the noontide blaze,
 While thick the gossamour waves wanton in the rays.

'Twas in that season when a simple Bard,
 Unknown and poor, simplicity's reward,
 Ae night, within the ancient brugh of Ayr,
 By whim inspir'd, 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 ;

The Brigs of Ayr

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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, with 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 tow'r and tree :
The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crept, gently-crusting, owre the glittering stream—

When, lo ! on either hand the list'ning Bard,
The clanging sough of whistling wings is heard ;
Two dusky forms dart thro' the midnight air,
Swift as the gos drives on the wheeling hare ;
Ane on th' 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 sp'ritual folk :
Fays, Spunkies, Kelpies, a', they can explain them,
And ev'n the very deils they brawly ken them.)
Auld Brig appeared o' ancient Pictish race,
The very wrinkles Gothic in his face ;
He seem'd as he wi' Time had warstl'd 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 ev'ry arch ;
It chanc'd his new-come neebor took his ee,

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-een :—

AULD BRIG

' I doubtna, frien', ye 'll think ye 're nae sheep-shank.
 Ance ye were streekit owre frae bank to bank !
 But gin ye be a brig as auld as me—
 Tho', faith ! that date, I doubt, ye 'll never see—
 There 'll be, if that day come, I'll wad a boddle,
 Some fewer whigmaleeries in your noodle.'

NEW BRIG

' Auld Vandal ! ye but show your little mense,
 Just much about it wi' your scanty sense ;
 Will your poor narrow foot-path of a street,
 Where twa wheel-barrows tremble when they meet,
 Your ruin'd formless bulk o' stane and lime,
 Compare wi' bonnie brigs o' modern time ?
 There's men o' taste wou'd tak the Ducat stream,
 Tho' 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 an' tide ;
 And tho' 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,

The Brigs of Ayr

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Or stately Lugar's mossy fountains boil,
Or where the Greenock winds his moorland course,
Or haunted Garpal draws his feeble source,
Arous'd by blust'ring winds an' spotting thowes,
In mony a torrent down the snaw-broo rowes ;
While crashing ice, borne on the roaring spate,
Sweeps dams, an' mills, an' 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 't o't,
The Lord be thankit that we've tint the gate o't !
Gaunt, ghastly, ghaist-alluring edifices,
Hanging with threat'ning jut, like precipices ;
O'er-arching, mouldy, gloom-inspiring coves,
Supporting roofs, fantastic, stony groves ;
Windows and doors in nameless sculptures drest,
With order, symmetry, or taste unblest ;
Forms like some bedlam Statuary's dream,
The craz'd 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, unblest with resurrection !'

