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OF

ROBERT BURNS.
ROBERT BURNS

THE ORIGINAL PAINTING IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY, EDINBURGH

THE WORKS
OF
ROBERT BURNS.
WITH
A SERIES OF AUTHENTIC
PICTORIAL ILLUSTRATIONS,
MARGINAL GLOSSARY, NUMEROUS NOTES, AND APPENDIXES:

ALSO
THE LIFE OF BURNS, BY J. G. LOCKHART;
AND ESSAYS ON THE GENIUS, CHARACTER, AND WRITINGS OF BURNS,
BY THOMAS CARLYLE AND PROFESSOR WILSON.

EDITED BY
CHARLES ANNANDALE, M.A., LL.D.,
EDITOR OF THE "IMPERIAL DICTIONARY," ETC.

VOL. II.

TORONTO:
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LONDON, GLASGOW, EDINBURGH, AND DUBLIN:
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1889.
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Colzium Castle.

Some on the B.

Gavin Hamilton.

Tarbolton, with--.

The Raas of B.

Ayr--The Two.

Kilmarnock M.

Kenmore and .

Blk. of Aber.

Bruar Water,

Gordon Castle.

Loch-Turk, an--.

Portr. of E--.

ON THE C.

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**OUR GRAND MAXIM**

1. Contribut...
THE

WORKS OF ROBERT BURNS.

ON THE GENIUS OF THE POET.

BY THOMAS CARLYLE.

SUMMARY.

Our grand maxim of supply and demand. Living misery and posthumous glory. The character of Burns
a theme that cannot easily become exhausted. His Biographers. Perfection in Biography. Burns one of
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interests and affects us. His life a deeper tragedy than any brawling Napoleon's. His heart, erring and
at length broken, full of inborn riches, of love to all living and lifeless things. The Peasant Poet bears
himself among the low, with whom his lot is cast, like a King in exile. His Writings but a poor muffled
fraction of what was in him, yet of a quality enduring as the English tongue. He wrote, not from hearsey,
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the heart of his life. Meteors of French Politics rise before him, but they are not his stars. Calumny is
busy with him. The little practical of Dumfries: Burns's desolation. In his destinies and degradation

1 Contributed to the Edinburgh Review, in 1828, in the form of a review of Lockhart's Life of Burns | Life is contained in the first volume of this work.
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one act of self-devotedness still open to him: Not as a hired soldier, but as a patriot, would he strive for the glory of his country. The crisis of his life: Death. Little effectual help could perhaps have been rendered to Burns: Patronage twice cursed; Many a poet has been poorer, none prouder. And yet much might have been done to have made his humble atmosphere more genial. Little Batolmas and Babyloniens: Let us go and do otherwise. The market-price of Wisdom. Not in the power of any mere external circumstances to ruin the mind of a man. The errors of Burns to be mourned over, rather than blamed.

The great want of his life was the great want of his age, a true faith in Religion and a singleness and unselhness of aim. Poetry, as Burns could and ought to have followed it, is but another form of Wisdom, of Religion. For his culture as a Poet, poverty and much suffering for a season were absolutely advantageous.

To divide his hours between poetry and rich men’s banquets an ill-starred attempt. Byron, rich in worldly means and honours, no whit happier than Burns in his poverty and worldly degradation: They had a message from on High to deliver, which could leave them no rest while it remained unaccomplished. Death and the rest of the grave: A stern moral, twice told us in our own time. The world habitually unjust in its judgments of such men. With men of right feeling anywhere, there will be no need to plead for Burns:

In pitying admiration he lies enshrined in all our hearts.

In the modern arrangements of society it is no uncommon thing that a man of genius must, like Butler, “ask for bread and receive a stone;” for, in spite of our grand maxim of supply and demand, it is by no means the highest excellence that men are most forward to recognize. The inventor of a spinning-jenny is pretty sure of his reward in his own day; but the writer of a true poem, like the apostle of a true religion, is nearly as sure of the contrary. We do not know whether it is not an aggravation of the injustice, that there is generally a posthumous retribution. Robert Burns, in the course of Nature, might yet [1828] have been living; but his short life was spent in toil and penury; and he died, in the prime of his manhood, miserable and neglected: and yet already a brave mausoleum shines over his dust, and more than one splendid monument has been reared in other places to his fame; the street where he languished in poverty is called by his name; the highest personages in our literature have been proud to appear as his commentators and admirers; and here is the sixth narrative of his Life that has been given to the world!

Mr. Lockhart thinks it necessary to apologize for this new attempt on such a subject: but his readers, we believe, will readily acquit him, or, at worst, will censure only the performance of his task, and not the choice of it. The character of Burns, indeed, is a theme that cannot easily become either trite or exhausted, and will probably gain rather than lose in its dimensions by the distance to which it is removed by Time. No man, it has been said, is a hero to his valet, and this is probably true; but the fault is at least as likely to be the valet’s as the hero’s. For it is certain that, to the vulgar eye, few things are wonderful that are not distant. It is difficult for men to believe that the man, the mere man whom they see, nay, perhaps, painfully feel, toiling at their side through the poor jostlings of existence, can be made of finer clay than themselves. Suppose that some dining acquaintance of Sir Thomas Lucy’s, and neighbour of John a Combe’s, had snatched an hour or two from the preservation of his game, and written us a Life of Shakespeare! What dissertations should we not have had,—not on Hamlet and The Tempest, but on the wool-trade, and deer-stealing, and the libel and vagrant laws; and how the Poacher became a Player, and how Sir Thomas and Mr. John had Christian bowels, and did not push him to extremities! In like manner, we believe, with respect to Burns, that till the companions of his pilgrimage, the Honourable Excise Commissioners, and the Gentlemen of the Caledonian Hunt, and the Dumfries Aristocracy, and all the Squires and Earlis, equally with the Ayr Writers, and the New and Old Light Clergy, whom he had to do with, shall have become invisible in the darkness of the Past, or visible only by light borrowed from his juxtaposition, it will be difficult to measure him by any true standard, or to estimate what a man of the eighteenth century could do for the world. 'Tis still a fair problem, if repeated attempts will produce approximations.

His former admirers had nothing to do but to assist us. Dr. Currie loved Burns less than he avowed he did himself; yet he even, as a certain patron of polite public men, outstripped by his scholar and genius to a rustic. It is a question whether he would not have been pleased, and, if pleased, what he would have thought. The question is, it is far from being asked by us. We have never heard it asked by Mr. Lockhart, and, if asked, he could be so many.
or to estimate what he really was and did, in the eighteenth century, for his country and the world. It will be difficult we say, but still a fair problem for literary historians, and repeated attempts will give us repeated approximations.

His former Biographers have done something, no doubt, but by no means a great deal, to assist us. Dr. Currie and Mr. Walker, the principal of these writers, have both, we think, mistaken one essentially important thing: their own and the world's true relation to their author, and the style in which it became such men to think and to speak of such a man. Dr. Currie loved the poet truly, more perhaps than he avowed to his readers or even to himself; yet he everywhere introduces him with a certain patronizing, apologetic air, as if the polite public might think it strange and half unwarrantable that he, a man of science, a scholar and gentleman, should do such honour to a rustic. In all this, however, we readily admit that his fault was not want of love, but weakness of faith; and regret that the first and kindest of all our poet's biographers should not have seen farther, or believed more boldly what he saw. Mr. Walker offends more deeply in the same kind; and both err alike in presenting us with a detached catalogue of his several supposed attributes, virtues and vices, instead of a delineation of the resulting character as a living unity. This, however, is not painting a portrait, but gauging the length and breadth of the several features, and jutting down their dimensions in arithmetical ephers. Nay, it is not so much as that; for we are yet to learn by what arts or instruments the mind could be so measured and gauged.

Mr. Lockhart, we are happy to say, has avoided both these errors. He uniformly treats Burns as the high and remarkable man the public voice has now pronounced him to be; and in delineating him he has avoided the method of separate generalities, and rather sought for characteristic incidents, habits, actions, sayings; in a word, for aspects which exhibit the whole man as he looked and lived among his fellows. The book accordingly, with all its deficiencies, gives more insight, we think, into the true character of Burns than any prior biography: though, being written on the very popular and condensed scheme of an article for Constatble's Miscellany, it has less depth than we could have wished and expected from a writer of such power; and contains rather more, and more multifarious quotations than belong of right to an original production. Indeed, Mr. Lockhart's own writing is generally so good, so clear, direct and nervous, that we seldom wish to see it making place for another man's. However, the spirit of the work is throughout candid, tolerant, andiously conciliating; compliments and praises are liberally distributed on all hands to great and small; and, as Mr. Morris Birkbeck observes of the society in the backwoods of America, "the courtesies of polite life are never lost sight of for a moment." But there are better things than these in the volume; and we can safely testify not only that it is easily and pleasantly read a first time, but may even be without difficulty read again.

Nevertheless, we are far from thinking that the problem of Burns's Biography has yet been adequately solved. We do not allude so much to deficiency of facts or documents,—though of these we are still every day receiving some fresh accession,—as to the limited and imperfect application of them to the great end of Biography. Our notions upon this subject may perhaps appear extravagant; but if an individual is really of consequence enough to have his life and character recorded for public remembrance, we have always been of opinion that the public ought to be made acquainted with all the inward springs and relations of his character. How did the world and man's life, from his particular position, represent themselves to his mind? How did coexisting circumstances modify him from without; how did he modify these from within? With what endeavours and what efficacy rule over them; with what resistance and what suffering sink under them? In one word, what and how produced was the effect of society on him; what and how produced was his effect on society? He who should answer these questions, in regard to any individual, would, as we believe, furnish a model of perfection in Biography. Few individuals, indeed, can deserve such a study; and many lives will be written, and, for the gratification of innocent curiosity, ought to be written, and read and forgotten, which are not in this sense biographies. But Burns, if we mistake not,
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is one of these few individuals; and such a study, at least with such a result, he has not yet obtained. Our own contributions to it, we are aware, can be but scanty and feeble; but we offer them with good-will, and trust they may meet with acceptance from those they are intended for.

Burns first came upon the world as a prodigy, and was, in that character, entertained by it, in the usual fashion, with loud, vague, tumultuous wonder, speedily subsiding into censure and neglect; till his early and most mournful death again awakened an enthusiasm for him, which, especially as there was now nothing to be done, and much to be spoken, has prolonged itself even to our own time. It is true, the "nine days" have long since elapsed, and the very continuance of this clamour proves that Burns was no vulgar wonder. Accordingly, even in sober judgments, where, as years passed by, he has come to rest more and more exclusively on his own intrinsic merits, and may now be well-nigh shorn of that casual radiance, he appears not only as a true British poet, but as one of the most considerable British men of the eighteenth century. Let it not be objected that he did little. He did much if we consider where and how. If the work performed was small, we must remember that he had his very materials to discover; for the metal he worked in was hid under the desert mire, where no eye but his had guessed its existence; and we may almost say that with his own hand he had to construct the tools for fashioning it. For he found himself in deepest obscurity, without help, without instruction, without model, or with models only of the meanest sort. An educated man stands, as it were, in the midst of a boundless arsenal and magazine, filled with all the weapons and engines which man’s skill has been able to devise from the earliest time, and he works accordingly with a strength borrowed from all past ages. How different is his state who stands on the outside of that storehouse, and feels that its gates must be stormed or remain for ever shut against him! His means are the commonest and rudest; the mere work done is no measure of his strength. A dwarf behind his steam-engine may remove mountains, but no dwarf will how them down with a pickaxe; and he must be a Titan that hurl them abroad with his arms.

It is in this last shape that Burns presents himself. Born in an age the most prosaic Britain had yet seen, and in a condition the most disadvantageous, where his mind, if it accomplished aught, must accomplish it under the pressure of continual bodily toil, nay of penury and desponding apprehension of the worst evils, and with no furtherance but such knowledge as dwells in a poor man’s hut, and the rhymes of a Ferguson or Ramsay for his standard of beauty, he sinks not under all these impediments: through the fogs and darkness of that obscure region, his lynx eye discerns the true relations of the world and human life; he grows into intellectual strength, and trains himself into intellectual expertise. Impelled by the expansive movement of his own irresistible soul, he struggles forward into the general view; and with haughty modesty lays down before us, as the fruit of his labour, a gift, which Time has now pronounced imperishable. Add to all this, that his darksome drudging childhood and youth was by far the kindliest era of his whole life; and that he died in his thirty-seventh year: and then ask, if it be strange that his poems are imperfect, and of small extent, or that his genius attained no mastery in its art? Alas, his Sun shone as through a tropical tornado; and the pale Shadow of Death eclipsed it at noon! Shrouded in such baleful vapours, the genii of Burns was never seen in clear azure splendour, enlightening the world; but some beams from it did, by fits, pierce through; and it tinted those clouds with rainbow and orient colours, into a glory and stern grandeur, which men silently gazed on with wonder and tears!

We are anxious not to exaggerate; for it is exposition rather than admiration that our readers require of us here; and yet to avoid some tendency to that side is no easy matter. We love Burns, and we pity him; and love and pity are prone to magnify. Criticism, it is sometimes thought, should be a cold business; we are not so sure of this; but, at all events, our concern with Burns is not exclusively that of critics. True and genial as his poetry must appear, it is not chiefly as a poet, but as a man, that he interests and affects us. He was often advised to write a tragedy; time

and means were wanting through life however to the deepest. We have since with many others seen Sir Hudson Leask write, "amid the melancholy reflecting mind, a fear" as did Burns, and perhaps go on in a hopeless stream which coiled elbowed and wound only death opening. We are a class of men in the world contending against hard intellect, truth, noblest but self-inspired, that inspire us in general things. The best it may ever do is like that of a certain sad man in whose Wisdom, some other alas: like the most profound and on a generation and development of themselves, his life of the heart, his mind of that highest, his body of that purest, his loves and his loveliness. That is a gift stowed on us by the poet as indifferently as a thing of a thing of art and torn asunder it and recognized it as such, given the power and the spirit, vileness, but have well reared the glorious fruitful lily of blossoms: and out and out ever having a soul; so far as it is living and lying out in sympathy in her bleak a meaning! Under his pliant that is "wee,
and means were not lent him for this; but through life he enacted a tragedy, and one of the deepest. We question whether the world has since witnessed so utterly sad a scene; whether Napoleon himself, left to brawl with Sir Hudson Lowe, and perish on his rock, amid the melancholy main, presented to the reflecting mind such a "spectacle of pity and fear" as did this intrinsically nobler, gentler and perhaps greater soul, wasting itself away in a hopeless struggle with base entanglements, which coiled closer and closer round him, till only death opened him an outlet. Conquerors are a class of men with whom, for most part, the world could well dispense; nor can the hard intellect, the unsympathizing lowness and high but selfish enthusiasm of such persons inspire us in general with any affection; at best it may excite amazement; and their fall, like that of a pyramid, will be beheld with a certain sadness and awe. But a true Poet, a man in whose heart resides some influence of Wisdom, some tone of the "Eternal Melodies," is the most precious gift that can be bestowed on a generation: we see in him a freer, purer development of whatever is noblest in ourselves; his life is a rich lesson to us; and we mourn his death as that of a benefactor who loved and taught us.

Such a gift had Nature, in her bounty, bestowed on us in Robert Burns; but with queenlike indifference she cast it from her hand, like a thing of no moment; and it was defaced and torn asunder, as an idle bauble, before we recognized it. To the ill-starred Burns was given the power of making man’s life more venerable, but that of wisely guiding his own life was not given. Destiny,—for so in our ignorance we must speak,—his faults, the faults of others, proved too hard for him; and that spirit, which might have soared could it but have walked, soon sank to the dust, its glorious faculties trodden under foot in the blossom; and died, we may almost say, without ever having lived. And so kind and warm a soul; so full of inborn riches, of love to all living and lifeless things! How his heart flows out in sympathy over universal Nature; and in her bleakest provinces discerns a beauty and a meaning! The "Daisy" falls not unheeded under his ploughshare; nor the ruined nest of that "wee, cowering, timorous beastie," cast forth, after all its provident pains, to "thole the sleet and dribble and enrange cold." The "hoarvisage" of Winter delights him; led dwells with a sad and oft-returning fondness in these scenes of solemn desolation; but the voice of the tempest becomes an anthem to his ears; he loves to walk in the sounding woods, for "it raises his thoughts to Him that walketh on the wings of the wind." A true Poet-soul, for it needs but to be struck, and the sound it yields will be music! But observe him chiefly as he mingles with his brother men. What warm, all-comprehending fellow-feeling; what truthful, boundless love; what generous exaggeration of the object loved! His rustic friend, his nut-brown maiden! are no longer mean and homely, but a hero and a queen, whom he prizes as the paragons of Earth. The rough scenes of Scottish life, not seen by him in any Arcadian illusion, but in the rude contradiction, in the smoke and soil of a too harsh reality, are still lovely to him: Poverty is indeed his companion, but Love also, and Commerce; the simple feelings, the worth, the nobleness, that dwell under the straw roof, are dear and venerable to his heart; and thus over the lowest provinces of man’s existence he pours the glory of his own soul; and they rise, in shadow and sunshine, softened and brightened into a beauty which other eyes discern not in the highest. He has a just self-consciousness, which too often degenerates into pride; yet it is a noble pride, for defence, not for offence; no cold suspicious feeling, but a frank and social one. The Peasant Poet bears himself, we might say, like a King in exile: he is cast among the low, and feels himself equal to the highest; yet he claims no rank, that none may be disputed to him. The forward he can repel, the supercillions he can subdue; pretensions of wealth or ancestry are of no avail with him; there is a fire in that dark eye, under which the "insolence of condescension" cannot thrive. In his abasement, in his extreme need, he forgets not for a moment the majesty of Poetry and Manhood. And yet, far as he feels himself above common men, he wanders not apart from them, but mixes warmly in their interests; may throws himself into their arms, and, as it were, entreats them to love him. It is moving to see how, in his darkest despondency, this proud being still seeks relief from
friendship; unbooms himself, often to the unworthy; and, amid tears, strains to his glowing heart a heart that knows only the name of friendship. And yet he was "quick to learn;" a man of keen vision, before whom common disguises afforded no concealment. His understanding saw through the hollowness even of accomplished deceivers; but there was a generous credulity in his heart. And so did our Peasant show himself among us; "a soul like an Alonian harp, in whose strings the vulgar wind, as it passed through them, changed itself into articulate melody." And this was he for whom the world found no fitter business than quarrelling with smugglers and vintners, computing excise-dues upon tallow, and gauging ale-barrels! In such toils was that mighty Spirit sorrowfully wasted: and a hundred years may pass on, before another such is given us to waste.

All that remains of Burns, the Writings he has left, seem to us, as we hinted above, no more than a poor mutilated fraction of what was in him; brief, broken glimpses of a genius that could never show itself complete; that wanted all things for completeness: culture, leisure, true effort, may even length of life. His poems are, with scarcely any exception, mere occasional effusions; poured forth with little premeditation; expressing, by such means as offered, the passion, opinion, or humour of the hour. Never in one instance was it permitted him to grapple with any subject with the full collection of his strength, to fuse and mould it in the concentrated fire of his genius. To try by the strict rules of Art such imperfect fragments, would be at once unprofitable and unfair. Nevertheless, there is something in these poems, marred and defective as they are, which forbids the most fastidious student of poetry to pass them by. Some sort of enduring quality they must have: for after fifty years of the wildest vicissitudes in poetical taste, they still continue to be read; nay, are read more and more eagerly, more and more extensively; and this not only by literary virtuosos, and that class upon whom transitory causes operate most strongly, but by all classes, down to the most hard, unlettered and truly natural class, who read little, and especially no poetry, except because they find pleasure in it. The grounds of so singular and wide a popularity, which extends, in a literal sense, from the palace to the hut, and over all regions where the English tongue is spoken, are well worth inquiring into. After every just deduction, it seems to imply some rare excellence in these works. What is that excellence?

To answer this question will not lead us far. The excellence of Burns is, indeed, among the rarest, whether in poetry or prose; but, at the same time, it is plain and easily recognized: his sincerity, his indubitable air of Truth. Here are no fabulous woes or joys; no hollow fantastic sentimentalities; no wiredrawn refinings, either in thought or feeling: the passion that is traced before us has glowed in a certain heart; the opinion he utters has risen in his own understanding, and been a light to his own steps. He does not write from hearsay, but from sight and experience; it is the scenes that he has lived and laboured amidst, that he describes: those scenes, rude and humble as they are, have kindled beautiful emotions in his soul, noble thoughts, and definite resolves; and he speaks forth what is in him, not from any outward call of vanity or interest, but because his heart is too full to be silent. He speaks it with such melody and modulation as he can; "in homely rustic jingle;" but it is his own, and genuine. This is the grand secret for finding readers and retaining them: let him who would move and convince others, be first moved and convinced himself. Horace's rule, Si vis me ferre, is applicable in a wider sense than the literal one. To every poet, to every writer, we might say: Be true, if you would be believed. Let a man but speak forth with genuine earnestness the thought, the emotion, the actual condition of his own heart; and other men, so strangely are we all knit together by the tie of sympathy, must and will give heed to him. In culture, in extent of view, we may stand above the speaker, or below him; but in either case, his words, if they are earnest and sincere, will find some response within us; for in spite of all casual varieties in outward rank or inward, as face answers to face, so does the heart of man to man. This may appear a very simple principle, and one which Burns had little merit in discovering. True, the discovery is easy enough: but the practical appliance is not easy; is in-
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deed the fundamental difficulty which all poets have to strive with, and which scarcely one in the hundred ever fairly surmounts. A head too dull to discriminate the true from the false; a heart too dull to love the one at all risks, and to hate the other in spite of all temptations, are alike fatal to a writer. With either, or as more commonly happens, with both of these deficiencies combine a love of distinction, a wish to be original, which is seldom wanting, and we have Affectation, the bane of literature, as Cant, its elder brother, is of morals. How often does the one and the other prevent, in poetry, as in life! Great poets themselves are not always free from the vice; nay, it is precisely on a certain sort and degree of greatness that it is most commonly ingrained. A strong effort after excellence will sometimes solace itself with a mere shadow of success; he who has much to unfold, will sometimes unfold it imperfectly. Byron, for instance, was no common man; yet if we examine his poetry with this view, we shall find it far enough from faultless. Generally speaking, we should say that it is not true. He refreshes us, not with the divine fountain, but too often with vulgar strong waters, stimulating indeed to the taste, but soon ending in dislike, or even nausea. Are his Harshads and Glaours, we would ask, real men; we mean, poetically consistent and conceivable men? Do not these characters, does not the character of their author, which more or less shines through them all, rather appear a thing put on for the occasion; no natural or possible mode of being, but something intended to look much grander than nature? Surely, all these stormful agonies, this volcanic heroism, superhuman contempt and moody desperation, with so much scowling, and teeth-grasping, and other sulphurous humour, is more like the bawling of a player in some paltry tragedy, which is to last three hours, than the bearing of a man in the business of life, which is to last threescore and ten years. To our minds there is a taint of this sort, something which we should call theatrical, false, affected, in every one of these otherwise so powerful pieces. Perhaps Don Juan, especially the latter parts of it, is the only thing approaching to a sincere work, he ever wrote; the only work where he showed himself, in any measure, as he was; and seemed so intent on his subject as, for moments, to forget himself. Yet Byron hated this vice; we believe, heartily detested it: may he had declared formal war against it in words. So difficult is it even for the strongest to make this primary attainment, which might seem the simplest of all: to read its own consciousness without mistakes, without errors involuntary or willful! We recollect no poet of Burns's susceptibility who comes before us from the first, and abides with us to the last, with such a total want of affectation. He is an honest man, and an honest writer. In his successes and his failures, in his greatness and his littleness, he is ever clear, simple, true, and glitters with no lustre but his own. We reckon this to be a great virtue; to be, in fact, the root of most other virtues, literary as well as moral.

Here, however, let us say, it is to the Poetry of Burns that we now allude; to those writings which he had time to meditate, and where no special reason existed to warp his critical feeling, or obstruct his endeavour to fulfil it. Certain of his Letters, and other fractions of prose composition, by no means deserve this praise. Here, doubtless, there is not the same natural truth of style; but on the contrary, something not only stiff, but strained and twisted; a certain high-flew inflated tone; the stilting emphasis of which contrasts ill with the firmness and rugged simplicity of even his poorest verses. Thus no man, it would appear, is altogether unaffected. Does not Shakespeare himself sometimes premeditate the sheerest bombast! But even with regard to these Letters of Burns, it is but fair to state that he had two excuses. The first was his comparative deficiency in language. Burns, though for most part he writes with singular force and even gracefulness, is not master of English prose, as he is of Scottish verse; not master of it, we mean, in proportion to the depth and vehemence of his matter. These Letters strike us as the effort of a man to express something which he has no organ fit for expressing. But a second and weightier excuse is to be found in the peculiarity of Burns's social rank. His correspondents are often men whose relation to him he has never accurately ascertained; whom therefore he is either forewarning himself against, or else unconsciously flattering, by adopting the style he thinks will please them. At all events, we should remember
that these faults, even in his Letters, are not the rule, but the exception. Whenever he writes, as one would ever wish to do, to trusted friends and on real interests, his style becomes simple, vigorous, expressive, sometimes even beautiful. His Letters to Mrs. Dunlop are uniformly excellent.

But we return to his Poetry. In addition to its Sincerity, it has another peculiar merit, which indeed is but a mode, or perhaps a means, of the foregoing: this displays itself in his choice of subjects; or rather in his indifference as to subjects, and the power he has of making all subjects interesting. The ordinary poet, like the ordinary man, is for ever seeking in external circumstances the help which can be found only in himself. In what is familiar and near at hand, he discerns no form or condition: home is not poetical but prosaic; it is in some past, distant, conventional heroic world, that poetry resides: we are there and not here, were it thus and not so, it would be well with him. Hence our innumerable host of rose-coloured Novels and iron-nailed Epius, with their locality not on the Earth, but somewhere nearer to the Moon. Hence our Virgins of the Sun, and our Knights of the Cross, malicious Saracen in turbans, and copper-coloured Chiefs in wampum, and so many other trenchant figures from the heroic times or the heroic climates, who on all hands swarm in our poetry. Peace be with them! But yet, as a great moralist proposed preaching to the men of this century, so would we fain preach to the poets, "a sermon on the duty of staying at home." Let them be sure that heroic ages and heroic climates can do little for them. That form of life has attraction for us, less because it is better or nobler than our own, than simply because it is different; and even this attraction must be of the most transient sort. For will not our own age, one day, be an ancient one; and have as quaint a costume as the rest; not contrasted with the rest, therefore, but ranked along with them, in respect of quaintness? Does Homer interest us now, because he wrote of what passed beyond his native Greece, and two centuries before he was born; or because he wrote what passed in God's world, and in the heart of man, which is the same after thirty centuries? Let our poets look to this: is their feeling really finer, truer, and their vision deeper than that of other men,—they have nothing to fear, even from the humblest subject; is it not so,—they have nothing to hope, but an ephemeral favour, even from the highest.

The poet, we imagine, can never have far to seek for a subject: the elements of his art are in him, and around him on every hand; for him the ideal world is not remote from the Actual, but under it and within it: nay, he is a poet, precisely because he can discern it there. Wherever there is a sky above him, and a world around him, the poet is in his place; for here too is man's existence, with its infinite longings and small acquisition; its ever-thwarted, ever-renewed endeavours; its unspoken aspirations, its fears and hopes that wander through Eternity; and all the mystery of brightness and gloom that it was ever made of, in any age or climate, since man first began to live. Is there not the fifth act of a Tragedy in every death-bed, though it were a peasant's, and a bed of health? And are weddings and weddings obsolete, that there can be Comedy no longer? Or are men suddenly grown wise, that Laughter must no longer shake his sides, but be cheated of his Face? Man's life and nature is, as it was, and as it will ever be. But the poet must have an eye to read these things, and a heart to understand them; or they come and pass away before him in vain. He is a mirror, a soothsayer, a gift of vision has been given him. Has life no meanings for him, which another cannot equally decipher; then he is no poet, and Delphi itself will not make him one.

In this respect Burns, though not perhaps absolutely a great poet, better manifests his capability, better proves the truth of his genius, than if he had by his own strength kept the whole Minerva Press going, to the end of his literary course. He shows himself at least a poet of Nature's own making; and Nature, after all, is still the grand agent in making poets. We often hear of this and the other external condition being requisite for the existence of a poet. Sometimes it is a certain sort of training; he must have studied certain things, studied for instance "the elder dramatisers," and so learned a poetic language; as if poetry lay in the tongue, not in the heart. At other times we are told he must be bred

in a certain rank, or be well born, or have some special footing with men of power, or be born with all the above things. We cannot see that these conditions make him little different from what he was, and see it with as much interest. The "poet," is a man who finds it all hard, and has to struggle against his will and against his lives. The mystery of the heart, the true philosophy, the uncommonness of man's existence, is the invariable mark of the poet, and only in capital poetry, I mean in every line, is it found. Nay, dead poets and all traces of them, are the only mark of a Bergman's or a Burns' verse, that can be discovered. The sameness of every imagination is the same world throughout; but in the coconut, if we are to learn any from it, it will come to light by itself.

But sometimes we find his work hid on the paper, as if he had not hinted that he would have us play with him; then we have a hint of that poet who lived long ago; it will be still more unexpected, but the poet has the power to attain to this, and to write in a manner that may be said of every genius who has ever been born. Why do we say of Shakespeare, as if he had not seen the beauty of the scene, or the idea of the scene, and then the music of it; and he could not write it. It is the same of every poet that has ever been born, and the same of every genius that has ever been born. A poetic genius is the author of every stroke of genius. Why do we say of Shakespeare, as if he had not seen the beauty of the scene, or the idea of the scene, and then the music of it; and he could not write it. It is the same of every poet that has ever been born, and the same of every genius that has ever been born. A poetic genius is the author of every stroke of genius.
in a certain rank, and must be on a confidential footing with the higher classes; because, above all things, he must see the world. As to seeing the world, we apprehend this will cause him little difficulty, if he have but eyesight to see it with. Without eyesight, indeed, the task might be hard. The blind or the purblind man "travels from Dan to Beersheba, and finds it all barren." But happily every poet is born in the world; and sees it, with or against his will, every day and every hour he lives. The mysterious workmanship of man's heart, the true light and the inscrutable darkness of man's destiny, reveal themselves not only in capital cities and crowded saloons, but in every hut and hamlet where men have their abode. Xay, do not the elements of all human virtues and all human vice, the passions at once of a Borgia and of a Luther, lie written, in stronger or fainter lines, in the consciousness of every individual bosom, that has practised honest self-examination? Truly, this same world may be seen in Mossgiel and Tarbolton, if we look well, as clearly as it ever came to light in Crockford's, or the Taileries itself.

But sometimes still harder requisitions are laid on the poor aspirant to poetry; for it is hinted that he should have been born two centuries ago; insomuch as poetry, about that date, vanished from the earth, and became no longer attainable by men! Such cobweb speculations have, now and then, overspread the field of literature; but they obstruct not the growth of any plant there; the Shakespeare or the Burns, unconsciously and merely as he walks onward, silently brushes them away. Is not every genius an impossibility till he appear? Why do we call him new and original, if we saw who his marble was lying, and what fabric he could rear from it? It is not the material but the workman that is wanting. It is not the dark place that hinders, but the dim yege. A Scottish peasant's life was the meanest and rudest of all lives, till Burns became a poet in it, and a poet of it; found it a man's life, and therefore significant to men. A thousand battlefields remain unsung; but the Wounded Hoe has not perished without immemorial; a balm of mercy yet breathes on us from its dumb agonies, because a poet was there. Our Halloween had passed and re-passed, in rude awe and laugh,., since the era of the Druids; but no Theocritus, till Burns, discerned in it the materials of a Scottish Idyl: neither was the Holy Fair any Convoc of Treat or Roman Jubilee; but nevertheless, Superstition and Hypocrisy and Fun having been propitious to him, in this man's hand it became a poem, instinct with satire and genuine comic life. Let but the true poet be given us, we repeat it, place him where and how you will, and true poetry will not be wanting.

Independently of the essential gift of poetic feeling, as we have now attempted to describe it, a certain rugged sterling worth pervades whatever Burns has written; a virtue, as of green fields and mountain breezes, dwells in his poetry; it is redolent of natural life and hardly natural men. There is a decisive strength in him, and yet a sweet native gracefulness; he is tender, he is vehement, yet without constraint or too visible effort; he melts the heart, or inflames it, with a power which seems habitual and familiar to him. We see that in this man there was the gentleness, the trembling pity of a woman, with the deep earnestness, the force and passionate ardent of a hero. Tears lie in him, and consuming fire; as lightning lurks in the drops of the summer cloud, he has a resonance in his bosom for every note of human feeling; the high and the low, the sad, the ludicrous, the joyful, are welcome in their turns to his "lighty-moving and all-conceiving spirit." And observe with what a fierce prompt force he grasps his subject, be it what it may! How he fixes, as it were, the full image of the matter in his eye; full and clear in every lineament; and catches the real type and essence of it, amid a thousand accidents and superficial circumstances, no one of which misleads him! Is it of reason; some truth to be discovered? No sophistry, no vain surface-logic detains him; quick, resolute, merrily, he pierces through into the narrow of the question; and speaks his verdict with an emphasis that cannot be forgotten. Is it of description; some visual object to be represented? No poet of any age or nation is more graphic than Burns; the characteristic features disclose themselves to him at a glance: three lines from his hand, and we have a likeness. And, in that rough dialect, in that rude, often awk-
ward metre, so clear and definite a likeness! It seems a draughtsman working with a burnt stick; and yet the barin of a Retzsch is not more expressive or exact.

Of this last excellence, the plainest and most comprehensive of all, being indeed the root and foundation of every sort of talent, poetical or intellectual, we could produce innumerable instances from the writings of Burns. Take these glimpses of a snow-storm from his "Winter Night" (the Italics are ours):

When biting Boreas, fell and.dour,
Sharped sleet, thro' the leafless bow'r,
And Phoebus gyes a short-led glow'r;

Far from the lift,

Dim dark'ning thro' the darkly show'r;

Or whirling drift;

As night the storm the steeples rock'd,

Poor labour sweet in sleep was lock'd,

While burns w't snar: wreathes uphe'ed:

Wild- eddying swirl,

Or thro' the mining outlet lock'd

Down headlong hurt.

Are there not "descriptive touches" here? The describer was this thing; the essential feature and true likeness of every circumstance in it; saw, and not with the eye only. "Poor labour locked in sweet slept; the dead stillness of man, unconscious, vanquished, yet not unprotected, while such strife of the material elements rages, and seems to reign supreme in loneliness: this is of the heart as well as of the eye!—Look also at his image of a thaw, and prophesied fall of the Auld Brig:

When heavy, dark, continued, a-day rains

With deepening deluges overflow the plains;

When from the hills where springs the brawling Cull,

Or stately Lugars' mellow fountains boil,

Or where the Greenock winds its northern course,

Or haunted Garpal draws his feebler source,

Arous'd by blastful winds and spotting thaws,

In mow a current down his sma-broo rouse; 5

White crashing ice, borne on the roaring seat,

Steeps drain and mills and bogs a' to the gate;

And from Glenbank down to the rottenkey,

Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd tumbling sea;

Then down ye'll hurt, Burt nor ye never rise! And dash the galeful jamps up to the pouring skies.

The last line is in itself a Poussin-picture of that Deluge! The welkin has, as it were, bent down with its weight; the "gullie

jaups" and the "pouring skies" are mingled together; it is a world of rain and ruin.—In respect of mere clearness and minute fidelity, the Farmer's commendation of his Auld Mare, in plough or in cart, may vie with Homer's Smithy of the Cyclops, or yoking of Priam's Chariot. Nor have we forgotten stout Burn's mind and his brawny customers, inspired by Scotch Drink; but it is needless to multiply examples. One other trait of a much finer sort we select from multitudes of such among his Songs. It gives, in a single line, to the saddest feeling the saddest environment and local habitation;

The pale Moon is setting beyond the white wave,
And Time is setting us with drifts:

Farewell, false friends! false lover, farewell!
I'll ne'er disturb them nor thee, O.

This clearness of sight we have called the foundation of all talent; for in fact, unless we see our object, how shall we know how to place or prize it, in our understanding, our imagination, our affections. Yet it is not in itself, perhaps, a very high excellence; but capable of being united indifferently with the strongest, or with ordinary power. Homer surpasses all men in this quality: but strangely enough, at no great distance below him are Richardson and Defoe. It belongs, in truth, to what is called a lively mind; and gives no sure indication of the higher endowments that may exist along with it. In all the three cases we have mentioned, it is combined with great garrulity; their descriptions are detailed, ample and lovingly exact; Homer's fire bursts through, from time to time, as if by accident; but Defoe and Richardson have no fire. Burns, again, is not more distinguished by the clearness than by the impetuous force of his conceptions. Of the strength, the piercing emphasis with which he thought, his emphasis of expression may give a humble but the readiest proof. Who ever uttered sharper sayings than his; words more memorable, now by their burning vehemence, now by their cool vigour and laconic pith? A single phrase depicts a whole subject, a whole scene. We hear of "a gentleman that derived his patent of nobility direct from Almighty God." Our Scottish forefathers in the battle-field struggled forward "red-wat-shed," in this one word, a full vision of horror, and frightfully accented.

In fact, one cannot separate the mind of Burns from his intellectual perception. It is visible in his judgments and volitions, with some such as

Burn's mind is as equally vigorous as his poetry was ran
thusastic and the genius exclusively in composition, he have pronounced whatever walk he has exerted his abilities—art not, is not at all times poetical endowed again, cases as that of his,  
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frightfully accurate for Art!
In fact, one of the ruling features in the
mind of Burns is this vigour of his strictly in-
tellectual perceptions. A resolute force is ever
visible in his judgments, and in his feelings
and volitions. Professor Stewart says of him,
with some surprise: "All the faculties of
Burns's mind were, as far as I could judge,
equally vigorous; and his predilection for
poetry was rather the result of his own en-
thusiastic and impassioned temper, than of a
genius exclusively adapted to that species of
composition. From his conversation I should
have pronounced him to be fitted to excel in
whatever walk of ambition he had chosen to
exert his abilities." But this, if we mistake
not, is at all times the very essence of a truly
poetical endowment. Poetry, except in such
cases as that of Keats, where the whole con-
ists in a weak-eyed maudlin sensibility, and
a certain vague random tunefulness of nature,
is no separate faculty, no organ which can be
superadded to the rest, or disjoined from them;
but rather the result of their general harmony
and completion. The feelings, the gifts that
exist in the Poet are those that exist, with
more or less development, in every human
soul: the imagination, which shudders at the
Hell of Dante, is the same faculty, weaker in
degree, which called that picture into being.
How does the Poet speak to men, with power,
but by being still more a man than they?
Shakspeare, it has been well observed, in the
planning and completing of his tragedies, has
shown an Understanding, were it nothing
more, which might have governed states, or
indited a Novum Organum. What Burns's
force of understanding may have been, we
have less means of judging: it had to dwell
among the humblest objects; never saw Phi-
losophy; never rose, except by natural effort and
for short intervals, into the region of great
ideas. Nevertheless, sufficient indication, if
no proof sufficient, remains for us in his works:
we discern the brawny movements of a gigantic
tough untutored strength; and can under-
stand how, in conversation, his quick sure
insight into men and things may, as much as
ought else about him, have amused the best
thinkers of his time and country.
But, unless we mistake, the intellectual gift
of Burns is fine as well as strong. The more
delicate relations of things could not well have
escaped his eye, for they were intimately
present to his heart. The logic of the senate
and the forum is indispensable, but not all-
sufficient, may perhaps the highest Truth is
that which will the most certainly elude it.
For this logic works by words, and "the
highest," it has been said, "cannot be ex-
pressed in words." We are not without tokens
of an openness for this higher truth also, of a
keen though uncultivated sense for it, having
existed in Burns. Mr. Stewart, it will be
remembered, "wonders," in the passage above
quoted, that Burns had formed some distinct
conception of the "doctrine of association."
We rather think that far subtle things than
the doctrine of association had from of old
been familiar to him. Here for instance:

"We know nothing," thus writes he, "or next to
nothing, of the structure of our souls, so we cannot
account for those seeming caprices in them, that one
should be particularly pleased with this thing, or
struck with that, which, on minds of a different cast,
makes no extraordinary impression. I have some
favourite flowers in spring, among which are the
mountain-daisy, the harebell, the foxglove, the wild-
brer rose, the budding birch, and the hoary haw-
thorn, that I view and hang over with particular
delight. I never hear the loud solitary whistle of the
curlew in a summer noon, or the wild hissing cascade
of a troop of grey power in an autumnal morning,
without feeling an elevation of soul like the en-
thusiasm of devotion or poetry. Tell me, my dear friend,
to what can this be owing? Are we a piece of ma-
rchinery, which, like theolian harp, passive, takes
the impression of the passing accident, or do these
workings argue something within us above the
trodden clear? I own myself partial to such proofs
of those awful and important realities; a God that
made all things, man's immortal and immoral
nature, and a world of weal or woe beyond death
and the grave." 1

Force and fineness of understanding, are
often spoken of as something different from
general force and fineness of nature, as some-
thing partly independent of them. The
necessities of language so require it; but in truth
these qualities are not distinct and indepen-
dent: except in special cases, and from special
causes, they ever go together. A man of strong
understanding is generally a man of strong
character; neither is delicacy in the one kind

1 Letter to Mrs. Dunlop, 1st January, 1779. [See
note to Lockhart's Life, vol. I. p. 98.]
ON THE GENIUS OF ROBERT BURNS.

often divided from delicacy in the other. No one, at all events, is ignorant that in the Poetry of Burns keenness of insight keeps pace with keenness of feeling; that his light is not more provoking than his warmth. He is a man of the most impassioned temper; with passions not strong only, but noble, and of the sort; in which great virtues and great poems take their rise. It is reverence, it is love towards all Nature that inspires him, that opens his eyes to its beauty, and makes heart and voice eloquent in its praise. There is a true old saying, that “Love furthereth knowledge:” but above all, it is the living essence of that knowledge which makes poets; the first principle of its existence, increase, activity. Of Burns’s fervid affection, his generous all-embracing love, we have spoken already, as of the grand distinction of his nature, seen equally in word and deed, in his Life and in his Writings. It were easy to multiply examples. Not man only, but all that environ man in the material and moral universe, is lovely in his sight: “the hoary hawthorn,” the “troop of gray plover,” the “solitary curlew,” all are dear to him; all live in this Earth along with him, and to all he is knit as in mysterious brotherhood. How touching it is, for instance, that, amidst the gloom of personal misery, brooding over the wintry desolation without him and within him, he thinks of the “aurie cattle,” and “silly sheep,” and their sufferings in the pitless storm!

I thought me on the aurie cattle,
Or silly sheep, who hide this brattle,
O wintry war.

Or thro’ the drift, deep-fearing, sprattle, sinking deep, beneath a shaw.

Hark happing bird, we helpless thing,
That in the merry months o’ spring
Delighted me to hear thee sing.

What comes o’ thee?
Where wilt then cow’t thy chittering wing, shivering
And close thy eye?

The tenant of the mean hut, with its “ragged roof and chinked wall,” has a heart to pity even these! This is worth several homilies on Mercy; for it is the voice of Mercy herself. Burns, indeed, lives in sympathy; his soul rushes forth into all realms of being; nothing that has existence can be indifferent to him. The very Devil he cannot hate with right orthodoxy.

But fare you weel, an’ Nickle-ben;
O, wad ye tak a thought and men! 
Ye aubins may — I thim ken, — perhaps, don’t
Still have a stake; (know)
I was to think you’d on, sorrowful
Even for your sake!

“He is the father of curses and lies,” said Dr. Sis: “and is cursed and damned already.”

— “I am sorry for it,” quoth my Uncle Toby! — a Poet without Love were a physical and mental impossibility.

But has it not been said, in contradiction to this principle, that “Indignation makes verses?” It has been so said, and is true enough; but the contradiction is apparent, not real. The Indignation which makes verses is, properly speaking, an inverted Love; the love of some right, some worth, some goodness, belonging to ourselves or others, which has been injured, and which this tempestuous feeling issues forth to defend and avenge. No selfish fury of heart, existing there as a primary feeling, and without its opposite, ever produced much Poetry: otherwise, we suppose, the Tiger were the most musical of all our choristers. Johnson said, he loved a good hater; by which he must have meant, not so much one that hated violently, as one that hated wisely; hated baseness from love of nobleness.

However, in spite of Johnson’s paradox, tolerable enough for once in speech, but which need not have been so often adopted in print since then, we rather believe that good men deal sprightly in hatred, either wise or unwise; may that a “good” hater is still a desideratum in this world. The Devil, at least, who passes for the chief and best of that class, is said to be nowise an amiable character.

Of the verses which Indignation makes, Burns has also given us specimens; and among the best that were ever given. Who will forget his “Dweller in yon Dungeon dark;” a piece that might have been chanted by the Furies of Eschylus? The secrets of the infernal Pit are laid bare; a boundless halting “darkness visible;” and streaks of hell-fire quivering madly in its black haggard bowers.

Dweller in yon Dungeon dark,
Hangman of Creation, mark! 
Who in widow’s weeds appears,
Laden with unmourned years,
Nosing with care a bruising purse,
Baited with many a deadly curse!

Why should Sir Walter— wi’ Wallace bleeding, the king to the dithyrambic war, and riding in the midst of the wildest Gallow wases— Mr. Syme, who before to speak of a man composing his praise it was unsafe to trifle with; that hymn was sung through the soul of the car, it should be sung in the heart. So lesser, the heart of Scotland in fierce thrills, and we believe, that we believe.

Another wild one:

“Macpherson’s something in the salt, yes—
It operates. For what shaggy Northlands start and strife, and is not he too one of the earth, in misty glens, for some one? Nay, was he given? A poetry itself, my heart: for he is before his excess poor melody his above oblivion, despair, which, him to the abyss and in Pecles’ hell against man’s F stroke, though obscure, sink not, even which has surival could have given us one—

Sae raving
Sae daun.
He play’d a
Below the

Under a light

[Syme’s story of Thomson, 1st Ser. Essay.]
ON THE GENIUS OF ROBERT BURNS.

Why should we speak of "Scott's wha hae wi' Wallace bled," since all know of it, from the king to the meanest of his subjects? This dithyrambe was composed on horseback; in riding in the middle of tempests, over the wildest Galloway moor, in company with a Mr. Syme, who, observing the poet's looks, forebore to speak,—judiciously enough, for a man composing "Bruce's Address" might be unsafe to trifle with. 1 Doubtless this stern hymn was singing itself, as he formed it, through the soul of Burns; but to the external ear, it should be sung with the throat of the whirlwind. So long as there is warm blood in the heart of Scotchman or man, it will move in fierce thrills under this war-ode; the best, we believe, that was ever written, by any pen.

Another wild stormful Song, that dwells in our ear and mind with a strange tenacity, is "Macpherson's Farewell." Perhaps there is something in the tradition itself that cooperates. For was not this grim Celt, this shaggy Northland Caes, that "lived a life of start and strife, and died by treachery,"—was not he too one of the Nimrods and Napoleon's of the earth, in the arena of his own remote misty glens, for want of a clearer and wider one? Nay, was there not a touch of grace given him? A fibre of love and softness, of poetry itself, must have lived in his savage heart: for he composed that air the night before his execution; on the wings of that poor melody his better soul would soar away above oblivion, pain and all the ignominy and despair, which, like an avalanche, was hurling him to the abyss! Here also, as at Thebes, and in Pëlaip's line, was material Fate matched against man's Free-will; matched in bitterest though obscure duel; and the eternal soul sunk not, even in its blindness, without a cry which has survived it. But who, except Burns, could have given words to such a soul; words that we never listen to without a strange half-haunted, half-poetic fellow-feeling?

Sae rantingly, sae wantonly, joyfully
Sae damaantly gaed he; audaciously
He playd a spring, and danced it round, tone
Below the gallowtree.

Under a lighter disguise, the same principle of Love, which we have recognized as the great characteristic of Burns, and of all true poets, occasionally manifests itself in the shape of Humour. Everywhere, indeed, in his sunny moods, a full buoyant flood of mirth rolls through the mind of Burns; he rises to the high, and stoops to the low, and is brother and playmate to all Nature. We speak not of his bold and often irresistible faculty of caricature; for this is Drolery rather than Humour: but a much tenderer sportfulness dwells in him; and comes forth here and there, in evanescent and beautiful touches; as in his "Address to the Mouse," or the "Farmer's Mare," or in his "Elegy on poor Mailie," which last may be reckoned his happiest effort of this kind. In these pieces there are traits of a Humour as fine as that of Sterne; yet altogether different, original, peculiar,—the Humour of Burns.

Of the tenderness, the playful pathos, and many other kindred qualities of Burns's Poetry, much more might be said; but now, with these poor outlines of a sketch, we must prepare to quit this part of our subject. To speak of his individual Writings, adequately and with any detail, would lead us far beyond our limits. As already hinted, we can look on but few of these pieces as, in strict critical language, deserving the name of Poems: they are rhymed eloquence, rhymed pathos, rhymed sense; yet seldom essentially melodious, aerial, poetical. "Tam o' Shanter" itself, which enjoys so high a favour, does not appear to us at all decisively to come under this last category. It is not so much a poem as a piece of sparkling rhetoric; the heart and body of the story still lies hard and dead. He has not gone back, much less carried us back, into that dark, earnest, wondering age, when the tradition was believed, and when it took its rise; he does not attempt, by any new modeling of his supernatural ware, to strike anew that deep mysterious chord of human nature, which once responded to such things; and which lives in us too, and will for ever live, though silent now, or vibrating with far other notes, and to far different issues. Our German readers will understand us when we say, that he is not the Tieck but the Mustaus of this tale. Externally it is all green and living; yet look closer, it is no firm growth, but only ivy on a rock. The piece does not

1 Syme's story is incorrect. See Burns's letter to Thomson, 1st Sept. 1783, and also Professor Wilson's Essay.  
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properly cohere; the strange charm which
yawns in our incredulous imaginations between
the Ayr public-house and the gate of Tophet,
is nowhere bridged over; nay the idea of such
a bridge is laughed at; and thus the Tragedy of
the adventure becomes a mere drunken
phantasmagoria, or many-coloured spectrum
painted on ale-vapours, and the Face alone
has any reality. We do not say that Burns should have made much more of this tradition;
we rather think that, for strictly poetical
purposes, not much care to be made of it. Neither
are we blind to the deep, varied, genial power
displayed in what he has actually accomplished;
but we find far more "Shakespearean" qualities,
as those of "Tam o' Shanter" have been
fondly named, in many of his other pieces;
aye we incline to believe that this latter might
have been written, all but as well, by a
man who, in place of genius, had only possessed
talent.

Perhaps we may venture to say, that the
most strictly poetical of all his "poems" is
one which does not appear in Currie's Edition;
but has been often printed before and since,
under the humble title of the "Jolly Beg-
gars." The subject truly is among the lowest
in Nature; but it only the more shows our
Poet's gift in raising it into the domain of Art.

To our minds this piece seems thoroughly compac-
ted; melted together, refined; and poured forth
in one flood of true lyrical harmony. It is
light, airy, soft of movement, yet sharp and
precise in its details; every facet is a portrait:
that ruano carino, that see Apollo, that Son
of Mars, are Scottish, yet ideal; the scene is
at once a dream and the very Hagenstein of
"Poiso-Nane." Further, it seems in a con-
siderable degree complete, a real self-supporting
Whole, which is the highest merit in a poem.
The blanket of the Night is drawn
saunter for a moment; in full, ruddy, flaming
light, these rough tatterdemalions are seen in
their boisterous revel; for the strong pulse of
Life vindicates its right to gladness even here;
and when the curtain closes, we prolong the
action, without effort; the next day as the last,
our Calvin and our Balladmonger are singing

1 [The "Jolly Beggars" first appeared in "Poems
ascribed to Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Bard.
Glasgow: Stewart, 1801," the year following the publication of Currie's edition.]

and soldiering; their "brats and callots" are
hawking, begging, cheating; and some other
night, in new combinations, they will wring
from Fate another hour of wassail and good
cheer. Apart from the universal sympathy
with man which this again bespeaks in Burns,
a genuine inspiration and no inconsiderable
technical talent are manifested here. There
is the fidelity, humour, warm life, and accur-
ate painting and grouping of some Teniers,
for whom hostlers and carousers peasants are
not without significance. It would be strange,
doubtless, to call this the best of Burns's writ-
ings: we mean to say only, that it seems to us
the most perfect of its kind as a piece of poeti-
cal composition, strictly so called. In the
Beggars' Opera, in the Beggars' Bush, as other
critics have already remarked, there is nothing
which, in real poetical vigour, equals this Cant-
tata; nothing, as we think, which comes within
many degrees of it.

But by far the most finished, complete, and
truly impressive pieces of Burns are, without
dispute, to be found among his Songs. It is
here that, although through a small aperture,
his light shines with least obstruction; in its
highest beauty and pure sunny clearness. The
reason may be, that Song is a brief simple
species of composition; and requires nothing
so much for its perfection as genuine poetic
feeling, genuine music of heart. Yet the Song
has its rules equally with the Tragedy; rules
which in most cases are poorly fulfilled, in
many cases are not so much as felt. We might
write a long essay on the Songs of Burns, which
we reckon by far the best that the world has
yet produced; for, indeed, since the era of Queen
Elizabeth, we know not that, by any other hand,
ought truly worth attention has been
accomplished in this department. True, we
have songs enough "by persons of quality;"
we have tawdry, hollow, wine-bred madrigals;
many a rhymed speech "in the flowing and
watery vein of Ossian the Portugal Bishop,
rich in sonorous words, and, for moral, dashed
perhaps with some tint of a sentimental sens-
suality; all which many persons cease not from
dreaming to sing; though, for most part, we
fear, the music is but from the throat out-
wards, or at best from some region far enough
short of the Soul; not in which, but in a cer-
tain inane Limbo of the Fancy, or even in

some vaporous dreams of the Nervous
poets and rhymer's imagination,

With the Songs, these things.

manly, heartfelt
his poetry, his
point of view:
They do not offer,
actually and in
have received the
themselves together,
ne Venus rose from
story, the feel-
ggested; not so
completeness and
ghashes, in glowing
ings not in whole
mind. We
ence of a song;
le careless cant
song, which Shiel
sprinkled over has
ly in nearly the sa-
do. Such grace,
, too, pros-
ing force and true
ning. The
perfect in the for-
With what tend
vemence and a
wall in his som-
joy; he burns with
the loudest
sweet and soft, to
lovers meet, and
If we farther take
variety of his
flowing revel
Maut," to the s
for "Mary in
reeting of "A
archness of "S
fury of "Scots,
has found a
man's heart—i
rank him as th
for we know n
being second to

It is on his So
chief influence
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some vaporous debatable-land on the outskirts of the Nervous System, most of such madrigals and rhymed speeches seem to have originated.

With the Songs of Burns we must not name these things. Independently of the clear, manly, heartfelt sentiment that ever pervades his poetry, his Songs are homespun: in another point of view; in form as well as in spirit. They do not affect to be set to music, but they actually and in themselves are music; they have received their life, and fashioned themselves together, in the medium of Harmony, as Venus rose from the bosom of the sea. The song, the feeling, is not detailed, but suggested; not said or spouted in rhetorical completeness and coherence; but sung, in fitful gushes, in glowing hints, in fantastic breaks, in wordings not of the voice only, but of the whole mind. We consider this to be the essence of a song; and that no songs since the bits careless catches, and as it were drops of song, which Shakspeare has here and there sprinkled over his Plays, fulfill this condition in nearly the same degree as most of Burns's do. Such grace and truth of external movement, too, presupposes in general a corresponding force and truth of sentiment and inward meaning. The Songs of Burns are not more perfect in the former quality than in the latter. With what tenderness he sings, yet with what vehemence and entireness! There is a piercing wail in his sorrow, the purest rapture in his joy; he burns with the sternest ire, or laughs with the loudest or sliest mirth; and yet he is sweet and soft, "sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet, and soft as their parting tear." If we farther take into account the immense variety of his subjects; how, from the loud flowing revel in "Wifie breud a Peck o' Maut," to the still, rapt enthusiasm of sadness for "Mary in Heaven;" from the glad kind greeting of "Auld Langsyne," or the comic archness of "Duncan Gray," to the fire-eyed fury of "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled," he has found a tone and words for every mood of man's heart—it will seem a small praise if we rank him as the first of all our Song-writers; for we know not where to find one worthy of being second to him.

It is on his Songs, as we believe, that Burns's chief influence as an author will ultimately be found to depend: nor, if our Fletcher's aphorism is true, shall we account this a small influence. "Let me make the songs of a people," said he, "and you shall make its laws." Surely, if ever any Poet might have equalled himself with Legislators on this ground, it was Burns. His Songs are already part of the mother-tongue, not of Scotland only but of Britain, and of the millions that in all ends of the earth speak a British language. In hut and hall, as the heart unfolds itself in many-coloured joy and woe of existence, the name, the voice of that joy and that woe, is the name and voice which Burns has given them. Strictly speaking, perhaps no British man has so deeply affected the thoughts and feelings of so many men, as this solitary and altogether private individual, with means apparently the humblest.

In another point of view, moreover, we incline to think that Burns's influence may have been considerable: we mean as exerted specially on the Literature of his country, at least on the Literature of Scotland. Among the great changes which British, particularly Scottish literature, has undergone since that period, one of the greatest will be found to consist in its remarkable increase of nationality. Even the English writers most popular in Burns's time were little distinguished for their literary patriotism, in this its best sense. A certain attenuated cosmopolitanism had, in good measure, taken place of the old insular home-feeling; literature was, as it were, without any local environment, was not nourished by the affections which spring from a native soil. Our Grays and Gloves seemed to write almost as if in vacuo; the thing written bears no mark of place; it is not written so much for Englishmen as for mere men, or rather, which is the inevitable result of this, for certain Generalizations which philosophy termed men. Goldsmith is an exception: not so Johnson; the scene of his Rambler is little more English than that of his搓 daunting.

But if such was, in some degree, the case with England, it was, in the highest degree, the case with Scotland. In fact, our Scottish literature had, at that period, a very singular aspect: unexampled, as far as we know, except perhaps at Geneva, where the same state of matters appears still to continue. For a long period after Scotland became British, we
had no literature at the date when Addison and Steele were writing their *Spectators*, our good John Boston was writing, with the noblest intent, but alike in defiance of grammar and philosophy, his *Penfold State of Man*. Then came the seisms in our National Church, and the fiercer seisms in our Body Politic: Theologic ink, and Jacobite blood, with gall enough in both cases, seemed to have blown out the intellect of the country: however, it was only obscured, not obliterated. Lord Kames made nearly the first attempt at writing English; and ere long, Hume, Robertson, and a whole host of followers, attracted him the eyes of all Europe. And yet in this brilliant resuscitation of our "servile genius," there was nothing truly Scottish, nothing indigenous; except, perhaps, the natural impetuousity of intellect, which we sometimes claim, and are sometimes upbraided with, as a characteristic of our nation. It is curious to remark that Scotland, so full of writers, had no Scottish culture, nor indeed any English; our culture was almost exclusively French. It was by studying Racine and Voltaire, Batteux and Boileau, that Kames had trained himself to be a critic and philosopher; it was the light of Montesquieu and Mably that guided Robertson in his political speculations; Quesnay's lamp that kindled the lamp of Adam Smith. Hume was too rich a man to borrow; and perhaps he reacted on the French more than he was acted on by them: but neither had he sought to do with Scotland; Edinburgh, equally with La Flèche, was but the lodging and laboratory, in which he not so much morally lived, as metaphysically investigated. Never, perhaps, was there a class of writers so clear and well-ordered, yet so totally destitute, to all appearance, of any patriotic affection, of any human affection whatever. The French wits of the period were as unpatriotic: but their general deficiency in moral principle, not to say their avowed sensuality and unbelief in all virtue, strictly so called, render this unaccountable enough. We hope, there is a patriotism founded on something better than prejudice; that our country may be dear to us, without injury to our philosophy; that in loving and justly prize all other lands, we may prize justly, and yet love before all others, our own stern Motherland, and the venerable structure of social and moral Life, which Mind has through long ages been building up for us there. Surely there is nourishment for the better part of man's heart in all this: surely the roots, that have fixed themselves in the very core of man's being, may be so cultivated as to grow up not into briars, but into roses, in the field of his life! Our Scottish sages have no such propensities: the field of their life shows neither briars nor roses; but only a flat, continuous threshing-floor for Logie, wherein all questions, from the "Doctrine of the Trinity," to the "Natural History of Religion," are thrashed and sifted with the same mechanical impartiality!

With Sir Walter Scott at the head of our literature, it cannot be denied that much of this evil is past, or rapidly passing away: our chief literary men, whatever other faults they may have, no longer live among us like a French colony, or some knot of Propaganda Missionaries; but like natural-born subjects of the soil, partaking and sympathizing in all our attachments, humours and habits. Our literature no longer grows in water but in mould, and with the true racy virtues of the soil and climate. How much of this change may be due to Burns, or to any other individual, it might be difficult to estimate. Direct literary imitation of Burns was not to be looked for: but his example, in the fearless adoption of domestic subjects, could not but operate from afar; and certainly in no heart did the love of country ever burn with a warmer glow than in that of Burns: "a tithe of Scottish prejudice," as he modestly calls this deep and generous feeling, "had been poured along his veins; and he felt that it would boil there till the flood-gates shut in eternal rest." It seemed to him, as if he could do so little for his country, and yet would so gladly have done all. One small province stood open for him,—that of Scottish Song; and how eagerly he entered on it, how devotedly he laboured there! In his toilsome journeys, this object never quits him; it is the little happy-Valley of his careworn heart. In the gloom of his own affliction, he eagerly searches after some lonely brother of the muse, and rejoices to snatch one other name from the oblivion that was covering it! These were early feelings, and they abode with him to the end:

A wish, the answer to my prayer,
That I, for love of thee,
Some useful work may see,
To earn a name that men may hold in awe.

The rough bell-ropes were cut off
Among the ruins
I turned the page
And parted from the world.

But to leave Burns, which has himself
Far more interesting works, as it appears, as he wrote the Life he will
I his fellow-men, as may be seen in the place, in place where their earthly rhymes will be buried, and where in the future, the French will never attain their full length or breadth. Thus it is, alas, in the history of a mighty edifice of columns, partake of the
stand completely, without indicated; without evidence, which one can now trace in the
attire. For the while, almost in the here, there are beautiful and
ruby! If charged in estimating the aim, that it must often
much more is
Life, the sun that has set where its light could not detail only, but left
altogether mark.

Properly speaking, the Life of Burns has not yet
for, to the end, in the completion of the thirty-seventh year of youth. With maturity of age, that peculiarity of his writings, which
regarding him as a poet, contains his pec.
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... A wish (I mind its power),
Remember
A wish, that to my latest hour
Will strongly leave my breast,—
That I, for poor and Scotland's sake,
Some useful plan or book could make,
Or sing a song at least.

The rough burr Thistle spreading wide
Among the bearded bear,
I turned the weeder-clips aside,
Weeding-shears
And spared the symbol dear.

But to leave the mere literary character of Burns, which has already detained us too long.
Far more interesting than any of his written works, as it appears to us, are his acted ones;
the Life he willed and was fated to lead among his fellow-men. These Poems are but like
little rhymed fragments scattered here and there in the grand unrhymed Romance of his earthly existence; and it is only when intercalated in this at their proper places, that they attain their full measure of significance. And this, too, alas, was but a fragment! The plan of a mighty edifice had been sketched; some columns, porticos, firm masses of building, stand completed; the rest more or less clearly indicated; with many a far-stretching tendency, which only studious and friendly eyes can now trace towards the purposed termination. For the work is broken off in the middle, almost in the beginning; and rises among us, beautiful and sad, at once unfinished and a ruin! If charitable judgment was necessary in estimating his Poems, and justice required that the aim and the manifest power to fulfil it must often be accepted for the fulfilment; much more is this the case in regard to his Life, the sum and result of all his endeavours, where his difficulties came upon him not in detail only, but in mass; and so much has been left unaccomplished, may was mistaken, and altogether marred.

Properly speaking, there is but one era in the life of Burns, and that earliest. We have not youth and manhood, but only youth; for, to the end, we discern no decisive change in the complexion of his character; in his thirty-seventh year, he is still, as it were, in youth. With all that resoluteness of judgment, that penetrating insight, and singular maturity of intellectual power, exhibited in his writings, he never attains to any clearness regarding himself; to the last, he never ascertains his peculiar aim, even with such distinctness as is common among ordinary men; and therefore never can pursue it with that singleness of will, which insures success and some contentment to such men. To the last, he wavers between two purposes: glorying in his talent, like a true poet, he yet cannot consent to make this his chief and sole glory, and to follow it as the one thing needful, through poverty or riches, through good or evil report. Another far meaner ambition still cleaves to him; he must dream and struggle about a certain "Rock of Independence," which, natural and even admirable as it might be, was yet but a warring with the world, on the comparatively insignificant ground of his being more completely or less completely supplied with money than others; of his standing at a higher or at a lower altitude in general estimation than others. For the world still appears to him, as to the young, in borrowed colours; he expects from it what it cannot give to any man; seeks for contentment, not within himself, in action and wise effort, but from without, in the kindness of circumstances, in love, friendship, honour, pecuniary ease. He would be happy, not actively and in himself, but passively and from some ideal cornucopia of Enjoyments, not earned by his own labour, but showered on him by the beneficence of Destiny. Thus, like a young man, he cannot gird himself up for any worthy well-calculated goal, but swerves to and fro, between passionate hope and remorseful disappointment: rushing onwards with a deep tempestuous force, he surmounts or breaks asunder many a barrier; travels, may advances far, but advancing only under uncertain guidance, is ever and anon turned from his path; and to the last cannot reach the only true happiness of a man, that of clear decided Activity in the sphere for which, by nature and circumstances, he has been fitted and appointed.

We do not say these things in dispraise of Burns; may, perhaps, they but interest us the more in his favour. This blessing is not given soonest to the best; but rather, it is often the greatest minds that are latest in obtaining it; for where most is to be developed, most time may be required to develop it. A complex condition had been assigned him from without; as complex a condition from within: no "pre-established harmony" existed between the clay
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soil of Mossgiel and the empyrean soul of Robert Burns; it was not wonderful that the adjustment between them should have been long postponed, and his arm long eburned, and his sight confused, in so vast and discordant an economy as he had been appointed steward over. Byron was, at his death, but a year younger than Burns; and through life, as it might have appeared, far more simply situated; yet in him too we can trace no such adjustment, no such moral manhood; but at best, and only a little before his end, the beginning of what seemed such.

By much the most striking incident in Burns's Life is his journey to Edinburgh; but perhaps a still more important one is his residence at Irvine, so early as in his twenty-third year. Hitherto his life had been poor and toil-worn; but otherwise not ungenial, and, with all its distresses, by no means unhappy. In his parentage, deducing outward circumstances, he had every reason to reckon himself fortunate. His father was a man of thoughtful, intense, earnest character, as the best of our peasants are; valuing knowledge, possessing some, and, what is far better and rarer, openminded for more: a man with a keen insight and devout heart; reverent towards God, friendly therefore at once, and fearless towards all that God has made: in one word, though but a hard-handed peasant, a complete and fully unfolded Man. Such a father is seldom found in any rank in society; and was worth descending far in society to seek. Unfortunately, he was very poor; had he been even a little richer, almost never so little, the whole might have issued far otherwise. Mighty events turn on a straw; the crossing of a brook decides the conquest of the world. Had this William Burns's small seven acres of nursery-ground anywise prospered, the boy Robert had been sent to school; had struggled forward, as so many weaker men do, to some university; come forth not as a rustic wonder, but as a regular well-trained intellectual workman, and changed the whole course of British Literature,—for it lay in him to have done this! But the nursery did not prosper; poverty sank his whole family below the help of even our cheap school system: Burns remained a hard-worked ploughboy, and British Literature took its own course. Nevertheless, even in this rugged scene there is much to nourish him. If he drudges, it is with his brother, and for his father and mother, whom he loves, and would fain shield from want. Wisdom is not banished from their poor hearth, nor the balm of natural feeling: the solemn words, Let us worship God, are heard there from a "priest-like father;" if threatenings of unjust men throw mother and children into tears, these are tears not of grief only, but of holiest affection; every heart in that humble group feels itself the closer knit to every other; in their hard warfare they are there together, a "little band of brethren." Neither are such tears, and the deep beauty that dwells in them, their only portion. Light visits the hearts as it does the eyes of all living: there is a force, too, in this youth, that enables him to trample on misfortune; nay to bind it under his feet to make him sport. For a bold, warm, buoyant humour of character has been given him; and so the thick-coming shapes of evil are welcomed with a gay, friendly irony, and in their closest pressure he bares no jot of heart or hope. Vague yearnings of ambition fail not, as he grows up; dreamy fancies hang like cloud-cities around him; the curtain of Existence is slowly rising, in many-coloured splendour and gloom; and the auroral light of first love is gilding his horizon, and the music of song is on his path; and so he walks

    ... in glory and in joy,
    Behind his plough, upon the mountain side.

We ourselves know, from the best evidence, that up to this date Burns was happy; nay that he was the gayest, brightest, most fascinating being to be found in the world; more so even than he ever afterwards appeared. But now, at this early age, it quite the paternal roof; goes forth into looser, louder, more exciting society; and becomes initiated in those dissipations, those vices, which a certain class of philosophers have asserted to be a natural prepartive for entering on active life; a kind of mind-bath, in which the youth is, as it were, necessitated to steep, and, we suppose, cleanse himself, before the real toga of Manhood can be laid on him. We shall not dispute much with this class of philosophers; we hope they are mistaken: for Sin and Remorse so easily beset us all at stages of life, and are always such indifferent company, that it seems hard we should, at any stage, be forced and fated to them, and on the leprosy of arming us, we are, at all events, frequently. Our determining for true manly will, after we have been in the chase ourselves, have ascertained the barriers here met with, it is to hope the soul from the world; that a man is not only the world; and that the world is not only the world, but have surrendered the part only do; it is gebruik fullly only where we are the soul to Necessity; and the end over it, and fellow. Surely such less shape or other, mortal man, and of a devout mother, and pliant, the lament of Fain Burns, when the broken before Burns, continuing in learning, it is have learned it, it has been saved may bitter hour an

It seems to be the import in Burns, he became in the course of his district; as the fighting Manhood, in their the tables of the learned much. Such liberal is in his mind so a whole work quite another to exercise.

reflect as his at some peri
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forced and fated not only to meet but to yield to them, and even serve for a term in their leprous armada. We hope it is not so. Clear we are, at all events, it cannot be the training one receives in this Devil's-service, but only our determining to desert from it, that fits us for true manly Action. We become men, not after we have been dissipated, and disappointed in the chase of false pleasure; but after we have ascertained, in any way, what impassable barriers hem us in through this life; how mad it is to hope for contentment to our infinite soul from the gifts of this extremely finite world; that a man must be sufficient for himself; and that for suffering and enduring there is no remedy but striving and doing. Manhood begins when we have in any way made truce with Necessity; begins even when we have surrendered to Necessity, as the most part only do; but begins joyfully and hopefully only when we have reconciled ourselves to Necessity; and thus, in reality, triumphed over it, and felt that in Necessity we are free. Surely such lessons as this last, which, in one shape or other, is the grand lesson for every mortal man, are better learned from the lips of a devout mother, in the books and actions of a devout father, while the heart is yet soft and pliant, than in collision with the sharp adamant of Fate, attracting us to shipwreck us, when the heart is grown hard, and may be broken before it will become contrite. Had Burns continued to learn this, as he was already learning it, in his father's cottage, he would have learned it fully, which he never did; and been saved many a lasting aberration, many a bitter hour and year of remorseful sorrow.

It seems to us another circumstance of fatal import in Burns's history, that at this time too he became involved in the religious quarrels of his district; that he was enlisted and feasted, as the fighting man of the New-Light Priesthood, in their highly unprofitable warfare. At the tables of these free-minded clergy he learned much more than was needful for him. Such liberal ridicule of fanaticism awakened in his mind scruples about Religion itself; and a whole world of Doubts, which it required quite another set of conjurors than these men to excercise. We do not say that such an intellect as his could have escaped similar doubts at some period of his history; or even that he could, at a later period, have come through them altogether victorious and unharmed; but it seems peculiarly unfortunate that this time, above all others, should have been fixed for the encounter. For now, with principles assailed by evil example from without, by "passions raging like demons" from within, he had little need of sceptical misgivings to whisper treason in the heat of the battle, or to cut off his retreat if he were already defeated. He loses his feeling of innocence; his mind is at variance with itself; the old divinity no longer presides there; but wild Desires and wild repentance alternately oppress him. Ere long, too, he has committed himself before the world; his character for sobriety, dear to a Scottish peasant as few corrupted worldlings can even conceive, is destroyed in the eyes of men; and his only refuge consists in trying to disbelieve his guiltiness, and is but a refuge of lies. The blackest desperation now gathers over him, broken only by red lightnings of remorse. The whole fabric of his life is blasted asunder; for now not only his character, but his personal liberty, is to be lost; men and Fortune are leagued for his hurt; "hungry Ruin has him in the wind." He sees no escape but the saddest of all: exile from his loved country, to a country in every sense inhospitable and abhorrent to him. While the "gloomy night is gathering fast," in mental storm and solitude, as well as in physical, he sings his wild farewell to Scotland:

Farewell, my friends; farewell, my foes!
My peace with those, my love with those:
The bursting tears my heart declare;
Adieu, my native banks of Ayr!

Light breaks suddenly in on him in floods; but still a false transitory light, and no real sunshine. He is invited to Edinburgh; hastens thither with anticipating heart; is welcomed as in a triumph, and with universal blandishment and acclamation; whatever is wisest, whatever is greatest or loveliest there, gathers round him, to gaze on his face, to show him honour, sympathy, affection. Burns's appearance among the sages and nobles of Edinburgh must be regarded as one of the most singular phenomena in modern Liter-

[Blacklock's letter, to Dr. Lawrie, among other things induced Burns to betake himself to Edinburgh, but he received no express invitation.]
nature; almost like the appearance of some Napoleon among the crowned sovereigns of modern Politics. For it is nowise as "a mockery king," set there by favour, transiently and for a purpose, that he will let himself be treated; still less is he a mad Illezzi, whose sudden elevation turns him to weak head; but he stands there on his own basis; cool, unastonished, holding his equal rank from Nature herself; putting forth no claim which there is not strength in him, as well as about him, to vindicate. Mr. Lockhart has some forcible observations on this point:

"It needs no effort of imagination," says he, "to conceive what the sensations of an isolated set of scholars (almost all either clergymen or professors) must have been in the presence of this big-boned, black-browed, browney stranger, with his great flashing eyes, who, having forced his way among them from the plough-tail at a single stride, manifested in the whole strain of his bearing and conversation a most thorough conviction, that in the society of the most eminent men of his nation he was exactly where he was entitled to be; hardly deigned to flatter them by exhibiting even an occasional symptom of being flattered by their notice; but turns calmly measured himself against the most cultivated understandings of his time in discussion; overpowered the bonitos of the most celebrated convivialists by broad floods of merriment, unpregnated with all the burning life of genius; astounded became habitually enveloped in the three-plied folds of social reserve, by compelling them to tremble,—nay, to tremble visibly,—beneath the fearless touch of natural pathos; and all this without indicating the smallest willingness to be ranked among those professional ministers of excitement, who are content to be paid in money and smiles for doing what the spectators and auditors would be ashamed of doing in their own persons, even if they had the power of doing it; and last, and probably worst of all, who was known to be in the habit of enlivening societies which they would have scorned to approach, still more frequently than their own, with eloquence no less magnificent; with wit, in all likelihood still more daring; often enough, as the superiors whom he fronted without alarm might have guessed from the beginning, and had ere long no occasion to guess, with wit pointed at themselves."

The further we remove from this scene, the more singular will it seem to us: details of the exterior aspect of it are already full of interest. Most readers recollect Mr. Walker's personal interviews with Burns as among the best passages of his Narrative: a time will come when this reminiscence of Sir Walter Scott's, slight though it is, will also be precious—

"As for Burns," writes Sir Walter, "I may truly say, Virginius eiu taviitum. I was a lad of fifteen in 1786-7, when he came first to Edinburgh, but had sense and feeling enough to be much interested in his poetry, and would have given the world to know him: but I had very little acquaintance with any literary people, and still less with the gentry of the west country, the two sets that he most frequented. Mr. Thomas Grierson was at that time a clerk at my father's. He knew Burns, and promised to ask him to his lodgings to dinner; but had no opportunity to keep his word, otherwise I might have seen more of this distinguished man. As it was, I saw him one day at the late venerable Professor Ferguson's, where there were several gentlemen of literary reputation, among whom I remember the celebrated Mr. Dougall Stewart. Of course, we youngsters sat silent, looked and listened. The only thing I remember which was remarkable in Burns's manner was the effect produced upon him by a print of Bumby's, representing a soldier lying dead on the snow, his dog sitting in misery on one side,—on the other, his widow, with a child in her arms. These lines were written beneath:

Cold on Canadian hills, or Muden's plain,
Perhaps that mother wept her soldier slave,
Bent over her babe, her eye dissolved in dew,
The big drops mingling with the milk she drew,
State the sad passage of his future years,
The child of misery baptiz'd in tears.

"Burns seemed much affected by the print, or rather by the ideas which it suggested to his mind, He actually shed tears. He asked those lines were; and it chanced that nobody but myself remembered that they occur in a half-forgotten poem of Langhorne's called by the unprofitable title of the 'Justice of Peace.' I whispered my information to a friend present; he mentioned it to Burns, who rewarded me with a look and a word, which, though of more civility, I then received and still recall with, very great pleasure.

"His person was strong and robust; his manners rustic, not clownish; a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity, which received part of its effect perhaps from one's knowledge of his extraordinary talents. His features are described in Mr. Nasmyth's picture: but to me it conveys the idea that they are diminished, as if seen in perspective. I think his countenance was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits. I should have taken the poet, had I not known what he was, for a very sagacious country farmer of the old Scotch school, i.e. none of our modern agriculturists who keep labourers for their drudgery, but the bouse gudeman who held his own plough. There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his lineaments; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetic character and temperament. It was large and of a dark cast, which glowed (I say literally glowed) when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men of my time. His conversation expressed perfect self-confidence without the slightest presumption. Among
the men who were the most learned of their time and
country, he expressed himself with perfect firmness,
but without the least intrusive forwardness; and
when he differed in opinion, he did not hesitate to
express it firmly, yet at the same time with modesty.
I do not remember any part of his conversation
distinctly enough to be quoted; nor did I ever see him
again, except in the street, where he did not recognize
me, as I could not expect he should. He was much
acquainted in Edinburgh; but (considering what literary
endowments have been since his day) the efforts made
for his relief were extremely trifling.

"I remember, on this occasion I mention, I thought
Burns's acquaintance with English poetry was rather
limited; and also that, having twenty times the abilities
of Allan Ramsay and of Ferguson, he talked of
them with too much humility as his models: there
was doubtless national predilection in his estimate.

"This is all I can tell you about Burns. I have
only to add that his dress corresponded with his
manner. He was like a farmer dressed in his best to
dine with the laird. I do not speak in malice per
ten, when I say I never saw a man in company with
his superiors in station or information more perfectly
free from either the reality or the affectation of em
barassment. I was told, but did not observe it, that
his address to females was extremely deferential, and
always with a turn either to the pathetic or humorous,
which engaged their attention particularly. I have
heard the late Duchess of Gordon remark this—"I
do not know anything I can add to these recollections
of forty years since."

The conduct of Burns under this dazzling
blaze of favour, the calm, unaffected, manly
manner in which he not only bore it, but esti
mated its value, has justly been regarded as
the best proof that could be given of his real
vigour and integrity of mind. A little natural
vanity, some touches of hypocritical modesty,
some glimmerings of affectation, at least some
fear of being thought affected, we could have
pardoned in almost any man; but no such in
dication is to be traced here. In his unex
sampled situation the young peasant is not a
moment perplexed; so many strange lights do
not confuse him, do not lead him astray.
Nevertheless, we cannot but perceive that this
winter did him great and lasting injury. A
somewhat clearer knowledge of men's affairs,
scarcey of their characters, it did afford him;
but a sharper feeling of Fortune's unequal
arrangements in their social destiny it also left
with him. He had seen the gay and gorgeous
arena in which the powerful are born to play
their parts; nay, had himself stood in the
midst of it; and he felt more bitterly than ever
that here he was but a looker-on, and had no
part or lot in that splendid game. From this
time a jealous indignant fear of social degenera
tion takes possession of him; and perverts,
so far as ought could pervert, his private con
tentment, and his feelings towards his richer
fellows. It was clear to Burns that he had
talent enough to make a fortune, or a hundred
fortunes, could he but have rightly will
this; it was clear also that he willed something
far different, and therefore could not make
one. Unhappy it was that he had not power
to choose the one and reject the other; but
must halt for ever between two opinions, two
objects, making hampered advancement to
wards either. But so is it with many men:
we "long for the merchandise, yet would fain
keep the price;" and so stand chaffering with
Fate, in vexations alteration, till the night
come, and our fair is over!

The Edinburgh learned of that period were
in general more noted for clearness of head than
for warmth of heart: with the exception
of the good old Blacklock, whose help was too
intellectual, scarcely one among them seems to
have looked at Burns with any true sympathy,
or indeed much otherwise than as a highly
curious thing. By the great also he is treated
in the customary fashion; entertained at their
tables and dismissed; certain modicum of pur
ding and praise are, from time to time, gladly
exchanged for the fascination of his presence;
which exchange once effected, the bargain is
finished, and each party goes his several way.
At the end of this strange season, Burns gloom
fully sums up his gains and losses, and meditates
on the chaotic future. In money he is some
what richer; in fame and the show of hap
iness, infinitely richer; but in the substance of
it, as poor as ever. Nay poorer; for his heart
is now maddened still more with the fever of
worldly Ambition; and through long years the
disease will rack him with unprofitable suffer
ings, and weaken his strength for all true and
noblest aims.

What Burns was next to do or to avoid; how
a man so circumstanced was now to guide him
self towards his true advantage, might at this
point of time have been a question for the
wisest. It was a question, too, which appar
ently he was left altogether to answer for him
self: of his learned or rich patrons it had not
struck any individual to turn a thought on
this so trivial matter. Without claiming for
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Burns the praise of perfect sagacity, we must say, that his Essay and Farm scheme does not seem to us a very unreasonable one; that we should be at a loss, even now, to suggest one decidedly better. Certain of his admirers have felt scandalized at his ever resolving to geometry, and would have had him lie at the pool till the spirit of Patronage stirred the waters, that so, with one friendly plunge, all his sorrows might be healed. Unwise counsellors! They know not the manner of this spirit, and how, in the lap of most golden dreams, a man might have happiness, were it not that in the interim he must die of hunger! It reflects credit on the manliness and sound sense of Burns, that he felt so early on what ground he was standing; and preferred self-help, on the humblest scale, to dependence and faction, though with hope of far more splendid possibilities. But even these possibilities were not rejected in his scheme! he might expect, if it chanced that he had any friend, to rise, in no long period, into something even like opulence and leisure; while again, if it chanced that he had no friend, he could still live in security; and for the rest, he "did not intend to borrow honour from any profession." We reckon that his plan was honest and well-calculated; all turned on the execution of it. Doubtless it failed; yet not, we believe, from any inherent vice in itself. Nay, after all, it was no failure of external means, but of internal, that overtook Burns. His was no bankruptcy of the purse, but of the soul; to his last day, he owed no man anything.

Meanwhile he begins well; with two good and wise actions. His donation to his mother, munificent from a man whose income had lately been seven pounds a year, was worthy of him, and not more than worthy. Generous also, and worthy of him, was the treatment of the woman whose life, a welfare now depended on his pleasure. A friendly observer might have hoped serene days for him; his mind is on the true road to peace with itself; what clearness he still wants will be given as he proceeds; for the best teacher of duties, that still lies dim to us, is the Practice of those we see and have at hand. Had the "patrons of genius," who could give him nothing, but taken nothing from him, at least nothing more! The wounds of his heart would have healed, vulgar ambition would have died away. Toil and Frugality would have been welcome, since Virtue dwelt with them; and Poetry would have shone through them as of old: and in her clear ethereal light, which was his own by birthright, he might have looked down on his earthly destiny, and all its obstructions, not with patience only, but with love.

But the patrons of genius would not have it so. Picturesque tourists, all manner of convivial Maccenas, hovered round him in his retreat; and his good as well as his weak qualities secured them influence over him. He was flattered by their notice; and his warm social nature made it impossible for him to shun them off, and hold on his way apart from these men, as we believe, were proximately the means of his ruin. Not that they meant him any ill; they only meant themselves a little good; if he suffered harm, let him look to it! But they wasted his precious time and his precious talent; they disturbed his composure, broke down his returning habits of temperance and assiduous contention exertion. Their pampering was baneful to him; their cruelty, which soon followed, was equally baneful. The old grudge against Fortune's inequality awoke with new bitterness in their neighbourhood; and Burns had no end of wanton opponents.

There is one little sketch by certain "English gentlemen" of this class, which, though adopted in Currie's Narrative, and since then repeated in most others, we have all along felt an invincible disposition to regard as imaginary: "On a rock that projected into the stream, they saw a man employed in angling, of a singular appearance. He had a cap made of foxskin on his head, a loose greatcoat fixed round him by a belt, from which depended an enormous Highland broad-sword. It was Burns." Now, we rather think it was not Burns. For, to say nothing of the foxskin cap, the loose and quite ill-fitting overcoat with the belt, what are we to make of this "enormous Highland broad-sword" depending from him? More especially, as there is no word of parish constables on the outlook to see whether, as Dennis phrases it, he had an eye to his own midriff or that of the public! Burns, of all men, had the least need, and the least tendency, to seek for distinction, either in his own eyes, or those of others, by such poor mummeries. There is nothing very incredible in the story, which is circumstantially told. Burns did sometimes indulge in eccentricities, and we have Mrs. Burns's evidence that he had a cap of the kind described, and two swords—one of them an Andreas Ferrara, though she did not remember him being so foolish as to put a sword on.

retreat but to make war — which is but another proof of how well at a distance all real wind and excitement, even the tempt of others was no more than in mind, but fast falling into hollowness at the tone, and science did not know what to doing.

Amid the various bootless remedies, Fate, true Poet, was too often not as she was, was too often a fool, And yet he saw such handstar Merry of Fries' and these were not enough, which lasted with him were worst distresses, and as Fate that time, he was an official Superior to be lacerated, we could give the mechanical implement, and she could better self-seek and be done than ever. If there is a life of freedom beyond the meek continuance,—such offered, at least they pass away. The world begins past him; for a noble, their friends, and a generous humanity is what are not with him! For in French Revolutions, in that one a nation, politics disappeared, were incited little to the Maccenas thence it. There is
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years, the Dumfries Aristocracy had partly withdrawn themselves from Burns, as from a tainted person, no longer worthy of their acquaintance. That painful issue, stationed, in all provincial cities, behind the outmost breastwork of Gentility, there to stand siege and do battle against the intrusions of Grocerdom and Grazierdom, had actually seen dishonour in the society of Burns, and branded him with their veto; had, as we vulgarly say, cut him! We find one passage in this Work of Mr. Lockhart’s, which will not out of our thoughts:

“A gentleman of that county, whose name I have already more than once had occasion to refer to, has often told me that he was seldom more grieved, than when riding into Dumfries one fine summer evening about this time to attend a county ball, he saw Burns walking alone, on the shady side of the principal street of the town, while the opposite side was gay with successive groups of gentlemen and ladies, all drawn together for the festivities of the night, not one of whom appeared willing to recognize him. The horseman dismounted, and joined Burns, who on his proposing to cross the street said: ‘Nay, nay, my young friend, that’s all over now; and quoted after a pause, some verses of Lady Grisel Baillie’s pathetic ballad:

His banner stood once fair on his brow true
His soul was lovelier than many one’s now:
But now he bites by wear it will beling,
And casts himself down upon the trembling, softly,

Nor were we younger when we once had been,
And we stood once galloping down on you green,
And linking it over the Lily-white sea
Tripping,

And then as my heart grew, I would die.