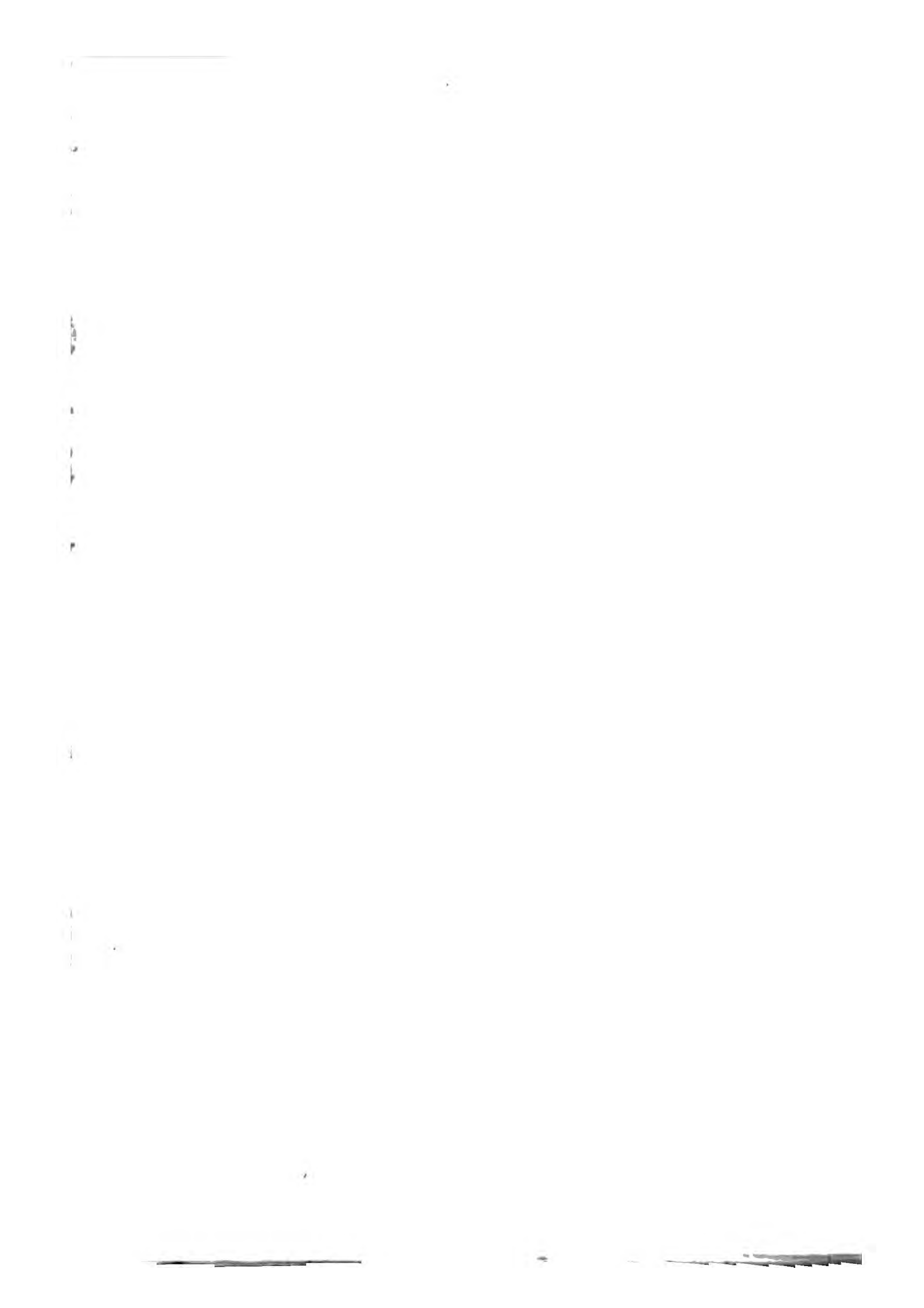
AULD BRIG

'O ye, my dear-remember'd, ancient yealings,
 Were ye but here to share my wounded feelings !
 Ye worthy Proveses, an' mony a Bailie,
 Wha in the paths o' righteousness did toil aye ;
 Ye dainty Deacons, an' ye douce Conveeners,
 To whom our moderns are but causey-cleaners !
 Ye godly Councils wha hae blest this town ;
 Ye godly Brethren o' the sacred gown,
 Wha meekly gie your hurdies to the smiters ;
 And (what would now be strange) ye godly Writers :
 A' ye douce folk I've borne aboon the broo,
 Were ye but here, what would ye say or do !
 How would your spirits groan in deep vexation,
 To see each melancholy alteration ;
 And agonizing, curse the time and place
 When ye begat the base degen'rate race !
 Nae langer rev'rend men, their country's glory,
 In plain braid Scots hold forth a plain braid story ;
 Nae langer thrifty citizens, an' 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 :





The Brigs of Ayr

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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 spar'd ;
To liken them to your auld-warld squad,
I must needs say, comparisons are odd.
In Ayr, wag-wits nae mair can have a handle
To mouth "a Citizen," a term o' scandal ;
Nae mair the Council waddles down the street,
In all the pomp of ignorant conceit ;
Men wha grew wise prigg'in' owre hops and raisins,
Or gather'd lib'ral views in Bonds and Seisins :
If haply Knowledge, on a random tramp,
Had shor'd 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.'

WHAT farther clishmaclaver might been said,
What bloody wars, 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 danc'd ;
Bright to the moon their various dresses glanc'd :
They footed o'er the wat'ry 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.
O had M'Lauchlan, thairm-inspiring sage,
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,
When thro' 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 fir'd,
 And ev'n 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 flow'ry hay, came Rural Joy,
 And Summer, with his fervid-beaming eye ;
 All-cheering Plenty, with her flowing horn,
 Led yellow Autumn wreath'd with nodding corn ;
 Then Winter's time-bleach'd locks did hoary show,
 By Hospitality with cloudless brow :
 Next followed 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, crown'd with a hazel wreath,
 To rustic Agriculture did bequeath
 The broken iron instruments of death :
 At sight of whom our Sprites forgat their kindling wrath.

TAM O' SHANTER

WHEN chapman billies leave the street,
And drouthy neibors neibors meet,
As market-days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to tak the gate ;
While we sit bousing at the nappy,
An' getting fou and unco happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and styles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Where 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 bonnie lasses).

O Tam ! hadst thou but been sae wise
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice !
She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,
A bletherin', blusterin', drunken blellum ;
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou was na sober ;
That ilka melder wi' the miller
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller ;
That every naig was ca'd a shoe on,
The smith and thee gat roarin' 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 be found deep drown'd in Doon ;

Poems of Robert Burns

Or catch'd wi' warlocks in 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 lo'ed him like a very 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 did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himsel among 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 flow'r, it's bloom is shed ;
Or like the snow falls in the river—
A moment white, then melts for ever ;
Or like the borealis race,

Tam o' Shanter

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That flit ere you can point their place ;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.
Nae man can tether time nor tide ;
The hour approaches Tam maun ride ;
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour, he mounts his beast in ;
And sic a night he taks the road in
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last ;
The rattling show'rs 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 gray mare, Meg,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire ;
Whiles holding fast his gude blue bonnet ;
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet ;
Whiles glow'ring 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 ford,
Where in the snaw the chapman smoor'd ;
And past the birks and meikle stane,
Where drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane ;
And thro' the whins, and by the cairn,
Where hunters fand the murder'd bairn ;
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Where Mungo's mither hang'd hersel.