It was little in Burns’s character to let his feelings on certain subjects escape in this fashion. He, immediately after reciting these verses, assumed the self-reproach of his most pleasing manner; and taking his young friend home with him, entertained him very agreeably till the hour of the ball arrived.”

Must when we think that Burns now sleeps

“where bitter indignation can no longer irritate his heart,” 2 and that most of those fair dames and frizzled gentlemen already lie at his side, where the breastwork of gentility is quite thrown down,—who would not sigh over the thin delusions and foolish toys that divide heart from heart, and make man unmerciful to his brother!

It was not now to be hoped that the genius of Burns would ever reach maturity, or accomplish aught worthy of itself. His spirit

1 Too much weight is here given to the collision with certain official superiors. It was a very small matter altogether, and only talked for a very short time in Burns’s imagination.

2 David M‘Culloch, Esq., brother to the Laird of Ardbreck.

3 Ubi serva insignatio cor uterum incurrar necuit. Swift’s Epitaph.
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was jarred in its melody; not the soft breath of natural feeling, but the rude hand of Fate, was now sweeping over the strings. And yet what harmony was in him, what music even in his discords! How the wild tones had a charm for the simplest and the wisest; and all men felt and knew that here also was one of the Gifted! "If he entered an inn at midnight after all the innates were in bed, the news of his arrival circulated from the cellar to the garret; and ere ten minutes had elapsed, the landlord and all his guests were assembled!" Some brief pure moments of poetic life were yet appointed him, in the composition of his Songs. We can understand how he grasped at this employment; and how too, he spurned all other reward for it but what the labour itself brought him. For the soul of Burns, though seathed and marred, was yet living in its full moral strength, though sharply conscious of its errors and absences; and in his desolation and degradation, was one act of seeming nobleness and self-devotion left even for him to perform. He felt too, that with all the "thoughtless follies" that had "laid him low," the world was unjust and cruel to him; and he silently appealed to another and calmer time. Not as a hired soldier, but as a patriot, would he strive for the glory of his country; so he cast from him the poor sixpence a-day, and served zealously as a volunteer. Let us not grudge him this last luxury of his existence; let him not have appealed to us in vain! The money was not necessary to him; he struggled through without it: long since, these guineas would have been gone, and now the high-mindedness of refusing them will plead for him in all hearts for ever.

We are here arrived at the crisis of Burns's life; for matters had now taken such a shape with him as could not long continue. If improvement was not to be looked for, Nature could only for a limited time maintain this dark and maddening warfare against the world and itself. We are not medically informed whether any continuance of years was, at this period, probable for Burns; whether his death is to be looked on as in some sense an accidental event, or only as the natural consequence of the long series of events that had preceded. The latter seems to be the likelier opinion; and yet it is by no means a certain one. At all events, as we have said, some change could not be very distant. Three gates of deliverance, it seems to us, were open for Burns: clear poetical activity; madness; or death. The first, with longer life, was still possible, though not probable; for physical causes were beginning to be concerned in it; and yet Burns had an iron resolution; could he but have seen and felt, that not only his highest glory, but his first duty, and the true medicine for all his woes, lay here. The second was still less probable; for his mind was ever among the clearest and firmest. So the milder third gate was opened for him; and he passed, not softly yet speedily, into that still country, where the hail-storms and fire-showers do not reach, and the heaviest-laden wayfarer at length lays down his load.

Contemplating this sad end of Burns, and how he sank unaided by any real help, unbecheered by any wise sympathy, generous minds have sometimes figured to themselves, with a reproachful sorrow, that much might have been done for him; that by counsel, true affection and friendly ministrations, he might have been saved to himself and the world. We question whether there is not more tenderness of heart than soundness of judgment in these suggestions. It seems dubious to us whether the richest, wisest, most benevolent individual could have lent Burns any effectual help. Counsel, which seldom profits any one, he did not need; in his understanding, he knew the right from the wrong, as well perhaps as any man ever did; but the persuasion, which would have availed him, lies not so much in the head as in the heart, where no argument or expostulation could have assisted much to implant it. As to money again, we do not believe that this was his essential want; or well see how any private man could, even presupposing Burns's consent, have bestowed on him an independent fortune, with much prospect of decisive advantage. It is a mortifying truth, that two men in any rank of society, could hardly be found virtuous enough to give money, and to take it as a necessary gift, without injury to the moral entireness of one or both. But so stands the fact: Friendship, in the old heroic sense of that term, no longer exists; except in legal affinity, it is not recognized as an individual. The observer of many a man's age, that is, beyond a certain point, is by the dictates of the rule, as, in the phrase, a question of the law, and must be the less scrupulous in the effectual help he can attempt ever to rest contented within himself. Such, we must reflect, is true with Burns; but no act whose question whether it would be an effectual help or not even a pension, might be called both ill-galled and end of the miserable him.

Still less, than with another country, can we accuse the high estimate of modern times in ruined Burns by all times. We have already mentioned the direct pecuniary help to which we would have that Burns was never applied very effectually. In fact, however, that money was not that many a person, who, if rewarded from high place, would have been a friend in his position; to the powerful; and the public, from high place, and the public, from high place, could not have been then breathing a friend, to the public and for Burns, nor all his pride, nor his exaggerated good without personal affability befriended and censured, needed had actually his own particular other. The one to the other; his calling as a hero to the world, has been a luxury of nobility to his own, and has been however, did not attempt, or w
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exists; except in the cases of kindred or other legal affinity, it is in reality no longer expected, or recognized as a virtue among men. A close observer of manners has pronounced "Patronage," that is, pecuniary or other economic furtherance, to be "twice cursed;" cursing him that gives, and him that takes! And thus, in regard to outward matters also, it has become the rule, as, in regard to inward it always was and must be the rule, that no one shall look for effectual help to another; but that each shall rest contented with what help he can afford himself. Such, we say, is the principle of modern Honour; naturally enough growing out of that sentiment of Pride, which we incalculate and encourage as the basis of our whole social morality. Many a poet has been poorer than Burns; but no one was ever prouder: we may question whether, without great precautions, even a pension from Royalty would not have called and encumbered, more than actually assisted him.

Still less, therefore, are we disposed to join with another class of Burns's admirers, who accuse the higher ranks among us of having ruined Burns by their selfish neglect of him. We have already stated our doubts whether direct pecuniary help, had it been offered, would have been accepted, or could have proved very effectual. We shall readily admit, however, that much was to be done for Burns; that many a poisoned arrow might have been warded from his bosom; many an entanglement in his path cut asunder by the hand of the powerful; and light and heat, shed on him from high places, would have made his humble atmosphere more genial; and the softest heart then breathing might have lived and died with some fewer pangs. Nay, we shall grant farther, and for Burns it is granting much, that, with all his pride, he would have thanked, even with exaggerated gratitude, any one who had cordially befriended him; patronage, unless once cursed, needed not to have been twice so. At all events, the poor promotion he desired in his calling might have been granted; it was his own scheme, therefore likelier than any other to be of service. All this it might have been a luxury, nay it was a duty, for our nobility to have done. No part of all this, however, did any of them do; or apparently attempt, or wish to do: so much is granted against them. But what then is the amount of their blame? Simply that they were men of the world, and walked by the principles of such men; that they treated Burns, as other nobles and other commoners had done other poets; as the English did Shakespeare; as King Charles and his Cavaliers did Butler, as King Philip and his Grandees did Cervantes. Do men gather grapes of thorns; or shall we cut down our thorns for yielding only a fence and lawns? How, indeed, could the "nobility and gentry of his native land" hold out any help to this "Scottish Bard, proud of his name and country?" Were the nobility and gentry so much as able rightly to help themselves? Had they not their game to preserve; their borough interests to strengthen; dinners, therefore, of various kinds to eat and give? Were their means more than adequate to all this business, or less than adequate? Less than adequate, in general; few of them in reality were richer than Burns; many of them were poorer; for sometimes they had to wring their supplies, as with thumbscrews, from the hard hand; and, in their need of guineas, to forget their duty of mercy; which Burns was never reduced to do. Let us pity and forgive them. The game they preserved and shot, the dinners they ate and gave, the borough interests they strengthened, the little Babylons they severally builded by the glory of their might, are all melted or melting back into the primeval Chaos, as man's merely selfish endeavours are fated to do; and here was an action, extending, in virtue of its worldly influence, we may say, through all time; in virtue of its moral nature, beyond all time, being immortal as the Spirit of Goodness itself; this action was offered them to do, and light was not given them to do it. Let us pity and forgive them. But better than pity, let us go and do otherwise. Human suffering did not end with the life of Burns; neither was the solemn mandate, "Love one another, bear one another's burdens," given to the rich only, but to all men. True, we shall find no Burns to relieve, to assuage by our aid or our pity; but celestial natures, groaning under the fardels of a weary life, we shall still find; and that wretchedness which Fate has rendered voiceless and tasteless is not the least wretched, but the most.

Still, we do not think that the blame of
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Burns's failure lies chiefly with the world. The world, it seems to us, treated him with more rather than with less kindness than it usually shows to such men. It has ever, we fear, shown but small favour to its Teachers: hunger and nakedness, perils and revellings, the prison, the cross, the poison-chalice have, in most times and countries, been the market-price it has offered for Wisdom, and nothing the difference which it has greatest those who have come to enlighten and purify it. Homer and Socrates, and the Christian Apostles, belong to old days; but the world's Martyrlogy was not completed with these. Roger Bacon and Galileo languish in priestly dungeons; Tasso pines in the cell of a mad-house; Camoens dies begging on the streets of Lisbon. So neglected, so "persecuted they the Prophets," not in Judea only, but in all places where men have been. We reckon that every poet of Burns's order is, or should be, a prophet and teacher to us, that he has no right to expect great kindness from it, but rather is bound to do it great kindness; that Burns, in particular, experienced fully the usual proportion of the world's goodness; and that the blame of his failure, as we have said, lies not chiefly with the world.

Where, then, does it lie? We are forced to answer: With himself; it is his inward, not his outward misfortunes, that bring him to the dust. Seldom, indeed, is it otherwise; seldom is a life morally wrecked but the grand cause lies in some internal mal-arrangement, some want less of good fortune than of good guidance. Nature fashions no creature without implanting in it the strength needful for its action and duration; least of all does she so neglect her masterpiece and darling, the poetic soul. Neither can we believe that it is in the power of any external circumstances utterly to ruin the mind of a man; may if proper wisdom be given him, even so much as to affect its essential health and beauty. The sternest sum-total of all worldly misfortunes is Death; nothing more can lie in the lap of human woe: yet many men, in all ages, have triumphed over death, and led it captive; converting its physical victory into a moral victory for themselves, into a seal and immortal consecration for all that the last life had achieved. What has been done, may be done again, nay, it is but the degree and not the kind of such heroism that differs in different seasons; for without some portion of this spirit, not of hoisterness daring, but of silent fearlessness, of Self-denial in all its forms, no good man, in any scene or time, has ever attained to be good.

We have already stated the error of Burns; and mourned over it, rather than blamed it. It was the want of unity in his purposes, of consistency in his aims; the hopeless attempt to mingle in friendly union the common spirit of the world with the spirit of poetry, which is of a far different: and altogether irreconcilable nature. Burns was nothing wholly, and Burns could be nothing, no man formed as he was can be anything, by halves. The heart, not of a mere hot-blooded, popular Verse-monger, or poetical Restaurateur, but of a true Poet and Singer, worthy of the old religious heroic times, had been given him: and he fell in an age, not of heroism and religion, but of scepticism, selfishness and triviality, when true Nobleness was little understood, and its place supplied by a hollow, disconsolate, altogether barren and unfruitful principle of Pride. The influences of that age, his open, kind, susceptible nature, to say nothing of his highly un-ward situation, made it more than usually difficult for him to cast aside, or rightly subordinate; the better spirit that was within him ever sternly demanded its rights, its supremacy: he spent his life in endeavouring to reconcile these two; and lost it, as he must lose it, without reconciling them.

Burns was born poor; and born also to continue poor, to be otherwise: this it had been well could he have once for all admitted, and considered as finally settled. He was poor, truly; but hundreds even of his own class and order of life have been poorer, yet have suffered nothing deadly from it: nay, his own Father had a far sorrier battle with ungrateful destiny than his was; and he did not yield to it, but died courageously warring, and to all moral intents prevailing, against it. True, Burns had little means, had even little time for poetry, his only real pursuit and vocation; but so much the more precious was what little he had. In all these external respects his case was hard; but very far from the hardest. Poverty, incessant drudgery and much worse evils, has often been the lot of Poets and wise men to strive with, and their

glory to conquer; traitor, and worse.

Understanding garret. Was it not he composed A
but fallen from
improvidence, and
found it a
Cervantes finished
and in prison? But
which Spain accused
without even the
snatched any more?

And what, then, did they want? Two things, as to us, are indispensable: a true, reli-

dge than a single, not a

They were not so;
but seekers more:

something would
be spent. Thus
however curious,
but the invisible
man's reasoning
a celestial flower;
into gladness;
their otherwise;
word, they will
things were
vent; and this
The wedge will
be sharp and
is bruised in p

Part of this
their age; in w
were still pra
believed in: b
soever large as
different. If
metrical, points, i
enjoyment, in

1 Alonso E
ON THE GENIUS OF ROBERT BURNS.

35

only thing he longs and strives for. A noble instinct sometimes raises him above this; but an instinct only, and acting only for moments. He has no religion; in the shallow age, where his days were cast. Religion was not discriminated from the New and Old Light forms of Religion; and was, with these, becoming obsolete in the minds of men. His heart, indeed, is alive with a trembling adoration, but there is no temple in his understanding. He lives in darkness and in the shadow of doubt. His religion, at best, is an anxious wish: like that of Rabelais, "a great Perhaps."

He loved Poetry warmly, and in his heart; could he but have loved it purely, and with his whole undivided heart, it had been well. For Poetry, as Burns could have followed it, is but another form of Wisdom, of Religion; is itself Wisdom and Religion. But this also was denied him. His poetry is a stray vagrant gleam, which will not be extinguished within him, yet rises not to be the true light of his path, but is often a wildfire that misleads him.

It was not necessary for Burns to be rich, to be, or to seem, "independent;" but it was necessary for him to be at one with his own heart; to place what was highest in his nature highest also in his life; "to seek within himself for that consistency and sequence, which external events would for ever refuse him."

He was born a poet; poetry was the celestial element of his being, and should have been the soul of his whole endeavours. Lifted into that serene ether, whither he had wings given him to mount, he would have needed no other elevation: poverty, neglect, and all evil, save the desecration of himself and his Art, were a small matter to him; the pride and the passions of the world lay far beneath his feet; and he looked down alike on noble and shrewd, on prince and beggar, and all that were the stamp of man, with clear recognition, with brotherly affection, with sympathy, with pity. Nay, we question whether for his culture as a Poet poverty and much suffering for a season were not absolutely advantageous. Great men, in looking back over their lives, have testified to that effect. "I would not for much," says Jean Paul, "that I had been born richer."

And yet Paul's birth was poor enough; for, in another place, he adds: "The prisoner's allowance is bread and water; and I had often

1 Alonso Ercilia y Zuvilla, the Spanish poet.
only the latter." But the gold that is refined in the hottest furnace comes out the purest; or, as he has himself expressed it, "the canary bird sings sweeter the longer it has been trained in a darkened cage."

A man like Burns might have divided his hours between poetry and virtuous industry; industry which all true feeling sanctions, may prescribe, and which has a beauty, for that cause, beyond the pomp of thrones: but to divide his hours between poetry and rich men's banquets was an ill-starred and insidious attempt. How could he be at ease at such banquets? What had he to do there, mingling his music with the coarse roar of all together earthly voices; brightening the thick smoke of intoxication with fire lent him from heaven? Was it his aim to enjoy life? To-morrow he must go drudge as an Exciseman! We wonder not that Burns became moody, indignant, at times an offender against certain rules of society; but rather that he did not grow utterly frantic, and run amuck against them all. How could a man, so falsely placed, by his own or others' fault, ever contentment or peaceable diligence for an hour? What he did, under such perverse guidance, and what he forebore to do, alike fill us with astonishment at the natural strength and worth of his character.

 Doubtless there was a remedy for this perverseness; but not in others; only in himself; least of all in simple increase of wealth and worldly "respectability." We hope we have now heard enough about the efficacy of wealth for poverty, and poets happy. Nay have we not seen another instance of it in these very days? Byron, a man of an endowment considerably less ethereal than that of Burns, is born in the rank not of a Scotch ploughman, but of an English peer: the highest worldly honours, the fairest worldly career, are his by inheritance; the richest harvest of fame he soon reaps, in another province, by his own hand. And what does all this avail him? Is he happy, is he good, is he true? Alas, he has a poet's soul, and strives towards the Infinite and the Eternal; and soon feels that all this is but mounting to the house-top to reach the stars! Like Burns, he is only a proud man; might, like him, have "purchased a pocket-copy of Milton to study the character of Satan;" for Satan also is Byron's grand exemplar, the hero of his poetry, and the model apparently of his conduct. As in Burns's case too, the celestial element will not mingle with the clay of earth; both poet and man of the world must not be; vulgar ambition will not live kindly with poetic Adoration; he cannot serve God and Mammon. Byron, like Burns, is not happy; may he is the most wretched of all men. His life is falsely arranged: the fire that is in him is not a strong, still, central fire, warming into beauty the products of a world; but it is the mad fire of a volcano; and now—we look sadly into the ashes of a crater, which ere long will fill itself with snow!

Byron and Burns were sent forth as missionaries to their generation, to teach it a higher Doctrine, a purer Truth; they had a message to deliver, which left them no rest till it was accomplished; in dim throes of pain, this divine heaviest lay smouldering within them; for they knew not what it meant, and felt it only in mysterious anticipation, and they had to die without articulately uttering it. They are in the camp of the Unconverted; yet not as high messengers of rigorous though benignant law, but as soft flattering singers, and in pleasant fellowship will they live there; they are first adulated, then persecuted; they accomplish little for others; they find no peace for themselves, but only death and the peace of the grave. We confess, it is not without a certain mournful awe that we view the fate of these noble souls, so richly gifted, yet ruined to so little purpose with all their gifts. It seems to us there is a stern moral taught in this piece of history,—twice told us in our own time! Surely to men of like genius, if there be any such, it carries with it a lesson of deep impresssive significance. Surely it would become such a man, furnished for the highest of all enterprises, that of being the Poet of his Age, to consider well what it is that he attempts, and in what spirit he attempts it. For the words of Milton are true in all times, and were never truer than in this; "He who would write heroic poems must make his whole life a heroic poem." If he cannot first so make his life, then let him hasten from this arena; for neither its lofty glories, nor its fearful perils, are fit for him. Let him withdraw into a modish house, and beasting the image that will not fail to repel others, and endure to live under Byron's or a Byron's fire of their own. Better it was for him. For it is not in the small, but in the expugnable citadels of Byron's or a Byron's great stand they must learn to reverence him as the wealth with favour; art; like the coarsest yet loveliest amaranth, cannot be mistaken. And they may be, if they can hire the minister of their occasional verses, to be their partisans. Let no such union of the Sun with the Dray-horse? If that path is through the all lands; will he drag ale for the door?

But we must caution, which we will lengths. We have, as the public moral charge, that we must forbear to consider him as guilty beyond the average; make less guilty than he is at a tribunal famous the Plebeians! We pronounced, he is less worthy of his of which this of all; But the world is no The exterior, and of which this the...
into a modish balladmonger; let him worship and beseech the idols of the time, and the time will not fail to reward him. If, indeed, he can endure to live in that capacity! Byron and Burns could not live as idol-priests, but the fire of their own hearts consumed them; and better it was for them that they could not. For it is not in the favour of the great or of the small, but in a life of truth, and in the inexpugnable citadel of his own soul, that a Byron's or a Burns's strength must lie. Let the great stand aloof from him, or know how to reverence him. Beautiful is the union of wealth with favour and furtherance for literature; like the costliest flower-jar inclosing the loveliest amaranth. Yet let not the relation be questioned. A true poet is not one whom they can hire by money or flattery to be a minister of their pleasures, their writer of occasional verses, their purveyor of table-wit; he cannot be their menial, he cannot even be their partisan. At the peril of both parties, let no such union be attempted! Will a Courtier of the Sun work softly in the harness of a Dray-horse? His hoofs are of fire, and his path is through the heavens, bringing light to all lands; will he lumber on mud highways, dragging ale for earthly appetites from door to door?

But we must stop short in these considerations, which would lead us to boundless lengths. We had something to say on the public moral character of Burns; but this also we must forbear. We are far from regarding him as guilty before the world, as guiltier than the average; may, from doubting that he is less guilty than one of ten thousand. Tried at a tribunal far more rigid than that where the Plebeians of common civic reputations are pronounced, he has seemed to us even there less worthy of blame than of pity and wonder. But the world is habitually unjust in its judgments of such men, unjust on many grounds, of which this one may be stated as the substance: It decides, like a court of law, by

dead statutes; and not positively but negatively, less on what is done right, than on what is or is not done wrong. Not the few inches of deflection from the mathematical orbit, which are so easily measured, but the ratio of these to the whole diameter, constitutes the real aberration. This orbit may be a planet's, its diameter the breadth of the solar system; or it may be a city hippodrome; may the circle of a gin-horse, its diameter a score of feet or paces. But the inches of deflection only are measured: and it is assumed that the diameter of the gin-horse, and that of the planet, will yield the same ratio when compared with them! Here lies the root of many a blind, cruel condemnation of Burns, Swifts, Rousseaus, which one never listens to with approval. Granted, the ship comes into harbour with shrouds and tackle damaged; the pilot is blameworthy; he has not been all-wise and all-powerful: but to know how blame-worthy, tell us first whether his voyage has been round the Globe, or only to Ramsgate and the Isle of Dogs.

With our readers in general, with men of right feeling anywhere, we are not required to plead for Burns. In pitying admiration he lies enshrined in all our hearts, in a far nobler mausoleum than that one of marble; neither will his Works, even as they are, pass away from the memory of men. While the Shakespereans and Milton's roll on like mighty rivers through the country of Thought, bearing fleets of traffic-klers and assiduous pearl-fishers on their waves; this little Vaucluse Fountain will also arrest our eye: for this also is of Nature's own and most cunning workmanship, bursts from the depths of the earth, with a full gushing current, into the light of day; and often will the traveller turn aside to drink of its clear waters, and muse among its rocks and pines!

[1Vaucluse, the romantic valley of Vanelise, to which Petrarch retired in 1333, and in which he lived for several years in literary retirement.]
POEMS AND SONGS.
This was the tune to which the King Templeton sang to a little girl, and it was sung by her to a neighbor. It is a slightly unusual tune, and she was not aware of the fact.
POEMS AND SONGS.

1785 TO 1788.

SONG—RANTIN' ROVIN' ROBIN.

TUNE—"Daintie Davie."^1

According to an Ayrshire tradition, a portion of the cottage in which the poet was born was blown
in by "a blast o' Janwar' win'" on his birth-night. Gilbert his brother, however, who must have

got the fact correctly from the mother with whom he lived so long, puts the date of the storm nine
or ten days later. The song was composed in 1785.

There was a lad was born in Kyle,^2
But whatna day o' whatna style,
I doubt it's hardly worth the while
To be sue 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,^3
'Twas then a blast o' Janwar' win'
Blew hansel in on Robin.
Robin was, &c.

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

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.
Robin was, &c.

^1 This was the tune Burns meant his verses to be
sung to, and he took care to point out that the chorus
was to be sung to the low section of the melody.
Templeton, the famous Scottish singer, always sang
it to a slightly varied form of the air known as "O
gin ye war dead, gudman," and to this melody the
words are now generally sung.

^2 The middle district of Ayrshire, having the other
districts Cunningham on the north and Carrick on
the south.

^3 Jan. 25, 1759, the date of my bardship's vital
existences."—R. B.—The "monarch" at this time
was of course George II., whose reign lasted till 25th
October, 1760.
POEMS AND SONGS.

But sure as three times three mak nine,
I see by ilk score and line,
This chap will dearly like our kin;
So leeze me¹ on thee, Robin.

Robin was, &c.²

ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT RUISSEAU.³

The date of the composition of the following piece cannot be fixed with certainty. It is one of the Reliques recovered by Cromek and first published in 1808.

Now Robin lies in his last air,
He'll gabble rhyme, nor sing nae mair,
Cauld poverty, wi' hungry stare,
Nae mair shall fear him, no more
Nor anxious fear, nor cankert care
E'er mair come near him.

To tell the truth, they seldom fasht him;
Except the moment that they rush'd him;
For same as chance or fate had rush't 'em,
Tho' e'er saw short,
Then wi' a rhyme or song he lasht 'em,
And thought it sport.—

Tho' he was bred to kintra wark,
And counted was baith wight and stark,
Yet that was never Robin's mark
To mak a man;
But tell him, he was learn'd and clark,
Ye roos'd him then!⁴

¹ A term of congratulatory endearment equivalent to "how fond or proud I am of you."
² This song is found in the Glenriddell abridgment of the poet's first Common-place Book, between September 1784 and June 1785. Another version of it was copied into the Edinburgh Common-place Book, 1787-1790, the first verse and chorus of which read thus:

There was a birdie born in Kyle,
But whatus day o' whatus style,
I doubt it's hardly worth the white
To be ma nice wi' Davie.

Chorus—Leeze me on thy curty pow,
Dennie Davie, dainty Davie,
Leeze me on thy curty pow
Thou're my dainty Davie.

Line 3 in the fourth stanza runs:

He'll gie his daddie's name a blow.

³ "Ruisseau—a play on his own name."—CHROMÉK.
⁴ "Ruisseau, in French, signifies a brook or burn—hence the plural Ruisseaux = Burns.
⁵ "Cromek found this fragment among the papers of Burns, and printed it in the Reliques."—ALLAN

CUNNIGHAM. It was probably intended to close the Kilmarnock edition of Burns's poems, but was fortunately supplanted by the "Bard's Epitaph." Burns had studied French for a week or two with Murdoch in Ayr, and, to quote Gilchrist Burns, "he had acquired such a knowledge of the language, as to read and understand any French author in prose." And in a letter to Peter Hill, bookseller, Edinburgh, written from Ellisland on 9th March, 1790, Burns himself says,—"I am much inclined to make a display of any out-of-the-way accomplishment he had. Hence the French Ruisseaux for Burns. But there may be here also a reference to Rousseau, who is most likely the person he had in his eye when he wrote in his Common-place Book in May, 1785,—"I sometimes think the character of a certain great man I have read of somewhere is very much apropos to myself—that he was a compound of great talent and great folly."
A FRAGMENT—"ONE NIGHT AS I DID WANDER."

TUNE—"John Anderson my Jo."

The following lines were included in Burns's abridgment of his first Common-place Book, written for Captain Riddell, under date 1783.

One night as I did wander,  
When corn begins to shoot,  
I sat me down to ponder,  
Upon an auld tree root:

Auld Ayr ran by before me,  
And bicker'd to the seas;  
A cratch crooded o'er me,  
That echoed thro' the braes.

FRAGMENTARY SONG—MY JEAN.

TUNE—"The Northern Lass."

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

Tho' mountains frown and deserts howl,  
And oceans roar between;  
Yet, dearer than my deathless soul,  
I still would love my Jean.¹

EPISTLE TO JOHN GOUDIE,³  
KILMARNOCK,
ON THE PUBLICATION OF HIS ESSAYS, AUGUST, 1785.

O Goudie! terror o' the Whigs,²  
Dread o' black coats and rev'rend wigs!  
Soo'r Bigotry, on his last legs,  
Girns an' looks back,

Wishin' the ten Egyptian plagues  
May seize you quick.

¹Jean is, of course, Jean Armour; and it will be noticed that the last quatrain has a striking family resemblance to the second in "Of a' the Arts tho' Wh' can b'law." The phrase "her dear idea" occurs in his mention of Jean in the "Epistle to Davie."

²This has no allusion to the political party called Whigs, but to the orthodox or Old Light portion of the Presbyterian church, as opposed to the New Light section, among whom views that had a rationalistic flavour to some extent prevailed. For some information regarding the New and Old Light parties, see Lockhart's Life, chap. iii.

³John Goldie or Goudie was the most talented and remarkable man of all Burns's local contemporaries to whom he addressed poetical epistles; and yet the epistle here given is one of his poorest. In addition to his other claims to remembrance, Goudie was the very first efficient patron of Burns, having been
POEMS AND SONGS.

[1785.]

Age 26.]

Poor gapin', glowin': Superstition,
Wae's me! she's in a sad condition;
Fie, bring Black Jock; her state physician,
To see her water;
Alas! there's ground o' great suspicion
She'll ne'er get better.

The name of Goldie became notorious in consequence of his writings; and it would have been indeed surprising had the author of the much-reprobated essays escaped the attention of Burns. Goldie was exceedingly accessible; and the poet had seen him more than once at his house in Kilmarnock. One day, the author of the essays had occasion to be in the neighbourhood of Mossgill; he called in passing; and in the course of his stay, Burns read over one or two of his manuscript poems. Goldie was highly delighted with the pieces, expressing his astonishment that he did not think of printing them. Burns at once unfolded his circumstances—he was on the eve of setting out for the West Indies, and Wilson (of Kilmarnock) would not run the hazard of publication. "Weel, Robin," said Goldie, "I'll tell you what to do. Come your way down to Killie some day next week, and tak' pat-luck wi' me. I hae twa or three guid friend's that'll be able to set the press a-going." Burns was of course true to his appointment; and after dinner they were joined by the friends whom his entertainer had purposely invited. In the course of the evening, Burns read several of his pieces; and so delighted were the company, that they at once became security to Wilson for the printing of his work. During the printing of his volume, Burns was almost a daily visitor at Goldie's house, where he corrected the most of the proof-sheets, and wrote not a few of his letters. At this period the poet was rather abstemious in his habits, and his dress was composed of "green gray," then the universal garb of the agricultural population.

Goldie latterly became engaged in coal speculations, in which he was at first successful; but being in advanced years, he unfortunately connected himself in partnership with an individual who did not act fairly by him. Amidst old age and difficulties, however, his mind continued vigorous and active.

The last published work by Mr. Goldie was printed at the Kilmarnock press in 1808, by H. and S. Crawford. It formed a single volume, and was entitled Conclusive Evidences against Atheism; in Vindication of a First Cause. At the end of this book a prospectus was given of another work on which he had been engaged, viz.—A Revision, or a Reform of the Present System of Astronomy, in three volumes. The nature of the proposed reform was never thoroughly understood, as the author, then far advanced in life, did not live to carry the publication into effect. He died in 1800, in the ninety-second year of his age. He left a great many MSS., including letters from Burns and other men of celebrity with whom he corresponded, but these have been all lost or destroyed.

The Rev. J. Russell, Kilmarnock.—R. B. — See notes to the "Holy Fair," and the "Twa Heris," in which pieces he is mentioned.

1 Tearing or rippling-comb, flax, hemp, &c., the stalk.
2 Mr. Russell joko here. To give in one's n Chapel, while 1
POEMS AND SONGS.

Auld Orthodoxy lang did grapple,
But now she's got an unco ripple,
Haste, gie her name up i' the chapel,
Nigh unto death;
See how she fetches at the thrapple,
An' gasps for breath.

Enthusiasm 's past redemption,
Gone in a galloping consumption,
Not a' the quacks wi' a' their gumption,
Will ever mend her.
Her feeble pulse gies strong presumption,
Death soon will end her.

'Tis you and Taylor are the chief,
Wha are to blame for this mischief;
But gin the L—'s ain folks get leave,
A toom tar barrel
And twa red peats wad send relief,
An' end the quarrel.

For me, my skill's but very sma',
An' skill in prose I've none ava';
But quietly, between us twa,
Weel may ye speed!
And tho' they sud you sair mis';
Ne'er fash your head.

E'en swinge the dogs, and thresh them sicker;
The mair they squeal aye chap the thicker;
And still 'mang hands a hearty bicker
O' something stout;
It gars an owthor's pulse beat quicker,
And helps his wit.

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

I've seen me daz'd upon a time;
I scarce could wink or see a styme;
points directly to Mr. Russell's Kirk then, and long after, locally called the Chapel, the High Church parish not having been formed till 1811.

1 Tearing or torture, as from passing through a ripping-comb, a toothed instrument, through which flax, hemp, &c., were drawn to separate the seed from the stalk.
2 Mr. Russell's Kirk.—R. B.—There is a double joke here. To give one's name up in the chapel, is to give in one's name at church, to be prayed for. But chapel, while it means a place of worship generally,
POEMS AND SONGS.

Just as hauf-mutchkin does me prime—
Ought less is little—
Then back I rattle on the rhyme,
As gleg's a whittle.†

THIRD EPISTLE TO JOHN LAPRAIK.

Cromek printed this poem in 1808 from a MS. preserved by Burns, and discovered among "the sweepings of his study," which Dr. Currie and his collaborators did not consider worthy of publication. Both Allan Cunningham and Dr. Chambers erroneously state that it was first published by Lapraik in a volume of his own poems published in 1788.

Sept. 13th, 1785.

Guid speed an' furder to you, Johannie,
Guid health, hate han's, and weather bonnie;
Now when ye're nickan down fu' emmnie
The staff o' bread,
May ye ne'er want a stomp o' bran'y
To clear your head.

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

I'm bizzie too, an' skelpin' at it,
But bitter, daudin' showers hue wat it,²
Sae my auld stumpie pen I gat it
Wi' muckle work,
An' took my joectleg³ an' whatt it,
Like ony clerk.

It's now twa month that I'm your debtor,
For your brow, nameless, dateless letter,
Absin' me for harsh ill nature
On holy men,
While deil a hair yours'el' ye're better,
But mair profane.

† The first five stanzas of this epistle, written in August, 1785, first appeared among the pieces published in Glasgow by Thomas Stewart in 1801. Stanzas six and seven are from the Glenriddell MS., published in 1874, which also gives the last two stanzas as concluding the poem. These were originally found pencilled in the poet's Edinburgh Common-place Book, and were published by Cromek in 1808. Cunningham says that they formed part of the first "Epiistle to Lapraik," and that he had seen a copy of which they formed a part, coming before the third stanza from the end. They certainly might come in there quite as well as here.

² This refers to the harvest of the year (1785), which was very stormy and late, so much so that the poet, in his autobiographical letter to Dr. Moore, declares that he and his brother lost half their crop.

³ "Joectleg, a folding-knife. The etymology of this word remained long unknown, till not many years ago, that an old knife was found having this inscription Jacobus de Liège, the name of the cutter. Thus it is in exact analogy with Andrea di Ferrara."—LORD HAILES.

This etymology receives confirmation from the fact mentioned by Grose, that Scotland was formerly supplied with cutlery from Liège.

† This is the song "Maggle" sportively borro
self on being a
But let the kirk-folk ring their bells,
Let's sing about our noble selfs;
We’ll cry man yahoos free heathen hills
To help, or roose us,
But browter wives and whiskie stills,
They are the muses.

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

But if the beast and brancks be spar'd
Till kye be gann without the herd,
An' a' the vittles in the yard,
An' theekit right,
I mean your ingle-side to guard
At winter night.

Then muse-inspirin' aqua-vite
Shall make us baith so blythe the an' witty,
Till ye forget ye're auld and gutty,
An' be as canty
As ye were nine years less than thretty,
Sweet ane an' twenty.

But stooks are cowpet wi' the blast,
An' now the sun keeks in the west,
Then I maun rin amang the rest
An' quat my chanter;
Sae I subscribe mysel' in haste,
Yours, Rab the Ranter.1

EPISTLE TO THE REV. JOHN M' MATH,
ENCLOSING A COPY OF "HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER," WHICH HE HAD REQUESTED.

Sept. 17th, 1785.

While at the stook the shearchers cow'r
To shun the bitter blaudin' show'r,
Or in gulravage rimin' scour 2
To pass the time,
To you I dedicate the hour
In idle rhyme.3

1 This is the name of the piper in the celebrated song "Maggie Landel," whence Burns has likely sportively borrowed it. He seems to have prided himself on being a "rantin" or jovial fellow.
2 Running in a confused, disorderly manner, like boys when leaving school.—CROMIK.
3 This is another allusion to the disastrous harvest of the year. See note 2 in preceding page.
My muse, tir'd wi' mony a sonnet
On gown, an' ban, an' dourse black bonnet,
Is grown right eerie now she's done it,
Lest they should blame her,
An' rouse their holy thunder on it,
And anathem her.

I own 'twas rash, an' rather hardy,
That I, a simple, kintra bardie,
Should meddle wi' a pack sae sturdy,
Wha, if they ken me,
Can easy, wi' a single wordie,
Lowse h'll upon me.

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

There's Gann mis'sa' waur than a beast,
Wha has mair honour in his breast
Than mony scores as guid's the priest
Wha see abus't him;
An' may a bard no crack his jest
What way they've use't him?

See him the poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word an' deed,
An' shall his fame an' honour bleed
By worthless skellums,
An' not a muse erect her head
To cowe the blllums?

O Po, an I thy satire's darts
To gie the rascals their deserts,
I'd rip their rotten, hollow hearts,
An' tell alond
Their jugglin' hocus-pocus arts
To cheat the crowd.

God know's, I'm no the things I should be,
Nor am I even the thing I could be,
But twenty times, I rather would be
An atheist clean,

---

1 The black gown and cambric hands, forming the characteristic dress of the Presbyterian clergyman.
2 The popular term applied to a church elder.
3 Learn three-mile prayers and half-mile graces.

—Dedication to Gavin Hamilton, July, 1785.

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4 Gavin Hamilton.—R. B.
5 That he's the poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word and deed,
It's no brave litter of damnation, &c.

—Dedication to Gavin Hamilton.
Than under gospel colours hid be,
Just for a screen.

An honest man may like a glass,
An honest man may like a lass,
But mean revenge, an' malice false,
He'll still disdain,
An' then cry zeal for gospel laws,
Like some we ken.

They take religion in their mouth;
They talk o' mercy, grace an' truth,
For what? to gie their malice skouth
On some puir wight,
An' hunt him down, o'er right an' ruth,
To ruin straight.

All hail, Religion! maid divine!
Pardon a muse sue mean as mine,
Who in her rough imperfect line
Thus dauns to sake thee;
To stigmatize false friends of thine
Can ne'er defame thee.

Tho' blotcht an' foul wi' mony a stain,
An' far unworthy of thy train,
With trembling voice I tune my strain
To join with those,
Who boldly dare thy cause maintain
In spite of foes:

In spite o' crowds, in spite o' mobs,
In spite o' undermining jobs,
In spite o' dark banditti stabs
At worth an' merit,
By scoundrels, even wi' holy robes,
But hellish spirit.

O Ayr, my dear, my native ground,
Within thy presbyterial bound
A candid liberal band is found
Of public teachers,
As men, as Christians too renown'd,
An' mauny preachers.

Sir, in that circle you are fam'd;
Sir, in that circle you are fam'd;
An' some, by whom your doctrine's blam'd
(Which gies you honour),
Even, sir, by them your heart's esteem'd,
An' winning manner.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Pardon this freedom I have ta'en,
An' if impertinent I've been,
Impute it not, good sir, to ane
Whose heart ne'er wrang'd ye,
But to his utmost would befriend
Ought that belong'd ye.¹

SECOND EPISTLE TO DAVIE,
A BROTHER POET.

This epistle was probably penned about October, 1786.

AULD NEIBOR,
I'm three times doubly o'er your debtor,
For your auld-farrant, frien'ly letter;
Tho' I maun say't, I doubt ye flatter,
Ye speak sae fair:
For my puir, silly, rhymin' clatter
Some less maun maun.

Hale be your heart, hale be your fiddle;
Lang may your elbow jerk an' diddle,
To cheer you thro' the weary widdle
O' war'ly cares,
Till bairns' bairns kindly cuddle
Your auld, gray hairs.

But, Davie, lad, I'm rue ye're glaikit;
I'm ta'd the Muse ye ha' negleckit:
An' gif it's sae, ye sud be licket
Until ye fyke;
Sic hauns as you sud ne'er be falkit,
Be hain't wha like.

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

Of a' the thoughtless sons o' man,
Comm'me to me to the bardie clan;
Except it be some idle plan
O' rhymin' clink,

¹The gentleman to whom this epistle is addressed, was assistant to the Rev. Peter Wodrow, minister of Tarbolton, and an adherent of the New Light party. It inclosed a copy of "Holy Willie's Prayer," which he had requested from the author. M'Math fell into dissipated habits, resigned his charge, and afterwards enlisted as a common soldier. His misfortunes and miseries arose from, or were intensified by, his having become a hypochondriac. He died poor and neglected, in the isle of Mull, in 1825.
The devil haet, that I sud ban,  
They ever think.

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

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

Hand to the Muse, my dainty Davie;
The warl' may play you monie a shavie;
But for the Muse, she'll never leave ye,
   Tho' o'er sae purr,
Na, even tho' limpin' wi' the spavie
   Frae door to door.1


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SONG—YOUNG PEGGY BLOOMS.2

"TUNE—" Last time I cam' o'er the muir."

This is one of the poet's earliest songs contributed to Johnson's Musical Museum; it stands No 78 in the first volume of that work, and was written in October, 1785.

Young Peggy blooms our bonniest lass,
   Her blush is like the morning,
The rosy dawn, the springing grass,
   With early gems adorning:
Her eyes outshine the radiant beams
   That gild the passing shower,
And glitter o'er the crystal streams,
   And cheer each fresh'ning flower.

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1 This epistle was prefixed to the poems of David Stillar, published at Kilmarnock, 1785. In regard to the person to whom it is addressed see note to "Epistle to Davie," vol. 1.
2 Miss Margaret, or Peggy Kennedy, a relative of Mrs. Davie Hamilton, was the daughter of a Carrick lauded proprietor. Burns met her in Mauchline during the autumn of 1785, and was much taken with her spirit and beauty. She was seventeen, and understood to be betrothed to Captain MacDonal, the representative of the oldest and richest family in Galloway. Burns wrote to her a respectful letter, in which this song was inclosed. Her subsequent history is most painful. Says Mr. Chambers: "While thus in the fair way to a dignified position in life, the powers of Honour, Love, and Truth had already been outraged, and a train of circumstanes commenced, which was to end in the loss of her good name and her early death." It is supposed, on not very conclusive evidence, however, that her sad fate suggested to the poet the deathless "Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon."
POEMS AND SONGS.

Her lips more than the cherries bright,
A richer dye has grace'd them,
They charm th' admiring gazers' sight,
And sweetly tempt to taste them:
Her smile is as the evening mild,
When feather'd pairs are courting,
And little lambkins wanton wild,
In playful bands dispersing.

Were Fortune lovely Peggy's foe,
Such sweetness would relent her,
As blooming Spring unbends the bow
Of spry, savage Winter.
Detraction's eye no aim can gain
Her winning powers to lessen;
And fretful envy grins in vain,
The poison'd tooth to fasten.

Ye pow'r's of Honour, Love, and Truth,
From ev'ry ill defend her;
Inspire the highly favour'd youth
The destinies intend her.
Still fan the sweet connubial flame
Responsive in each bosom;
And bless the dear parental name
With many a filial blossom.

SONG—THE BRAES O' BALLOCHMYLE.¹

TUNE—"The Braes o' Ballochmyle."

The Catrine² woods were yellow seen,
The flowers decay'd on Catrine lee,
Nae lav'rock sang on hillock green,
But nature sicken'd on the ee.
Thro' fad' groves Maria sang,
Hersel' in beauty's bloom the while,
And aye the wild-wood echoes rang,
Fareweel the braes o' Ballochmyle!

¹ Ballochmyle, the ancient seat of the Whitefoord family, passed into the hands of Mr. Alexander (see note to the "Lass of Ballochmyle"). Maria Whitefoord (afterwards Mrs. Cranston), the heroine of this song, was the eldest daughter of Sir John Whitefoord, to whom Burns, in one of his letters, acknowledges his obligations, as being one of the first gentlemen in Ayrshire who discovered the genius of the poet. The song (the date of which is probably about the end of the autumn of 1785) was written as a farewell to the family inheritance. The tune is the production of the poet's friend Allan Masterton, writing-master, Edinburgh, the "Allan" of "Willie brew'd a peck o' malt."

² Catrine was a fine estate immediately adjoining that of Ballochmyle, and was in the poet's time owned by Professor Matthew Stewart, and his more celebrated son, Professor Dugald Stewart.

The following who are unaccounted for notes are added. Prophecy to the striking part of the text be some entertainers, to see the remains of Hallowe'en is the 31st of October. The human sacrifices, and other misfortunes on their benevolent, indulgent people, the hold a grand anniversary.

'Halloween' is the liveliest of all the winter with one of the superstitions fanciful imaginaries. In many customs of the folk, dwell from the hum of custom and latest fall generation of young people, and a poem which used to be read at Mr. Whitefoord, and girls gathered. If you, though perhaps for grammar, had not the doubtless, as

. . . In practice.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Low in your wintry beds, ye flowers,
Again ye'll flourish fresh and fair;
Ye birdies dumb, in with'ring bowers,
Again ye'll charm the vocal air.
But here, alas! for me nae mair
Shall birdie charm, or 'oweret smile;
Fareweel the bonnie banks of Ayr,
Fareweel, fareweel! sweet Ballochmyle!

HALLOWEEN.

The following poem will, by many readers, be well enough understood; but for the sake of those who are unacquainted with the manners and traditions of the country where the scene is cast, notes are added, to give some account of the principal charms and spells of that night, so big with prophecy to the peasantry in the west of Scotland. The passion of prying into futurity makes a striking part of the history of human nature in its rude state, in all ages and nations; and it may be some entertainment to a philosophic mind, if any such should honour the author with a perusal, to see the remains of it, among the more unenlightened in our own. — R. B., 1786. — Halloween or Hallowe'en is the eve or vigil of All-Saints' Day (also called All-Hallows or Hallowmas, 1st November).

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

Upon that night, when fairies light
On Cassillis Downans' dance,
Or owre the lays, in splendid blaze,
On sprightly coursors prance;
Or for Colean the route is ta'en,
Beneath the moon's pale beams;

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

"Halloween" is now almost an obsolete word, and the liveliest of all festivals that used to usher in the winter with one long night of wild and mad mockery of superstitions fancied, not unattended with stirrings of imaginative fears in many a simple breast, is gone with many customs of the good old time, not among town-folks only, but dwellers in rural parishes far withdrawn from the hum of crowds, where all such rites originate and latest fall into decay. The present wise generation of youngsters care little or nothing about a poem which used to drive their grandfathers and grandmothers half-crazy with merriment, when boys and girls gathered in a circle round someachloerry reciter, who, though perhaps endowed with no great memory for grammar, had half of Burns by heart. Many of them, doubtless, are of opinion that it is a silly affair.

1 Halloween is thought to be a night when witches, devils, and other mischief-making beings are all abroad on their benauch, midnight errands; particularly those aerial people, the fairies, are said on that night to hold a grand anniversary. — Prof. Wilson. — Professor Wilson is here a little too sweeping in his statements. Halloween has now, no doubt, lost much of its importance as a popular festival, but it is still (1880) kept up to some little extent both in town and country. Probably Burns's own poem has had a good deal to do with keeping it alive.

2 Certain little, romantic, rocky, green hills, in the neighbourhood of the ancient seat of the Earls of Cassillis. — R. B. — Cassillis House or Castle stands on a beautiful lawn on the left bank of the Doon, about 4 miles north-east of Maybole. The lands, and probably also the castle of Cassillis, appear to have passed, in the reign of David II., from a family named Montgomery, into the possession of Sir John Kennedy of Dunure, direct male ancestor of the present Marquis of Ailsa. At the beginning of the sixteenth century it must have been the chief residence of this powerful race, as David, third Lord Kennedy, was, about 1510, created Earl of Cassillis. This nobleman fell at Flodden, with many of his followers. Tradition tells a well-known tale in connection with Cassillis Castle and its owners. While John, the sixth earl, was attending the Assembly of Divines at Westminster
POEMS AND SONGS.

There, up the cove, to stray an' rove
Among the rocks and streams
To sport that night:

Among the bonnie winding banks,
Where Doon rins, wimpin', clear,

in 1643, his consort is said to have been seduced away from this house by a party of gypsies, supposed to have been headed by a lover in disguise; the consequence of this imprudence was her confinement for life in a tower belonging to her husband in the neighbouring town of Maybole, while those who had decoyed her away were hanged on a tree in front of the castle. These circumstances are more particularly related in the old ballad of Johnnie Fan, which is sung to a beautiful air; but it is proper to state that great doubt hangs over them. In a music-book, known from unquestionable evidence to have been written before 1680, this very air is found, under the title of "Lady Cassillie's Lilt," which evinces that it could not have been composed for the wife of the sixth earl (that lady having been born in 1607), in whatever way the verses of the ballad may have taken their origin. Cassilis Castle continued to be the principal residence of the family till the extinction of the main line in 1769, when the titles were adjudged to Sir Thomas Kennedy, of Colzean, a son of the third earl. (See below.)

Cassilis Castle, however, is still one of the seats of the family. The Cassilis Downes are three or four small hills rising about a quarter of a mile to the south of the castle, near the road between Maybole and Dalrymple. The largest—that nearest to the house—appears to be three hundred feet above the level of the Doon; the second is somewhat lower; and one or two others are greatly less marked. They are covered with green sward, through which, in some places, the rock may be seen; and hence Burns has described them in the note as "rocky." On the top of the highest there is a circular mound, with a breach in it to the west, as if designed for a means of access. It is probable that this was an early fort, more particularly as the farm on the slope of the hill bears the name of Dunree—obviously Dun-ridg, the king's castle. The peculiar forms of these hillocks, and their rising in the midst of a generally level country, are circumstances which could not fail to excite superstitions ideas in an unlettered people. They were, accordingly, down to Burns's time, regarded as the work of fairies, and a peculiar scene of their midnight revels. In reality, they are masses of trap.

1 A noted cavern near Colzean House, called The Cove of Colzean; which, as Cassilis Downes, is famed in country story for being a favourite haunt of fairies.—R. B.

The lands of Colzean in the sixteenth century were the property of Sir Thomas Kennedy, second son of Gilbert, third Earl of Cassillis. The former castle, connected with the lands, was built soon after by this individual. Sir Archibald Kennedy of Colzean, great-grandson of Sir Thomas, is said to have acquired some notoriety as a persecutor of the Covenanters, and tradition states, that after the Revolution, he was sometimes obliged for his safety to the cove (that is Linn) of the mansion. By his will, one of the daughters of General David Leslie, Lord Newark, he had four daughters, the second of whom, Susanna, distinguished for extraordinary beauty, became the wife of Alexander, ninth Earl of Eglington. In her youth she patronized Ramsay, who dedicates the "Gentle Shepherd" to her; and in her old age she received a visit from Dr. Johnson, at her dotal or seat of Anchans, near Dundonald. On the extinction of the main line of the Cassilis family, in the person of John, the eighth earl, in 1769, the title and family estates became the inheritance of Sir Thomas Kennedy of Colzean, who accordingly—though not without some litigation—became ninth Earl of Cassillis. It was now deemed necessary that the house of Colzean should be rebuilt; and this task was accordingly commenced in 1777 by David, the tenth earl, brother of the preceding. The plan of the new mansion was by Robert Adam. It presents, along the verge of the precipice, a range of lofty castellated masses, and with its outbuildings, splendid terraced garden, &c., it covers an area of four acres. The impression conveyed by the mansion, on approaching it through the far-spaying glades of an ancient park, is that of baronial dignity, affluence, and taste; surveyed from the sea, or from the beach, it suggests the idea of those eery-like fortresses of old, which took so much strength from nature as to appear to smile defiance at all the hostile efforts of mere human power. The interior of the castle is remarkable for an extensive and valuable collection of arms and armour. The coves are situated directly under the castle. They appear simply natural chinks left in the bank in the process of its volcanic formation. Burns, during his residence near Kirkoswald, must have often heard of their reputation as haunts of the fairies. They are six in number, and are thus described in the Rev. Mr. Biggar's statistical account of the parish of Kirkoswald, written in the end of the last century: "Of the three towards the west, the largest has its entry as low as high-water mark. The roof is about fifty feet high, and has the appearance if two large rocks had fallen together, forming a Gothic arch, though
Age 20.

very irregular.

feet, and very irregis; of much the other
are the other with each and fluros
not been westmost
is a door
three feet
above both
be sent down
the door.

moon was
zean: it
design to
protect it.
Where Bruce once ruled the martial ranks,
An' shook his Carrick spear,
Some merry, friendly, country-folks
Together did convene,
To burn their nits, an' pon their stocks, nits pull colowort plants
An' hand their Halloween hold
Fu' blythe that night.

The lasses feast, an' cleanly neat,
Mair braw than when they're fine;
Their faces blythe, fu' sweetly kythe
Hearts leal, an' warm, and kin':
The lads sae trig, wi' woer-labs,
Weel knotted on their garten,
Some unco blate, an' some wi' gabs, extremely bashful chatter
Gar lasses' hearts gang startin'
While fast at night.

Then first and foremost thro' the kail,
Their stocks maun a' be sought ances;
They steek their een, an' grain, an' wale, close their eyes choose
For muckle anes an' straight anes.
Poor hav'rl Will fell aff the drift,
An' wander'd thro' the bow-kail,
An' pou', for want o' better shift,
A rant was like a sow-tail,
Sae bown't that night.

Then, straight or crooked, yird or name,
They roar and cry a' thronther;
The vera wee things, toddlin', rin
WI' stocks owt-owre their shouter;
An' gif the custoe's sweet or sour,
WI' jectelegs they taste them;

The famous family of that name, the ancestors of Robert, the great deliverer of his country, were Earls of Carrick.—R.B.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Syne cozie, aboon the door, 
Wi' canny care they place them
To lie that night.

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

The auld guidwife's weel-hoordit nits 
Are round an' round divided, 
An' monie hals' and lasses' fates, 
Are there that night decided:
Some kindle, couthie, side by side, 
An' burn the-gither trinly;
Some start awa wi' sauce pride, 
And jump out-owre the chimulie
Fu' high that night.

Jean slips in twa, wi' tentie ee; 
Wlw 'twas she wadna tell;
But this is Jock, an' this is me, 
She says in to herself;
He bleez'd owre her, an' she owre him, 
As they wad never mair part;
Till, fuff! he started up the lom, 
And Jean had e'en a sair heart
To see't that night.

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

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

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

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

[1788.

Age 26.]
POEMS AND SONGS.

Nell had the false-house in her min',
She puts herself an' Rob in;
In loving breeze they sweetly join,
Till white in use they're sobbin';
Nell's heart was dancin' at the view,
She whisper'd Rob to lenk for't;
Rob, stoulines, prie'd her bonnie mou',
Fur' cozie in the nek for't,

Unseen that night.

But Merran sat behind their backs,
Her thoughts on Andrew Bell;
She leaves them goshin' at their cracks,
And slips out by herself:
She thro' the yard the nearest taks,
An' to the kiln she goes then,
An' darkens grapit for the banks,
And in the blue-clene 1 throws then,

Right fear't that night.

An' aye she win't, an' aye she swat,
I wot she made ma faukin';
Till something held within the pat,
Guid L.—d! but she was quaunin'
But whether 'twas the devil himself,
Or whether 'twas a bank'en,
Or whether it was Andrew Bell,
She dinna wait on talkin',

To spier that night.

Wee Jenny to her grannie says,
"Will ye go wi' me, grannie?"
"I'll eat the apple 2 at the glass,
I gat frac uncle Johnie:"
She fuil't her pipe wi' sic a hunt,
In wrath she was sae vap'in',
She notice't na, an' aizle brunt
Her braw new wors' mron

Out thro' that night.

"Ye little skelpie-limmer's face! 3
I daur you try sic sportin',
As seek the fowl Thief ony place,
For him to spae your fortune:

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

2 A technical term for female ascension.—Burns's Glossary.—A "skelpie limmer" is a husky that deserves slapping.

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

Nae doubt but ye may get a sight!
Great cause ye hae to fear it;
For monie a ane has gotten a fright,
An' liv'd an' dee'd deleeret
On sic a night.

"An' hirest afore the Sherra-noor,
I mind't as weel's yestreen,
I was a gilpy then, I'm sure
I was na past fiftene:
The simmer had been cauld an' wat,
An' stuff was uneo green;
An' aye a rantin' kirk we gat,
An' just on Halloween
It fell that night.

"Our stibble-rig was Rab McGraen,
A clever, studdy fellow;
His sin' gat Eppie Sim wi' wean,
That liv'd in Achmacalla:
He gat hemp-seed, I mind it weil,
An' he rade uneo light o'it;
But monie a day was by himself,
He was sae fairly frightened
That vera night."

Then up gat fechtin' Jamie Fleck,
An' he svoor by his conscience,
That he could saw hemp-seed a peck;
For it was a but nonsense.
The auld gardman rought down the peck,
An' out a handful gied him;
Synne bad him slip fräe 'mang the folk
Sometime when nac ane see'd him,
An' try't that night.

He marches thro' amang the stacks,
Tho' he was something sturtin';
The grait he for a harrow takes,
An' hurls at his curpin':
An' ev'ry now an' then, he says,
"Hemp-seed, I saw thee,

1 Battle of Sheriffmuir, Nov. 1715, between the Royalists under the Duke of Argyll, and the Jacobites under the Earl of Mar.
2 Lit., stubble-ridge; hence, the reaper that took the ridge next to the part of the field already reaped.
3 There is no place so named in Kyle or Carrick. A name was needed of a certain length, accent, and capacity for rhyme; hence the above coinage.
4 Steal out unperceived, and sow a handful of hemp-seed; harrowing it with anything you can conveniently draw after you. Repeat now and then, "Hemp-seed, I saw thee, hemp-seed, I saw thee; and him (or her) that is to be my true-love, come after me and poni thee." Look over your left shoulder, and you will see the appearance of the person invoked, in the attitude of pulling hemp. Some traditions say, "Come after me, and shaw thee," that is, show thyself; in which case it simply appears. Others omit the harrowing, and say, "Come after me, and harrow thee."—R. B.
An' her that is to be my lass,  
Come after me, and draw thee,  
As fast this night."

He whistl'd up "Lord Lenox' march"  
To keep his courage cheerie;  
Although his hair began to arch,  
He was sae f'ry'd an' eerie:  
Till presently he hears a squeak,  
An' then a grave an' gruntle;  
He by his shouter gae a keek,  
An' tumble'd wi' a wittle
Out-owre that night.

He roar'd a horrid murder shout,  
In dreadfu' desperation!  
An' young an' auld came rinnin' out,  
To hear the sad narration:  
He svoor 'twas hilchin Jean McCraw,  
Or crouchie Merran Humphie,  
Till, stop! she 'sald thro' them a';—  
And wha was it oot grumphie  
Asteer that night!

Meg fain wad to the barn gaen  
To winn three wechs o' maething;¹  
But for to meet the deil her lane,  
She put but little faith in:  
She gies the herd a pickle nits,  
An' twa red-checkit apples,  
To watch, while for the barn she sets,  
In hopes to see Tam Kipples  
That vera night.

She turns the key wi' cannie throw,  
An' owre the threshold ventures;  
But first on Sawnie gies a cat,²  
Syne baudly in she enters:  
A ratton rattled up the wa',  
An' she cried, L—d, preserve her!  
An' ran thro' midden-hole an' a',  
An' pray'd wi' zeal an' fervour,  
Fu' fast that night.

¹ This charm must likewise be performed unperceived, and alone. You go to the barn, and open both doors, taking them off the hinges, if possible; for there is danger that the being, about to appear, may shut the doors, and do you some mischief. Then take that instrument used in winnowing the corn, which, in our country dialect, we call a weech; and go through all the attitudes of letting down corn against the wind. Repeat it three times; and the third time an apparition will pass through the barn, in at the windy door, and out at the other, having both the figure in question, and the appearance or retinue, marking the employment or station in life.—R. B.—The weech is an implement shaped like a sieve, being a round shallow wooden vessel with a bottom made of hide or skin, used for taking quantities of grain.

² She first calls out to the herd-boy, to give her a little courage from assurance of his proximity.
They hoy't out Will, wi' sair advice:
    They hecht him some fine braw ane;
  It chan'd the stack he faldom'd thrice,  
     Was timmer-propt for thrillin':
He take a swirlie, auld moss-oak,
    For some black, gruesome carlin;
An' loot a winze, an' drew a stroke,
    Till skin in blypes came haurlin'

Aff's nieves that night.

A wanton widow Leezie was,
    As canty as a kitten;
But, ooh! that night, amang the shaws,
    She got a fearfu' settlin'!
She thro' the whins, an' by the cairn,
    Whare three lairds' lands met at a burn;
To dip her left sark-sleeve in,
    Was beut that night.

Whyles owre a linn the burnie plays,
    Sometimes over a rock streamlet
    As thro' the glen it wimpl't:
    Whyles round a rocky scuar it strays;
    Whyles in a wiel it dimpl't;
    Whyles glitter'd to the nightly rays,
    Wi' bickering, dancing dazzle;
    Whyles cookit underneath the branes,
    Below the spreading hazel,
    Unseen that night.

Amang the brachens, on the brae,
    Between her and the moon,
    The dell, or else an outlaw quey,
    Gat up an' gae a croon:
    Poor Leezie's heart maist lap the hool;
    Almost leaped from its case(bull)
    Near lav'rock-height she jumpit,
    But mist a fit, an' in the pool
    Out-owre the lugs she plumpit,
    Wi' a plunge that night.

1 Take an opportunity of going, unmeticed, to a bear stack, and fathom it three times round. The last fathom of the last time, you will catch in your arms the appearance of your future conjugal yoke-fellow. — R. B.
2 The particular stack mentioned in the text was propped up by pieces of timber, having settled or got twisted (thrown) to one side. One of the props was a moss-oak or bog-oak, such as are found embedded in peat-bogs.
3 You go out, one or more, for this is a social spell, to a south running spring or rivulet, where "three lairds' lands meet," and dip your left shirt sleeve. Go to bed in sight of a fire, and hang your wet sleeve before it to dry. Lie awake; and sometime near midnight, an apparition, having the exact figure of the grand object in question, will come and turn the sleeve, as if to dry the other side of it. — R. B.
4 See the song of "Tam Glen" for an interesting reference to this spell, which in the case of Tam's sweetheart was used with the desired effect in calling up the likeness of Tam.
5 "Those who understand the Scottish dialect will allow this to be one of the finest instances of description which the records of poetry afford. Though of a very different nature, it may be compared, in point of excellence, with Thomson's description of a river swollen by the rains of winter bursting through the straits that confine its torrent." — CURRIE. The verb to cock used above means literally to appear and disappear by turns.
In order, on the clean hearth-stane,
    The luggies three1 are ranged,          looped wooden dishes
And ev'ry time great care is ta'en,
    To see them duly changed;  
And huld uncle John, wha wedlock's joys
Sin' Mar's year2 did desire,
Because he gat the toom dish thrice,
He hea'ld them on the fire
In wrath that night.

Wi' merry sangs, an' friendly cracks,
1 wat they didna weary;
An' unco tales, an' funnie jokes,
Their sports were cheap an' cheery;
Till butter'd so'ns,3 wi' fragrant hoot,
    Set a' their gabs a-stearn';
Syne, wi' a social glass o' strunt,
They parted aff careerin'
    Fu' blythe that night.4

FRAGMENT—HER FLOWING LOCKS.

Of the date of the composition of this fragment, or of the subject of it, nothing certain seems to be known.

Her flowing locks, the raven's wing,
Adown her neck and bosom hing;
(How sweet unto that breast to cling,)
    And round that neck entwine her!
Her lips are roses wat wi' dew,
O, what a feast, her bonnie mou'!
Her cheeks a mair celestial hue,
    A crimson still diviner.

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

2 1715, the year in which the Earl of Mar raised an insurrection. See note on Sirrill'snair above.

3 Sowens, with butter instead of milk to them, is always the Halloween supper.—R. B.—Sowens, blamble, made of the dust of oatmeal remaining among the seeds (husks), steeped and sourd.—JAMIESON.

4 In Ruddiman's Weekly Magazine for November, 1789, appeared a poem of twelve stanzas, by John Mayne, on the subject of Halloween. It is very probable that it fell under the notice of Burns and suggested his poem. We append two or three stanzas of Mayne's composition:—

Ranged o'er a bleeding ingle side,
    Where nother could nor hunger hide,
The farmer's house, wi' secret pride,
    Will a' convene.

Placed at their head the gudewife sits,
And deals round apples, pears, and nuts,
Syne tells her guests, how, at sic bids
Where she had been,
    Bogles ha' gart folk tym their wits
At Halloween.

But there a languard tale to tell,
    The gates o' luka charm and spell;
Aurie gane to saw hemp-seed himself
Poor Jock M'Lean,
    Plump in a filthy peat-pot fell
At Halloween.

Of Burns's poem Lockhart says:—"Halloween, a descriptive poem, perhaps even more exquisitely wrought than the 'Holy Fair,' and containing nothing that could offend the feelings of anybody, was produced about the same period. Burns's art had now reached its climax."
TO A MOUSE,
ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER, 1785.1

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,  smooth-skinned
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' murdering pattle!2

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, whyles, but thou may thieve; sometimes
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live! must
A daimen-icker in a thawe3 'S a sma' request:
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave, remainder
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin! fragile walls
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
buid
An' mething, now, to big a new ane, herbage
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin', both biting
Baith snell and keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste, snug
An' weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell;
T'll crash! the cruel coult'ir past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit hemp o' leaves an' stibble, stubble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy troubl,
But house or hald, without holding
To thole the winter's sleyt dibble, endure
An' cuarrench cauld!
hoar-frost

---

1 John Blair, a farm-servant at Meaigot in 1785, and who died at Kilmarnock about the middle of this century, used to tell of his pursuing a mouse across the field, with the pettle or plough-cleansing uten, while Burns was ploughing. Burns told him to let the poor creature alone; and was observed to be very thoughtful all day. In the evening, he repeated to him his poem on the mouse, the most tender-hearted, perhaps, of all his productions.

2 The plough-staff, used to clear away the adhering earth from the plough—also written pettle.

3 An occasional car of corn in a thawe, that is, twenty-four sheaves or two stocks.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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,\(^1\)
An' lea'e us nought but grief and pain,
For promis'd joy.

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, och! I backward cast my ee,
On prospects drear;
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear.\(^2\)

THE JOLLY BEGGARS.\(^3\)
A CANTATA.

RECITATIVO.
When lyart leaves bestrew the yird,
Or, wavering like the bauckie-bird,\(^4\)
Bedin cauld Boreas' blast;
When hailstanies drive wi' bitter skyte,
And infant frosts begin to bite,
In hoary cranreuch drest:
As night at e'en, a merry core
O' rondele gangrel bodies,
In Poosie Nausie's\(^5\) held the spore,
To drink their orra duddies:

---

\(^1\) This phrase:—
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,—
and a couplet in the "Address to the Louise"—
O, wad some Pow'r the giffie gie us,
To see oursel's as others see us—
are so often quoted as to have become proverbial.

\(^2\) "How his heart flows out in sympathy over universal nature; and in her bleakest provinces discerns a beauty and a meaning! The 'Daisy' falls not unheded under his ploughshare; nor the ruined nest of that 'wee cowering timorous beastie,' cast forth after all its provident pains to 'thole the seelty drible, and cranreuch cauld.'—THOMAS CARLYLE.

\(^3\) Composed apparently at Mossiegil before the close of 1786, and regarded by Burns himself as of little value, probably because his mother and brother looked on it with suspicion on account of the lowness of some of its sentiments. In September, 1788, he wrote to George Thomson that he had kept no copy of it, and had in fact forgotten its existence. On 31 August, 1799, the "Jolly Beggars" was published in chap-book form by Stewart and Melkie, Glasgow, with the exception of a portion which John Richmond had taken with him to Edinburgh; and two years later it was republished by Stewart in a complete form, Richmond having in the meantime supplied the missing portion. Along with it Stewart also printed other POEMS ASCENDED TO ROBERT BURNS, THE AVONSHIRE BARD, not contained in any edition of his works hitherto published. So popular were these additional poems, especially the "Jolly Beggars," that another edition of a smaller size was issued from the same press during the same year.

\(^4\) The older writers call it merely the bak; thus in Gawain Dougla's metrical translation of Virgil:—

The sallow light iscause the weary, trust me,
Altho' to the bak his bright beams doth flee.

The comparison of the fluttering of the dry and withered leaves in the wintry blast, to the "wavering" flight of the bal is peculiarly appropriate.

\(^5\) Poosie Nausie's, the scene of the "Jolly Beggars," is still pointed out in Musselburgh. It was one of those places of resort in which the lowest of mankind—those ambigous wretches who hang upon the skirts of society—the nameless beggar, the sturdy caird, the wandering tinkler, the travelling ballad-singer—found a resting-place after the fatigues of the day, and when
POEMS AND SONGS.

Wi' quaffing and laughing,
They ranted and they sang;
Wi' jumping and thumping
The vera girdle rang.

First, niest the fire, in an'a red rags,
Ane sat, weel brach'd wi' mealie bags
And knapsack a' in order;
His doxy lay within his arm,
Wi' unaqueae and blankets warm,
She blinket on her sodger;
And aye he gies the tozie drab
The tither skelpin' kiss,
While she held up her greedy gab,
Just like an amorous dish;
Ilk smack still, did crack still,
Just like a cadger's whip,
Then staggering, an' swaggering,
He roar'd this ditty up—

AIR.

TUNE—"Soldier's Joy."

I am a son of Mars, who have been in many wars,
And show my cuts and scars wherever I come;
This here was for a wench, and that other in a trench,
When welcoming the French at the sound of the drum.
Lal de dandle, &c.

My prenticeship I past where my leader breath'd his last,
When the bloody die was cast on the heights of Abram; 2
I served out my trade when the gallant game was play'd,
And the Moro low was laid at the sound of the drum. 3
Lal de dandle, &c.

I lastly was with Curtis, among the floating batt'ries, 4
And there I left for witness an arm and a limb:

they lost in that "glory" which results from deep potations, the consciousness of their own degradation. John Richmond told Robert Chambers when he visited Mauchline, that onelight when Burns, "Smith, the sleest pawkie thief," and Richmond were loosing up the street in a state of partial intoxication, their attention was attracted by the noise of revelry issuing from this hostelry. At the instigation of Burns they went in, and entered on spirit into the scene of drunken frolic which they found going forward. Such was the source of the poet's inspiration, and such the scene, which a few touches of his pen have rendered immortal.

2 The ammunis dish was a wooden vessel, half platter, half bowl, with which every professional mendicant was formerly provided as part of his accouterments. It was used to receive the ammun or alms, which was usually made in kind.

3 The battle-ground before Quebec, where Wolfe fell in the arms of victory, September 1759.

4 El Moro, a strong castle that defended the entrance of the harbour of St. Iago, an island near the southern shore of Cuba; stormed and taken by the British in 1762.

5 The destruction of the Spanish floating batteries, during the siege of Gibraltar, in 1782, is here referred to. The services rendered by Captain Curtis on this occasion were of the highest value.

1 The circular iron plate on which cakes are baked in Scottish households.
Yet let my country need me, with Elliot\(^1\) to head me, I'd clatter on my stumps at the sound of the drum.

_‘Lal de daudle, &c._

And now, tho' I must beg, with a wooden arm and leg, And many a tatter'd rag hanging over my bum, I'm as happy with my wallet, my bottle, and my callet,\(^2\) As when I us'd in scarlet to follow the drum.

_‘Lal de daudle, &c._

What tho' with hoary locks, I must stand the winter shocks, Beneath the woods and rocks, oftentimes for a home; When the tother bag I sell, and the tother bottle tell, I could meet a troop of h-ll at the sound of the drum.

**REMITTIVO.**

_He ended; and the kebars sheuk_  
_Aboon the chorus roar;_  
_While frighted rattons backward leak,_  
_And seek the benmost bore:_

_A fairy\(^3\) fiddler frae the neuk,_  
_He skirl'd out encore!_  
_But up arose the martial chuck,_  
_And laid the loud uproar._

**AIR.**

_Tune—"Soldier Laddie."_

I once was a maid, tho' I cannot tell when,  
And still my delight is in proper young men;  
Some one of a troop of dragoons was my daddie,  
No wonder I'm fond of a sodger laddie.

_Sing, Lal de lal, &c._

The first of my loves was a swaggering blade,  
To rattle the thundering drum was his trade;  
His leg was so tight, and his cheek was so ruddy,  
Transported I was with my sodger laddie.

_Sing, Lal de lal, &c._

But the godly old chaplain left him in the lurch,  
So the sword I forsook for the sake of the church,  
He ventur'd the soul, and I risked the body,  
'Twas then I prov'd false to my sodger laddie.

_Sing, Lal de lal, &c._

---

\(^1\) **George Augustus Elliot** (Lord Heathfield), born 1717, died 1790, successfully defended Gibraltar against the Spaniards, during the famous siege of over three years and seven months, in 1779-83.

\(^2\) "A beggar in his drink could not have laid such terms upon his callet."—**Shakespeare—Othello**.

\(^3\) This epithet is apparently used in the sense of little, puny.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Full soon I grew sick of my sanctified cot,
The regiment at large for a husband I got;
From the gilded spoutoon to the fife I was ready,
I asked no more but a sodger laddie.

Sing, Lal de lal, &c.

But the peace it reduc'd me to beg in despair,
Till I met my old boy at a Cunningham fair;
His rags regimental they flutter'd sae gaudy,
My heart it rejoice'd at a sodger laddie.

Sing, Lal de lal, &c.

And now I have liv'd—I know not how long,
And still I can join in a cup or a song;
But whilst with both hands I can hold the glass steady,
Here's to thee, my hero, my sodger laddie.

Sing, Lal de lal, &c.

RECITATIVO.

Poor Merry Andrew, in the neuk,
Sat guzzling wi' a tinkler hizzie.

They mind't na wha the chorus teuk,
Between themselves they were sae busy;

At length, wi' drink and courting dizzy,
He stoiter'd up and made a face;

Then turn'd and laid a smack on Grizzy,
Syne tun'd his pipes wi' grave grimace.

AIR.

TUNE—"Auld Sir Symon."

Sir Wisdom's a fool when he's fou,
Sir Knave is a fool in a session;¹
He's there but a 'prentice I trow,
But I am a fool by profession.

My grannie she bought me a benk,
And I held awa to the school;

I fear I my talent misteuk;
But what will ye hae of a fool?

For drink I would venture my neck;
A hizzie's the half o' my craft;

But what could you other expect
Of ane that's avowedly daft?

I ance was tied up like a stirk,²
For civilly swearing and quaffing.

¹ This seems to mean when under a criminal indictment, during the session or sitting of a court.
² Referring to the punishment of the "jougs," which was an iron collar locked round an offender's neck so as to keep standing in some exposed position.

Specimens of this instrument of punishment may still be seen, one attached to the pillar of the gate of the churchyard of Duddingston near Edinburgh, and another to the gable of the townhouse of Kilmaurs in Ayrshire.
POEMS AND SONGS.

I ance was abused 't the kirk,
For tossing a lass i' my daftin.

Poor Andrew that tumbles for sport,
Let nobody name wi' a jeer;
There's ev'n, I'm tauld, i' the court,
A tumbler ca'd the Premier.

Observ'd ye you reverend lad
Maks faces to tickle the mob;
He rails at our mountebank squad,
It's rivalship just i' the job.

And now my conclusion I'll tell,
For fa' I'm confoundedly dry,
The chiel that's a fool for himself,
Gude L—d, is far dafter than I.

RECITATIVO.

Then niest outspak a rauce carlin,
Wha kent fu' weel to cleek the sterlin',
For monie a pursie she had hooked,
And had in monie a well been douked;
Her love had been a Highland laddie,
But weary fa' the waefu' woodie!
Wi' sighs and sols, she thus began
To wail her braw John Highlandman.

AIR.

TUNE—"O an' ye were dead, guidman."
A Highland lad my love was born,
The Lawland laws he held in scorn;
But he still was faithful to his clan,
My gallant, braw John Highlandman.

CHORUS.

Sing, hey, my braw John Highlandman;
Sing, ho, my braw John Highlandman;
There's not a lad in a' the lan'
Was match for my John Highlandman.

With his philibeg and tartan plaid,
And guid claymore down by his side,
The ladies' hearts he did troop,
My gallant, braw John Highlandman.

Sing, hey, &c.

We ranged a' from Tweed to Spey,
And liv'd like lords and ladies gay;

1 "A curse befall the woeful halter." For a long time the Highlanders were notoriously given to cattle-plundering the hated Lowlander, and many of them were hanged for such offences.
POEMS AND SONGS.

For a Lawlaid face he feared nane,
My gallant, braw John Highlandman.

Sing, hey, &c.

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

Sing, hey, &c.

But och! they catch’d him at the last,
And bound him in a dungeon fast;
T’ll, ’ve hang’d my braw John Highlandman.

Sing, hey, &c.

And now a widow, I must mourn
The pleasures that will ne’er return;
No comfort but a hearty can,
When I think on John Highlandman.

Sing, hey, &c.

RECITATIVO.

A pigmy scrammer wi’ his fiddle,
Who us’d at trysts and fairs to driddle,
Her strappin’ limb and gauchy middle
(He reach’d nae higher),
Had hold his heartie like a riddle,
And blawn’t on fire.

Wi’ hand on lainch, and upward ee,
He croon’d his gamut, ane, twa, three,
Then, in an Arioso key,
’T he wee Apollo
Set aff, wi’ Allegretto glee,
His giga solo.

AIR.

TUNE—”Whistle o’er the lave o’l.”

Let me ryke up to dight that tear,
And go wi’ me and be my dear,
And then your every care and fear
May whistle o’er the lave o’l.

CHORUS.

I am a fiddler to my trade,
And a’ the tunes that e’er I play’d,

1 This melody was composed about the year 1720 by John Bruce, a musician in the town of Dumfries, and was published with variations in the last volume of Oswald’s Caledonian Pocket Companion. Burns wrote another song to it, viz. that beginning—First when Maggie was my care.
The sweetest still to wife or maid,
Was whistle o'er the lave o't.

At kirk and weddings we'se be there,
And oh! see nicely's we will fare;
We'll howse about, till Daddie Care
Sings whistle o'er the lave o't.

I am, &c.

Sae merrily's the bames we'll pyke,
And sun ourselves about the dyke,
And at our leisure, when ye like,
We'll whistle o'er the lave o't.

I am, &c.

But bless me wi' your heav'n o' charms
And while I lizzie hair on their hairs
Hunger, cauld, and a' sic harms,
May whistle o'er the lave o't.

I am, &c.

RECITATIVO.

Her charms had struck a sturdy caird,
As weel as poor gut-scraper;
He takes the fiddler by the beard,
And draws a roosy rapier—
He swore, by a' was swearing worth,
To spext him like a pliver,
Unless he wad from that time forth
Relinquish her for ever.

Wi' ghastly ee, poor tweedle-dee
Upon his hunkers bended,
And pray'd for grace, wi' ruefu' face,
And sae the quarrel ended.
But though his little heart did grieve
When round the tinkler prest her,
He feign'd to snittle in his sleeve,
When thus the caird address'd her;

AIR.

TUNE—"Clout the Caudron."

My bonny lass, I work in brass,
A tinkler is my station;
I've travell'd round all Christian ground
In this my occupation.

1 Tinkler and caird are here treated as synonymous terms; but we have been informed, on the authority of one of the fraternity of tinkers, that there is a difference; a tinker or tinkler is a workman, an artificer in brass and tin-plate, &c., a caird is not, the latter being merely a vagrant usually with rather loose notions as to meum and tuum. Neither tinker nor caird is now so common in Scotland as formerly.
I've ta'en the gold, an' been enroll'd
In many a noble squadron;
But vain they search'd, when off I march'd
To go and clout the cauldron.
I've ta'en the gold, &c.

Despise that shrimp, that wither'd imp,
Wi' a' his noise and cap'r'in',
And tak' a share wi' those that bear
The budget and the apron.
And by that stoup, my faith and houp,
And by that dear Kilbagie,!
If e'er ye want, or meet wi' scant,
May I ne'er weet my crugie.
And by that stoup, &c.

RECIPIENT.

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

But hurchin Cupid shot a shaft,
. That play'd a dame a shavie,
The fiddler rak'd her fore and aft,
Behind the chicken cavie.
Her lord, a wight o' Homer's craft,
The limpin' wi' the spavie,
He hilp'd up, and lap like daft,
And shord them Dainty Davie
O' boot that night.

He was a care-defying blade
As ever Bacchus listed,
The' Fortune sair upon him laid,
His heart, she ever miss'd it.
He had nae wish, but—to be glad,
Nor want, but—when he thirsted;
He hated nought but—to be sad:
And thus the Muse suggested
His sang that night.

1 A peculiar sort of whisky; so called from Kil-

---

Burn's day sold so low as one penny per gill, the

---
POEMS AND SONGS.

AIR.

TUNE—"For a' that, and a' that."

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

CHORUS.

For a' that, and a' that,
And twice as nuckle's a' that;
I've lost but none, I've twa behin',
I've wife enough, for a' that.

I never drunk the Muses' stank,
Castalia's burn, and a' that;
But there it streams, and richly reams,
My Helicon I ca' that.

For a' that, &c.

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

For a' that, &c.

In raptures sweet, this hour we meet,
Wi' mutual love, and a' that;
But for how long the fleece may sting
Let inclination law that.

For a' that, &c.

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

For a' that, and a' that,
And twice as nuckle's a' that;
My dearest bluid, to do them guid,
They're welcome till', for a' that.

RECITATIVO.

So sung the bard—and Nance's wa's
Shook with a thunder of applause,
Re-echo'd from each mouth;
They toom'd their pecks, and pawn'd their duds,
They scarcely left to cover their rumps,
To quench their lowin' drouth.

The third, fourth, and fifth stanzas of this song form the second, third, and fourth of song 299 in Johnson's Museum; yet we find the editor of that work in a note asserting that the song was "wholly written for that publication by Burns in 1789, that is, about four years after the verses were composed. It is almost needless to say that Burns wrote another song to this tune, that stirring lyric beginning "Is there for honest poverty," which belongs to a period nearly ten years later than this.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Then o'er again, the jovial throng,
The poet did request,
To loose his shack, and wail a song,
A ballad o' the best;
He, rising, rejoicing,
Between his twa Deborahs,
Looks round him, and found them
Impatient for the chorus.

AIR.

TUNE—"Jolly Mortals, fill your Glasses."

See the smoking bowl before us!
Mark our jovial ragged ring!
Round and round take up the chorus,
And in raptures let us sing:

CHORUS.

A fig for these by law protected!
Liberty's a glorious feast!
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.

What is title? What is treasure?
What is reputation's care?
If we lead a life of pleasure,
'Tis no matter how or where!
A fig, &c.

With the ready trick and fable,
Round we wander all the day;
And at night, in barn or stable,
Hug our doxies on the hay.
A fig, &c.

Does the train-attended carriage
Thro' the country lighter stay?
Does the sober bed of marriage
Witness brighter scenes of love?
A fig, &c.

Life is all a variorum,
We regard not how it goes;
Let them cawl about decorum
Who have character to lose.
A fig, &c.

1 Burns may have obtained a hint for this song, and even the idea of the whole cantata, from a song called "The Merry Beggars," published in the Characters, two vols., London, 1751. We give two of the stanzas:—

1st Beggar—
I once was a poet at London,
I keep my heart still full of glee;

2nd Beggar—
There's no man can say that I'm undone,
For begging's no new trade to me.

3rd Beggar—
Who'er would be merry and free,
Let him list, and from us he may learn;
In palaces who shall you see
Half so happy as us in a barn?
Here's to budgets, bags, and wallets!  
Here's to all the wandering train!  
Here's our ragged brats and calleis!  
One and all cry out, Amen!  
A fig for those by law protected!  
Liberty's a glorious feast!  
Courts for cowards were erected,  
Churches built to please the priest.  

TRAVELLING TINKER'S SONG.  

**Tune.—** "Lord Dundee's March," or "The Bob o' Dumbarton."  

O merry lass I been teetlin' a heckle,  
And merril lass I been hawkin' a spoon;  
O merry lass I been cloutin' a kettle,  
And kissin' my Katie when a' was done.  
O a' the lang day I ca' at my hammer,  
And a' the lang day I whistle and sing,  
A' the lang night I cuddle my kinner,  
And a' the lang night am as happy a king.  

Dr. Carrie did not introduce this singular and humorous cantata into his collection.  It is true, that in one or two passages the muse has trespassed slightly upon decorum, where, in the language of Scottish song,  

High kilted was she  
As she went o'er the lan.  

Something, however, is to be allowed to the nature of the subject, and something to the education of the poet; and if from veneration to the names of Swift and Dryden, we tolerate the grossness of the one, and the indiscretion of the other, the respect due to that of Burns may surely claim indulgence for a few light strokes of broad humour."—Sir WALTER SCOTT.  

For Carlyle's opinion of this Cantata see his essay in the present vol., p. 22.  

"The whole of this admirable Cantata has never been in print. Two different songs, connected by a few verses of recitative matter, and which exhibited the character of a chimney-sweep and a "tiller," were omitted after the first copy by the author, and seem now to be past recovery."—ROBERT CHAMBERS.  

2 Steinhouse, after stating that he has the original copy of this humorous song in the handwriting of Burns in his hands, adds: "It seems to be a whimsical allusion to his former occupation as a flax-dresser."  

This is no doubt a mistake.  Teething heckles (fixing the fine long metallic teeth of the heckle, a flax-dresser's instrument for combing the fibre to be spun, into their frame), horn-spoon making, and the mending of kettles, &c., were the occupations of the traveling tinker.  Probably the verses were meant to form a part of the "Jolly Beggars," but on second thoughts were suppressed in favour of others.
Bitter in dool I lickit my wimins\(^1\)
O' marrying Bess, to gie her a slave:
Blest be the hour she coold in her linens,
And blithe be the bird that sings on her grave.
Come to my arms, my Katie, my Katie,
And come to my arms and kiss me again!
Drunken or sober, here's to thee, Katie!
And blest be the day I did it again.