Poems of Robert Burns

Before him Doon pours all his floods ;
 The doubling storm roars thro' the woods ;
 The lightnings flash from pole to pole ;
 Near and more near the thunders roll :
 When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
 Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze ;
 Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing ;
 And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn !
 What dangers thou canst make 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 car'd na deils a boddle !
 But Maggie stood right sair astonish'd,
 Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,
 She ventur'd forward on the light ;
 And, vow ! 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 in their heels.
 A winnock-bunker in the east,
 There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast—
 A touzie 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 cantraip sleight
 Each in its cauld hand held a light,
 By which heroic Tam was able

To note upon the haly table
 A murderer's banes in gibbet-airns ;
 Twa span-lang, wee, unchristen'd bairns ;
 A thief new-cuttet frae the rape—
 Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape ;
 Five tomahawks, wi' blude red rusted ;
 Five scymitars, 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 gray hairs yet stack to the heft ;
 Wi' mair of horrible and awfu',
 Which even to name wad be unlawfu'.

As Tammie glowr'd, amaz'd, 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 linkit at it in her sark !

Now Tam, O Tam ! had thae been queans,
 A' plump and strapping 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' gude blue hair,
 I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies,
 For ae blink o' the bonnie burdies !

But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
 Rigwoodie hags wad spean a foal,
 Louping and flinging on a crummock,
 I wonder didna turn thy stomach.

Poems of Robert Burns

But Tam kent what was what fu' brawlie :
 There was ae winsome wench and walie
 That night enlisted in the core,
 Lang after kent on Carrick shore !
 (For mony a beast to dead she shot,
 And perish'd mony a bonnie 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 tho' sorely scanty,
 It was her best, and she was vauntie.
 Ah ! little kent thy reverend grannie
 That sark she coft for her wee Nannie
 Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches)
 Wad ever grac'd a dance of witches !

But here my muse her wing maun cour ;
 Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r—
 To sing how Nannie lap and flang,
 (A souple jad she was, and strang) ;
 And how Tam stood, like ane bewitch'd,
 And thought his very een enrich'd ;
 Even Satan glowr'd, and fidg'd fu' fain,
 And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main :
 Till first ae caper, syne anither,
 Tam tint his reason a' thegither,
 And roars out ' Weel done, Cutty-sark !'
 And in an instant all was dark !
 And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
 When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke
 When plundering herds assail their byke,
 As open pussie's mortal foes

Tam o' Shanter

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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 skriech and hollow.

Ah, Tam ! ah, Tam ! thou 'll 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 key-stane o' the brig :
There at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they dare na cross !
But ere the key-stane 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,
But left behind her ain gray tail :
The carlin claut her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Each man and mother's son, take heed ;
Whene'er to drink you are inclin'd,
Or cutty-sarks rin in your mind,
Think ! ye may buy the joys o'er dear ;
Remember Tom o' Shanter's mare.

THE VISION

DUAN FIRST

THE sun had closed the winter day,
 The curlers quat their roarin' play,
 An' hunger'd maukin taen her way
 To kail-yards green,
 While faithless snaws ilk step betray
 Where she has been.

The thresher's weary flingin'-tree
 The lee-lang day had tirèd me :
 And when the day had clos'd 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 smeek,
 The auld clay biggin' ;
 An' heard the restless rattons squeak
 About the riggin'.

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

The Vision

201

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

I started, mutt'ring 'blockhead ! coof !'
And heaved on high my waukit 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 snick did draw ;
An' 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 need na doubt I held my whisht ;
The infant aith, half-form'd, was crusht ;
I glowr'd as eerie's I'd been dusht
 In some wild glen ;
When sweet, like modest worth, she blusht,
 An' 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 these reckless vows,
 Would soon been broken.

Poems of Robert Burns

A hare-brain'd, sentimental trace,
 Was strongly markèd in her face ;
 A wildly-witty rustic grace
 Shone full upon her ;
 Her eye, ev'n 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 ;
 An' such a leg ! my bonnie Jean
 Could only peer it ;
 Sae straught, sae taper, tight, and clean,
 Nane else came near it.

Her mantle large, of greenish hue,
 My gazing wonder chiefly drew ;
 Deep lights and shades, bold-mingling, threw
 A lustre grand ;
 And 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 thro' his woods,
 On to the shore ;
 And many a lesser torrent scuds,
 With seeming roar.

The Vision

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

By stately tower 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 feature 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, pourtray'd
 In colours strong ;
Bold, soldier-featured, undismay'd
 They strode along.

Poems of Robert Burns

DUAN SECOND

With musing-deep astonish'd stare,
 I view'd the heavenly-seeming Fair;
 A whisp'ring throb did witness bear
 Of kindred sweet,
 When with an elder Sister's air
 She did me greet.

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

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

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

'Of these am I—Coila my name;
 And this district as mine I claim,
 Where once the Campbells, chiefs of fame,
 Held ruling pow'r:
 I mark'd thy embryo-tuneful flame,
 Thy natal hour.

The Vision

205

‘ 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 thro’ the sky,
I saw grim Nature’s visage hoar
 Struck thy young eye.

‘ Or when the deep green-mantled Earth
Warm-cherish’d ev’ry flow’ret’s birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
 In ev’ry grove,
I saw thee eye the gen’ral mirth
 With boundless love.

‘ When ripen’d fields and azure skies
Call’d forth the reapers’ rustling noise,
I saw thee leave their ev’ning 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’ adored Name,
I taught thee how to pour in song,
 To soothe thy flame.

Poems of Robert Burns

'I saw thy pulse's maddening play
Wild send thee pleasure's devious way,
Misled by fancy's meteor ray,
By passion driven ;
But yet the light that led astray
Was light from Heaven.

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

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

'Yet all beneath th' unrivall'd rose
The lowly daisy sweetly blows ;
Tho' 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 king's regard,
Can give a bliss o'ermatching thine,
A rustic Bard.

The Vision

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‘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.



Glossary

- Abeigh**, aloof, at bay.
Aboon, above.
Acquent, acquainted.
Ae, one; only.
Aff-loof, offhand.
A-gley, askew.
Aiblins, perhaps, possibly.
Airt, region, direction; to direct.
Airted, directed.
Aizle, ash (of fuel); a cinder.
Ajee, ajar.
An, if.
Asklent, askance.
Ava, at all; of all.
Awnie, bearded (barley).
Ayont, beyond.
- Babie-clouts**, baby-clothes.
Bairntime, a mother's whole brood or issue.
Bade, endured, could stand.
Bannock, a soft flat cake.
Barley - bree, barley - brew = ale or whisky.
Baudrons, the cat.
Bawsent, white streaked.
Beets, adds fuel to, incites.
Bell, flower, blossom; **sin' lint was i' the bell**, since flax was in blossom.
Belyve, by and by, presently.
Ben, the spence or parlour; in, into, the inner room.
Beuk, a book.
Bicker, a wooden cup; a draught.
Bickering, hurrying.
Biel, **bield**, a shelter.
Bien, comfortable.
Big, to build.
Biggin, a building.
Bill, a bull.
- Billie**, brother; comrade.
Bings, heaps.
Birk, a birch (tree).
Birkie, chap, fellow (carries a suggestion of strut, conceit or cockiness).
Birken-shaw, a wood of birches.
Bizz, to buzz.
Blate, bashful, shy.
Blaud, a slapping lot.
Bietum, a gassy fool.
Blethers, nonsense.
Blink, to glance brightly; a glance; a moment.
Blinkers, spies.
Bluntie, stupid, like a fool.
Bocked, vomited.
Boddle, a small coin, about = $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Bogle, a ghost.
Boortrees, elder-bushes.
Bore, a hole or gap.
Boot, more than they bargained for.
Bouk, a bulk, body.
Braing't, pulled with a jerk.
Brak's, broke his.
Branks, a wooden curb, a bridle.
Brats, clothes; aprons.
Brattle, a spurt, sprint, scamper.
Braw, handsome; gaily dressed.
Braxies, sheep that have died of braxy.
Briestit, sprang forward.
Brechan, a horse-collar.
Brent, smooth, upright.
Brent-new, brand-new.
Brock, a badger.
Brogue, a trick.
Broo, brew, liquid, water.
Broozes, wedding-races home from church.
Brough, a borough.
Brulzie, a brawl or brangle.