---

**THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT.**

INSCRIBED TO R. AIKEN, ESQ.\(^2\)

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

My lov'd, my honour'd, much respected friend!
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride I scorn each selfish end;
My dearest need, a friend's esteem and praise:
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been;
Ah! tho' his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween.\(^3\)

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sigh:
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreatin' frae the plough;
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose:
The toil-worn cotter frae his labour goes,
This night his weekly toil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend, morrow
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does homeward bend.\(^4\)

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1 This may be rendered, "Bitterly in sorrow I ate what I won in marrying Bess," &c.
2 Robert Aiken, writer in Ayr, one of the poet's early friends and patrons.
3 This noble poem was written about the end of 1785; probably the first verse dedicating the poem to Mr. Aiken was added afterwards.
4 The "Cotter's Saturday Night" was no doubt suggested by Ferguson's "Farmer's Instruction," a poem which is much shorter and far inferior in all respects, though not without merit of its own.
5 "That one single stanza is in itself a picture. It may say a poem, of the poor man's life. It is imaged on the eye that absolutely sees it; but then not an epithet but shows the condition on which he holds, and the heart with which he endures, and enjoys it. Work he must in the face of November; but God who made the year, shortens and lengthens its days for the sake of his living creatures, and has appointed for them all their hour of rest. The 'miry beasts' will soon be at supper in their clean strawed stalls—the black'ning trains o' craws invisibly hushed on their rocking trees; and he whom God made after his own image, that 'toil-worn cotter,' he too may lie down and sleep. There is nothing especial in his lot whereby he should be pitied, nor are we asked to pity him, as he 'collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes;' many of us who have work to do, and do it not, may envy his contentment, and the religion that gladdens his release—'hoping the Morn in ease and rest to spend,' to such as he, in truth, a Sabbath."—PROFESSOR WILSON.
At length his lonely cot appears in view,
   Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin', stachin' thro'
   To meet their dad, wi' flitcherin' noise an' glee.
His wee bit ingle, blinkin' bonnily,
   His clean hearth-stane, his thriftie wife's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
   Does a' his weary, carking cares ¹ beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his toil.

Belyve the elder bairns come drappin' in,
   At service out, amang the farmers roon';
Some ca' the plough, some herd, some tentic rin
   A cannie errand to a neebor town:
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown,
   In youthin' bloom, love sparkling in her ee,
Comes hame, perhaps, to show a braw new gown,
   Or deposite her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

Wi' joy unfeign'd, brothers and sisters meet,
   An' each for other's weelfare kindly spiers:
The social hours, swift-wing'd, amonic'd fleet;
   Each tells the means 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,
   Cares and chaes look amist as weel's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

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

But hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
   Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad cam o'er the moor,
   To do some errands, and convey her name.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
   Sparkle in Jenny's ee, and flash he, cheek:
With heart-struck, anxious care, inquires his name,
   "While Jenny hallins is afraid to speak;
Weel plea'd the mother hears, it's nae wild, worthless r.k.e.

¹ "Klaugh [that is, toil or travaill] and care," original reading, altered in 1793 to "carking cares," as above.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben;
A strappin' youth; he taks 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 overflows wi' joy,
But bhe and faithful, scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave;
Weel plead to think her bairn's respected like the lave.1 other people

O happy love!—where love like this is found!—
O heart-felt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've paced 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 ev'n ing gale."2

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 halestone parritch,3 chief o' Scotin's food,
The soupe their only hawkie does afford,
That 'yont the hallan n'gley shows her cood,
The dame brings forth in complimen't mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-handl keeble: fell, well-saved cheese pungent
An' aft he's prest, an' aft he ca'it guid;
The frugal wifie, gardulous, well fell,
How 'twas a towmand add, that last was o' the ladd1 towmanth

1 "Where does the quiet and complacent warmth of the tenderness of the mistress of his heart, when she repays parental affection smile with a more gentle benignity than in the figure of the mother in the 'Gatter's Saturday Night'"—Professor Walker.
2 The germ of this exquisite stanza will be found in the poet's Common-place Book. "Notwithstanding all that has been said against love, respecting the folly and weakness it leads a young inexperienced mind into, still I think it in a great measure deserves the encomiums that have been passed upon it. If any thing on earth deserves the name of rapture or transport, it is the feelings of green eighteen in the bosom of the mistress of his heart, when she repays an equal return of affection."—Common- Place Book. 4, 1787.
3 We fancy it hardly to be called "chief o' Scotin's food" in those days.
4 The hay, a very natural torch. The characteristic method of reckoning employed by those engaged in rural occupations was here well exemplified—a year old since flax was in blossom (say about the end of July). Flax was formerly a somewhat important crop in Scotland though it is now hardly to be seen there.
The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha'Bible, once his father's pride:
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyar hatt'ets 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 Elysia beets the heav'nward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compar'd with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tick'ld ears no heart-felt raptures raise;
Na' unison hae they with our Creator's praise.  

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

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

\[\text{1} \] A large edition of the Bible, such as lay in the hall or principal room of houses.

\[\text{2} \] Dundee, Martyrs, Elysia, the names of psalm-tunes then popular in Scotland.

\[\text{3} \] "We do not find fault with Burns for having written these last three lines; for association of feeling with feeling, by contrast, is perhaps most of all powerful in music. Believing that there was no devotional spirit in Italian music, it was natural for him to denounce its employment in religious services; but we all know that it cannot without most igno-

\[\text{4} \] The priest-like father was Burns's own father. Burns had often remarked to his brother Gilbert that he thought there was something particularly venerable in the phrase, "Let us worship God," used by a decent sober head of a family introducing family worship; and to this sentiment of the author the world is indebted for the "Cotter's Saturday Night."

In his letter to Dr. Currie Gilbert Burns says that the "cotter" was an exact copy of his father in his manners, his family devotion, and exhortations.
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 look 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.

Compar'd with this, how poor Religion's pride,  
In all the pomp of method, and of art,  
When men display to congregations wide,  
Devotion's ev'ry grace, except the heart!  
The Power, incens'd, the pageant will desert,  
The pomps strain, the sacerdotal stole;  
But, imply, in some cottage far apart,  
May hear, well pleas'd, the language of the soul;  
And in his book of life the inmates poor enrol.

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

From scenes like these, old Scotia's grandeur springs,  
That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd 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 refined!

1 "The affectionate reverence with which William  
Burnes's children ever regarded him, is attested by  
all who have described him as he appeared in his  
domestic circle; but there needs no evidence besides  
that of the poet himself, who has painted in colours  
that will never fade, 'the saint, the father, and the  
husband' of the 'Cotter's Saturday Night.'"—Lock-  
hart.

2 See: from the brake the whirling pleasant springs,  
And mounts exulting on triumphant wings.  
Pope's "Windsor Forest."

3 "The affectionate reverence with which William  
Burnes's children ever regarded him, is attested by  
all who have described him as he appeared in his  
domestic circle; but there needs no evidence besides  
that of the poet himself, who has painted in colours  
that will never fade, 'the saint, the father, and the  
husband' of the 'Cotter's Saturday Night.'"—Lock-  
hart.

4 "Our moral nature revolt with a sense of in-  
justice from the comparison of the wickedness of one  
class with the goodness of another; and the effect  
is the very opposite of that intended, the rising up  
of a miserable conviction, that for a while had been  
laid asleep, that vice and crime are not excluded  
from cots, but often, alas! are found there in their  
darkest colours and most portentous forms."—Prof.  
Wilson.
O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!  
For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent!  
Long may they hardy sons of rustic toil,  
Be blessed with health, and peace, and sweet content!  
And, O! may Heaven their simple lives prevent  
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!  
Then, how'd coronets and crowns be rent,  
A virtuous populace may rise the while,  
And stand a wall of fire around their much-lov'd isle.

O Thou! who pour'd the patriotic tide  
That stream'd thro' Wallace's undaunted heart;  
Who dar'd 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 hard,  
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard.

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL.

Gilbert Burns gives the winter of 1784 as the date of the composition of this poem, but that his memory had deceived him may be proved by a letter of the poet's to John Richmond, then in Edinburgh, dated Feb. 17th, 1786, in which he says, "I have been very busy with the muse since I saw you, and have composed, among several others, 'The Address to the Deil,' a poem on Mr. McKinnay's being called to Kilnarnock; Scotch Drink,' a poem; 'The Cotter's Saturday Night,' and 'An Address to the Deil,' &c."—Richmond went to Edinburgh for the purpose of completing his legal studies in the latter part of the preceding year.

O Prince! O Chief of many thousand powers,  
That led th'embattled seraphim to war.—Milton.

O thou! whatever title suit thee,  
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie,  
Wha in ye cavern grim an' son'y,  
Clo'd under hatch't.
POEMS AND SONGS:

Speirges about the brunstane cootie,
To scant poor wretches!

Hear me, and Hangie,1 for a wee,
An' let poor damned bodies be;
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
E'en to a deil,
To skelp an' scant poor dogs like me,
An' hear us scart!

Great is thy power, an' great thy fame;
I'm kind' and noted is thy name;
An' tho' you lowin' bennie's thy hame,
Thou travels far;
An', faith! thou's neither lag nor lame,
Nor blest nor scur.

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

I've heard my reverend grannie say,
In lanely glens ye like to stray;
Or where aubl-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 prayers, dunsie, honest woman!
Aft' yont the dyke she's heard you hummin',
Wi' eerie drone;
Or, rustlin', thro' the boortries comin',
Wi' heavy groan.

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

The cudgel in my nieve did shake,
Each bristl'd hair stood like a stake,

1 Elsewhere Burns addresses him as

Dweller in yon dungeon dark,

Hungman of creation.
When wi an eldritch, stour "quaack, quaick" hourse
   Among the springs,
Awa ye squatter'd, like a drake,            flattered
   On whistling wings.
Let warlocks grim, an' wither'd hags,
Tell how wi' you, on ragweed nags,
They skin the muis, an' dizzy crags,
Wi' wicked speed;
And in kirk-yards renew their leagues,
Owre howkit dead
Thence countra wives, wi' toil an' pain,
May plunge an' plunge the kurn in vain;
For, O! the yellow treasure's taen
By witching skill;
An' dawtit, twal-pint hawkie's gaen
As yells the bill.

[A stanza omitted.]
When thowes dissolve the snawy hoard,
An' float the jinglin' icy hoard,
Then water-kelpies haunt the fould,
By your direction,
An' 'nighted trav'lers are allur'd
   To their destruction.
An' aft your moss-traversing spankies
goblins
Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is:
The breezin', 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 man' stop,
   Or, strange to tell!
The youngest brother ye wad whip
   Aff straight to h-ll!
Lang syne, in Eden's bonnie yard,
When youthfu' lovers first were pair'd,
An' all the soul of love they shar'd,
   The raptur'd hour,
Sweet on the fragrant, flow'ry swa'rd
   In shady bower; 1

1 This verse originally stood:—
Langsyne in Eden's happy scene,
When strapping Adam's days were green,
And Eve was like my bonnie Jean,
My dearest part,
A dancin', sweet, young, handsome queen,
Wi' guileless heart.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Then you, ye auld, sneek-drawings dog!
Ye came to Paradise incog.
An' play'd on man a cursed brogue,
(Black be your fa')
An' gied the infant world a slog,
'Maist ruin'd a'.

Dye mind that day, when in a bizz,
Wi' reekit duds, an' reekit gizz,
Ye did present your smootlie phiz
'Mang better folk,
An' skelent on the man of Uz
Your spiteful' joke?

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

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

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

But, fare ye well, auld Nickie-ben!
O wad ye tak a thought an' men'!
Ye aiblius might—I dinna ken—
Still hae a stake—
I'm wae to think upon your den,
Ev'n for your sake!"
POEMS AND SONGS.

SCOTCH DRINK. 1

Give him strong drink, until he wink,
That's sinking in despair;
An' liquor guid to fire his blind,
That's proof wi' grief an' care.
There let him bowse, an' deep carouse,
Wi' brawiers flowing o'er,
Till he forgets his loves or debts,
An' ances his griefs no more.

Solomon's Proverbs, xxxi. 6, 7.

Let other poets raise a fracas,
Bont vines an' wines, an' drunken Bacchus,
An' crabbed names an' stories wrack us,
An' grate our lug,
I sing the juice Scotch here can mak us,
In glass or jug.

O thou, my Muse! guid an' guid Scotch Drink!
Whether thro' winninin' worms thou jink,2
Or, richly brown, ream o'er the brink,
In glorious sound,
Inspire me, till I lis an' wink,
To sing thy name!

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

On thee aft Scotland showers her cood,
In simple scences, the wale o' food; 3
Or tumblin' in the boiling flood
Wi' kail an' beef: 4
But when thou pours thy strong heart's blood,
There thou shans chief.

Existence can be indifferent to him. The very devil he cannot hate with right orthodoxy. He did not know probably that Sterne had been beforehand with him. 'He is the father of curses and lies,' said Dr. Shop; 'and is cursed and damned already.' 'I am sorry for it,' quoth my uncle Toby! A poet without love were a physical and metaphysical impossibility.' —Carlyle. —It is tolerably certain that Burns did know that Sterne had been beforehand with him, and that the sentiment so characteristic of the gentle and humane uncle Toby was consciously or unconsciously borrowed by Burns. The poet's letters clearly enough evidence his familiarity with and admiration of Sterne, and in his autobiographical letter to Dr. Moore he expressly says that two or three years before this time Tristram Shandy was a 'bosom favourite' with him.

1. "Notwithstanding the praise he has bestowed on 'Scotch Drink'—which seems to have misled his historians—I do not recollect during these seven years [the Tarbolton period], nor till towards the end of his commencing author—when his growing celebrity occasioned his being often in company—to have ever seen him intoxicated, nor was he at all given to drinking."—GILBERT BURNS TO DR. CHERIE.

2. Alluding to whisky, which has to come through the spirally-curved worm of the still.

3. The poet here alludes to cakes made of barley-meal, which are baked so thin as to be quite flexible.

4. In Scotland, haidle barley is uniformly used along with kail or colovart in making broth or soup.

5. That is, when brewed or distilled.
IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)
POEMS AND SONGS.

Food fills the waeie, an' keeps us livin';
Thou' 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 kitches fine.

Thou art the life o' public haunts:
But thee, what were our fairs and rants!
Even godly meetings o' the saints,
By thee inspir'd,
When gaping they besiege the tents,
Are doubly fir'd.

That merry night we get the corn in,
O sweetly then thou reams the horn in!
Or reekin' on a New-year mornin'
In cog or bicker,
An' just a wee drap sp'iritual burn in,
An' gusty suckler!

When Vulcan gies his bellows breath,
An' ploughmen gather wi' their graith,
O rare! to see thee fizz an' breath
I' th' luggit camp!
Then Burnewin comes on like death
At every chaup.

1 That is, when pain and grief form a heavy drag upon the wheels.
2 Ale in silver jugs at the tables of the rich.
3 When milk is scarce, small beer or other malt liquor is often used as a substitute for it in taking porridge or eating bread. The word kitchen in Scotland often means what gives a relish to the commonest fare.
4 The movable pulpits at celebrations of the communion. See note to the "Holy Fair."
5 Referring to the harvest-home, when the last of the corn-crop is brought home.
6 A small quantity of whisky burnt in a spoon, and mixed with the ale.
7 Burnewin — burn-the-wind — the Blacksmith — an appropriate title. — CURRAN.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Nae mercy, then, for airm or steel;
The brawnie, beinie, ploughman chiel,
Brings hard owre hip, wi' sturdy wheel,
The strong forehammer,
Till block an' studdie ring an' reel
Wi' dinsome clamour.

When skirlin' wannies see the light,
Thou mak'st the gossips clatter bright,
How fumblin' eftis their dearies slight;
Wae worth the name!
Nae howdie gets a social night,
Or plack frae them.

When neebours 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.

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

Wae worth that brandy, burning trash!
Fell source o' monie a pain an' brash
Twins monie a poor, doyit, drucken hash,
O' half his days;
An' sends, beside, and Scotland's cash
To her worst foes.

Ye Scots, wha wish and Scotland well,
Ye chief, to you my tale I tell,
Poor plackless devils like myself,
It sets you ill,
Wi' bitter, dearrow' wines to smell,
Or foreign gill.

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

O Whisky! soul o' plays an' pranks!
Accept a Bardie's grateful thanks!
When wanting thee, what tuneless cranks
Are my poor verses!
Thou comes—they rattle 't their ranks
At ither's a—s!

Thee, Ferintosh! O sadly lost!
Scotland, lament free coast to coast!
Now colic grips an' burnin' honest
May kill us a';
For royal Forbes' charter'd boast
Is ta'en awa!

Thae cursed horse-leeches o' th' Excise,
Wha mak the whisky stells their prize!
Haul up thy han', De'il! once, twice, thrice!
There, seize the blinkers!
An' bake them up in brannstane pies
For poor d—n'd drinkers.

Fortune! if thou'll but gie me still
Hale brecches, a scone, and whisky gill,
An' rowth o' rhyme to rave at will,
Tak a' the rest,
An' deal't about as thy blind skill
Directs thee best.²

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 [1780].³

A guid New-year I wish thee, Maggie!
Hae, there's a ripp to thy auld baggie: handful of corn in the stalk bag (stomach)
Tho' thou's bowes-backit now, an' knaggie, hollow-backed with bones protruding
I've seen the day,
Thou could hae gaen like any staggie
Out-owre the lay.

¹ For the privilege of distilling whisky, free of duty, on his barony of Ferintosh in Cromarty, for public services done by the family. So much whisky was there distilled that Ferintosh became a name almost synonymous with whisky. By the act relating to Scotch distilleries in 1755, the privilege was abolished, but Mr. Forbes received in compensation, by a decision of a jury, the sum of £21,580.
² "Of his pieces of humour, the tale of 'Tane o' Shunter' is probably the best; though there are traits of infinite merit in 'Scotch Drink,' 'The Holy Fair,' 'Halloween,' and several of the songs, in all of which it is remarkable that he rises occasionally into a strain of beautiful description or lofty sentiment, far above the pitch of his original conception."—JEFREY. "Scotch Drink" seems to have been suggested by Ferguson's "Csummer (that is fresh and cool) Water," and it is in the same measure.
³ "It was the token of a true knight in chivalry to be kind to his charger; the Kyle farmer shares in the same feeling; for he is gentle both in word and deed to his 'Auld Mare.' He recollects when she bore him triumphantly home when mellow from markets and other meetings; how she ploughed the stillest land, and faced the steepest brae, and, moreover, brought home his bonnie bride."—ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Tho' now thou's dowie, stiff, an' crazy,
An' thy and hide's as white's a daisy,
I've seen thee dapp'ft, sleek, and glaze,
A bonnie gray;
He should been tight that daun't to raise thee,
Ane in a day.

Thou ance was i' the foremost rank,
A filly buirdly, steeve, and swank,
An'veel down a shapely shank,
As e'er tread yird;
An' could hae flown out-owre a stank,
Like any bird.

It's now some nine an' twenty year,
Sin' thou was my guid-father's mere;
I've seen thee dapp'l, sleek, and ghiize,
A bonnie gay;
Thou should been tight that daun't to raise thee,
An' in a day.

When first I gaed to woe my Jenny,
Ye then was trottiu' wi' your minnie:
Tho' ye was trickie, slec, an' funnie,
Ye ne'er was donsie;
But hamely, tawie, quiet, an' cannie,
An' unco sousie.

That day, ye prant' wi' muckle pride,
When ye bare hame my bonnie bride;
An' sweet, an' gracefu' she did ride,
Wi' maiden air!
Kyle Stewart I could bragged wide,
For sic a pair.

Tho' now ye dow but hoyte an' hobble,
An' winkle like a saumont-coble,
That day ye was a jinker noble,
For heels an' win';
An' ran them till they a' did wauble,
Far, far behin'.

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

defull
shining
excite
Once on a time
large-stood strong active
earth
ditch
father-in-law's mare
clown
wealth
strong
mother
restive
manageble steady
singularly engaging
bore
challenged
such
can but amble crazily
reel salmon-boat
active beast
stagger
high-nottled
lingering
neigh
town'sfolk aloof

1 That allows itself peaceably to be handled, spoken of a horse, cow, &c.—Burn's Glossary.
2 The district in Ayrshire situated between the Ayr and the Doon. See note 3, p. 89.
POEMS AND SONGS.

When thou was corn't, an' I was mellow,
We took the road aye like a swallow;
At brooses* thou had me'er a fellow,
For pith an spek;
But ev'ry tail thou pay't them hollow,
Where'er thou gael.

The sma', droop-rumpl'd, hunter cattle,
Might alblins waurn thee for a brattle;
But sax Scotch miles² thou try't their mettle,
An' gart them whinzie:
Nae whip nor spur, but just a wattle
O' smuch or hazel.

Thou was a noble fittie-han',³
As e'er in tug or tow was drawn!
Aft thee an' I, in aught hours gann,
In guid March weather,
Hae turn'd sax rood beside our han',
For days thegither.

Thou never braind'g't, an' fetch't, an' fliskit,⁴
But thy and tail thou wad hae whiskit,
An' spread abreid thy weel-fill'd brisket,
Wi' pith an' power,
Till spritty⁵ knowes wa'd rain't and risket,
An' slypet owre.

When frosts lay lang, an' snows 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.⁶

In cart or car thou never roestit;
The steyste brae thou wad hae fac't it:
Thou never lap, and sten't, and breastit,
Then stood to blow;
But just thy step a wee thing hastit,
Thou snook't awa.

[1780.]

* Races at country weddings, the object being to see who shall first reach the bridegroom's house on returning from church, or from the bride's former residence after the ceremony.

* Nearly seven English miles.

* In Burns's time the plough was drawn usually by four horses (not ar now by two), and the "fitte-ha" (foot-on-land, that is on the soil) not yet turned up), or "lan'-ahin" (that is, land-behind) was the near or left-hand horse of the hinder pair. The others were the "fur-ahin (furrow-behind) and the "fur-aboe;"

Besides the ploughman, a gauchman (goadsman) was required to drive the horses.

* According to Burns's own glossary, brainge, or brainge, is "to run rashly forward;" fetch, "to pull by fits;" flib, "to fret at the yoke;" the spirit, sprat, or sprat is a variety of rush (Juncus articulatus). To risk, is to make a noise like the tripping of roots.

* That is, she would not have much sleep, would have plenty of hard work, or summer, In return for getting that extra quantity of oats now,
POEMS AND SONGS.

My plough is now thy burn-time a':
Four gallant brutes as e'er did draw:
Forbye sax mac, I've sell't awa,
That thou hast mirst.
They drew me threenteen pound an' twa,
The vera wart.

Monie a sair daurk we twa hae wrought,
An' wi' the weary warl' fought!
An' monie an anxious day, I thought
We wad be bent!
Yet here to crazy age we've brougth,
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 stimpart, I'll reserve ane
Laid by for you.

We've worn to crazy years thegither;
We'll toyte about wi' ane another;
Wi' tentie care I'll dit thy tether,
To some hain'd rig,
Where ye m' may nobly rax your leather,
Wi' suma fatigue.2

THE TWA DOGS.—A TALE.

The "Twa Dogs" was completed in February, 1786, as appears from a letter of Burns to Richmond, dated the 17th of that month, in which he says: "I have likewise completed my poem on the 'Dogs,' but have not shown it to the world." His brother gives us the following information: "The tale of 'Twa Dogs' was composed after the resolution of publishing was nearly taken. Robert had a dog, which he called Lanthis, that was a great favourite. The dog had been killed by the wanton cruelty of some person the night before my father's death. Robert said to me that he should like to confer such immortality as he could bestow on his old friend Lanthis, and that he had a great mind to introduce something into the book (the first edition of his poems) under the title of Steacns to the Memory of a Quadruped Friend; but this plan was given up for the poem as it now stands. Cesar was merely the creature of the poet's imagination, created for the purpose of holding a chat with his favourite Lanthis."—GILBERT BURNS.

'Twas in that place o' Scotland's isle,
That bears the name o' Auld King Coil;3
Upon a bonnie day in June,
When wearing thro' the afternoon,

1 My plough-team now consists entirely of the offspring. Burn-time is the same as Old English burna-tume, A. Saxon burna-tám, from burna, child, and team, family, progeny.
2 "Towards the close of his Address he grows serious, but not sad—as well he may; and at the close, as well he may, tender and grateful. . . The Address has—we know—humanized the heart of a Gilmerton carter."—PROFESSOR WILSON.
3 Kyle, the central district of Ayrshire, popularly
POEMS AND SONGS.

Twa dogs, that were na throng at hame,
Forgan't bea ance upon a time.

The first I'll name, they ca'd him Cesar;
Was keepit for his honour's pleasure:
His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs,
Show'd he was same o' Scotland's dogs;
But whalp it some place far abroad,
Where sailors gang to fish for cod.

His locketter'd, braw brass collar
Show'd him the gentleman and scholar; 1
But though he was o' high degree,
The fient 2 a pride, nee pride had he;
But wad he spent an hour caressin',
Ev'n wi' a tinkler-gypsy's messin.
At kirk or market, mill or smiddle,
Nae tawted tyke, the'er saw 1 in's die,
But he wad stan't, as glad to see him,
And stream't on stanes an' hillocks wi' him.

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

He was a gash an' faithfu' tyke,
As over lap a shong or dyke.
His honest, sonsie, baws'n't 4 face,
Aye gat him friends in ilka place.
His breast was white, his towzie back
Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black;
His gawcie tail, wi' upward curl,
Hung o'er his hurdies wi' a swirl.

Nae doubt but they were fain o' iither,
An' unco pack an' thick thegither;
Wi' social nose whyles snuff'd and snowkit,
Whyles mice an' mondieworts they howkit;
Whyles scur'd awa' in lang excursion,
An' worry'd iither in diversion;

supposed to have derived its name from Colms, said
in legend to have been a king of the Picts. The por-
tion of Kyle north of the Ayr is distinguished as
King's Kyle, or Kyle Stewart, having been at one
time in the possession of that family.

1 The burlesque panegyric of the first dog reminds
one of Launce's account of his dog Crab, where he is

said, as an instance of his being in the way of pro-
motion, 'to have got among three or four gentleman-
like dogs under the duke's table.' — Hazlitt.

2 Corruption of fiend: therefore, a petty oath =
the devil a pride.

3 Cuchullin's dog in Ossian's Fingal.—R. B.

4 Having a white stripe down the face.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Until wi' daffin weary grown,
Upon a kno've they sat them down,
And there began a lang digression
About the lords o' the creation.¹

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 rack'd rents,
His coals, his kain,² 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 bonnie silken purse
As lang's my tail, whare, thro' the steeks,
The yellow letter'd Geordie keeks.

Frae morn to e'en it's nought but toiling,
At baking, roasting, frying, boiling;
An' tho' the gentry first are stechin',
Yet ev'n the ha' folk fill their pechan
Wi' sauce, ragouts, and sielike trashtrie,
That's little short o' downright wastrie.
Our whipper-in, wee blastit wonner,³
Poor worthless elf, it eats a dinner,
Better than oly 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, Cesar, whyles they're fash't enough;
A cottar howkin' in a shengh,
Wi' dirty stanes biggin' a dyke,
Baring a quarry, and sic like,
Himself, a wife, he thus sustains,
A smytric o' wee dudlie weans,
An' nought but his han' darg, to keep
Them right and tight in thack an' rape.⁴

¹ "In one of his earlier poems his plan seems to be to inculcate a lesson of contentment on the lower classes of society, by showing that their superiors are neither much better nor happier than themselves; and this he chooses to execute in the form of a dialogue between two dogs. . . . The dogs of Burns, excepting in their talents for morning, are downright dogs; and not like the horses of Swift, or the kind and sporting knoll
knock
at all
proprietor
rent in kind assessments
rent
assessments
calls for
meshees (lit. stitches)
golden guineas peeps
screaming kitchen-peoples belly
such like stuff
wonder
co'tars put stomach

² Fowls, &c., paid as rent by a farmer.—BURNS.
³ Wonner or wonder is often used in Scotland as a term of great contempt for a small and insignificant person.
⁴ In a comfortable home, the thatch properly secured with straw-ropes.
An' when they meet wi' sair disasters,
Like loss o' health, or want o' masters,
Ye maist wad think, a wee touch hunger,
An' they maun starve o' could an' hunger:
But, how it comes, I never kent yet,
The 're maistly wonderfu' contented;
An' amily chielis, an' clever hizzies,
Are bred in sic a way as this is.

CESAR.

But then to see how ye're neglekit,
How huff'd, and cuff'd, and disrespekit
L—d, man, our gentry care as little
For delvers, ditches, an' sic cattle;
They gang as saucy by poor folk,
As I wad by a stinking brock.

I've notice'd 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 smash;
He'll stamp, an' threaten, curse an' swear,
He'll apprehend them, point their gear;
While they maun stan', wi' aspect humble,
An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble! 1

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:
Tho' constantly on poortith's brink,
They're sae accustom'd wi' the sight,
The view o' gies them little fright.

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

The dearest comfort o' their lives,
Their grushie weans an' faithful' wives,
The pratling things are just their pride,
That sweetens a' their fire-side.

An' whyles twalpennie worth o' nappy 2
Can mak' the bodies mae happy;

1 This description is from dire personal experience.
"My indignation yet boils at the recollection of
(what we suffered at Montgomery, from) the
scoundrel factor's insolent letters, which used to
set us all in tears."—Burns's Autobiographical Letter

to Dr. Moore.

2 Twalpennies Scots is equal to one penny sterling
—the then price of a choppin (quart) of Scotch ale.
They lay aside their private cares,
To mind the Kirk and State affairs:
They'll talk o' patronage and priests,
Wi' kindling fury in their breasts,
Or tell what new taxation's comin',
An' ferlie at the folk in London.

As bleak-fac'd Hallowmass returns,
They get the jovial, ranting kins,
When rural life, o' ev'ry station,
Unite in common recreation;
Love blinks, Wit slaps, an' social Mirth
Forgets there's Care up' the eart.

That merry day the year begins,
They bar the door on frosty whis!
The mappy reeks wi' mantling ream,
An' sheds a heart-inspiring steam;
The huntin' pipe, an' sneezein'-mill,
Are hawked round wi' richt guid will;
The cantie and folks crackin' crouse,
The young anes rantin' thro' 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 monie a creditable stock,
O' decent, honest, fawsont folk,
Are riven out faith root and branch,
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench,
Wha thinks to knit himsel' the faster
In favour wi' some gentle master,
Wha, aiblins, through a-parliamentin',
For Britain's guid his saul indentin'—

CÉSAR.

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

1"He carries us into the humble scenes of life, not to make us dolce out our tribute of charitable compassion to paupers and cottagers, but to make us feel with them on equal terms, to make us enter into their passions and interests, and share our hearts with them as with brothers and sisters of the human species."—THOMAS CAMPBELL.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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; 1
Or down Italian vista startles,
Wh-re-hunting among graves o' myrtles:
Then bowses durnly German water,
To mak' himsell' look fair and fatter,
An' clear the consequent salt sorrows,
Love-gests of carnival signoras.

For Britain's guid!—for her destruction!
Wi' dissipation, feud, an' faction.

LUATH.

Hech man! dear Sirs! is that the gate
They waste sae mony a braw estate!
Are we sae foughten an' harass'd
For gear to gang that gate at last!

O would they stay aback frae courts,
An' please themselves wi' kintra sports,
It wad for ev'ry ane be better,
The laird, the tenant, an' the cotter!
For thae frank, rantin', ramblin' billies,
Fient haec2 o' them's ill-hearted fellows;
Except for breakin' o' their tinner,
Or speakin' lightly o' their limmer,
Or shootin' o' a hare or moor-cock,
The ne'er a bit they're ill to poor folk.3

But will ye tell me, Master Cesar,
Sure great folk's life's a life o' pleasure?
Nae cauld nor hunger e'er can steer them,
The vera thought o' t' need na fear them.

CESAR.

I.—d, man, were ye but whyles where I am,
The gentle ye wad ne'er envy 'em.

It's true they need na starve or sweat,
Tho' winter's cauld, or simmer's heat;
They've nee sair work to craze their banes,
An' fill auld age wi' grips an' grumes;

1 An allusion to the bull-fights of Spain.
2 Fient haec here, and devil haec some lines farther on, are petty oaths expressing negation, and exactly equivalent to the English demnec or devil a bit.
3 "When describing with satirical humour the character of country squires, he remarks that they are in general disposed to treat their rustic dependants with affable liberality and indulgence, and that there are but a few unpardonable offences which never fail to kindle their resentment, and call forth their powers of oppression. These he catches with penetrating observation, and enumerates with happy brevity, in six lines, of which the descriptive truth will be recognized from Caithness to Cornwall."—Professor Walker. 
But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges and schools,
That when we read ills perplex them,
They make enow themselves to vex them;
An' aye the less they have to sturt them,
In like proportion less will hurt them.

A country fellow at the plough,
His acres till'd, he's right enough;
A country girl at her wheel,
Her dizzens done, she's unco weel;
But gentlemen, an' ladies warst,
Wi' ev'n down want o' wark are curst.
They loiter, lounging, lank, an' lazy;
Tho' delf haunt ells them, yet uneasy;
Their days, insipid, dull, and tasteless;
Their nights maquet, lang and restless.

An' c'en their sports, their balls an' races,
Their galloping thro' public places,
There's sic parade, sic pomp, an' art,
The joy can scarcely reach the heart.

The men cast out in party matches,
Then sowther a' in deep delanchoes;
As night they're mad wi' drink an' wh-ring,
Niest day their life is past enduring.

The ladies arm-in-arm in clusters,
As great and gracions a' as sisters;
But hear their absent thoughts o' ither,
They're a' ran dels an' jads thegither.1
Whyles o'er the wee bit cup an' platie,
They sip the scandal potion pretty;
Or lee-lang nights, wi' crabbit leeks
Pore owre the devil's pictur'd leeks;
Stake on a chance a farmer's stackyard,
An' cheat like onie unhang'd blackguard.

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

By this the sun was out o' sight,
An' darker gloaming brought the night:

1 All regular devils and jades together.
POEMS AND SONGS.

The bann-clock humm'd wi' lazy drone;
The kye stood rowlin' i' the lean;
When up they got, and shook their hogs,
Rejoic'd they were na men, but dogs;
An' each took off his several way,
Res'I'd to meet some other day.

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

This was written before the act anent the Scotch distilleries, of session 1786; for which Scotland and the Author return their most grateful thanks.—BURRS.

[Verse]

... How art thou lost! (Parson on Milton)

Ye Irish lords, ye knights an' squires,
Wha represent our brughs an' shires,
An' duncely manage our affairs
In parliament,
To you a simple Bardie's prayers
Are humbly sent.

... Ye rooët muse is hearse!
Your honours' hearts wi' grief 't wad pierce,
To see her sittin' on her
Low i' the dust,
An' scriechin' out prosaic verse,
An' like to brust!

Tell them wha hae the chief direction,
Scotland an' me's in great affliction,
E'er sin' they laid that curse restriction
On aquavitae; 4

1 "Though I am very far from meaning to compare our rustic bard to Shakespeare, yet whoever will read his lighter and more humorous poems, his Dialogue of the Dogs, his Dedication to Gavin Hamilton, Esq., his Epistles to a Young Friend, and to W. Simson, will perceive with what uncommon penetration and sagacity this heaven-taught ploughman, from his humble and unlettered station, has looked upon men and manners." —HENRY MACKENZIE.

2 The lines parodied (not very happily) are in Paradise Lost, book ix., the words being used by Adam in regard to Eve after she had eaten the forbidden fruit:

O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God's works . . .

How art thou lost!

3 The Almanacs of the period give the names of several Irish peers among the representatives of the "brughs an' shires" of Scotland, these peers being probably connected by blood or marriage with the great Scotch families who held the patronage of many of the seats in North Britain. It is somewhat anomalous that while "Irish lords" that have not a seat in the House of Peers are eligible for a seat in the House of Commons (for constituencies in Great Britain), the same privilege is not enjoyed by peers of Scotland. This disability Burns probably regarded as a national insult.

4 In the end of 1785 there was a great outcry among the distillers of Scotland against the laws to which their industry was subject, and they were supported.
POEMS AND SONGS.

An' rouse them up to strong conviction,
   An' move their pity.
Stand forth, an' tell you Premier Youth;1
The honest, open, naked truth:
Tell him o' mine an' Scotland's drouth,
   His servants humble:
The muckle devil blaw ye south,
   If ye dissemble!

Does any great man glum an' gloom?    brown
Speak out, an' never fash your thumb!    trouble
Let posts an' pensions sink or soon
Wi' them wha grant 'em,
If honestly they canna come,
   Far better want 'em.
In gath'rin' votes you were an' slack;    house
Now stand as tightly by your tuck;
Ne'er claw your lug, an' fidge your back,
An' hum an' law,
But raise your arm, an' tell your crack
Before them a'.

Paint Scotland greeting ower her thrissle;    weeping
Her matchkin-stoup as toon's a whistle;
An' damn'd excisemen in a bustle,
   An' law,
Seizin' a stoll,

Triumphant crushin' like a mussel
Or limpet shell.

Then on the tither hand present her,
A blackguard smuggler right behind her,
An' check-for-chow, a chullie vinter,
Collaung' join,
Picking her pouch as bare as winter
   Of a' kind coin.

Is there, that bears the name o' Scot,
But feels his heart's blood rising hot,
To see his poor an' mither's pot
   Knocked
Thus dung in staves,

An' plunder'd o' her hindmost groat
By gallows knaves!

1 Mr. Pitt. Though only about twenty-seven years of age he was then premier,

by the farmers and land-owners, these latter classes resting their case chiefly on the fact that the excise laws injuriously affected the sale of barley by reducing its price. It was alleged that many distillers were, in consequence of the existing laws or the excessively rigorous manner in which they were carried out, forced to give up their business; while illicit distillation and smuggling of spirits from abroad were greatly on the increase, and had come to a pitch never known before. The agitation led to new excise regulations being introduced in 1780 (as Burns intimates in his note given above) which seem to have been considered quite satisfactory by the persons chiefly concerned.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Alas! I'm but a nameless wight,
Trod o' the mire o' sight!
But could I like Montgome'ries1 fight,
Or gab like Boswell,
There's some sark-necks I wad draw tight,
An' tie some hose well.

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

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

Dempster,2 a true blue Scot, I'me warran';
Thee, aith-detesting, chaste Kilkerran;3
An' that glib-gabet Highland baron,
The Laird o' Graham,4
An' ane, a chap that's d-mn'd anfdarran',
Dundas his name.5

Erskine,6 a spunkie Norland billie;
True Campbells, Frederick an' Hay;7
An' Liv'rstone, the bauld Sir Willie;8
An' monie others,
Whom auld Demosthenes or Tully
Might own for brithers.9

1 The Montgomerics of Colsfield. The "Boswell" mentioned along with the Montgomerics, was the well-known biographer of Johnson, who often spoke at Ayr county-meetings. It is singular that this enthusiastic literary gossip should have overlooked Burns.
2 George Dempster of Dumfischene, in Forfarshire, a distinguished Whig representative. See note to the "Epistle to James Smith."
3 Sir Adam Ferguson of Kilkerran, Bart., then member for the city of Edinburgh.
5 Henry Dundas, M.P. for Edinburghshire, afterwards Viscount Melville.
6 Probably Thomas Erskine, afterwards Lord High Chancellor of England, born 1750, died 1823. But he was not then in parliament.
7 Lord Frederick Campbell, M.P. for Argyllshire, second brother of the Duke of Argyll; and Hay Campbell, M.P. for the Glasgow group of burghs. He was afterwards president of the Court of Session, and died in 1832.
8 Sir William Augustus Cunningham, Bart. of Livington, sometime M.P. for Linlithgowshire.
9 In the original MS. the following stanza occurs here:—

See, sodger Hugh, my watchmam shent,
If basons e'en represented;
I ken that it's yer word was wanted,
Yes, leid yer hand;
But when there's aught to say aboot it,
Ye've at a stand.

"Sodger Hugh," says Currie, "is evidently the Earl of Eglinton, then Colonel Montgomery of Colsfield, representing in parliament the county of Ayr. Why this was left out does not appear." The explanation given is that as there is here a reference to the
POEMS AND SONGS.

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

This while she's been in crankous mood,
Her lost militia fir'd her bluid;¹
(Deil na they never mair do guid,
Play'd her that pliskie!)
An' now she's like to rin red-wud
About her whisky.

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

For G—d sake, sirs! then speak her fair,
An' straik her cannie wi' the hair,
An' to the muckle house repair,
Wi' instant speed,
An' strive, wi' a' your wit and lear,
To get remeal.

Yon ill-tongued tinkler, Charlie Fox,
May taunt you wi' his jeers an' mocks;
But gee him'ht, my hearty cocks!
E'en cowe the cadie;
An' send him to his dicing box
An' sportin' lady.

Tell you guid bluid o' auld Boconnock's²
I'll be his debt twa maslulm bannocks;³
An' drink his health in auld Nansie Tinnock's⁴
Nine times a-week.

¹ The Scots Militia Bill, introduced into parliament in 1782, had inserted in it the third reading a clause for facilitating enlistment into the army from the force contemplated to be raised. Dumfries and other liberal members, objecting to this condition, opposed the bill and it was lost.
² Pitt's father, the Earl of Chatham, was the second son of Robert Pitt of Boconnock, in Cornwall.
³ Maslulm = mixed. Maslulm bannocks, cakes made of a mixture of oats, peas, and beans, with wheat or barley ground fine.
⁴ A worthy old hostess of the author's in Manclislie, where he sometimes studied politics over a glass of gud and Scotch drink. — R. B.
⁵ Nansie Tinnock is long deceased, and no one has caught up her mantle. She is described as having been a true ale-wife in the proverbial sense of the word—close, discreet, civil, and no tale-teller. When any neighbouring wife came asking if her John was here, 'Oh, no!' Nansie would reply, shaking money in her pocket as she spoke, 'he's no here;' implying to the querist that her husband was not in the house, while she meant to herself that he was not among her halfpence—thus keeping the word of promise to the
POEMS AND SONGS.

If he some scheme, like tea an' winnocks,¹
Wad kindly seek.

Could be some commutation broach,
I'll pledge my aith in guid brained Scotch,
He needna fear their foul reproach
Nor erudition,
Yon mixtie-maxtie queer hotch-potch,
The Coalition.²

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

An' now, ye chosen Five-and-Forty,³
May still your mither's heart support ye;
Then, tho' a minister grow dourty,
An' kick your place,
Ye'll snap your fingers, poor an' hearty,
Before his face.

God bless your honours a' your days,
Wi' sowps o' kail and brats o' chaise,
In spite o' a' the thievish knees,
That haunt St. Jamie's!⁴

Your humble Bardie sings an' prays
While Rab his name is.

POSTSCRIPT.

Let half-starv'd slaves, in warmer skies,
See future wines, rich clust'ring, rise;
Their lot auld Scotland ne'er envies,
But, blythe and frisky,
She eyes her freeborn, martial boys
Tak aff' the'ir whisky.

What tho' their Phoebus kinder warms,
While fragrance blooms and beauty charms,

ear, but breaking it to the hope... It is re-

1. Alluding to a reduction of the duty on tea, and a tax on windows, introduced by Pitt in 1784.
2. The short-lived coalition ministry under the Duke of Portland, in which it was attempted to effect the Utopian scheme of combining the leading men of both parties—materials the most discordant—into one vigorous and united administration.
3. The number of Scottish representatives in the House of Commons previous to the passing of the Reform Act of 1832.
4. The court of St. James's.
When wretches range, in famish'd swarms,
The scented groves,
Or hounded forth, dishonour arms
In hungry droves.

Their gun's a burden on their shouther;
They downa bide the stink o' powther;
Their baulest thought's a hank'ring swither
To star' or rin,
Till skelp—a shot—they're aff, n' throw'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 haw 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' leav'es him
In faint huzzas.¹

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

Scotland, my auld, respected mither!
Tho' whiles ye moistify your leatheer,
Till whare ye sit, on craps o' heather,
Ye tine your dam;
Freedom and whisky gang thegither!
Tak aff your dram.

¹ "There are specimens of such vigour and emphasis scattered through his whole works, as are sure to make themselves and their author remembered; for instance, that noble description of a dying soldier, "Nae cauld, faint-hearted doubtings tease him."—JEFFREY.