- Brunstane**, brimstone.
Bughtin, gathering sheep into the fold or bught.
Buirldy, burly, stalwart.
Bum, to hum.
Bum-clock, the beetle.
Burdies (dim of **burd**), damsels.
Bure, did bear.
Burn, a stream.
Burnewin, the blacksmith.
Bur-thistle, the spear-thistle.
But, without.
But an' ben, the kitchen and parlour.
By, a great deal ("I carena by").
Byke, a hive; a crowd.
Byre, a cowshed.
- Ca'**, call; drive (cattle, nails, etc.); push.
Cadger, a hawker.
Caff, chaff.
Caird, a tinker.
Cairn, a (memorial) heap of stones.
Caller, fresh.
Cannie, quiet, gentle, kind (also adv.).
Cantie, merry, jolly.
Cantraip, cantrip, magic, witching.
Carl, an old man.
Carl-hemp, male-hemp.
Carlin, a middle-aged or old woman.
Cast out, quarrel.
Caups, wooden cups.
Chanter, the playing pipe of the bag-pipes.
Chaup, a stroke, a blow.
Chiel, chap, young fellow (eulogistic term).
Chimla, chimney.
Chitter, to shiver.
Claivers, clavers, talk, about anything and nothing.
Clash, gossip, tittle-tattle; to talk so.
Claupt, clutched.
Claut, a handful, a quantity.
Cleed, to clothe.
Cleekit, linked (their arms in dancing).
Clink, money.
Clishmaclaver, palaver.
Cloot, a hoof.
Clud, a cloud.
Coble, a small boat.
- Coft**, bought.
Cogs, various wooden vessels for food and drink are so called.
Coggie, dim. of **cog**.
Coila, Kyle, a division of Ayrshire.
Coof, cuif, a dolt, ninny; a mean-spirited fellow.
Coost, did cast.
Cootie, leg-plumed; a small pail.
Corbies, crows.
Couthie, kindly, comfortable.
Cour, to cower.
Crack, a story; a chat.
Crackin, conversing.
Craig (dim. **craigie**), the throat.
Craiks, landrails.
Crambo-clink, rhyme.
Crambo-jingle, rhyming.
Cranreuch, hoar frost.
Crap, a crop.
Creel, an osier basket.
Creepie-chair, stool of repentance.
Creeshie, greasy.
Crood, to coo.
Crouse, confident, bold.
Crowdie, oatmeal and water or milk (=uncooked porridge).
Crummock, a hooked stick.
Cushat, the wood-pigeon.
Cutty, short.
- Daffin**, funning, skylarking.
Daimen-icker, an ear or two of corn.
Darg, work.
Daw, to dawn.
Dawtit, petted, made much of.
Dead, death.
Deave, deafen.
Diddle, to jog to and fro.
Dight, to winnow or sift; to wipe.
Din, dun coloured.
Dink, dainty, trim.
Ding, to overthrow, beat.
Dirl, to vibrate, thrill.
Dizzen, a dozen.
Doited, muddled; bewildered.
Donsie, restive; wayward.
Doo, a pigeon.
Dooked, ducked.
Dool, sorrow.

- Douce**, sedate, serious ; seemly.
Dour, stubborn.
Dow, can ; **downa**, cannot.
Dowff, dull.
Dowie, low-spirited, dull, jaded.
Downa bide, cannot stand (them).
Doylt, stupified.
Draigl't, dragged.
Dreigh, tedious, slow, tiresome.
Droop-rump'lt, short-rumped.
Droukit, soaked.
Drouthy, thirsty.
Drucken, drunken.
Drumlie, muddy.
Drumossie Moor, Culloden Field.
Dub, a puddle.
Duds, duddies, clothes.
Duddie, ragged.
Dundee, a Scotch psalm tune.
Dunts, knocks.
Dusht, touched.
- Earn**, an eagle.
Eerie, apprehensive, frightened, "queer."
Eild, old age, eld.
Elbuck, elbow.
Eldritch, unearthly, fearsome.
Elgin, a Scotch psalm tune.
Erse, Gaelic.
Ettle, intention.
Eydent, diligent.
- Fa'**, to fall ; lot ; to have (by lot) ; to claim.
Faikit, let off, excused.
Fain, fond, glad ; **fain o' ither**, fond of each other.
Fairin, a gift from the Fair : ironically = a thrashing.
Fan', fand, found.
Fash, to mind, trouble oneself.
Fasten-een, Fasten-even (evening before Lent).
Faught, a fight.
Fauldin'-slap, gate of the fold.
Fawsont, seemly, well-doing.
Fecht, a fight.
Feckless, feeble, fit for nothing.
Fell, sharp, tasty.
- Fen', fend**, a shift or provision ; to provide for, look after.
Ferlie, to wonder.
Fetch't, stopped suddenly.
Fey, fated to death.
Fidge, to fidget.
Fidgin-fain, fidgeting with fainness.
Fiel, well.
Fient, fiend. **The fient a**, devil a . . .
Fiere, comrade.
Fissle, to bustle, be all alive.
Fittie-lan', the hindmost near horse in ploughing.
Fleech'd, beseeched, wheedled.
Flee, a fly.
Fleg, a fright.
Fley'd, frightened, scared.
Flichterin', fluttering.
Flingin-tree, a flail.
Fliskit, fretted and capered.
Foor, fared, went.
Forbye, besides.
Forfairn, worn out.
Forfoughten, exhausted by the conflict.
Forjesket, "jaded with fatigue," R.B.
Fou, full ; drunk.
Foughten, troubled, wearied.
Fyke, fidget.
Fyle, to dirty.
- Gae**, gave.
Gae, gaed, go, went.
Gairs, slashes (of a stuffed gown).
Gar (pf. **gar'd, gart**) make, cause to.
Gate, gait, the road ; the way ; **a' to the gate**, away, out of the way ; **tak the gate**, start for home.
Gaucie, gawcie, ample, flowing.
Gaun, going.
Geck, to toss the head.
Get, the begettings, offspring.
Genty, trim, elegant.
Geordie, the yellow lettered, a guinea.
Gin, if ; when.
Girn, to twist the face, in chagrin or malice.
Gizz, a wig.
Glaikit, silly, thoughtless.
Glaum'd, clutched.
Gleib, a portion (of land).

- Glowrin**, staring.
Glunch, a scowl.
Gowan, the daisy.
Gowk, a fool; a guy.
Graith, the implements of an occupation.
Grat, wept.
Gree, a prize; **bure the gree** = won the victory.
Greet, to weep.
Groanin' maut, the gossips' ale at a lying-in.
Gruntle, the face, phiz.
Grunzie, the phiz (rather, mouth and nose).
Grushie, sturdy-growing.
Guid-father, father-in-law.
Guid-willie, hearty, with good-will.
Gumlie, muddy.
Gusty, tasty.
- Hae**, have.
Haet (=have it), component term in phrases; **deil-haet**, **fient-haet** = devil a bit, devil a one.
Haffets, the temples.
Haffins, half-like, partly.
Haggis, "A special Scotch pudding made of sheep's entrails, onions, and oatmeal, boiled in a sheep's stomach. The *pièce de résistance* at Burns' Club Dinners, and an esteemed antidote to whisky." Thus Henley and Henderson, with obvious envy.
Hain, to use sparingly; be out of use.
Hairst, **har'st**, harvest.
Haith, faith!
Haivers, nonsense; idle chat.
Hal', **hald**, a holding.
Hallen, a partition wall; a porch.
Halloween, All Saints' Eve (Oct. 31).
Hammers, blockheads.
Hangie, hangman (nickname for Old Nick).
Hansel, the first gift or getting, supposed to bring luck to the receiver or occasion.
Hap, any warm wrap or covering.
Happer, the hopper of a mill.
Harn, coarse cloth.
- Hash**, an oaf, dunderhead.
Haslock, the finest of the wool.
Haud, to hold.
Haughs, low-lying rich lands.
Hauns, hands.
Havins, manners, conduct.
Hawkie, the cow.
Hech, dear me! (expression of surprise and grief).
Heft, a haft, handle.
Heigh, high.
Hein-shinned, crooked shinned.
Herriment, plundering, devastation.
Heugh, a hollow or pit.
Hilch, to hobble, halt.
Hiltie-skiltie, helter-skelter.
Hirples, limps.
Histie, bare.
Hizzie, a wench, young woman.
Hoast, a cough.
Hog-shoulder, shouldering, jostling.
Hoolie! beware!
Houlet, an owl.
Howdie, midwife
Howe, a hollow.
Howket, they dug; dug up, unearthed.
Hoyte, "to amble crazily," R.B.
Hughoc = little Hugh.
Hunkers, the hams.
Hurdies, the buttocks.
Hushion, a footless stocking, worn on the arm.
- Icker**, an ear of corn.
Ilka, each, every.
Indentin', indenturing, devoting.
Ingine, genius.
I'se, I will or shall.
Ither, other, another, each other.
- Jad**, a jade.
Jauk, to trifle, dally.
Jaups, splashes.
Jimp, small, slender.
Jimps, stays.
Jink, to dodge, to turn quickly this way and that.
Jinker, a spanker; a coquette.
Jirkinet, bodice.
Jirt, a jerk.

- Jo**, sweetheart.
Jouk, to duck down, cower.
Jundie, to justle.
- Kain**, farm produce paid as rent.
Kebars, rafters.
Kebbuck, a cheese.
Keek, peep.
Kelpies, water-demons.
Kennin, a little, a thought (astray, etc.).
Kep, to catch (a ball, etc.).
Ket, a fleece.
Kiaugh, cark, anxiety.
Kilbaigie, an esteemed whisky.
Kimmer, wench, gossip, lass (married or single).
Kirn, a churn.
Kirns, harvest-homes.
Kirsen, to christen.
Kist, a chest.
Kitchen, a relish, treat or extra; to impart a relish to.
Kittle, risky, difficult.
Knaggie, knobblly.
Knap, to break (stones for road-metal).
Knowe, a knoll.
Kyles, skittles.
Kytes, bellies.
- Laigh**, low.
Laik, lack.
Lairing, sinking in moss or mud.
Laithfu', lothe, bashful.
Lallan, Lowland.
Lane, lone, alone (is used with possessive pronoun: "thou art no thy lane" = not alone).
Lap, leapt.
Lave, the remainder; the rest of them.
Lawin, the reckoning.
Lea (also **lay** and **ley**), untilled or meadow-land.
Lea-ri?, a strip of grass-land.
Lear, lore, learning.
Lee-lang, livelong.
Leeze me on, a blessing on.
Licket, licked, thrashed.
Lift, the sky; a load, share.
Limmer, a jade.
- Lin** (also **Linn**), a waterfall.
Link, to go dancingly, trippingly on.
Linkit at it, went at it.
Linties (or **Lintwhites**), linnets.
Loan, a lane.
Loof, palm of the hand; the hand.
Loot, let (past tense).
Lough, a loch, lake.
Loup (also **lowp**), to leap.
Lowe, a flame.
Lug, ear.
Lugget, eared; **lugget caup**, the two-eared cup.
Luggie, a cog with an upright handle.
Luntin, smoking.
Lyart, faded, blanched.
- Mae**, more.
Mailin, a farm.
Mark, an old Scots coin (Is. 1½d. stg.).
Martyrs, a Scotch psalm tune.
Maukin, a hare.
Maun, must.
Maut, malt.
Mavis, the thrush.
Melder, a milling, or quantity of corn sent to be ground.
Mell, to meddle.
Mense, good manners, discretion.
Messan, a mongrel.
Midden, a dungheap.
Midden-creels, dungheap baskets.
Mind, to remind; to remember.
Minnie, mother.
Mirk, dark.
Moop, to nibble; to herd with.
Mottie, dusty.
Mou', the mouth.
Moudiewort, a mole.
Muslin-kail, meatless broth.
Mutchkin, a liquid measure = 1 pint English.
- Naigie**, dim. of **naig**, a nag.
Nappy, ale, liquor.
Near-hand, nearly.
Neuk, corner.
New-ca'd, newly driven.
Nieve, fist.