VOL. II.
THE ORDINATION.\(^1\)

In a letter of the poet's to his intimate friend John Richmond, Edinburgh, dated 17th February, 1786, he says: "I have been very busy with the Muses since I saw you, and have composed, among several others, the 'Ordination,' a poem on Mr. Mc'Klnlay's being called to Kilmarnock."

For sense they little owe to Flrgal Heaven,—
To please the mob they hide the little given.

Kilmarnock websters fidge an' claw,
An' pour your creeshie nations;
An' ye wha leather rax an' draw,
Of a' denominations,\(^2\)
Swith! to the Leigh Kirk, an' an' a',
An' there tak up your stations:
Then aff to Begbie's in a raw,\(^3\)
An' pour divine libations

For joy this day.

Curst Common Sense, that imp o' hell,
Cam in wi' Maggie Launder;\(^1\)
But Oliphant aft made her yell,
An' Russell sair misc'd her;\(^5\)
This day Mackinlay takes the flail,
An' he's the boy will bauld her!
He'll clap a shang'an on her tail,
An' set the barns to dand her
Wi' dirt this day.

Mak haste an' turn king David owre,
An' lilt wi' holy changor;
O' double verse come gie us four,
An' skirl up the Bangor;\(^6\)

---

\(^1\)The "Ordination," as proved by Burns's own statement regarding its composition, must have been written about, or a little before, the beginning of February, 1786, when it became known that the Rev. Mr. Mackinlay was to be ordained minister of the Leigh (that is Low) or parochial Church of Kilmarnock, which took place on the 6th of April, 1786. Mackinlay died so recently as the 10th of February, 1841, having held the church in Kilmarnock about fifty-five years, and survived the poet about forty-five. He belonged to the high Orthodox or Old Light party, in opposition to the Moderates or New Lights, to which Burns attached himself: and as he succeeded a Moderate (the Rev. Mr. Mutch) the severe irony of the satire may be accounted for. Other poems in which the severely orthodox party are ridiculed by Burns are the "Twa Herds," the "Holy Fair," and the "Kirk's Alarm."

\(^2\)The Inhabitants of Kilmarnock were then chiefly employed in weaving carpets and other goods, and in the preparation of leather.

\(^3\)A tavern in Kilmarnock, near the Leigh Kirk, kept by a person of this name.

\(^4\)Alluding to a scoffing ballad which was made on the admission of the late Reverend and worthy Mr. Lindsay to the Leigh Kirk.\(\text{— R. B.}\) This ballad, which is more doggerel, was written by an eccentric shoemaker named Hunter, and is given at p. 144 of the History of Kilmarnock, by Archibald Mc'Kay.

Mr. Lindsay was said to have obtained his appointment through the influence of his wife, Margaret Lauder, who had been housekeeper to the Earl of Glencairn, the patron of the church. Lindsay was a Moderate, or adopted what was then called the Common Sense doctrines. His Induction had to be effected by force. He died in 1774, and was succeeded by the Rev. John Mutch, who died in 1798, 1785. Mackinlay obtained the presentation to the Low Church from the Earl of Glencairn in the same year, through the influence of Sir W. Cunningham of Auchencleith, in whose family he had for some time been tutor.

\(^5\)Oliphant and Russell were Kilmarnock ministers of the Old Light party.

\(^6\)A favourite psalm tune.
This day the kirk kicks up a stoure,
Nae mair the knaves shall wrang her,
For Heresy is in her power,
An' gloriously she'll whang her
Wi' pith this day.

Come, let a proper text be read,
An' touch it aff wi' vigour,
How graceless Ham\(^1\) leugh at his dad,
Which made Canaan a nigger;
Or Phineas\(^2\) drove the murdering blade,
Wi' wh-re-abhorring rigour:
Or Zipporah,\(^3\) the scandalin' jade,
Was like a bluidy tiger
F' th' inn that day.

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

Now, anld Kilmarnock, cock thy tail,
And toss thy horns fu' cauntly;
Nae mair thou'll rowte out-ove the dale,
Because thy pasture's scanty;
For lopfu's large o' gospel kail
Shall fill thy crib in plenty,
An' runs o' grace the pick an' wale,
No gien by way o' dainty,
But ilka day.\(^4\)

Nae mair by Babel's streams we'll weep,
To think upon our Zion;
And hang our fiddles up to sleep,
Like baby-clouts a-dryin':
Come, screw the pegs wi' tunefu' cheep,
And o'er the thairms be tryin';

dust
no more
flog

\(^1\) Genes. ix. ver. 22.
\(^2\) Numbers xxv. ver. 8.
\(^3\) Exod. iv. ver. 25.
\(^4\) "The conceptions of Burns were no less remarkable for their clearness than their strength. This enabled him to sustain all the similes correctly, and to avoid that incongruity in the progress of the parallel to which less discriminating minds are exposed. We may refer, as examples, to the ludicrous comparisons of Kilmarnock to a cow in the 'Ordination,' and of the life of the 'Unco Gud' to a mill, in the 'Address,' and also to the whole allegorical song 'John Barleycorn.'" — Professor Walker.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Oh, rare! to see our elbucks wheep,
An' a' like lamb-tails flyin'
Fu' fast this day!

Lang Patronage, wi' rod o' airn,
Has shor'd the Kirk's UndoIn',
As lately Fenwick,5 air forfain,
Has proven to its ruin:
Our patron, honest man! Glencairn,
He saw mischief was brewin';
And like a godly elect lairn,
He's wad' us out a true one,
And sound this day.

Now Robertson6 larrangue nae mair,
But steek your gab for ever:
Or try the wicked town o' Ayr,
For there they'll think you clever.
Or, nae reflection on your lear,
Ye may commence a shaver;
Or to the Netherton7 repair,
And turn a carpet-weaver
All-hand this day.

Mutrie and you were just a match,
We never had sic twa drones;
Auld Hornie did the Laigh Kirk watch,
Just like a winkin' baudrons;
And aye he catch'd the tither wretch,
To fry them in his caudrons;
But now his honour maun detach,
Wi' a' his brimstone squadrons,
Fast, fast this day.

See, see auld Orthodoxy's face
She's swingin' thro' the city:
Hark, how the nine-tail'd cat she plays!
I vow it's unco pretty;
There, Learning, with his Greckish face,
Grunts out some Latin ditty;
And Common Sense is gau, she says,
To mak' to Jamie Beattie8
Her 'plain this day.

But there's Morality himsel',
Embracing all opinions;

1 A parish in Ayrshire.
2 The colleague of Mackinlay—a Moderate; died 1798.
3 A suburb of Kilmarnock.
4 Probably James Beattie, LL.D., the poet and philosopher, author of an Essay on Truth, as it was supposed he sided with the "Moderates" in church matters.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Hear, how he gies the tither yell,
Between his two companions;
See, how she peels the skin an' fell,
As ane were peelin' onions!
Now there—they're packed all to hell,
And banish'd our dominions,
Henceforth this day.

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

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

——

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH.1

Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul!
Sweetness of life, and order of society!
I owe thee much.—BLAIR.

Dear Smith, the sleek, pawkie thief,
That e'er attempted stealth or rie,
Ye surely hae some warlock-breef
Owe human hearts;
For ne'er a bosom yet was prief
Against your arts.

1 "This poem on the clerical settlements at Kilmarnock, blends a good deal of ingenious metaphor with its accustomed humour. Even viewing him as a satirist, the least and humblest light on which he can be regarded as a poet, it may still be said of him,

His style was witty, though it had some gall;
Something he might have mended—so may all."—THOMAS CAMPBELL.

2 James Smith, to whom this epistle is addressed, and who is therein described as of "scrimpit stature," but of sterling manhood, was originally a shopkeeper in Mauchline. He removed to the banks of the Avon, in the neighbourhood of Linlithgow, where he established a calico-printing establishment. Becoming unfortunate in his speculations, he afterwards went to the West Indies, and found an early grave. He is said to have been of rather rukld habits, as, indeed, is hinted in the "Epitaph" on p. 110. The epistle was written in the spring of 1786.

"The epistle to Smith is, perhaps, the very best of
POEMS AND SONGS.

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 other pair that’s done,
Mair ta’en I’m wi’ you.

That auld, capricious carlin, Nature,
To mak amends for scrimpit stature,
She’s turn’d you aft, a human creature
Oa her first plan,
And in her freaks, on ev’ry feature,
She’s wrote, the Man.

Just now I’ve ta’en the fit o’ rhyme,
My barmie noodle’s working prime,
My fancy yerkit up sublime
WT’ hasty summon:
Hae ye a leisure-moment’s time
To hear what’s comin’?

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

The star that rules my luckless lot,
Has fated me the russet coat,
An’ damn’d my fortune to the groat;
But, in requit,
Has bless’d me wi’ a random shot
O’ countra wit.

This while my notion’s ta’en a skelent,
To try my fate in guid black prent; ¹
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 ensur’d their debtors
A’ future ages;

¹ An allusion to the first edition of his poems, which was passing through the press at the time this epistle was written, and was published in the end of July, 1786.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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’ lowes
My rustic sang.

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

But why o’ death begin a tale?
Just now we’re living, sound and hale;
Then top and maintop crowd the sail,
Heave care o’er side!
And large, before enjoyment’ 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, ane that five-an’forty’s speel’d,
See crazy, weary, joyless eild,
Wi’ wrinkled face,
Comes hostin’, kirplin’, owre the field,
Wi’ creepin’ pace.

When ane 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 in thy morning,
Young Fancy’s rays the hills adorning,
Cold-pausing Caution’s lesson scorning,
We frisk away,
Like school-boys, at th’ expected warning,
To joy and play.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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

Some, lucky, find a flowery spot,
For which they never toiled or swat;
They drink the sweet, and eat the fat,
But care or pain;
And, hapy, eye the barren butt
With high disdain.

With steady aim, some fortune chase;
Keen hope does every sinew brace;
Thro' fair, thro' foul, they urge the race,
And seize the prey:
Then cannie, in some cozy place,
They close the day.

And others, like your humble servant,
Poor wights! nae rules nor roads observin';
To right or left, eternal swervin',
They zig-zag on:
Till curse with age, obscene an' starvin'
They aften grown.1

Alas! what bitter toil an' straining—
But truce with peevish, poor complaining!
Is fortune'sickle Luna waning?
Fen let her gang!
Beneath what light she has remaining,
Let's sing our sang.

My pen I here fling to the door,
And kneel, "Ye Powers!" and warm implore,
"Thot' I should wander Terra o'er,
In all her climes,
Grant me but this, I ask no more,
Aye rowth o' rhymes. abundance

"Gie dreeping roasts to countra birds,
Till icles 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.

1 "Where can we find a more exhilarating emnumera-  
successive extinction as age advances, than in the  
sion of the enjoyments of youth, contrasted with their  
'Epistle to James Smith?'"—Professor Walker.
POEMS AND SONGS.

"A title, Dempster¹ 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 pleas'd to keep me hale,
I'll sit down o'er my scanty meal,
Be't water-brose, or muslin-kail,²
Wi' cheerful face,
As lang's the masses dinna fail
To say the grace."

An anxious ce I never throws
Behind my lug, or by my nose;
I jounk beneath misfortune's blues
As weel's I may:
Sworn foe to sorrow, care, and prose,
I rhyme away.

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

Nae hair-brain'd, sentimental traces³
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, nac doubt ye're wise;
Nae ferly tho' ye do despise
The harum-searam, ram-stam boys,
The rattlin' squad:
I see you upwards cast your eyes—
—Ye ken the road.—

¹ George Dempster of Dumfriesshire, Forfarshire, M.P.,
a distinguished parliamentary orator, and an intrepid
defender of all Scottish patriotic institutions: died in
1818, aged eighty-two: referred to in the "Author's
Cry."
² Water-brose is made by stirring boiling water and
oat-meal together so as to form a thickish mess which
is eaten with milk. It used to be a very common

³ This line is quoted by Burns himself in his po.
of the "Vision:"

A "hair-brain'd, sentimental trace"
Was strongly marked in her face.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Whilst I—but I shall haud me there—
Wi' you I'll scarce gang any where—
Then, Jamie, I shall say nac mair,
But quat my sang,
Content wi' you to mak a pair,
Whare'er I gang.1

---

EPITAPH ON A WAG IN MAUCHLINE.2

Lament him, Mauchline husbands a',
He aften did assist ye;
For had ye staid whole weeks awa';
Your wives they ne'er had miss'd ye.
Ye Mauchline lairds, as on ye pass
To school in bands thegither,
O tread ye lightly on his grass,
Perhaps he was your father.

---

EPITAPH ON JOHN DOVE,3

INNKEEPER, MAUCHLINE.

Here lies Johny Pigeon; what was his religion
Wha'er desires to ken,
To some other warl' maun follow the earl,
For here Johny Pigeon had nane.

Strong ale was ablation, small beer persecution,
A dram was *memento mori*;
But a full flowing bowl was the saving his soul,
And Port was celestial glory.

---

1 "The bounding sense of enjoyment expressed in this poem is in striking contrast to the sombre tones of "Man was made to Mourn," and the verses "To a Mouse."... There was, indeed, at this time a contention going on in Burns's mind, between the sad consideration of his position in life, and those poetical tendencies which might be interpreted as partly the cause of that position being so low... At length we have the final struggle between these two contending principles, and the triumph of the muse, expressed in a poem of the highest strain of eloquence."—ROBERT CHAMBERS.

2 This "wag" was James Smith, to whom Burns addressed the above poetical epistle. His claims to distinction, as a village notoriety, might have with propriety been left unsung.

3 The landlord of the "Whitefoord Arms," Mauchline, in the main street opposite the parish church, and closely adjoining the house in which Jean Armour's parents resided. It was Burns's "howff" in the days preceding the publication of the Kilnarnock edition of his poems, and the headquarters of a bachelors' club, of which the poet, John Richmond, James Smith, and William Hunter were "the bright particular stars." Its object was to discuss and explicate village scandals, and its proceedings were assimilated to those of a court of justice. Smith, the "wag" of the preceding epitaph, acted as "fiscal."
POEMS AND SONGS.

THE VISION.

DUAN FIRST.

The sun had clos'd the winter day,
The curler's quait their roaring play,
An' hauger'd maukin ta'en her way
To kail-yards green,
While faithless swans ilk step betray
Where she has been.

The thresher's weary flingin'-tree
The lee-lang day had tired me;
And when the day had clos'd his ee,
Far it the west,
Ben i' the spence, right pensively,
I gaed to rest.

There, lonely, by theingle-cheek,
I sat and cy'd the spewing reek,
That fill'd, wi' hoast-provoking smeek,
The anld clay biggin; 3
An' heard the restless ratsone squeak
About the riggin.

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

Had I to guid advice but harket,
I might, by this, ha' led a market,
Or strutted in a bank an' charret
My cash account:
While here, half-mad, half-fed, half-sarket,
Is a' th' amount.

1 Duau, a term of Osian's for the different divisions of a digressive poem. See his "Cath-Loda," vol. ii. of M'Pherson's translation. - R. B.

2 Curling, a winter amusement on the ice, in which contending parties abide large smooth stones of a circular form, with a handle on the upper side, from one mark to another, called the tee. The chief object of the player is to hurl his stone along the ice towards the tee with proper strength and precision; and on the skill displayed by the players in placing their own stones in favourable positions, or in driving rival stones out of favourable positions, depends the chief interest of the game. Curling is well called a roaring play (the "roaring game" indeed is its ordinary colloquial designation), both from the hilarity of the players and the roaring sound of the stones along the ice. It may be looked upon as a sort of game of bowls played on ice instead of a smooth board of grass.

3 The farmhouse of Mossigil, where the poet was living when he wrote this poem, was not such a hovel as one might suppose from its being here called "an anld clay biggin."
I started, muttering, "Blockhead! coof!"
And hear'd on high my wakinit loof,
To swear by a' yon starry roof,

Or some rash oath,

That I, henceforth, would be rhyme-proof
Till my last breath—

When, click! the string the snick did draw;
And, jee! the door grained to the wa';
An' by my ingle-lope I saw,

Now bleezin' bright,

A tight, outlandish hizzie, braw,

Come full in sight.

Ye need na doubt, I held my whisht;
The infant oath, half-form'd, was crusht;
I gloor'd as eerie's I'd been dusht
In some wild glen;

When sweet, like modest worth, she blusht,

And stepped ben.

Green, slender, leaf-clad holly-bonghs
Were twisted, gracefu', round her brows;
I took her for some Scottish Muse,

By that same token;

An' come to stop those reckless vows,

Would soon been broken.

A "hair-brain'd, sentimental trace,"
Was strongly mark'd in her face;
A wildly-witty, rustic grace
Shone full upon her;

Her eye, ev'n turn'd on empty space,

Bean'd keen with honour.

Down flow'd her robe, a tartan sheen,
Till half a leg was scrumply seen;
And such a leg! my bonnie Jean

Could only peer it;

Sae straight, sae taper, tight, and clean,

None else came near it.

Her mantle large, of greenish hue,
My gazing wonder chiefly drew;

\[1\] A quotation from himself—from the "Epistle to James Smith," the piece immediately preceding this.
\[2\] Kilmarnock (original) edition:—

And such a leg! my Jean, I ween.

In the original MS. the line was as in the text; but while his poems were at the press Burns's irritation at Jean Armour's conduct in connection with the destruction of the marriage lines he had given her caused him to obliterate her name, and substitute for it that of "the Cynthia of the minute." The indignant feeling having subsided, and Jean being once more in favour, her name was restored in the Edinburgh edition.
Deep lights and shades, bold-mingling threw
A lustre grand;
And seem'd, to my astonished view,
A well known land.

Here, rivers in the sea were lost;
There, mountains to the skies were toss'd;
Here, tumbling billows mark'd the coast,
With surging foam;
There, distant shone art's lofty boast,
The lordly done.

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

Low, in a sandy valley spread,
An ancient borough rear'd her head;
Still, as in Scottish story read,
She boasts a race,
To ev'ry nobler virtue bred,
And polish'd grace. ¹

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

My heart did glowing transport feel,
To see a race² heroic wheel,
And brandish round the deep-dy'd steel
In sturdy blows;
While back-recoiling seem'd to reel
Their Suthron foes.

His Country's Saviour,³ mark him well!
Bold Richmond's ¹ heroic swell;

¹ The remaining seven stanzas of Dun Fh'st were added in the Edinburgh edition, from motives of policy, to please Mrs. Dunlop and other influential Ayrshire patrons. But they formed part of the first draft, together with a good many more, descriptive of the mantle of Colin, which were entirely suppressed by the author. In fact the suppressed stanzas are weak, and conspicuously below the Burns level. Writing to Mrs. Dunlop on 15th January, 1787, in reference to the seven stanzas introduced in the Edinburgh edition, he says:—"I have not composed anything on the great Wallace, except what you have seen in print and the enclosed, which I will print in this edition. When I composed my Vision long ago, I had attempted a description of Kyle, of which these stanzas are a part as it originally stood."

² The Walls. — R. B.

³ Sir Wm. W. Wallace. — R. B.

¹ Adam Wallace, of Richmond, cousin to the immortal preserver of Scottish independence. — R. B.
POEMS AND SONGS.

The chief on Sark¹ who glorious fell,
In high command;

And he whom ruthless fates expel
His native land.

There, where a sceptor'd Pictish shade,²
Stalk'd round his ashes lowly laid,
I mark'd a martial race, portrayed
In colours strong;

Bold, soldier-featur'd, undismay'd
They strode along.³

Thro' many a wild, romantic grove,
Near many a hermit-fancy'd cove,
(Fit haunts for friendship or for love)
In musing mood,

An aged judge, I saw him rove,
Dispensing good.⁴

With deep-struck reverential awe
The learned sire and son⁵ I saw;
To nature's God and nature's law
They gave their love;

This, all its source and end to draw;
That, to adore.

¹Wallace, Laird of Craigie, who was second in command, under Douglas Earl of Ormonde, at the famous battle on the banks of Sark, fought anno 1448. That glorious victory was principally owing to the judicious conduct and intrepid valor of the gallant Laird of Craigie, who died of his wounds after the action.—R. B.

²Collus, King of the Picts, from whom the district of Kyle is said to take its name, lies buried, as tradition says, near the family-seat of the Montgomeryes of Colffiled, where his burial-place is still shown.

³The mound popularly understood to contain the remains of old King Coll was opened in May, 1537, when it was satisfactorily ascertained to have been a place of sepulture of no ordinary description.

⁴—Paterson's History of the Counties of Ayr and Wigton, vol. i. p. 759.

⁵The Montgomeryes of Colffield.

⁶Barkshinmog, and its proprietor, Thomas Miller, lord justice clerk, were here in the poet's eye, and the compliment was merited by both. The lands and mansion of Barkshinmog occupy a more than usually romantic portion of the banks of the Ayr, between the villages of Tarbolton and Mauchline, and must have been much under the notice of Burns when he resided at Lochlea and Mossgiel. The river here steals its way through a long profound chasm in the New Red Sandstone of the district, the sides of which are in many places as perpendicular as walls, but, in every spot where vegetation is possible, clothed with the most luxuriant wood. A bridge stretches from the one bank to the other, at a dizzy height above the furtive and scarce seen stream, giving access to the mansion, which is situated on a height immediately above. In the precipices beneath the house there are some artificial caves (hiene the expression "many a hermit-fancy'd cove"), accessible in the course of the pleasure walks connected with the mansion. Lord Justice Clerk Miller was born in 1717. Entering at the bar in 1742, he rose through a series of offices to that of supreme criminal judge, which he held from 1766 till January, 1788; when he succeeded Sir Robert Dundas as president of the Court of Session, and attained the dignity of a baronet. His life was unexpectedly cut short. In the ensuing September, when he died, after an illness of two days, at his seat of Barkshinmog; "leaving," says his biographer, Mr. David (afterwards Baron) Hume, "no good man his enemy, and attended with that sincere and extensive regret which only those can hope for who have occupied the like important stations, and acquitted themselves as well."

⁷Cafrine, the seat of Professor Dougald Stewart.

—R. B.—Dr. Matthew Stewart, the mathematician and professor in Edinburgh University, and his son Dougald Stewart, the metaphysician and professor in the same university, are here meant. Burns became acquainted with Professor Dougald Stewart in the latter part of 1786 after the publication of the Kilnarnock edition of his poems, and was a visitor at the mansion of Cafrine, which was three or four miles from Mossgiel. See vol. i. p. 155.
1 Wall mand, & battle of glorious conduct
Craige, R. B.
2 Colla of Kyle of Colla
-R. B. -
tain the 1837, wh been a p
Paterson, vol.
3 The 2
Barab lord just the court manast romantic the villa have bee resided a its way t Red Sam in many every spx the most
Brydone's brave ward I well could spy,
Beneath old Scotia's smiling eye;
Who call'd on Fame, low standing by,
To hand him on,
Where many a patriot name on high,
And hero shone.

DUAN SECOND.

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

"All hail! my own 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 geniuses of this land
Has many a light, aerial 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 are the soldier on to dare;
Some rouse the patriot up to dare
    Corruption's heart;
Some teach the bard, a darling care,
    The tuneful art.

"Mong swelling floods of reeking gore,
They, ardent, kindling spirits pour;
Or, 'mid the venal senate's roar,
    They, sightless, stand,
To mend the honest patriot-lore,
    And grace the land.

"And when the bard, or hoary sage,
Charm or instruct the future age,
POEMS AND SONGS.

They bind the wild poetic rage
In energy,
Or point the inconclusive page
Full on the eye.

"Hence Fullarton, the brave and young;
Hence Dempster's zeal-inspired tongue;
Hence sweet harmonious Beattie sung
His 'Minstrel bays;
Or tore, with noble ardour sung,
The sceptic's bays.

"To lower orders are assign'd
The humbler ranks of human-kind,
The rustic bard, the lab'ring kind,
The artisan;
All choose, as various they're inclin'd,
The various man.

"When yellow waves the heavy grain,
The threatening storm some strongly rein;
Some teach to meliorate the plain
With tillage-skill;
And some instruct the shepherd-train,
Blythe o'er the hill.

"Some hint the lover's harmless wile;
Some grace the maiden's artless smile;
Some soothe the lab' rer's weary toil,
For humble gains.
And make his cottage-scenes beguile
His cares and pains.

"Some, bounded to a district-space,
Explore at large man's infant race,
To mark the embryotic trace
Of rustic bard;
And careful note each op'ning grace,
A guide and guard.

"Of these am I--Coila my name;
And this district as mine I claim,
Where once the Campbells, chiefs of fame,
Held ruling pow'r:
I mark'd thy embryo tuneful flame,
Thy natal hour.

1 George Dempster, of Dunichen in Forfarshire, highly popular for his patriotic services to his country both as member of parliament and as landed proprietor and agriculturist.

2 "Truth-prevailing" in the Kilmarnock edition.

3 The London branch of the Campbells, to whom Mossgiel and much of the land in the neighbourhood then belonged.
"With future hope, I oft would gaze,
Fond, on thy little early ways,
Thy rudely caroll'd chiming phrase,
In uncouth rhymes,
Fir'd 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 hour
Struck thy young eye.

"Or, when the deep green-mantl'd 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'r'al mirth
With boundless love.

"When ripen'd fields, and azure skies,
Call'd forth the reaper's rustling noise,
I saw thee leave their evening joys,
And lonely stalk
To vent thy bosom's swelling rise
In pensive walk.

"When youthful love, warm-blushing, strong,
Keen-shivering shot thy nerves along,
Those accents, grateful to thy tongue,
Th' adored Name,
I taught thee how to pour in song,
To soothe thy flame.

"I saw thy pulse's maddening play,
Wild send thee pleasure's devious way,
Misled by fancy's meteor ray,
By passion driven;
But yet the light that led astray
Was light from heaven."

"I taught thy manners-painting strains,
The loves, the ways of simple swains,

1 "Of strains like the above, solemn and sublime with that rapt and inspired melancholy in which the poet Lifts his eye 'above this visible diurnal sphere,' the poems entitled 'Despondency,' 'The Lament,' 'Winter, a Dirge,' and the invocation 'To Ruin,' afford no less striking examples." — Henry MacKenzie. — It has been pointed out by more than one critic, that light that led astray could hardly be light from heaven.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Till now, o'er all my wide domains
Thy fame extends.
And some, the pride of Colin'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 thrice,
With Shenstone's art;
Or pour, with Gray, the moving flow
Warm on the heart.

"Yet, all beneath th' unrivalled rose,
The lowly daisy sweetly blows;
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'er-matching thine,
A rustic land.

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

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

SONG—HERE'S HIS HEALTH IN WATER.¹

TUNE—"The Job of Journey-work."

Altho' my back be at the wa',
And though he be the fanta';

¹ There is an old song, the burden of which is, "Here's his health in water." Stemhouse says the song was thrown off by Burns in jocular allusion to his own and Jean Armour's awkward predicament before their marriage. We put it here accordingly, though its date is doubtful.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Altho' my back be at the wa',
Yet here's his health in water:

O! wae gae by his wanton sides,
Sae brawlie he could flatter;
Till for his sake I'm slighted sait,
And dree the kintra clatter.

But tho' my back be at the wa',
And tho' he be the factor,
But tho' my back be at the wa',
Yet here's his health in water!

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID, OR THE RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS.

My son, these maxims make a rule,
And lump them yae theither;
The Rigled Righteous is a fool,
The Rigled Wise anither;
The clearest eare that e'er was slight
May have some pyles o' caffin;
So ne'er a fellow-creature slight
For randon his o' shalfe.—Solomon.—Eccles. vii. 10.

O ye wha are sae guid yersel',
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
Your neibour's faults and folly!
Whase life is like a weel-gain mill,
Supplied wi' store o' water,
The heapit happen's ebbing still,
And still the clap plays clatter.

Hear me, ye venerable core,
As counsel for poor mortals,
That frequent pass dounce Wisdom's door,
For glaikit folly's portals;
I, for their thoughtless, careless sakes,
Would here propose defences,
Their dencie tricks, their black mistakes,
Their failings and mishances.

Ye see your state wi' theirs compar'd,
And shudder at the niffer,
always together

1This poem appeared in the Edinburgh edition of 1787, whence it may be concluded that it was written after the publication of the Kilmarock edition in July, 1784. It springs so directly from the heart, embodies so much dear-bought experience, and enforces charitable construction of the conduct of others with such calmness and good sense,—the outcome of a full consciousness on the part of the poet of his own weaknesses and shortcomings,—that had it been written before that date it would most probably have been given to the world then. But the thoughts here embodied were familiar to him, and the germ of the poem may be found in his Common-place Book, under date March, 1784.
But cast a moment's fair regard,
What makes the mighty differ?
Discount what scant occasion gave
That purity ye pride in,
And (what's aft mair than a' the love)
Your better art o' hiding.

Think, when your castigated pulse
Gies now and then a wallop,
What ragings must his veins convulse,
That still eternal gallop:
Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,
Right on ye send your sea-way;
But in the teeth o' baith to sail,
It makes an unco lee-way.

See Social Life and Glee sit down,
All joyous and unthinking,
Till, quite transmogrified, they're grown
Debauchery and Drinking:
O, would they stay to calculate
Th' eternal consequences;
Or your more dreaded hell to state,
D-mutation 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.

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman;
The' 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 hues:

1 Literally, as much as enables one to ken or know.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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.

THE INVENTORY.

IN ANSWER TO A MANDATE BY THE SURVEYOR OF TAXES.

Sir, as your mandate did request,
I send you here a faithful list
O' gudes an' gear, an' a' my grace,
To which I'm clear to give my aith.

Imprimis, then, for carriage cattle,
I have four brutes o' gallant mettle,
As ever drew afore a pettie.
My lair'-afore's a guid auld has-been,
An' wight an' wilfu' a' his days been;
My lair'-ahin's a weel-grown fillie,
That ait has borne me safe frae Killie;
An' auld burgh mony a time,
In days when riding was nae crime:
But ane, when in my wooing pride,
I, like a blockhead, boost to ride,
The wilfu' creature sae I put to,
(L—d, pardon a' my sins, and that too!) I play'd my fillie sic a shavie,
She's a' bedevil'd with the spavie.
My fur-ahin's a wordy beast,
As e'er in tug or tow was trac'd.
The fourth's a Highland Donald haste,
A d-m'nd red-wud, Kilburnie blastie!
Forbye a cowt, o' cowts the wale,
As ever ran afore a tail;

1 "The momentous truth of this passage could not possibly have been conveyed with such pathetic force by any poet that ever lived, speaking in his own voice; unless it were felt that, like Burns, he was a man who preached from the text of his own errors; and whose wisdom, beautiful as a flower that might have risen from seed sown from above, was in fact a solon from the root of personal suffering."—Wordsworth.

2 In 1785, in order to liquidate ten millions of unfunded debt, Mr. Pitt passed a new tax act, among the taxed articles specified in it being male and female servants, riding and carriage horses (ten shillings each), stage-coaches, &c. As tax-collector for the district, Mr. Aiken, to whom the "Cotter's Saturday Night" was inscribed, had sent to Burns the usual schedule to be filled up, on receipt of which the poet sent his friend this poetical "Inventory," which is valuable for the information it gives us about the habits and surroundings of the poet at Mossgiel.

3 The fore-horse in the left hand in the plough. See note to the "Auld Farmer's New-Year Morning Salutation," p. 88.

4 The hindmost horse on the left hand.

5 Kilmarnock.

6 The hindmost horse on the right hand.

7 Kilburnie, in the district of Cunningham, is noted for its horse fairs, considered the largest in the west of Scotland, at one of which the poet had bought "Highland Donald."
POEMS AND SONGS.

Gin he be spar'd to be a beast,
He'll draw me fifteen pun' at least.—

Wheel carriages I hae but few,
Three carts, an' twa are feckly new;
Ae an' wheel-barrow, mair for token
Ae leg an' baith the trams are broken;
I made a poker o' the spin',
An' my an' mither brunt the trin'.—

For men, I've three mischievous boys,
Run-deils for rantin' an' for noise;
A gausman's ane, a thrasher 'tither,
Wee Davock hands the nowt in fother.
I rule them, as I ought, discreetly,
And aften labour them completely:
An' aye on Sundays dully, nightly
I on the Questions targe them tightly;
Till, faith, wee Davock's turn'd sae gleg,
Tho' scarcely longer than your leg,
He'll screech you aff Effectual Calling,
As fast as any in the dwelling.—

I've none in female servan' station,
(L—d, keep me aye frae a' temptation!) I hae nae wife, and that my bliss is,
An' ye have laid mae tax on misses;
An' then, if kirk folks dinna clutch me,
I ken the devils dare na touch me.
Wi' weans I'm mair than wheel contented,
Heav'n sent me ane mair than I wanted,
My sonsie, smirking, dear-bought Bess,
She stares the daddy in her face,
Enough of ought ye like but grace;
But her, my bonie sweet wee lady,
I've paid enough for her already,
An' gin ye tax her or her mither,
B' the L—d! ye'se get them a' thegither!

And now, remember, Mr. Aiken,
Nae kind of license out I'm takin':
Thro' dirt and dub for life I'll plod,
Ere I see dear pay for a saddle;

1 Gausman, from gaud = gaud, the boy that drives the plough team; so called because when oxen used to be yoked to the plough, the driver carried a gaud or prick. As explained elsewhere, the plough in Burns's day was drawn by four horses.
2 A pet diminutive form of D'-eid.
3 The Shorter Catechism of the Westminster divines, on which Scottish youth, especially in the rural districts, used to be severely exercised on the Sunday evenings.
4 A prominent question and answer in the Shorter Catechism, considered rather difficult to get by heart.
5 An illegitimate child of the poet's, by a servant girl of his mother's, Elizabeth Paton. See note to poem commencing, "Thou's welcome, wean," &c., vol. I. p. 221.
POEMS AND SONGS.

My travel a' on foot I'll shank it,
I've sturdy bearers, Gude be thankit.
The kirk an' you may tak you that,
It puts but little in your pat;
So dimna put me in your buke,
Nor for my ten white shillings like.

This list wi' my ain hand I wrote it,
Day an' date as under notit;
Then know all ye whom it concerns,
Subscripsi buic

Robert Burns.

Mossiel, Feb. 22, 1786.

TO JOHN KENNEDY,

DUMFRIES HOUSE.1

Now, Kennedy, if foot or horse
E'er bring you in by Mauchline corse,
(Lord, man, there's lassies there wad force
A hermit's fancy;
An' down the gate in faith they're worse,
An' mair unchaney.)

But, as I'm sayin', please step to Dow's,2
And taste sic gear as Johnnie brews,
Till some bit callan bring the news
That ye are there;
An' if we dimna hae a bouse,
Tse ne'er drink mair.

It's no I like to sit an' swallow,
Then like a swine to puke and wallow;
But gie me just a true good fellow
Wi' right ingine,
An' squintie ance to mak' us mellow,
An' there we'll shine.

Now if ye're a' warl's folk,
Wha rate the weaver by the cloak,
And skinent on poverty their joke,
Wi' bitter sneer,
Wi' you nae friendship I will troke,
Nor cheap nor dear.

1 The above lines follow a short note written to
Mr. Kennedy (factor or sub-factor to the Earl of
Dumfries, Dumfries House, Ayrshire), in reply to a
request to be favoured with a perusal of the "Cotter's
Saturday Night." See the note in its place in the
General Correspondence.

2 John Dove, landlord of the Whitefoord Arms Inn,
Mauchline, a favourite haunt of the poet's. See p. 110.
POEMS AND SONGS.

But if, as I'm inform'd weel,
Ye hate as ill's the vera deil
The flinty heart that canna feel—
Come, sir, here's to you!
Hae, there's my haun, I wiss you weel,
An' gude be wi' you.

ROBERT BURNESS.

TO A LOUSE.

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

Ha! where ye gaun, ye crowlin' ferlie?
Your impudence protects you sairly:
I canna say but ye strut rarely,
Ower ganeze and lace;
Tho', faith, I fear ye dine but sparetly
On sic a place.

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

Swith! in some beggar's haffet squattle;
There ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle
Wi' ither kindred, jumpin' cattle,
In shoals and nations;
Whare horne nor lane ne'er daurn unsettle
Your thick plantations.

Now hand ye there, ye're out o' sight,
Below the fatt'riis, snug an' tight;
Na, faith ye yet! ye'll no be right
Till ye've got on it,
The vera tapmost, tow'ring height
O' Miss's bonnet!

My sooth! right haund ye set your nose out,
As plump and gray as oun grozet;
O for some rank, mercurial rozet,
Or fell, red smeddum,
I'd gie you sic a hearty doze o't,
Wad dress your droddum!
POEMS AND SONGS.

I wad na been surpris'd to spy
You on an auld wife's flamen toy;[1]
Or ainlaws some bit duddie boy,
On's wyliecoat;
But Miss's fine Lunardi[2] tie,
How dare ye do't!

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

O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us
To see oursel's as others see us!
It wad frae Ludiie a blunder free
And foolish notion:
What airs in dress an' gait wad leave us,
And ev'n devotion.[3]

TO M'R. M'ADAM,
OF CRAIGEN-GILLAN,
IN ANSWER TO AN OSLIGING LETTER HE SENT IN THE COMMENCEMENT OF MY POETIC CAREER.[4]

Sir, o'er a gill I got your card,
I trow it made me proud;
“See wha taks notice o' the bard!”
I lap and cried fu' loud.

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

'Twas noble, sir; 'twas like yoursell',
To grant your high protection:
A great man's smile ye ken fu' well,
Is aye a blist infection.

[2] In 1785 Vincent Lunardi, the celebrated aeronaut, visited Scotland, and made several ascents in his balloon. In compliment to him the Scottish ladies wore what they called "Lunardi bonnets," to which Burns alludes in the above verse. They were made of gauze, or thin muslin, extended on wire, the upper part representing the balloon, and were for some time universally fashionable.

[3] With regard to this closing verse Motherwell has written:—"If poetical merit were to be determined by frequency of quotation, it would stand very high in the scale."

[4] Burns copied the above epistle into the Glenride Collection, where he added the note that it was composed extempore in Nasee Tinock's, Mauchline.—Craigen-Gillan is a large estate in Carrick, the southern district of Ayrshire. In what way Mr. M'Adam had noticed the poet we do not know.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Tho', by his banes wha in a tub
Match'd Macedonian Sandy! ¹
On my ain legs thro' dirt an' dub,
I independent stand aye.—

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

Heaven spare you lang to kiss the breath
O' mony flow'ry simmers!
And bless your bonnie hasses baith,
I'm tald they're loosome kimmers!

And God bless young Dunaskin's² hird,
The blossom of our gentry!
And may he wear an auld man's beard,
A credit to his country.

____________________________

INSCRIBED ON A WORK OF HANNAH MORE'S,

PRESENTED TO THE AUTHOR BY A LADY.³

Thon flatt'ring mark of friendship kind,
Still may thy pages call to mind
The dear, the beauteous donor;
Tho' sweetly female ev'ry part,
Yet such a head, and more—the heart
Does both the sexes honour:
She shew'd her taste refined and just
When she selected thee;
Yet deviating, own I must,
For see approving me;
But kind still, I'll mind still
The giver in the gift;
I'll bless her, an' wiss her
A Friend aboon the lift.

¹ Diogenes of Sinope, the celebrated Cynic philosopher. The poet refers to his memorable interview with Alexander the Great (for which probably there is no historical basis). That monarch is said to have visited Diogenes at Corinth, and found him basking in the sun. Surprised at finding him apparently in such extreme poverty, Alexander, addressing him kindly, asked if he could do him any favour. "Yes," replied the philosopher, "stand a little out of my sunshine!"—"If I were not Alexander," remarked the conqueror as he turned slowly away, "I would wish to be Diogenes!"
² A place in Ayrshire, apparently belonging to Mr. M'Adam.
³ Who this lady was has never been discovered. She was a certain Mrs. C., a friend of Robert Aikman's. In a letter to whom, dated 3d April, 1786, the poet transcribes the above lines.
THE HOLY FAIR.

There is some uncertainty about the date when this poem was written; some editors assign it to the year 1755. We assign it to the early part of 1780 on the following grounds:—On the 17th Feb. 1786, Burns wrote to his friend Richmond, in Edinburgh, to send him a copy of Ferguson's poems. A poem in that volume, "Leith Races," seems to have served Burns as a model, or suggestion, for his satire. The Edinburgh hard is accompanied to the gathering by a personage of the fair sex named Mirth, who meets him and introduces herself on a July morning quite in the same way as his Ayrshire brother is met and accompanied to the Holy Fair by Fan, and the measure of the present poem is the same as that of "Leith Races." The poem itself appeared in the Kilmarnock edition, published in July, 1786.

A role of seeming truth and trust
Old crafty observation;
And secret hung, with piissen'd crust.
The disk of Deformation;
A mask that like the gogit show'd,
Eye varying, on the pigeons;
And for a mantle large and broad,
He wrap't him in Religion.—Hypocrisy a-la-mode.

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

As lightsomely I gloar'd abroad,
To see a scene so gay,
Three hizzies, early at the road,
Cam'skelpin' up the way;
Twa had manteles o' dolefu' black,
But ane wi' lyart lining;
The third, that gaed a wee a-back,
Was in the fashion shining
Fu' gay that day.

The twa appear'd like sisters twin,
In feature, form, an' chaos;
Their visage, wither'd, lang, an' thin,
An' sorr as any slaes:
The third cam' up, hap-step-an'-lowp,
As light as any lambic,
An' wi' a curchie low did stoop,
As soon as e'er she saw me,
Fu' kind that day.

Wi' bonnet aff, quoth I, "Sweet lass,
I think ye seem to ken me;
I'm sure I've seen that bonnie face,
But yet I canna name ye."
Quo' she, an' laughin' as she spak,
An' takes me by the hauns,
"Ye, for my sake, hae gien the feck
Of a' the ten commandments
A screed some day.

"My name is Fun—your cronic dear,
The nearest friend ye hae;
An' this is Superstition here,
An' that's Hypocrisy.
I'm gaun to Mauchline Holy Fair,\(^1\)
To spend an hour in daflin';
Gin ye'll go there, you rank'd pair,
We will get famous laughin'
At them this day."

Quoth I, "With a' my heart, I'll do't:
I'll get my Sunday's sark on,
An' meet you on the holy spot;
Faith, we're hae fine remarkin'!"
Then I gaed hame at crowdie-time,
An' soon I made me ready;
For roads were clad, frae side to side,
Wi' monie a wearie body,
In droves that day.

Here, farmers gash, in ridin' graith,
Gaed holdin' by their cotters;
There, swankies young, in braw braid-claith,
Are springin' o'wre the gutters.
The lasses, skelpin' barefoot, thrang,
In silks an' scarlets glitter;
Wi' sweet-milk cheese, in monie a whang,
An' farls, bak'd wi' butter,
Fu' crump that day.

When by the plate we set our nose,
Weel heaped up wi' ha'pence,
A greedy glowr Black Bonnet throws,
An' we maun draw our tippence.
Then in we go to see the show,
On ev'ry side they're gath'rin',
Some carrying dails, some chairs an' stools,
An' some are busy bleth'rin'
Right loud that day.

Here stands a shed to fend the showers,\(^2\)
An' screen our countra gentry,

\(^1\) Holy Fair is a common phrase in the West of Scotland for a sacramental occasion.—R. B.
\(^2\) The whole of the proceedings described take place out of doors, as explained below; hence the need for...
There, racer Jess an' twa-three whi-res,  
Are blinkin' at the entry.
Here sits a raw ofittlin' jauds,  
Wi'heavin breast an' bare neck,  
An' there a batch o' wealster lads,  
Blackguardin' frae Kilmarnock,  
For fun this day.

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

O happy is that man, an' blest!  
Nae wonder that it pride him!  
Whase ain dear lass, that he likes best,  
Comes clinkin' down beside him!  
Wi' arm repos'd on the chair back,  
He sweetly does compose him;  
Which, by degrees, slips round her neck,  
An's leaf upon her bosom,  
Unkenn'd that day.