Niffer, exchange.
Nit, a nut.
Nowte, cattle.

Ourie, shivering, drooping.
Out-owre, out-over, away across.
Owsen, oxen.

Pack and thick, confidential.
Paidle, to wade.
Painch, the paunch.
Patrick, a partridge.
Parishen, the people of a parish.
Pat, did put.
Pattle, a plough-spade.
Paughty, pompous, haughty.
Paukie (or **pawkie**), sly.
Pechan, the stomach.
Pechin', cramming.
Pint (Scots), two English quarts.
Plack, a small coin, about $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Plaiden, of coarse woollen cloth.
Poind, distrain.
Poortith, poverty.
Poussie, the hare.
Pow, the poll, head.
Pownie, a pony.
Prief, proof.
Priggin', haggling.
Proveses, provosts.
Pyke, to pick.
Pyles, grains, particles.

Quat, quitted.
Quean, a young woman, lass.

Ragweed, the ragwort.
Rair, to roar.
Raize, to excite, to anger.
Ramfeezl'd, fagged out.
Ram-stam, headlong, reckless.
Rant, to rollick, royster.
Rants, jollifications; rows.
Rape, a rope.
Raploch, coarse cloth.
Rash, a rush.
Rash-buss, a clump of rushes.
Ratton, a rat.
Raw, a row (of pins).

Rax, to stretch; to reach. **Rax thy leather**, stretch or exercise thyself.
Reave, to rob. **Red-wat-shod**, red-wet-shod.

Reek, smoke; to smoke.
Reekit, smoked, smoky. **Remead**, remedy.

Rig, a ridge.
Riggin, the roof, roof-tree.
Reestit, scorched; rested = refused to go.
Rigwoodie hags, gallows hags (rigging for the woodie).

Rip, (or **ripp**), a handful of corn from the sheaf.

Rive, to strain, rend, tear.

Rock, a distaff.

Rockin, a social meeting for song and chat and story, to which the women brought their **rock** or distaff.

Roose, to praise, flatter.

Rowe, to roll.

Rowte, to low, bellow.

Rowth, abundance. **Rung**, a cudgel.

Sair, sore; to serve.

Sarkit, shirted.

Saugh, the willow; **saugh-woodies**, willow-wands.

Sawmont, salmon.

Scaith, hurt.

Scar (or **Scaur**), a jutting cliff, or bank of earth.

Scaur, to scare; (adj.) readily scared.

Scaud, scald.

Scho, she.

Sconner, to loathe.

Screed, a rent, tear.

Screevin', careering; tearing along.

Seizins, freehold properties.

Sets you, becomes you.

Seventeen-hunder linen, fine linen, woven in a reed of 1700 divisions.

Shachl't, large and shapeless.

Shavie, a trick.

Shaw, a wood.

Sheuch, a ditch, watercourse.

Shiel, a shed or hut.

Shill, shrill, shrilly. **Sic**, such.

Siller, silver; money; wealth.

Sinsyne, since then.

- Skeigh**, skittish, coy.
Skellum, a scullion, a worthless fellow.
Skelp, to spank (in all the Eng. senses).
Skinkin', watery.
Skirl, to shrill out, to scream.
Sklent, to slant, look aside; to cheat.
Skriegh, a scream.
Shyrin', flaring.
Skyte, a glancing quick stroke.
Slap, a gap in a fence or wall, a gate.
Slecest, slyest.
Slypet, slipped down.
Smoor'd, smothered.
Smytrie, a smattering, a clump.
Snapper, to stumble along.
Snash, abuse, insolence.
Snaw-broo, melted snow.
Sned, to crop, lop, prune. **Sned besoms**, make birch-brooms.
Snell, bitter, biting.
Sneeshin-mill, the snuff-box.
Snick (or **sneck**), the door latchet.
Snool, to snub; to bear snubbing, cringe.
Snoove, to go slowly and steadily on.
Snowkit, pried with the nose.
Sonsie, plump and pleasant.
Sough, a sighing sound.
Soupe (or **Sowpe**), a "sup" of anything.
Souter, a cobbler.
Sowth, the low humming or whistling of one trying over a tune. Cp. "soothe."
Sowther, solder.
Spairge, sprinkle.
Spate, the flooding of a river or stream.
Spavie, the spavin.
Spean, to wean.
Speel, to climb.
Speer, **spier**, to inquire.
Splore, a jollification.
Spotting, ? making **spates**.
Sprattle, to scramble.
Spring, a quick dancing air on the pipes.
Spritty, full of roots of sprits, or rushes.
Spunkies, Will-o'-the-wisps.
Stacher, to stagger.
Stang, to sting.
Stank, a pool.
Starns, stars.
Staumrel, doltish, half-witted.
- Staw**, stole.
Staw, to disgust, turn the stomach.
Stechin, cramming.
Steek, to close, fasten.
Steeks, stitches, links (of a purse).
Steer, to stir, molest.
Steeve, firm, compact.
Sten, a leap, bound.
Stents, assessments, dues.
Stey, steep.
Stilt, to limp, halt.
Stimpart, a dry measure = about $\frac{1}{2}$ peck.
Stirk, a young bullock or heifer (over a year old).
Stocks, heads (of cabbage, etc.)
Stoiter, to stagger.
Stookit raw, row of **stooks**, or shocks of corn.
Stoor, harsh, deep-sounding.
Stoure, dust (of toil, etc.)
Stown, (could) have stolen.
Stowlins, by stealth.
Streekit, stretched.
Stroan'd, spouted.
Studdie, an anvil. **Sturt**, trouble.
Sucker, sugar.
Swank, limber, agile.
Swarf, to swoon.
Swat, sweated.
Swats, new ale.
Swither, hesitation.
Syne, then; since.
- Tapetless**, headless = silly.
Tapsalteerie, topsyturvy.
Tassie, a cup.
Tawie, quiet to handle.
Tawted, matted.
Teat (pron. **taït**), a little, a small quantity.
Temper-pin, the wooden pin that regulates (tempers), the motion of the spinning-wheel.
Tent, care, heed; to care for, attend to.
Tentie, careful.
Thack, thatch.
Thae, those.
Thairm, fiddlestrings; intestines.
Theekit, thatched.
Thegither, together.

- Thieveless**, dry, unfriendly.
Thir, these.
Thirl, to thrill.
Thole, to endure, suffer.
Thowe, a thaw.
Thowless, lazy, good-for-nothing.
Thrang, busy; a throng.
Thrave, 24 sheaves (= 2 shocks) of corn.
Thraw, to cross, contradict; to twist.
Thraw saugh woodies, make (and peddle) baskets.
Thrissle, the thistle.
Throu'ther, throwther, pell-mell, mixed up.
Till, to; **till't**, to it.
Timmer, timber; the woods.
Tine, lose; be lost.
Tint, lost.
Tinkler, a tinker.
Tirlin', rattling on the door-pin (= knocking for admittance.)
Tittie, sister.
Tocher, dowry; **tocher-band**, marriage-contract.
Tod, a fox.
Toun (often spelt **town**), a farm-house and the buildings a-near; a hamlet.
Towmond, a twelvemonth.
Toyte, totter.
Trig, smart, neat.
Tyke, a vagrant dog.
- Unco**, great; very; strange.
Uncos, news; strangers.
- Vauntie**, proud, in high spirits.
Virl, the ring of metal round the point of a staff or umbrella.
- Wabster**, a weaver.
Wad, would; wager.
Wae, sorrowful.
Waft, a side excursion.
- Wair**, to spend, bestow.
Wale, to choose; a choice.
Walie (adj.), choice; goodly; large.
Wame, the belly.
Wanchancie, risky.
Wanrestfu', restless.
Wark-lume, a tool.
Warstle, to wrestle, struggle.
Waught, a draught, or hearty drink.
Wauken, to awaken.
Waukin', watching.
Waukit, hardened with work.
Waukrife, wakeful.
Waur, worse.
Weans (= **wee anes**), children.
Weasan, the weasand.
We'se, we will, or shall.
Whaizle, to wheeze.
Whiddin, scudding; **whids**, gambols.
Whigmaleeries, fantastical notions.
Whins, furze bushes.
Whirligigums, flourishes.
Whitter, a hearty draught.
Whyles, sometimes.
Widdle, the wriggle and struggle.
Wimple, to meander.
Winnock-bunker, a window-seat.
Wintle, a staggering motion.
Woodie, the gallows; a wand.
Wordy, worthy. **Writers**, lawyers.
Wud, wild, mad.
Wyte, blame.
- Yell**, dry, milkless. **Ye'se**, you shall or will.
Yestreen, last night.
Yett, gate.
Yokin, a yoking; a spell of work; a set to.
Yont, beyond.
Yowe, a ewe.
Yowie (dim. of **yowe**), a pet ewe.
Yule, Christmas (old style, however, and therefore January 5).

[N.B.—The reader will do well to bear in mind that where Burns uses, seemingly, a mixed dialect, the bias of feeling is towards the vernacular; so that many words that are spelt as English must be pronounced as Scotch in order to get the sense or rhyme or both. See (e.g.) **toun** above.]

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