Now a' the congregation o'er,  
Is silent expectation;  
For Moodie speaks the holy door,  
Wi' tidings o' damnation.  
Should Hornie, as in ancient days,  
'Mang sons o' God present him,  
The vera sight o' Moodie's face,  
To's ain hit hame had sent him  
Wi' fright that day.

\[3\] "When the second edition of his poems was passing through the press Burns was favoured with many critical suggestions and amendments, to one of which only he attended, Blair reading over with him or hearing him recite, (which he delighted at all times in doing,) his 'Holy Fair,' stopped him at this line, which originally stood, 'wi' tidings o' salvation.' Nay, said the doctor, read 'damnation.' Burns improved the wit of the verse, undoubtedly, by adopting the emendation; but he gave another strange specimen of want of tact, when he insisted that Dr. Blair, one of the most scrupulous observers of clerical propriety, should permit him to acknowledge the obligation in a note."—J. G. LOCKHART.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Hear how he clears the points o' faith,
Wi' rattlin' an' wi' thumpin'!
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath,
He's staunpin' an' he's jumpin'!
His lengthen'd chin, his turn'd-up snout,
His eldritch squeal and gestures,
Oh how they fire the heart devout,
Like cantharidian plasters,
On sic a day!

But, hark! the tent ¹ has chang'd its voice;
There's peace an' rest nea longer;
For a' the real judges rise,
They cuma sit for anger.
Smith² opens out his cant'd harangues,
On practice and on morals,
An' all the godly pour in throngs,
To gie the jars an' barrels
A lift that day.

What signifies his barren shine
Of moral powers and reason?
His English style, an' gesture fine,
Are a' clean out o' season.
Like Socrates or Antonine,
Or some auld pagan heathen,
The moral man he does define,
But ne'er a word o' faith in
That's right that day.

In guid time comes an antidote
Against sic poison'd nostrum;
For Peebles,³ frae the Water-fit,
Ascends the holy rostrum:
See, up he's got the word o' God,
An' meek an' mim hae view'd it,

¹ What the "tent" here means requires to be explained. Dr. Jamieson in his Scottish Dictionary defines it as "a square pulpit of wood, erected in the fields (in this case it would not doubt be in the churchyard), and supported by four posts, which rest on the ground, rising three or four feet from it, with a trap leading up to the door ['the holy door'] and a projection in front, which is meant to protect the speaker from the sun and rain, as well as to serve as a sounding-board." "Tent-preaching," he adds, "has been long in use in Scotland, occasionally, at least, from the year 1630. . . . It became customary in consequence of the multitudes who assembled from different, and often remote, places to attend the dispensation of the supper, all of whom it was impossible to accommodate within doors. . . . The practice is now, indeed, almost entirely disbused about cities and towns (he is writing about the year 1855); but it is still retained in many country parishes on the Lord's day at least, where no church would suffice to accommodate all who attend divine service." It will be observed that Burns does not touch upon the actual dispensation of the sacrament, which would no doubt take place in the church itself, the people going in successive batches.

² George Smith, minister of Galston, who figures in the "Kirk's Alarm," by the name of Irvine-side. Burns, it is said, here meant to be complimentary to Smith as a preacher of good sense, but Smith, it seems, resentted the compliment, and hence he is spoken of in a different style in the "Kirk's Alarm."—The "real judges" did not approve of Smith's style of preaching, and rose and went off for the purpose of refreshing themselves with the contents of the jars and barrels.

Poems and Songs.

While Common-Sense has taken the road,
An' aff, an' up the Cowgate,
Fast, fast, that day.

Wee Miller,niest, the guard relieves,
An' orthodoxy naibles,
Tho' in his heart he weel believes,
An' thinks it an'ld wives' fables:
But, faith! the birkie wants a maus,
So, cannyly he hums them;
Altho' his carnal wit an' sense
Like haddins-ways o' overcomes him
At times that day.

Now but an' ben, the change-house fills,
Wi' yeill-caup commentators;
Here's crying out for bakes and gills,
An' there the pint stowp clatters;
While thick an' thrang, an' loud an' lang,
Wi' logic an' wi' scripture,
They raise a din, that in the end,
Is like to breed a rupture
O' wrath that day. ¹

Leeze me on drink! ² ³ ⁴ gies us mair
Than either school or college:
It kindles wit, it wakens hair,
It languis us fu' o' knowledge.
Be't whisky gill, or penny wheep,
Or ony stronger potion,
It never fails, on drinking deep,
To kittle up our notion
By night or day.

The lads an' lasses, blythely bent
To mind baith soul an' body,
Both soul

¹ Some commentators suppose that there is here a local allusion to Dr. MacKenzie, then of Mauchline, who had conducted a controversy under the pseudonym of Common Sense. But the poet seems rather to intend a personification of the class of doctrines then known by this title, also called the New Light doctrines. See notes to the "Ordination," p. 102.
² A street so called, which faces the tent in Mauchline.—R. B.
³ The Rev. Mr. Miller, afterwards minister of Kilmaurs.
⁴ The devotion of the common people on the usual days of worship is as much to be commended as their conduct at the sacrament is to be censured. It is celebrated but once in a year, when there are in some places three thousand communicants, and as many idle spectators. Of the first, as many as possible crowd each side of a long table, and the elements are rudely shaven from one to another, and in some places, before they is at an end, fights and other indecencies ensue. It is often made a season of debauchery."—Pennant's Tour in Scotland, 1760.

We quote this passage to show that, in depleting the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, accompanied by such scenes as are described in the "Holy Fair," Burns did not so far overstrain probability, as the modern reader is apt to believe. His satiric exposure, on the other hand, had, doubtless, much effect in putting a stop to the abuses connected with these occasions.

⁵ Leeze me on, a phrase of congratulatory endearment.—R. B.—"Leeze me on drink," I am happy in drink; pleased am I with drink; or proud I am of drink.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Sit round the table, weel content,
An' steer about the toddy.
On this ane's dress, an' that ane's lenk,
They're making observations;
While some are cozie i' the neuk,
An' formin' assignations

To meet some day.

But now the L—d's ain trumpet touts,
Till a' the hills are rairin',
An' echoes back return the shouts:
Black Russell has na spairin':
His piercing words, like Highland swords,
Divide the joints an' narrow;
His talk o' hell, whare devils dwell,
Our vera sauls does harrow

Wi' fright that day.

A vast, unbottum'd, boundless pit,
Fill'd fu' o' lowin' brunstane,
Whase ragin' flame, an' scorchin' heat,
Wad melt the hardest whum-stane!
The half asleep start up wi' fear,
An' think they hear it roarin',
When presently it does appear,
'Twas but some neebor snorin'

Asleep that day.

'Twad be owre lang a tale, to tell
How monie stories past,
An' how they crowded to the yill
When they were a' dismissit;
How drink gaed round, in cogs an' caups, small tubs and wooden bowls
Amang the furns an' benches;

1 The Rev. John Russell, of Kilmarnock, afterwards of Stirling. He was at one time a schoolmaster in Cromarty, and Hugh Miller thus speaks of him: "Some traits of Russell have been preserved. Burns seems to have seized with the felicity of genius the distinctive features of his character. He was a large, robust, dark-complexioned man, imperturbably grave, fierce of temper, and had a stern expression of countenance. . . . He became popular as a preacher: his manner was strong and energetic: the severity of his temper was a sort of genius to him, while he described, as he loved to do, the textures of the wicked in a future state. . . . A native of Cromarty, who happened at that time to be in the west of Scotland, walked to Mauchline to hear his old schoolmaster preach:—this was about 1792. There was an excellent sermon to be heard from the tent, and excellent drink to be had from a neighbouring ale-house, and between the two, the people seemed much divided. A young clergyman was preaching, and Russell was nigh him. At every fresh movement of the people, or ungodly burst of sound from the ale-house, the latter would raise himself on tip-toe—look sternly towards the change-house, and then at his younger brother in the pulpit: at last his own turn to preach arrived—he sprang into the tent—closed his Bible—and without psalm or prayer or other preliminary matter, burst out at once in a passionate and eloquent address upon the folly and sin which a portion of the people were committing. The sound in the ale-house ceased—the inmates came out and listened to the denunciation, which some of them remembered with a shudder in after-life. He lived to a great age, and was always a dauntless and intrepid old man."

2 Shakespeare's Hamlet. — R. B.
The poet perhaps had in mind the lines—

Looks it not like the King? mark it, Horatio.
— Most like; it harrows me with fear and wonder.
POEMS AND SONGS.

An' cheese an' bread, frae women's laps,
Was dealt about in lunches,

large pieces

An' daws that day

IN comes a gauzie gash goodwife,
An' sits down by the fire,
Syne draws her kebbuck an' her knife;
The lasses they are shyer.
The auld guidmen about the grace,
Fae side to side they bother,
Till some ane by his bonnet lays,
An' gies them't like a tether,

Jelly gaudelous matron
then cheese
olderly married men

Faire lang that day.}

Waesucks! for him that gets nae lass.
Or lasses that hae naething!
Sma' need has he to say a grace,
Or melvie his braw chaiting!
O' wives! be mindful, ance yoursel'
How bonnie lads ye wanted,
An' dinna, for a kebbuck-heed,
Let lasses be affronted

almost
soil with meal

On sic a day.

Now Clinkumbl! wi' rattlin' tow,
Begins to jow an' croman;
Some swagger hame the best they dow,
Some wait the afternoon.

the bell-ringer rope
the bell

At slaps the billies halt a blink,
Gaps young fellows moment
Till lasses strip their shoon:?

shoes

Wif faith an' hope, an' love an' drink,
They're a' in famous tune,

For crack that day.

How monie hearts this day converts
O' sinners and o' lasses!

by night

Their hearts o' stane, gin night, are gane
As saft as any flesh is.

There's some are fu' o' love divine;
There's some are fu' o' brandy;
An' monie jobs that day begin,

Some ither day.3

The annual celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the rural parishes of Scotland has much in it of those old popish festivals in which superstition, traffic, and amusement are to be found so strangely intermingled. Burns saw and seized in it one of the happiest of all subjects to afford scope for the display of that strong and piercing sagacity by which he could almost intuitively distinguish the

1 The farcical scene the poet here describes was often a favourite field for his observation, and the most of the incidents he mentions had actually passed before his eyes."—GILBERT BURNS.

2 Formerly, perhaps in some places even yet, it was common for the "lasses" to walk barefooted ("skelpin' barefoot") most of the way to and from church, their shoes being put on and off not far from the building.

3 "The annual celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the rural parishes of Scotland has much in it of those old popish festivals in which superstition, traffic, and amusement are to be found so strangely intermingled. Burns saw and seized in it one of the happiest of all subjects to afford scope for the display of that strong and piercing sagacity by which he could almost intuitively distinguish the
TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY, 1
ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE FLOUGH IN APRIL, 1786.

In a letter [written in April, 1786] to his friend John Kennedy, then sub-factor at Dumfries House, near Auchinleck, the seat of the Earl of Dumfries, enclosing a copy of this poem, under the title of "The Gowan," Burns writes of it:—"I am a good deal pleased with some sentiments myself, as they are just the native querulous feelings of a heart, which, as the elegantly melting Gray says, 'melancholy has marked for her own.'" The acknowledgment of marriage between him and Jean Armour had just been destroyed, which, as he says himself, "used his heart to die within him.

Wee, modest, crannson-tipped flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I must crush among the stone
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 weet,

W' spreckled breast,
When upward-springing, blythe to greet
The purpling east. 2

reasonable from the absurd, and the becoming from
the ridiculous:—of that picturesque power of fancy
which enabled him to represent scenes and persons,
and groups and looks, attitude and action, in a
manner almost as lively and impressive, even in
words, as if all the artifices and energies of the pencil
had been employed,—of that knowledge which he
had necessarily acquired of the manners, passions,
and prejudices of the rustics around him;—of whatever
was ridiculous, no less than whatever was essentia-
ally beautiful, in rural life."—ROBERT HENRY.

Encouraged by the rear of applause which greeted
these pieces [the 'To a Herd,' 'Holy Willie's prayer,' &c.,] thus early pronounced and recommended, he pro-
t.- In succession various satires, wherein the same set of persons were lamped; as the 'Ordination,' the Kirk's Alarm, &c., and last and best undoubtedly, the 'Holy Fair,' in which, unlike the others that I've been mentioned, satire keeps its
own place and is subservient to the poetry of Burns.
This was indeed an extraordinary perform. ...ne'er no partisans of any sect could whisper that malice had
formed its principal inspiration, or that its chief
attraction lies in the boldness with which individuals,
culprits and accusers to respect, were held up to
ridicule: it was acknowledged, amidst the sternest
mutterings of truth, that national manners were
once more in the hands of a national poet, and
hardly denied by those who shook their heads over
the indiscretions of particular passages, or even by
those who justly regretted a too prevailing tone of
levity in the treatment of a subject essentially solemn,
that the muse of 'Christ's Kirk on the Green' had
awakened after the slumber of ages, with all the
vigour of her regal youth about her, in 'the woful
clay beggar' of Moss-gill."—J. G. LOCKHART.—Mr.
Lockhart remarks also that it "will ever continue to
move wonder and regret" that the same man should
have written this poem and the "Cotter's Saturday
Night." In regard to this Prof. Wilson says: "Of the
'Holy Fair' few have spoken with any very serious
reprehension. Dr. Blair was so much taken with it
that he suggested a well-known emendation [see note
3, p. 129]—and for our own part we have no hesitation
in saying that we see no reason to lament that it
should be written by the writer of the 'Cotter's
Saturday Night.'"—The professor's opinion will un-
doubtedly find more supporters than Mr. Lockhart's.

1 "The address 'To a Mountain Daisy' is a poem
of the same nature with the address 'To a Mouse,'
though somewhat inferior in point of originality,
as well as in the interest produced. To extract out of
incidents so common, and seemingly so trivial as
these, so fine a train of sentiment and imagery, is
the surest proof, as well as the most brilliant
triumph, of original genius."—CULLEN.

"He invested the most common of all the wild
flowers of the earth with immortal beauty to all eyes,
far beyond that of the rose, till a tear as of pity
might fall down on every cheek that the dew-drop nature
gathers on its 'snowy bosom sunward spread.'"—
PROF. WILSON.

2 "I have seldom met with an image more truly
pastoral than that of the lark in the second stanza.
Such strokes as these mark the pencil of the poet,
which delineates nature with the precision of
intimacy, yet with the delicate colouring of beauty and
of taste."—HENRY MACKENZIE.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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 flowers our gardens yield,
High sheltering woods and wa's marn shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,
Dry

There, in thy scantly mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the shards uptears thy head
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.

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!
SONG—AGAIN REJOICING NATURE SEES.

TUNE—"Johnny's Gray Breeks.

The gloom that pervades this song points it out as probably a composition of that dreary period (the spring of 1786) to which the pieces immediately following belong. See notes to these.

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 Menie1 don't,
And bear the scorn that's in her eye:
For it's jet, jet black, an' it's like a hawk,
An' it wimma let a body be!2

In vain to me the cowslips blow,
In vain to me the violets spring;
In vain to me, in glen or shaw,
The mavis and the linnet white sing.
And maun I still, &c.

The merry ploughboy cheers his team,
W' th joy the tentie seedsman stalks,
But life to me 's a weary dream,
A dream of ane that never wanks.
And maun I still, &c.

The wanton coot the water skims,
Among the reeds the ducklings cry,
The stately swan majestic swims,
And every thing is blest but I.
And maun I still, &c.

The sheep-herd steeks his faulking slap,
And owre the moorlands whistles shrill,
W' wild, unequal, wand'ring step,
I meet him on the dewy hill.
And maun I still, &c.

And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Blythe waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts and sings on fluttering wings,
A woe-worn ghast I homeward glide.
And maun I still, &c.

1 "Menie is the common abbreviation of Marianne."
—R. B.—It is more correctly the popular pet name for Marion.

2 This chorus, Burns tells us, was "part of a song the composition of a gentleman in Edinburgh, a particular friend of the author's." The "gentleman" Mr. Scott Douglas would identify with the "at himself; and "Menie" he regards as a transparent substitute for "Jeanie," Jean Armour to wit. The poet admits his obvious obligations to Gray's "Elegy" in this piece. Currie has objected to the chorus, as perpetually interfering with the sentiment of the song itself; everyone will probably feel the force of Dr. Currie's objection.

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POEMS AND SONGS.

[1786]
POEMS AND SONGS.

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 manh I still, &c.

THE LAMENT.

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

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

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

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

No idly-feign’d poetic pains
My sad, love-born lamentings claim;
No shepherd’s pipe—Arcadian strains;
No fabled tortures, quaint and tame:
The plighted faith; the mutual flame;
The oft-attested pow’rs above;
The promised Father’s tender name:
These were the pledges of my love!

Encircled in her clasping arms,
How have the raptur’d moments flown!
How have I wish’d for fortune’s charms,
For her dear sake, and hers alone!
And must I think it—is she gone,
My secret heart’s exulting boast?
And does she heedless hear my groan?
And is she ever, ever lost?
Oh! can she bear so base a heart,
So lost to honour, lost to truth,
As from the fondest lover part,
The plighted husband of her youth!
Ahas! life's path may be unsmooth,
Her way may lie thro' rough distress!
Then who her pangs and pains will soothe,
Her sorrows share, and make them less?

Ye winged hours that o'er us pass'd,
Enraptured more, the more enjoy'd,
Your dear remembrance in my breast,
My fondly-treasured thoughts employ'd.
That breast how dreary now, and void,
For her too scanty once of room!
Ev'n ev'ry ray of hope destroy'd,
And not a wish to gild the gloom!

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

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

O! thou bright queen, who o'er th' expanse,
Now highest reign'st, with boundless sway!
Oft has thy silent-marking glance
Observ'd us, fondly-wand'ring, stray!
The time, unheeded, sped away,
While love's luxurios pulse beat high,
Beneath thy silver-gleaming ray,
To mark the mutual-kindling eye.

Oh! scenes in strong remembrance set!
Scenes, never, never, to return!
Scenes, if in stupor I forget,
Again I feel, again I burn!
POEMS AND SONGS.

From ev'ry joy and pleasure torn,
Life's weary vale I wander thro':
And hopeless, comfortless, I'll mourn
A faithless woman's broken vow.¹

Σ To Ruin.

All hail! inexorable lord!
At whose destruction-breathing word,
The mightiest empires fall!
Thy cruel woe-delighted train,
The ministers of grief and pain,
A sullen welcome, all!
With stern-resolv'd, despairing eye,
I see each aim'd dart;
For one has cut my dearest tie,
And quivers in my heart.²

¹ This poem, though said to be written on the unfortunate issue of a friend's amour, was in reality the result of the poet's own personal feelings during that most unhappy passage of his life, in the early part of 1786, when Jean Armour was forced by her parents to discard him, and to destroy the private nuptial engagements or marriage agreements that had passed between them. The misery into which this plunged the poet and the pangs which he seems to have suffered from wounded affection and injured pride may be seen from his poems and letters. In his autobiographical letter to Dr. Moore he writes:—

"The unfortunate story that gave rise to the printed poem, the 'Lament,' was a most melancholy affair, which I cannot yet bear to reflect on, and I have very nearly given me one or two of the principal qualifications for a place among those who have lost the chart, and mistaken the reckoning of rationality."

The poem first appeared in the Kilmarnock edition of his works which were passing through the press at this very time, in the midst of his affliction, with the view of raising a small sum of money to carry him to the West Indies. In one of his letters to Mr. David Brice of Glasgow, dated June 12th, 1786, he says:—

"I just write to let you know that there is such a worthless, rhyming reprobate as your humble servant still in the land of the living, though I can scarcely say in the place of hope. . . . Poor ill-advised ungrateful Armour came home from Paisley on Friday last, . . . What she thinks of her conduct now, I don't know; one thing I do know—she has made me completely miserable. Never man loved, or rather adored, a woman more than I did her; and to confess a truth between you and me, I do still love her to distraction after all. . . . May Almighty God forgive her ingratitude and perjury to me, as I from my very soul forgive her; and may his grace be with her and bless her in all her future life! I can have no nearer idea of the place of eternal punishment than what I have felt in my own breast on her account. . . . And now for a grand cure: the ship is on her way home that is to take me out to Jamaica: and then, farewell, dear old Scotland! and farewell, dear ungrateful Jean! for never, never will I see you more!" The reader must not suppose, however, that the poet's misery was entirely unbroken. He found consolation in a new love in place of the old; and strange as it may seem, the letter just quoted was written about a month after the poet's farewell meeting with Highland Mary, while the poem above would probably be written some little time before that tender episode. In the letter he represents himself as all the time loving Jean to distraction, though in fact he had already pledged himself to Mary, and had even (in a letter to John Arnot) treated Jean Armour's desertion of him in quite a burlesque vein. See also note to the "Farewell."

² The "dart" that
Cut my dearest tie,
And quivers in my heart,
is an allusion to Jean Armour's enforced desertion of him, which, though "Hungry Ruin had held him in the wind" he felt to be, of all hisills, that which he could least easily bear. See note to preceding poem.

The jingle of the last four lines of each stanza of this poem, and of the ode to "Despondency" which directly follows, is, we think, even worse. The rhyme absolutely faultless, inappropriate to the sentiments of the pieces. It is admirably adapted, however, to lighter themes, such as turn the staple of the first "Epistle to Davie."
POEMS AND SONGS.

Then low'ring, and pouring,
The storm no more I dread;
Tho' thick'ning and black'ning,
Round my devoted head.

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

DESPONDENCY—AN ODE.

"I think it is one of the greatest pleasures attending a poetical genius, that we can give our woes, cares, joys, and loves an embodied form in verse, which to me is ever immediate ease."—B. B.

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

Happy, ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal to the bustling strife,
No other view regard!
Ev'n when the wished end's denied,
Yet while the busy means are plied,
They bring their own reward:
POEMS AND SONGS.

Whilst I, a hope-abandon'd wight,
Unfitted with an aim,
Meet ev'ry sad returning night,
And joyless morn the same;
You, bustling, and justling,
Forget each grief and pain;
I, listless, yet restless,
Find every prospect vain.

How blest the Solitary's lot,
Who, all-forgetting, all-forgot,
Within his humble cell,
The cavern wild with tangling roots,
Sits o'er his newly-gather'd fruits,
Beside his crystal well!
Or, haply, to his ev'ning thought,
By unfrequented stream,
The ways of men are distant brought,
A faint collected dream:
While praising, and raising
His thoughts to heav'n on high,
As wand'ring, meand'ring,
He views the solemn sky.

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

Oh! enviable, early days,
When dancing thoughtless pleasure's maze,
To care, to guilt unknown!
How ill exchang'd for riper times,
To feel the follies, or the crimes
Of others, or my own!

—FARNEILL's Hermit.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Ye tiny elves that guiltless sport
Like linnets in the bush,
Ye little know the ills ye court,
When manhood is your wish!
The losses, the crosses,
That active man engage!
The fears all, the tears all,
Of dim-declining age!

---

POETICAL REPLY TO AN INVITATION.

Sir,
Yours this moment I unseal,
And faith, I am gay and hearty!
To tell the truth, an' shame the devil,
I am as fou as Bartie;
But Poorsday, sir, my promise lead,
Expect me o' your party,
If on a beastie I can speel,
Or hurl in a cartie.—ROBERT BURNS.

MACCULLIN, Monday Night, 10 o'clock.

---

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

Mossvillie, May 3, 1780.

I hold it, sir, my bounden duty
To warn you how that Master Tootie,
Alias, Laird McGaun,
Was here to hire you lad away
'Bout whom ye spak the other day,
An' wad hae don't aff hau':

1 The darkening views of his lot, expressed in this poem, point with sufficient distinctness to the period of its composition as being that to which the three immediately preceding pieces belong.
2 To whom this "Reply" was sent is not known.
3 One of the many humorous designations given by the peasantry of Ayrshire to the devil.
4 The proper appellation, of which Mossvillie is a contraction.
5 "Master Tootie was a dealer in cows. It was his common practice to cut the nicks or markings from the horns of cattle, to disguise their age."—CROMIEK.
6 The village of Mauchline is situated nine miles to the south of Kilnamock, on the road from Glasgow to Dumfries, and is intimately connected with the personal and literary history of Burns. The years of his life between the twenty-fifth and twenty-eighth were spent at Mossvillie, a mile from Mauchline,—the years during which he wrote his principal poems, and when, to use the language of Mr. Lockhart, "his character came out in all its brightest lights, and in all but its darkest shadows." As the chief seat of an assembled population in his neighbourhood, this village appropriated a large share of the notice of the
DAVIE HAMILTON'S HOUSE, MAUCHLINE.

Published by R. & J. Adam, Glasgow & Edinburgh.
poet during a visit to New York. After his death, his body was presented to the people of New York.

"Jolly
Jolly
Jolly
Jolly"

The last words of the poet, and an epitaph to his memory.

His name, though not widely known, is still remembered as a symbol of the romantic spirit of the age.

Thus concludes our brief look at the life and works of the poet. May his memory live on through the ages.

Muncie, Indiana:
A city on the slope, a city of opportunity, a city where the past meets the present. The city of the rising sun, where the sun sets in the west.

Florio: A man of wisdom, a man of culture, a man of grace. His words have lasted through the ages, and his legacy continues to inspire us today.

Cowen: A man of courage, a man of honor, a man of integrity. His name is synonymous with the spirit of the age.

Mr. C. G. T. Cleveland was a man of great talent and a man of great spirit. His legacy continues to inspire us today.

The square
POEMS AND SONGS.

But lost he learn the callan tricks,
As, faith, I muckle doubt him,
Like scrapin' out and Crumie's nicks,
An' tellin' lies about them;
As lieve, then, I'll have them,
Your clerkship he should sair,
If sae be, ye may be
Not fitted otherwhere.

Altho' I say't, he's gleeg enough,
An' bout a house that's rule an' rough,
The boy might learn to swear;

bov

an old cow

willingly

serve

sharp

poet during this important era. To it he resorted,

and among the pleasures of society. There he

presided in the debating club, or shone over the

bow. It was the scene of the "Holy Fair," and of the

"Jolly Beggars." Here dwelt John Dow or Dave and

Nancy Thumock, both of whom entered for the dele-
tation—perchance also the observation—of the public.

His mistress, Jean Armour, was one of the "six
proper young belles" of Machinie whom he cele-
brates. He proposes to meet Lapraik at "Machinie
race," or "Machinie fair." His minister was that
Dudlie Auld, whom he has characterized so mangently;

and one of his elders was that Holy Willie into whose

mouth he has put so remarkable an exposition of

right Calvinism. And here was the residence of his

friend Gavin Hamilton, whose friendship was un-

questionably one of the most important circum-

stances of his early life.

Machinie is a neatly-built village situated on a

slope, about a mile from the river Ayre. The church

which existed in Burns's day was a low ungainly build-

ing, since supplanted by a handsome modern Gothic

colise. (See the accompanying plate.) The burial-
ground surrounding the old edifice was more particu-
larly the scene of the "Holy Fair." On the right of the

church stood a plain, but not uncomfortable bun, de-
nominated the Whitefood Aulis. It was a favourite

spot of Burns, who, on the back window of one of

the upper rooms, scribbled an amusing epitaph on the

host, John Dow ("Johnny Pigeon"), in which he made

out the religion of that worthy to be a mere compar-

ative appreciation of his various liquors. From the

same back window he could converse in the language

of the eyes with his Jean, whose father's house was

immediately behind. In the lane denominated the

Cowgate. The reader will recollect an allusion to

this lane in the "Holy Fair." The house of Mr. Gavin

Hamilton was in Burns's time the most conspicuous

object in the village. The taller part of the edifice

(as seen in the plate) was a portion of what was called

the castle formerly connected with the Priory of

Machinie; the rest of the house was comparatively

modern.

Mr. Gavin Hamilton was a writer, or legal prac-

titioner, of highly respectable character—a man of

spirit and intelligence, generous, affable, and enlight-

ened. Unfortunately, his religious practice did not

square with the notions of the then minister of

Machinie, the "Dudlie Auld" already alluded to,

who, in 1785, is found in the session records to have

summoned him for relapse, on the four following

charges:—1. Unnecessary absence from church for

five consecutive Sundays (apparently the result of

some dispute about a poor's rate); 2. Setting out on

a journey to Currieck on a Sunday; 3. Habitual, if not

total neglect of family worship; 4. Writing an abusive

letter to the session in reference to some of their

former proceedings respecting him. Strange though

this prosecution may seem, it was strictly accordant

with the right assumed by clergymen at that period

to inquire into the private habits of parishioners. It

was fortunately, however, mixed up with some per-

sonal motives in the members of the session, which

were so apparent to the presbytery, to which Mr.

Hamilton appealed, that that reverend body ordered

the proceedings to be stopped, and all notice of them

expunged from the records. Prepossessions of more

kinds than one induced Burns to let loose his irrever-

ent muse in satire against the persecutors of Mr.

Hamilton; and the result was several poems, in

which, as many as inclined to think, religion itself

suffers in common with those whom he holds up as

abusing it. About two years after, when Burns had

commenced the Edinburgh chapter of his life, a new

offence was committed by Mr. Hamilton. He had,

on a Sunday morning, ordered a servant to take in

some potatoes which happened to have been left out

in the garden after being dug. This came to the ears

of the minister, and Mr. Hamilton was summoned to

answer for the offence. Some ludicrous details occur

in the session records. It is there alleged that two

and a half rows of potatoes were dug on the morn-

ing in question, by Mr. Hamilton's express order, and

carried home by his daughter: say, so keen had the

spirit of persecution been, that the rows had been

formally measured, and found to be each eleven feet

long; so that twenty-seven feet and a half altogether

had been dug! The presbytery or synod treated this

prosecution in the same way as the former, and

Burns did not overlook it in his poems. He alludes

to it in "Holy Willie's Prayer," when he makes that

individual implore a curse upon Mr. Hamilton's

—basket and his store,

Kail and potatoes—

and on several other occasions.
POEMS AND SONGS.

But then wi' you, he'll be sae taught,
An' get sic fair example straught,
I hae na ony fear.
Ye'll catechize him every quirk,
An' shore him weel wi' hell;
An' gar him follow to the kirk—
—Aye when ye gang yourself.
If ye then, maun be then
Fae hame this comin' Friday,
Then please, sir, to leave, sir,
The orders wi' your lady.

My word of honour I hae gi'en,
In Paisley John's, 1 that night at c'en,
To meet the warld's worm;
To try to get the twa to gree,
An' name the airles an' the fee,
In legal mode an' form:
I ken he weel a snick can draw, 2
When simple bodies let him;
An' if a devil be at a',
In faith, he's sure to get him.
To phrase you, an' praise you,
Ye ken your Laureat scorns:
The prayer still, you share still,
Of gratefull Minstrel Burns.

SONG—MY HIGHLAND LASSIE, O.

This song, in the words of Burns himself, "was a composition of mine in very early life, before I was at all known in the world. My Highland Lassie was a warm-hearted, charming young creature as ever blessed a man with generous love." See Burns's statement complete in vol. i. p. 174, where the origin of this and the next song is discussed, the heroine of both being Highland Mary (Mary Campbell).

Nae gentle dames, tho' e'er sae fair,
Shall ever be my muse's care;
Their titles a' are empty show;
Gie me my Highland Lassie, O,
Within the glen sae bushy, O,
Aboon the plain sae rushy, O,
I sit me down wi' right good will,
To sing my Highland Lassie, O.

Oh, were yon hills and yon gardens fine,
Yon palace and yon gardens fine!

1 John Dow's inn.
2 Similarly Satan is called a "skeck-draw'ing dog" in the "Address to the Deil." See note to that poem (page 82), explaining the term.
POEMS AND SONGS.

The world then the love should know
I bear my Highland Lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

But fickle fortune frowns on me,
And I must cross the raging sea;
But while my crimson currents flow.
I'll love my Highland Lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

Altho' thro' foreign climes I range,
I know her heart will never change,
For her bosom burns with honour's glow,
My faithful Highland Lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

For her I'll dare the billows' roar,
For her I'll trace a distant shore,
That Indian wealth may lustre throw
Around my Highland Lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

She has my heart, she has my hand,
By sacred troth and honour's band!
Till the mortal stroke shall lay me low,
I'm thine, my Highland Lassie, O.
Farewell the glen sae bushy, O!
Farewell the plain sae rushy, O!
To other lands I now must go,
To sing my Highland Lassie, O!


SONG—WILL YE GO THE INDIES, MY MARY?

TUNE—"Erie-Deights, Marion."

"In my very early years, when I was thinking of going to the West Indies, I took the following farewell of a dear girl. . . . You must know that all my earlier love-songs were the breathings of ardent passion, and though it might have been easy in after times to have given them a polish, yet that polish, to me whose they were, and who perhaps alone cared for them, would have defaced the legend of the heart which was so faithfully inscribed on them. Their meagre simplicity was, as they say of wines, their race."—BURNS TO THOMSON, 20th Oct. 1792. See introductory note to preceding song.

Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
And leave auld Scotia's shore?
Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
Across th' Atlantic's roar?

1 This refers to the poet's project of going to Jamaica, which occupied his mind at the time the song was written—the spring or early summer of 1786.
O sweet grows the lime and the orange,
And the apple on the pine;
But a’ the charms o’ the Indies
Can never equal thine.

I hae sworn by the Heavens to my Mary,
I hae sworn by the Heavens to be true;
And sae may the Heavens forget me,
When I forget my vow!

O plighted me your faith, my Mary,
And plighted me your lily-white hand;
O plighted me your faith, my Mary;
Before I leave Scotia’s strand.

We hae plighted our troth, my Mary,
In mutual affection to join;
And curst be the cause that shall part us!
The hour and the moment o’ time!

---

EPITHE TO A YOUNG FRIEND.1

May, 1780.

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

Ye’ll try the world soon, my lad,
And, Andrew dear, believe me,
Ye’ll find mankind an unco squad,
And muickle 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.

---

1 This epistle was addressed to Andrew Aiken, son of Robert Aiken, writer in Ayr, to whom the “Cotter’s Saturday Night” is inscribed. Andrew Aiken was successful in life as a merchant in Liverpool, and afterwards held the appointment of English consul at Riga, where he died in 1831. His son P. F. Aiken published Memorials of Robert Burns, with Selections of his Poems, in 1856. —”The epistle displays much shrewdness, an intimate acquaintance with human nature, and great kind-heartedness. When Burns employed his mind in giving rules for moral and prudential conduct, no man was a sounder philosopher.” — Motherwell.
I'll no say, men are villains a;
The real, harden'd wicked,
Wha hae nae check but human law,
Are to a few restrick'd:
But, och! mankin'd are unco weak,
An' little to be trusted;
If self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted!

Yet they wha fa' in fortune's strife,
Their fate we should na censure,
For still th' important end of life,
They equally may answer;
A man may 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 yourself,
Ye scarcely tell to ony.
Conceal yourself as weel's ye can
Frae critical dissection;
But keek thro' ev'ry other man,
Wi' sharpent'd, slee inspection.

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

To catch dame Fortune's golden smile,
Assiduous wait upon her;
And gather gear by ev'ry wile
That's justified by honour;

Yet still keep up a decent pride,
And never ever dare disdain you:
Time comes wi' kind oblivious shade,
And daily darker sets it.
And if nae nae mistakes are made,
The world soon forgets it.

This stanza Burns doubtless felt to be wanting in
terminology and point of the rest, and, therefore,
omitted it in the MS, sent for publication. But, as
Chambers justly observes, "It throws so valuable a
light on the state of his own mind at this crisis, that
it certainly ought not to be suppressed, though we
should not desire to see it replaced in the poem."
Not for to hide it in a hedge,  
Nor for a train-attendant,  
But for the glorious privilege  
Of being independent.

The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip  
To hand the wretch in order;  
But where ye feel your honour grip,  
Let that aye be your border;  
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's 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's phrase, "God send you speed,"  
Still daily to grow wiser;  
And may ye better reck the rede,  
Than ever did th' adviser!  

1 William Niven of Killbride, Maybole, the "Willie," who was Burns's schoolfellow and crony during the short period he attended the school at Kirkoswald, always asserted that this epistle was originally addressed to him, but afterwards transferred to Andrew Aiken from motives of policy.
ADDRESS OF BEELZEBUB

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY.

To the Right Honourable the Earl of Breadalbane, President of the Right Honourable and Honourable the Highland Society, which met on the 23d of May last, at the Shakespeare, Covent Garden, to concert ways and means to frustrate the designs of five hundred Highlanders, who, as the society were informed by Mr. M'Kenzie, of Applecross, were so audacious as to attempt to escape from their lawful lords and masters, whose property they were, by emigrating from the lands of Mr. M'Donald, of Glengarry, to the wilds of Canada, in search of that fantastic thing—LIBERTY.

Long life, my lord, an' health be yours,
Unscath'd by hunger'd Highland boors;
Lord grant nae duddie desperate beggar,
Wi' dirk, claymore, or rusty trigger,
May twin auld Scotland o' a life
She likes—as laumkkins like a knife.

Faith, you and Applecross were right
To keep the Highland hounds in sight;
I doubt na! they wad bid nae better
Than let them ance out owre the water;
Then up amang the lakes and seas
They'll mak what rules and laws they please;
Some daring Hancock, or a Franklin,
May set their Highland bluid a-ranklin';
Some Washington again may head them,
Or some Montgomery, fearless, lead them,
Till God knows what may be effected
When by such heads and hearts directed—
Poor dunghill sons of dirt and mire
May to Patrician rights aspire!
Nae sage North, now, nor sager Sackville,
To watch and premier o'er the pack vle,
An' whare will ye get Howes and Clutons.
To bring them to a right repentance,
To cowe the rebel generation,
An' save the honour o' the nation?
They, an' be damnd! what right hae they
To meat or sleep, or light o' day?
Far less to riches, pow'r, or freedom,
But what your lordship likes to gie them?

But hear, my lord! Glengarry, hear!
Your hand's owre light on them, I fear!
Your factors, grieves, trustees, and bailies,
I canna' say but they do grieve;
They lay aside a' tender mercies,
An' tirl the hallions to the birses;

To the Right Honourable the Earl of Breadalbane, President of the Right Honourable and Honourable the Highland Society, which met on the 23d of May last, at the Shakespeare, Covent Garden, to concert ways and means to frustrate the designs of five hundred Highlanders, who, as the society were informed by Mr. M'Kenzie, of Applecross, were so audacious as to attempt to escape from their lawful lords and masters, whose property they were, by emigrating from the lands of Mr. M'Donald, of Glengarry, to the wilds of Canada, in search of that fantastic thing—LIBERTY.
Yet while they're only poind't and herriet,
They'll keep their stubborn Highland spirit;
But smash them! crush them a' to spails!
An' rot the dyvors i' the jails!
The young dogs, swing them to the labour;
Let wark an' hunger mak them sober!
The hizzies, if they're aughtless fawson,
Let them in Drury-lane be lesson'd!
An' if the wives an' dirty brats
Come thiggat at your doors and yetts,
Flaffan wi' duds and gray wi' beas',
Frighten awa your deucks an' geese,
Get out a horse whip or a jowler,
The langest thong, the fiercest growler,
And gar the tatter'd gypsies pack
Wi' a' their bastards on their back!
Go on, my lord! I lang to meet you,
An' in my house at hame to greet you;
Wi' common lords ye shanna mingle,
The bennost neuk beside the ingle,
At my right han' assign'd your seat
'Tween Herod's hip an' Polycrate,—
Or if you on your station tarrow,
Between Almagro and Pizarro,
A seat, I'm sure ye're weel deservin';
Ar' till ye come—Your humble servant,

June 1st, Anno Mundi 5790 [A. D. 1780.]

1 The "Address of Beelzebub" was first published in the Edinburgh Magazine of Feb. 1818. The person who sent it had got the MS. of it in Burns's handwriting from a friend, who again had got it from the poet's intimate and crony, Rankine, of Adamhill. Burns must have misapprehended the scope of the meeting of the Highland Society he refers to in the dedication or superscription. A notice of it appeared in the Edinburgh Advertiser of May 30th, 1788:—"On Tuesday [May 23] there was a meeting of the Highland Society at London for the encouragement of the fisheries in the Highlands, &c. Three thousand pounds were immediately subscribed by eleven gentlemen present for this particular purpose. The Earl of Breadalbane informed the meeting that 500 persons had agreed to emigrate from the estates of Mr. McDonald of Glenairn; that they had subscribed money, purchased ships, &c., to carry their design into effect. The noblemen and gentle-

men agreed to co-operate with government to frustrate their design; and to recommend to the principal noblemen and gentlemen in the Highlands to endeavour to prevent emigration, by improving the fisheries, agriculture, and manufactures, and particularly to enter into a subscription for that purpose." What is the dread of one generation becomes the desire of another. Highland proprietors, instead of subscribing now to prevent the people on their estates from emigrating, would gladly subscribe to assist suitable persons to seek "fresh woods and pastures new" in emigration districts. Mr. M'Kenzie of Applecross, in Ross-shire, who is here reprented along with the Earl of Breadalbane, was in his time regarded, and is still remembered, as a liberal-minded and excellent landlord, so anxious for the welfare of his tenantry that he spontaneously relinquished his feudal claims upon their labour.
A DREAM.¹

Thoughts, words, and deeds, the statute shines with reason;
But surely Dreams were ne'er inflected Treason.

On reading, in the public papers, the Laureate's Ode, with the other parade of June 4, 1786, the author was no sooner dropped asleep than he imagined himself transported to the birthday levee; and in his dreaming fancy made the following Address.

Guid-mornin' to your Majesty!
May Heaven augment your blisses,
On every new birth-day ye see,
A humble bardie wishes!
My bardship here, at your levee,
On sic a day as this is,
Is sure an uncouth sight to see,
Amang the birth-day dresses
Sae fine this day.

I see ye're complimented thrang,
By monie a lord and lady;
"God save the king!" 's a cuckoo sang
That's unco easy said aye;
The poets, too, a venal gang,
Wi' rhymes weel-turn'd and ready,
Wad gar ye tow' ro ne'er do wrang,
But aye unerring steady,
On sic a day.

For me! before a monarch's face,
Ev'n there I wi'na flatter;
For neither pension, post, nor place,
Am I your humble debtor:

¹ It is said that this poem injured Burns at court—at least, prevented the then existing administration from recommending him to the strange of royalty. Some of his friends, hearing this, endeavoured to persuade him to keep it out of the Edinburgh edition; but in vain. We cannot see why the poem should have given offence to any but fools. It displays throughout an affectionate loyalty, mingled up with the soundest observation; and this should have gone far to excuse the homeliness of its address. On 30th April, 1787, he wrote to Mrs. Dunlop, one of those friends:—"I set as little by princes, lords, clergy, critics, &c., as all these respective gentry do by my bardship." And in the same letter he says, "Poets, much my superiors, have so flatter'd those who possessed the adventitious qualities of wealth and power, that I am determined to flatter no created being, either in prose or verse."

Thomas Warton was then poet-laureate. His ode for June 4, 1786, begins thus.—

When Freedom nurs'd her native fire
In ancient Greece, and ruled the lyre,
So, nae reflection on your grace
Your kingship to bespatter;
There's monie waur been o' the race,
And aiblins ane been better
Than you this day.

'Tis very true, my sov'reign king,
My skill may weel be doubted;
But facts are chiefts that winna ding,
An' downa be disputed:
Your royal nest, beneath your wing,
Is e'en right reft an' clouted,
And now the third part of the string,
An' less, will gang about it
Than did ae day.1

Far be't frae me that I aspire
To blame your legislation,
Or say, ye wisdom want, or fire,
To rule this mighty nation:
But, faith! I muckle doubt, my Sire,
Ye've trusted ministration
To chaps, wha, in a barn or byre,
Wad better fill'd their station
Than courts you day.

And now ye've gi'en anld Britain peace,
Her broken shins to plaster;
Your sair taxation does her fleece,
Till she has scarce a tester;
For me, thank God, my life's a lease,
Nae bargain wearing faster,
Or, faith! I fear, that wi' the geese,
I shortly boost to pasture
I' the craft some day.

I'm no mistrusting Willie Pitt,
When taxes he enlarges,
(An' Will's a true guid fallow's get,2
A name not envy spaires,) That he intends to pay your debt,
An' lessen a' your charges;
But, G-d'sake! let nae saving-fit
Abridge your bonnie barges
An' boats this day.3

---

1 Alluding to the loss of the American colonies, formally given up at the close of the American war, by the treaties of 1783.
2 William Pitt being the son of the celebrated Earl of Chatham.
3 In the spring of 1786 a great deal of discussion took place in the House of Commons about reducing the naval force, and particularly the giving up of 64-gun ships. Hence the allusion here to abridging the "bonnie barges an' boats."
Adieu, my Liege! may freedom seek
Beneath your high protection;
An' may ye rax Corruption's neck,
An' gie her for dissection!
But since I'm here, I'll no neglect,
In loyal, true affection,
To pay your Queen, with due respect,
My fealty and subjection
This great birth-day.

Hail! Majesty Most Excellent!
While nobles strive to please ye,
Will ye accept a compliment
A simple bardie gies ye?
Thae bonnie bairn-time, I heav'n has lent,
Still higher may they heezo ye
In bliss, till fate some day is sent
For ever to release ye
Frae care that day.

For you, young potentate of Wales, 2
I tell your Highness fairly,
Down pleasure's stream, wi' sweling sails,
Told ye're driving rareley;
But some day ye may gnaw your nails,
An' curse your folly sairly,
That e'er ye brak Diana's pales,
Or rattl'd dice wi' Charlie, 3
By night or day.

Yet aft a ragged cowt's been known
To make a noble aiver;
Sae, ye may doucely fill a throne,
For a' their clish-ma-claver:
There, him at Agincourt wha shone,
Few better were or braver;
And yet, wi' funny, queer Sir John, 4
He was an unco shaver
For monie a day.

For you, right rev'rend Osnaburg, 5
Nane sets the lawn-sleeve sweeter,
Although a ribbon at your lug
Wad been a dress completer:

1 See note p. 89 for explanation and origin of this term.
2 George IV., then Prince of Wales, already notorious for his dissolute and extravagant habits.
3 Charles James Fox, almost equally celebrated as a gamester and as a statesman, and with whom and other distinguished Whigs the Prince of Wales then associated.
4 King Henry V.—R. B.
5 Sir John Falstaff: vide Shakspeare.—R. B.
6 The Duke of York, son of George III., and titular bishop of Osnaburg.
POEMS AND SONGS.

As ye disown ye saucy dog
That bears the keys of Peter,
Then, swith! an' get a wife to hug,
Or, troth! ye'll stain the nitre,
Some luckless day.

Young, royal Tarry Brecks,1 I learn,
Ye've lately come athwart her;
A glorious galley,2 stern an' stern,
Weel rigg'd for Venus' barter;
But first hang out, that she'll discern
Your hymeneal charter,
Then heave aboard your grapple a'irn,
An', large upon her quarter,
Come full that day.

Ye, lastly, bonnie blossoms a',
Ye royal lasses dainty,
Heav'n mak' ye guid as weel as braw,
An' gie you lads a-plenty:
But an'er na British boys awa',
For kings are unco scant aye;
An' German gentle are but sma',
They're better just than want aye,
On onie day.

God bless you a'! consider now,
Ye've unco muckle clautet;
But, ere the course o' life be thro',
It may be bitter sautet:
An' I hae seen their coggie fou,
That yet hae tarrow't at it;
But or the day was done, I trow,
The laggan3 they hae clautet
Fu' cleane that day.4

1 William IV., then post-captain in the royal navy.  
2 Alluding to the newspaper account of a certain royal sailor's amours.-R. H.—The Duke of Clarence's connection with the celebrated Mrs. Jordan did not take place till 1791, so the poet cannot be referring to it. William IV. was born in 1765.  
3 The angle between the side and bottom of a wooden dish.—Burn's Glossary.  
4 "Few of the commentators have ventured to discuss the merits of 'The Dream.' They are of a high order—the gaiety as well as the keenness of the satire, and the vehement rapidity of the verse, are not the only attractions. Even the prose introduction is sarcastic: the poet, on reading the laureate's Ode, fell asp—a likely consequence, for the birthday strains of those times were something of the dulllest."—ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.—"'The Dream,' if not a high, is a very characteristic effort: there never was an ender hand-gallop of verse."—ALEXANDER SMITH.  
—Dr. Hately Waddell quotes, as an "unconscious commentary" on this stanza, "the well-known verses attributed to the Princess Amelia—herself one, and the fairest, of these very blossoms and 'royal lasses dainty':—

Unthinking, idle, wild, and young,
I laughed, and danced, and talked, and sung
And proud of health, of freedom vain,
Dreamed not of sorrow, care, or pain,—
Concluding, in those hours of glee,
That all the world was made for me.

But when the hour of trial came,
When sickness shook this trembling frame
When folly's gay pursuits were o'er,
And I could sing and dance no more,—
It then occurred how sad 't would be
Were this world only made for me.
POEMS AND SONGS.

A DEDICATION
TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ. 1

Expect na, sir, in this narration,
A fleecin', fleth'rin dedication,
To roose you up, an' ca' you guid,
An' sprung o' great an' noble blood,
Because ye're surnam'd like His Grace; 2
Perhaps related to the race;
Then when I'm tir'd—and sae are ye,
Wi' mony a falsome, sinfu' lie,
Set up a face, how I stop short,
For fear your modesty be hurt.

This may do—maun do, sir, wi' them wha
Mann please the great folk for a wame fou;
For me! sae laigh I needna bow,
For, Lord be thankit, I can plough;
And when I downa yoke a naig,
Then, Lord be thankit, I can beg; 3
Sae I shall say, an' that's nae flatt'rin,
It's just sic poet, an' sic patron.

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

The Patron, (sir, ye mann forgie me,
I winna lie, come what will o' me)
On ev'ry hand it will allow'd be,
He's just—nae better than he should be.

I readily and freely grant,
He downa see a poor man want;
What's no his ane he winna tak it,
What ance he says he winna break it;

1 See a previous note (p. 143), in which an account of this early friend of Burns is given.
2 The Duke of Hamilton.
3 "The old-recalled beggar, even in my own time . . . was expected to merit his quarters by something beyond an exposition of his distresses. He was often a talkative, facetious fellow, prompt at repartee, and not withheld from exercising his power that way by any respect of persons, his patched cloak giving him the privilege of the ancient jester. To be a guid crook—that is, to possess talents for conversation—was essential to the trade of a 'pair body' of the more exalted class; and Burns, who delighted in the amusement their discourses afforded, seems to have looked forward with gloomy firmness to the possibility of himself becoming, one day or other, a member of their itinerant society. In his poetical works it is alluded to so often, as perhaps to indicate that he considered the consumption as not utterly improbable. Thus in the fine dedication of his works to Gavin Hamilton, he says:

And when I downa yoke a naig,
Then, Lord be thankit, I can beg.

Again, in his 'Epistle to Davie, a Brother Poet,' he states that, in their closing career,

'The last o't, the worst o't,
Is only but to beg.'

—SIR WALTER SCOTT.
Ought he can lend he'll no refuse,
Till his goodness is abused;
And rascals whyles that do him wrang,
Ev'n that, he does na mind it lang:
As master, landlord, husband, father,
He does na fail his part in either.

But then, nae thanks to him for a' that;
Nae godly symptom ye can ca' that;
It's maething but a milder feature,
Of our poor, sinfu', corrupt nature:
Y'll get the best o' moral works,
'Mang black Gentoo and pagan Turks,
Or hunters wild on Ponotaxi,
Wha never heard of orthodoxy.
That he's the poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word and deed,
It's no thro' terror of d-m-n-tion;
It's just a carnal inclination.

Morality, thou deadly bane,
Thy tens o' thousands thou hast slain!
Vain is his hope, whose stay and trust
In moral mercy, truth, and justice!

No—stretch a point to catch a plack;
Abuse a brother to his back;
Steal thro' a winnock frae a wh-ore,
But point the rake that taks the door;
Be to the poor like ony whunstane,
And haun their noses to the grunstane;
Ply ev'ry art o' legal thieving;
No matter—stick to sound believing!

Learn three-mile pray'rs, and half-mile graces,
Wi' weel-spread looves, an' lang wry faces;
Grun up a solemn, lengthen'd groan,
And damn a' parties but your own;
I'll warrant then, ye're nae deceiver,
A steady, sturdy, staunch believer.

O ye wha leave the springs of Calvin,
For gummie dubs o' your ain delvin'!
Ye sons of Heresy and Error,
Ye'll some day squeal in quaking terror!
When Vengeance draws the sword in wrath,
And in the fire throws the sheath;

1 See him the poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word an' deed—
Epistle to M'Math.

2 "Three-mile prayers, and half-mile graces" is also an expression used in the "Epistle to M'Math," which we need scarcely remind the reader, describes the not very cordial relations that existed between Gavin Hamilton and some of the neighbouring clergy.
When Ruin, with his sweeping besom,
Just frets till Heaven commission gives him:
While o'er the harp pale Mis'ry moans,
And strikes the ever-deep'ning tones,
Still louder shrieks, and heavier groans!

Your pardon, sir, for this digression,
I must forget my dedication;
But when divinity comes 'cross me,
My readers still are sure to lose me.

So, sir, ye see 'twas nae daft vapour,
But I maturely thought it proper,
When a' my works I did review,
To dedicate them, sir, to you:
Because (ye need na tak it ill)
I thought them something like yours'.

Then patronise them wi' your favour,
And your petitioner shall ever—
I had almost said, ever pray;
But that's a word I need na say:
For prayin' I hae little skill o't;
I'm baith dead-sweer, an' wretched ill o't;
But I'll repeat each poor man's pray'r,
That kens or hears about you, Sir—

"May ne'er Misfortune's growling bark,
Howl thro' the dwelling o' the Clerk!"
May ne'er his gen'rous, honest heart,
For that same gen'rous spirit smart!
May Kennedy's far honour'd name,
Lang beat his hymeneal flame,
Till Hamiltons, at least a dozen,
Are free their nuptial labours risen:
Five bonnie lasses round their table,
And seven braw fellows, stont an' able
To serve their king and country weel,
By word, or pen, or pointed steel!
May health and peace, with mutual rays.
Shine on the evening o' his days;
Till his wee curlie John's ier-oe,
When ebbing life nae mair shall flow,
The last, sad, mournful rites bestow!"

I will not wind a lang conclusion,
Wi' complimentary effusion:

1 Mr. Hamilton was popularly known by this name, because he was a writer, as an attorney or solicitor is called in Scotland, and, perhaps, because he may have acted in the capacity of clerk to some of the county courts.
2 Mr. Hamilton's wife was a Kennedy.
But whilst your wishes and endeavours
Are blest with fortune's smiles and favours,
I am, dear Sir, with zeal most fervent,
Your much indebted, humble servant.

But if (which Pows above prevent!)
That iron-hearted carl, Want,
Attended in his grim advances,
By sad mistakes, and black mischances,
While hopes, and joys, and pleasures fly him,
Make you as poor a dog as I am,—
Your humble servant then no more;
For who would humbly serve the poor?
But, by a poor man's hopes in heaven!
While recollection's power is given,
If, in the vale of humble life,
The victim sad of fortune's strife,
I, thro' the tender gushing tear,
Should recognize my master dear,
If friendless, low, we meet together,
Then, sir, your hand—my friend and brother!

STANZAS ON NAETHING.²

EXTEMPORE EPISTLE TO GAVIN HAMILTON.

To you, sir, this summons I've sent,
Pray, whip till the pownie is frothing;
But if you demand what I want,
I'll honestly answer you—nothing.

Ne'er scorn a poor poet like me,
For idly just living and breathing,
While people of every degree
Are busy employed about—nothing.

Poor Centum-per-centum may fast,
And grumble his hurldies their catting,
He'll find when the balance is cast,
He's gone to the devil for—nothing.

¹ It might have been expected that this poem would have opened the volume published at Kilmarrock, but it does not, though it is included in the work. Its freedom of sentiment and its irreverent handling of orthodoxy may have seemed even to its reckless writer, unknown as he then was beyond his own district, too much like a challenge to more rigid professors, and savouring too much of self-complacency for the piece to take so prominent a position.

² The above extempore verses were first published in Macmillan's edition of Burns, edited by Alexander Smith (London, 1868), and were extracted from a Common-place Book which the poet probably sent to Mrs. Dunlop, and which, now in a fragmentary condition, was then in the possession of Mr. Macmillan. In the MS. no date of composition is given, but it is evident from the second last stanza that the author's expected departure for Jamaica was approaching.
POEMS AND SONGS.

The courtier cringes and bows,
Ambition has likewise its palything;
A coronet beams on his brows;
And what is a coronet?—naething.

Some quarrel the Presbyter gown,
Some quarrel episcopal graceing;
But every good fellow will own
The quarrel is a’ about—naething.

The lover may sparkle and glow,
Approaching his bonnie bit gay thing;
But marriage will soon let him know
He’s gotten—a buskit up naething.

The Poet may jingle and rhyme,
In hopes of a laureate wreathing,
And when he has wasted his time,
He’s kindly rewarded wi’—naething.

The thundering bully may rage,
And swagger and swear like a heathen;
But collar him fast, I’ll engage,
Ye’ll find that his courage is—naething.

Last night wi’ a feminine Whig—¹
A poet she couldna put faith in;
But soon we grew lovingly big,
I taught her her terrors were—naething.

Her Whigship was wonderful pleased,
But charmingly tickled wi’ ae thing;
Her fingers I lovingly squeezed,
And kissed her, and promised her—naething.

The priest anathemas may threat—
Predicament, sir, that we’re baulth in;
But when honour’s reveille is beat
The holy artillery’s—naething.

And now I must mount on the wave—
My voyage perhaps there is death in;
But what is a watery grave?
The drowning a Poet is naething.

And now as grim death’s in my thought,
To you, sir, I make this bequeathing;
My service as long as ye’ve aught,
And my friendship, by God, when ye’ve naething!

¹ The word is not used here in its political sense, but in that of one of the rigidly orthodox. So the "terror of the Whigs."
TO A MEDICAL GENTLEMAN

(DR. MACKENZIE, MAUCHLINE)

INVITING HIM TO ATTEND A MASONIC ANNIVERSARY MEETING ON ST. JOHN’S DAY, 24TH JUNE, 1786.

Friday first's the day appointed,
By our Right Worshipful anointed,
To hold our grand procession;
To get a blad o’ Johny’s morals,
And taste a swatch o’ Mason’s1 barrels,
I’ the way of our profession.
Our Master and the Brotherhood
Wad a’ be glad to see you:
For me, I would be mair than proud,
To share the mercies wi’ you.
If death, then, wi’ scathe, then,
Some mortal heart is hechting,
Inform him, and storm him,
That Saturday ye’ll fecht him.

Robert Burns.

FAREWELL TO THE BRETHREN OF ST. JAMES’S LODGE,

TARBOLTON.2

TUNE—“Good night and joy be wi’ you a’!”

Adieu! a heart-warm, fond adieu!
Dear brothers of the mystic tie!
Ye favour’d, ye enlighten’d few.
Companions of my social joy!
The’ I to foreign lands must hie,
Pursuing Fortune’s slidd’ry ba’,
With melting heart, and brimful eye,
I’ll mind you still, tho’ far awa’.

Oft have I met your social band,
And spent the cheerful, festive night;
Oft, honour’d with supreme command,
Presided o’er the sons of light:

1The keeper of the Tarbolton ale-house in which the brethren used to assemble. The reference to “Johny’s morals” is not understood.
2Tarbolton is a village in Ayrshire, about 7 miles to the north-east of Ayr, in the parish of the same name—a plain country village with no feature of particular note. Tarbolton parish comprised the farm of Lochlea, at which Burns lived from 1774 to 1784, and the whole locality has many reminiscences of the poet. In regard to his residence in the Tarbolton neigh-

POEMS AND SONGS. [1786.

Farewell to the brethren of St. James’s Lodge, Tarbolton.

Tune—“Good night and joy be wi’ you a’!”

Adieu! a heart-warm, fond adieu!
Dear brothers of the mystic tie!
Ye favour’d, ye enlighten’d few.
Companions of my social joy!
The’ I to foreign lands must hie,
Pursuing Fortune’s slipp’d’ry ba’,
With melting heart, and brimful eye,
I’ll mind you still, tho’ far awa’.

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And spent the cheerful, festive night;
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This work.

In the year 1788, the parish of St. Andrew's was dissolved, and the lodge was re-established in the town of Edinburgh. The first lodge meeting was held in the month of January, and the officers were elected as follows: 

- Master: John Brown
- Senior Warden: John Smith
- Junior Warden: John Wilson

In this meeting, the brethren discussed the current affairs of the lodge and made plans for future meetings. The lodge continued to meet regularly, and the records of these meetings are still preserved in the archives.

In the following year, the lodge was dissolved again, and it was not until the year 1790 that it was re-established once more. During this time, the lodge decided to hold meetings in a nearby church, and the brethren worked hard to ensure that the lodge continued to prosper.
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In regard
POEMS AND SONGS.

And by that hieroglyphic bright,
Which none but Craftsmen ever saw!
Strong Mem'ry on my heart shall write
Those happy scenes when far awa'.

May Freedom, Harmony, and Love,
Unite you in the Grand Design,
Beneath th' Omnipotent Eye above,
The glorious Architect divine!

That you may keep th' unerring line,
Still rising by the plummet's law,
Till Order bright completely shine,
Shall be my pray'r when far awa'.

And you, farewell! whose merits claim,
Justly, that highest badge to wear!
Heaven bless your honour'd, noble name,
To Masonry and Scotia dear!

A last request permit me here,
When yearly ye assemble a',
One round, I ask it with a tear,
To him, the Bard that's far awa'.

ON A SCOTCH BARD,²

A' ye wha live by sowps o' drink,
A' ye wha live by cranibo-clink,
A' ye wha live and never think,
Come mourn wi' me!

Our billie's g'ien us a' a jink,
An' owre the sea.

Lament him a' ye rantin' core,
Wha dearly like a random splore,
Nae mair he'll join the merry roar,
In social key;

For now he's ta'en anither shore,
An' owre the sea.

The bonnie lasses weel may wiss him,
And in their dear petitions place him:
The widows, wives, an' a' may bless him,
Wi' tearfu' ee;

For weel I wat they'll sairly miss him
That's owre the sea.

¹The reference here is probably to Captain James Montgomery, Grandmaster of St. James's Lodge at this time, as stated by Chambers.
²This was written on himself in 1788, in anticipation of his departure for the West Indies. In one MS. copy in the author's handwriting, the line in the first verse, Our billie's g'ien us a' a jink, stands thus: Our billie, Rob, has ta'en a jink.
POEMS AND SONGS.

O Fortune, they hae room to grumble!
Hadst thou ta'en aff some drowsy bummle,
Wha can do nought but fyke an' fumble,
’Twaed been nae plea;
But he was gleg as any wamble,
That’s owre the sea.

Auld cantie Kyle may weepers wear,
An’ stain them wi’ the saunt, saunt tear;
’Twill mak’ her poor auld heart, I fear;
In flinders flee;
He was her laurate monie a year,
That’s owre the sea.

He saw misfortune’s cauld nor’-wast
Lang mustering up a bitter blast;
A jilet brak his heart at last,¹
Ill may she be!
So, took a berth afore the mast,
An’ owre the sea.

To tremble under Fortune’s cummock,
On scarce a bellyfu’ o’ drummock,
Wi’ his proud, independent stomach,
Could ill agree;
So, row’t his hurdles in a hammock,
An’ owre the sea.

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

Jamaica bodies, use him weel,
An’ hap him in a cozie bie!
Ye’ll find him aye a dainty chiel,
And fa’ o’ glee;
He wad na wrang’ the vera deil,
That’s owre the sea.

Fareweel, my rhyme-composing billie!
Your native soil was right ill-willie;
But may you flourish like a lily,
Now bonnillie!
I’ll toast ye in my hindmost gillie,
’Tho’ owre the sea.

¹ This of course refers to Jean Armour’s desertion of him, which did not quite break his heart however.
POEMS AND SONGS.

SONG—ELIZA!

TUNE—"Gilderoy."

From thee, Eliza, I must go,
And from my native shore;
The cruel fates between us throw
A boundless ocean's roar:
But boundless oceans, roaring wide,
Between my love and me,
They never, never can divide
My heart and soul from thee!

Farewell, farewell, Eliza dear;
The maid that I adore!
A boding voice is in mine ear,
We part to meet no more!
But the last throb that leaves my heart,
While death stands victor by,
That throb, Eliza, is thy part,
And thine that latest sigh!

—

A BARD'S EPITAPH.²

Is there a whim-inspired 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 drop a tear.

Is there a bard of rustic song,
Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,

¹ Discarded by Jean Armour, and driven from her father's door with contumely, Burns's affections turned towards the heroine of this song, and, in a far more intense degree towards his Highland Lassie (Mary Campbell), to whom he writes farewell strains fully as impassioned. Gilbert Burns, Chambers, and others identify Miss Betty (Miller), who figures as one of the Manchline belles, as the inspirer of these evil-boding verses. From the following obituary notice, however, which appeared in the newspapers about the year 1827, it would appear that there is another claimant for this honour. "At Alva, on the 28th ult., in the 74th year of her age, Mrs. Elizabeth Black, relfect of the late Mr. James Stewart, vintner there . . . She was Burns's ELIZA. She was born and brought up in Ayrshire, and in the bloom of youth was possessed of no ordinary share of personal charms. She early became acquainted with Burns, and made no small impression on his heart. She possessed several love-epistles he had addressed to her. It was when Scotia's bard intended embarking from his own to a foreign shore that he wrote the stanzas beginning, 'From thee, Eliza, I must go'—the subject being of course Elizabeth Black." This claim is, however, rather weak; Elizabeth Black was acquainted with the Burns family before they came to Mossgiel, but by this time she had left that part of the country, and they appear to have lost sight of her. Moreover, if she died in 1827, aged 74, she must have been six years older than Burns, and therefore hardly likely to have been a sweetheart of his.

² This beautiful and affecting poem was composed as a fitting conclusion to the volume published at Kilmarnock in 1786. The analysis of his own character here is perfect so far as it goes.
POEMS AND SONGS.

That weekly this area throng;
    O, pass not by!
But, with a frater-feeling strong,
        Here, heave a sigh.

Is there a man, whose judgment, clear,
    Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs, himself, life’s mad career,
        Wild as the wave;
Here pause—and, 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 earthy hole,
        In low pursuit;
Know, prudent, cautious self-control
        Is wisdom’s root.¹

EPITAPH FOR ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ.²

Know thou, O stranger to the fame
Of this much lov’d, much honour’d name!
(For none that knew him need be told)
A warmer heart death ne’er made cold.

¹ "Whom did the poet intend should be thought of as occupying that grave over which, after modestly setting forth the moral discernment and warm affections of the ‘poor inhabitant,’ it is supposed to be inscribed that—

    Thoughtless follies lay’d him low,
        And stain’d his name—
Whom but himself—himself anticipating the too probable termination of his own course? Here is a sincere and solemn avowal—a public declaration from his own will—a confession at once devout, poetical, and human—a history in the shape of a prophecy! What more was required of the biographer than to have put his seal to the writing, testifying that the forebodings had been realized, and the record was authentic?"—Wordsworth. "Wordsworth owed much to Burns, and a style of perfect plainness, relying for effect solely on the weight and force of that which with entire fidelity it utters, Burns could show him.

² "Every one will be conscious of a likeness here to Wordsworth; and if Wordsworth did great things with this nobly plain manner, we must remember, what indeed he himself would always have been forward to acknowledge, that Burns used it before him."—Matthew Arnold.

² Robert Aiken, writer or solicitor in Ayr, was one of Burns’s earliest friends and patrons. He spoke in high terms of Burns’s poetry wherever he went, and contributed materially to the spread of the poet’s fame. By way of marking his sense of Aiken’s friendly attentions, Burns inscribed to him “The Cotter’s Saturday Night,”—and infuriated the above kindly and graceful epitaph.
a likeness here to
and great things
in Ayr was one
He spoke in
above kindly and
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EPITAPH FOR GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

The poor man weeps—here Gavin sleeps,
Whom canting wretches blam'd;
But with such as he, where'er he be,
May I be sav'd or damn'd!

EPITAPH ON WEE JOHNY.

Woe be the art, O reader, know,
That death has murder'd Johny!
An' here his body lies fu' low—
For saul he ne'er had ony.

SONG—THE LASS O' BALLOCHMYLE.

TUNE—"Miss Forbes' Farewell to Rauch."

"My two songs on Miss W. Alexander ("The Lass o' Ballochmyle") and Miss Peggy Kennedy ("Young Peggy blooms") were likewise tried yesterday by a jury of literati, and found defamatory libels against the fastidious powers of Poesy and Taste, and the author forbidden to print them under pain of forfeiture of character. I cannot help almost shedding a tear to the memory of two songs that had cost me some pains, and that I valued a good deal, but I must submit."—BURNS TO GAVIN HAMILTON, March 8, 1787.

'Twas even—the dewy fields were green,
On ev'ry blade the pearls hang;
The zephyr wanton'd round the beam,
And bore its fragrant sweets along:

Gavin Hamilton was another of the poet's early friends. In this case also, Burns repaid his kindness in song. The "Dedication to Gavin Hamilton," has received the praise of the critics; elsewhere his "takin' arts wi' grit and saunt," are prominently mentioned; and in the Epistle to the Rev. John M'Math, his virtues are expatiated upon at length.

Miss Johny was long supposed to be John Wilson, the printer of the first edition of the poems. It was considered to be a great joke that he should have printed his own "the jacket" unsuspecting of its application. But Burns had no cause to think meanly of his printer, nor was Wilson such a simon-pietist as to be a ready or likely butt. The real "Wee Johny" was a miserly, ill-conditioned cow-feeder in the neighbourhood of Mancehline, who was occasionally, through sheer ignorance, impertinent to the poet. He is said to have been frequently styled "Saumless Johny." See p. 430, vol. 1. of Hotchk Waddell's Life and Works of Burns, and letter in Kilwinning Standard of Nov. 25th, 1884, the statements in which were corroborated by Miss Peggy (Burns's niece) at the date of writing.

Hang is not the present but the past tense; the conjunction of the verb in Scotland being king, hang, hang.

The "Braes of Ballochmyle" extend along the right or north bank of the Ayr, between the village of Catrine and Howford Bridge, and are situated at the distance of about two miles from Burns's farm of Mossgiel. They form the most important part of the pleasure-grounds connected with Ballochmyle House, the seat of a family named Alexander, one of the members of which, Miss Wilhelmina Alexander, was the subject of the poem. Presenting a mixture of steep bank and precipice, clothed with the most luxuriant natural wood, while a fine river sweeps round beneath them, they form a scene of bewildering beauty, exactly such as a poet would love to dream in, during a July eve. A short while before the incident which gave rise to the song, Balloch-
POEMS AND SONGS.

In ev’ry glen the mavis sang,
All nature listening seem’d the while,
Except where green-wood echoes rang,
Among the brack O’ Ballochmyle.

With careless step I onward stray’d,
My heart rejoic’d in nature’s joy,
When musing in a lonely glade,
A maiden fair I chanc’d to spy.

Her look was like the morning’s eye,
Her air like nature’sernal smile,

Currie’s account of the circumstances attending the composition of the present song is as follows:—“The whole course of the Ayr is fine; but the banks of that river, as it heads to the eastward above Mauchline, are singularly beautiful, and they were frequent’d, as may be imagined, by our poet in his solitary walks. Here the muse often visit’d him. In one of these wanderings he met among the woods a celebrated beauty of the west of Scotland—a lady of whom it is said, that the charms of her person correspond with the character of her mind. This incident gave rise, as might be expected, to a poem, of which an account will be found in the following letter, in which he inclos’d it to the object of his inspiration.” The letter is dated 15th November, 1788, some months after the poem must have been written. After apologizing for the liberty of taking the lady whom he is addressing for the subject of his lyric, he proceeds:—“I had rov’d out as chance direct’d, in my favourite haunts of my muse—the banks of the Ayr, to view nature in all the gaiety of the vernal year. The sun was flaming over the distant western hills; not a breath stirr’d the crimson opening blossom, or the verdant spreading leaf. It was a golden moment for a poetic heart. I listen’d to the feather’d warblers, pouring their harmony on every hand, with a congenial kindred regard, and frequently turn’d out of my path, lest I should disturb their little songs, or frighten them to another station. Surely, said I to myself, he must be a wretch indeed, who, regardless of your harmonious endeavour to please him, can eye your elevative flights to discover your secret recesses, and to rob you of all the pleasure nature gives you, your dearest comforts, your helpless nestlings. Even the hoary hawthorn twig that shot across the way, want heart, but at such a time must have been interested in its welfare, and wished it preserv’d from the rudely-browsing cattle, or the withering eastern blast? Such was the scene—and such the hour, when, in a corner of my prospect, I spied one of the finest pieces of Nature’s workmanship that ever crown’d a poetical landscape, or blst a poet’s eye: those visionary larks except’d who hold commerce with aerial beings! Had Cambus and Villainy taken my walk, they had at that moment sworn eternal peace with such an object. What an hour of inspiration for a poet! It would have raised plain, still, historic prose into metaphor and measure! The inclos’d song was the work of my return home; and perhaps but poorly answers what might have been expected from such a scene.” Burns clos’d the letter with a request for the lady’s consent to the publication of the song, in the second edition of his poems, but (a good deal to his chagrin) received no reply.

Miss Alexander has been blamed by various writers for her reserve; and certainly it is now to be regretted that she was so fortunate as to cultivate the friendship of the poet. But when the plain fact is known, all such commentaries appear vain. Burns, though he wrote poetry which no contemporary, gentle or simple, approached, was, at this time at least, locally known chiefly for an unusual share of some of the failings of humanity. His character had been reported to Miss Alexander in terms which caused her to shrink from his correspondence; and while she did not fail to appreciate the beauty of his poetry, and the value of the compliment he had paid to her, she deemed it best, for her own sake and for the feelings of her poetical minders, to allow the affair to rest at the point which it had already reached.

She afterwards displayed no imperfect sense of the honour which the genius of Burns has conferred upon her. She preserved the original manuscript of the poem and letter with the greatest care; and these are now preserved in separate frames, and are to be seen hung up on the walls of the back parlour of the farm-house of Mossgiel, having been placed there by the late Lord Alexander, for the inspection of visitors.

Miss Alexander died on the 5th June, 1843. She was aged eighty-eight at the time of her decease, and must therefore have been Burns’s senior by three or four years.

“When I first read that song it made the hairs of my head creep, I thought it so beautiful. Burns took it heliumously amiss that Miss Alexander never made any reply to the flaming letter which he sent her along with the song. I think it would have been very mortifying if she had; for how could she think with patience of a great black curvy ploughman, with brawny limbs and broad shoulders, straining her nightly to his bosom. It was really too much of a good thing this!”—JAMES Hogg.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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;
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,
The' sheltered 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 slipp'ry 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.

A Farewell.

Farewell, dear friend! may guid luck hit you,
And, 'mang her favourites admit you!
If e'er Detraction shoule to smit you,
May nae believe him!
And oye deil that thinks to get you,
Good Lord deceive him.

1 These lines were addressed by the poet to his friend Mr. John Kennedy, in an undated letter from Kilmarnock, which, from internal evidence, may be assigned to some day between 24th and 16th August, 1786. Burns was then contemplating his voyage to Jamaica as immediate, and he mentions the recent publication of his poems thus:—"I have at last made my public appearance, and am solemnly inaugurated into the numerous class of authors." Another piece addressed to Kennedy will be found on p. 123.
LINES WRITTEN ON A BANK NOTE.

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

THE FAREWELL.

The valiant in himself, what can he suffer?
Or what does he regard his single wound?
But when, alas! he multiplies himself,
To clearer eyes, to the last tender hair.
To those whose bliss, whose being hung upon him,
To helpless children! then, O then! he feels
The point of misery festering in his heart,
And wanly weeps his fortune like a coward.
Such, such an is I; unwept—Thomson's Edinurgh and Eleanora

Farewell, old Scotia's bleak domains,
Far dearer than the torrid plains
Where rich annals blow!
Farewell, a mother's blessing dear!
A brother's sigh! a sister's tear!
My Jean's heart-rending throe!
Farewell, my Bess! tho' thou'rt bereft
Of my parental care;
A faithful brother I have left,
My part in him thou'lt share!

1 This note of the Bank of Scotland for one pound, dated 1st March, 1786, was probably part of the proceeds of the Kilmarnock edition of the poems, and the "Lines," therefore, were written in August, 1786; the last two lines give the strongest internal evidence for this. The piece appeared first in the Morning Chronicle of 27th May, 1814. The first edition of the poems with which they were incorporated was that of Gilbert Burns, 1820.

2 "The Farewell" seems to bear internal evidence of the period of its composition, namely, the end of August, 1786, when the poet was looking forward to his voyage to the West Indies as in the immediate future; and when the event mentioned in next note was close at hand. This latter would seem to have stirred up kinder feelings in the poet's mind towards Jean than he had recently entertained.

3 This no doubt refers to Jean Armour's approaching confinement. On the 3d September, 1786, Jean was delivered of twins, a boy and a girl.

4 The poet's illegitimate daughter, the "sonnie, snirking, dear-bought Bess" of the "Inventory." In a deed of assignment, dated 23d July, 1786, Burns made over all his goods, with the prospective profits of his poems, to his brother Gilbert, who in return "binds and obliges himself to educate my said natural child in a suitable manner, as if she was his own."
POEMS AND SONGS.

Adieu too, to you too,
My Smith,' my bosom frien';
When kindly you mind me,
O then befriend my Jean!

What bursting anguish tears my heart!
From thee, my Jeannie, must I part!
Thou, weeping, ans'w'rest, "No!"
Alas! misfortune stares my face,
And points to ruin and disgrace,
I, for thy sake, must go!^*2
Thee, Hamilton and Aiken^ dear,
A grateful, warm adieu!
I, with a much-indebted tear,
Shall still remember you!
All-hail then, the gale then,
Wafts me from thee, dear shore!
It rustles, and whistles—
I'll never see thee more!

VERSES TO AN OLD SWEETHEART
AFTER HER MARRIAGE.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF A COPY OF HIS POEMS, PRESENTED TO THE LADY.4

Once fondly lov’d, and still remember’d dear;
Sweet early object of my youthful vows!
Accept this mark of friendship, warm, sincere,—
Friendship! 'tis all cold duty now allows.

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

1 James Smith, merchant in Mauchline—the same person to whom one of the poet’s best epistles is addressed.
2 When thus taking an anguished farewell of his Jean did no recollection rise up in the mind of Burns, we wonder, of the Highland Mary, with whom a few short months before he had “lived one day of parting love” on the banks of the Ayr, vowing eternal constancy, and exchanging Bibles in pledge thereof? Mary was at this time with her own people in the Highlands, preparing, to use the poet’s own words, “for our projected change of life;” yet, from this poem one would think that no rival to Jean had ever engaged his affections.
3 Gavin Hamilton and Robert Aiken. These gentlemen were at this period the chief advisers and patrons of the poet. They have already been repeatedly mentioned in our pages.
4 In the Glenriddell MS. there is this note:—
"Written on the blank leaf of a copy of the first edition of my poems, which I presented to an old sweetheart, then married. 'Twas the girl I mentioned in my letter to Dr. Moore, where I speak of taking the sun's altitude.'" This was Peggy Thomson, of Kirkoswald, who became the wife of a Mr. Neilson, of that place, whom Burns describes as an "old acquaintance and a most worthy fellow." See also vol. i. p. 215.
THE CALF.

TO THE REV. JAMES STEVEN,

On his text, Malachi ch. iv. 2: "And ye shall go forth, and grow up, like calves of the stall."

Right, S! your text I'll prove it true,
Tho' heretics may laugh;
For instance, there's yourself just now,
God knows, an unco calf!

And should some patron be so kind,
As bless you wi' a kirk,
I doubt not, Sir, but then we'll find,
Ye're still as great a stick.

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

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

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

And when ye're number'd wi' the dead,
Below a grassy hillock,
W'I justice they may mark your head—
"Here lies a famous bullock!" 1

1 Gilbert Burns tells us, that, on Sunday, 3d September, 1786, "the poet had been with Mr. Gavin Hamilton in the morning, who said joically to him, when he was going to church, in allusion to the injunction of some parents to their children, that he must be sure to bring him a note of the sermon at mid-day: this address to the reverent gentlemen on his text was accordingly produced." The poet's own account is somewhat different. In a letter to his friend Robert M'Ur, Kilmarnock, written a few days after the piece was composed, he says: "The poem was nearly an extemporaneous production on a wager with Mr. Hamilton, that I would not produce a poem on the subject in a given time." The preacher was assistant to the minister of Arbrossan, but on this occasion occupied Mr. Auld's pulpit at Mauchline. He was afterwards minister of the Scots Church, Crown Court, Covent Garden, London; and ultimately minister of Kilwinning in Ayrshire. The name of "The Calf" stuck to him through life. In a letter to Burns from his younger brother, who died in London, we find this passage, dated 21st March, 1790: "We were at Covent Garden chapel this forenoon to hear the Calf preach: he is grown very fat, and is as bolterous as ever."—Towards the evening of the Sunday on which this memorable sermon was preached, and this vigorous jeu d'esprit written, Jean was delivered of twins. In the same letter to Mr. M'Ur, the poet says, "You will have heard that poor Armour has repaid me double. A very fine boy and a girl have awakened a thought and feelings that thrill, some with tender pressure, and some with foreboding anguish, through my soul." An arrangement was made between the Burns and Armour families, that the boy should be taken care of at Messie, the girl (who did not live long) kept at her mother's.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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NATURE’S LAW,
A POEM HUMBLY INSERIVED TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

Great Nature spoke; observant man obey’d.—Pope.

Let other heroes boast their scars,
The marks of start and strife;
And other poets sing of wars,
The plagues of human life;
Shame fa’ the sun; wi’ sword and gun
To slay mankind like lumber!
I sing his name, and nobler fame
Wha multiplies our number.

Great Nature spoke with air benign,
“Go on, ye human race;
This lower world I you resign;
Be fruitful and increase.
The liquid fire of strong desire,
I’ve pour’d it in each bosom;
Here, on this hand, does Mankind stand,
And there, is Beauty’s blossoms.”

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

He felt the powerful high behest
Thrill vital thro’ and thro’;
And sought a correspondent breast
To give obedience due:
Propitious Powers screen’d the young flow’rs,
From mildews of abortion;
And lo! the bard—a great reward—
Has got a double portion.

Auld canty Coil may count the day
cheery
As annual it returns,
The third of Libra’s equal sway
That gave another Burns,

1 These verses were published for the first time in Pickering’s Atheneum edition, 1830.

2 Robert Burns, jun., one of the twins or “double portion” born to the poet on the 34 of September, 1756; he died at Dumfries, 14th May, 1857 (see note to preceding poem). He seems to have had all his sire’s warm passions and imprudence, but wanted his poetic fire.”
POEMS AND SONGS.

With future rhymes, an' other times,
To emulate his sire;
To sing and so in nobler style,
With more poetic fire.

Ye Powers of Peace and peaceful song,
Look down with gracious eyes;
And bless and Coin, large and long,
With multiplying joys;
Long may she stand to prop the land,
The flow'r of ancient nations;
And Burns'ss spring, her fame to sing
To endless generations!

ADDRESS TO THE TOOTH-ACHE.

From a letter addressed to Creech, the publisher, dated simply "May 30th," and commencing:—
"I had intended to have troubled you with a long letter, but at present the delightful sensations of
an omnipotent toothache en press all my inner man, as to put it out of my power even to write
nonsense." It has been generally inferred that the following "Address" was penned about the same
time. Seeing there is no other evidence to support it, this is a risky inference, to start with; and
when it can be shown that Creech, who first published the letter, supplemented conjecturally,
"Ellisland, 1759," to the date, and also that the contents of the letter do not justify the assigning
of this date, the period formerly set down for the composition of the poem must be wrong. Mr. W.
Scott Douglas shows that the true date of the letter is 30th May, 1755, and gives fair reasons for
assigning this piece to a period prior to the publication of the Edinburgh edition of the poet's
works, in April, 1757. The date may then be hypothetically given as 1756.

My curse upon your venom'd sting,
That shoots my tortur'd gums aching;
And thro' my lungs gies mony a twang,
Wi' gnawing vengeance;
Tearing my nerves wi' bitter pang,
Like racking engines!

When fevers burn, or ague freezes,
Rheumatics gnaw, or cholic squeezes;
Our neighbours' sympathetic may ease us,
Wi' pitying mean;
But thee—thou hell o' a' diseases—
They mock our groan!

Adown my beard the slavers trickle!
I throw1 the wee stools o'er the needle,
As round the fire the giglets keekle,
To see me loon;
While raving mad, I wish a needle
Were in their doup.

1 The variation "kick" for "throw" seems due to the ingenuity of critics, and cannot be
traced to Burns.
POEMS AND SONGS.

O' n the num'rous human dools,
Hil ha'ests, daft bargains, cutty-stools,
Or worthy friends rak'd i' the moos,
Sad sight to see!
The tricks o' knaves, or fash o' fools,
Thon bearst the gree.

Where'er that place be priests en' hell,
Whence o' the tones o' mis'ry yell,
And ranked plagues their numbers tell,
In dreedfu' raw,
Thon, Tooth-ache, surely bearst the bell
Among them n':

O thou grim, mischief-making chiel,
That gars the notes of discord squeal,
Till daft mankind a' chance a reel
In gore a shoe-thick;
Gie a' the faces o' Scotland's weal
A townou'd Tooth-ache!

WILLIE CHALMERS.

"W. Chalmers, a gentleman in Ayrshire, a particular friend of mine, asked me to write a poetical epistle to a young lady, his daughter. I had seen her, but was severely acquainted with her, and wrote as follows."—K. D.

MADAM,

Wi' braw new branks in mickle pride,
And eke a braw new brechan,
My Pegasus I'm got astride,
And up Parnassus pechin';
While unswee a bush wi' downward crush
The doilest beastie stammers;
Then up he gets, and off he sets,
For sake o' Willie Chalmers.

I doubt na, lass, that weel-knewd name
May cost a pair o' blushes;
I am nac stranger to your fame,
Nor his warm-arged wishes.
Your bonnie face sae mild and sweet
His honest heart enamours,

Chalmers was a writer & solicitor in Ayr. How far the poem tended to the success of his suit has nowhere been mentioned. Lockhart obtained this piece from Lady Harriet Don, the sister of the poet's early patron, Lord Glencairn, and it was first published by him in the second edition of the Life of Robert Burns in 1829—that which is printed in the first volume of this work. The versification may have been suggested by an old Scottish lyric in the Ten-Table Miscellany with the title "Omnia vincit Amor."
And, faith, ye'll no be lost a whit,
Tho' waivered on Willie Chalmers.

Auld Truth herself might swear ye're fair,
And Honour safely back her,
And Modesty assume your air,
And ne'er a rue mistake 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 pother'd priestie,
Fu' lifted up wi' Hebrew lore,
And bauld upon his breastie:
But oh! what signifies to you
His lexicoms and grammars:
The feeling heart's the royal blue,
And that's wi' Willie Chalmers.

Some gapin', glowrin', countra laird,
May warsle for your favour;
May claw his lug, and straik his beard,
And hoast up some palaver.
My bonnie maid, before ye wed
Sie clumsy-witted hammers,
Seek Heaven for help, and barefit skelp
Awa' wi' Willie Chalmers.

Forgive the Bard! my fond regard
For ane that shares my bosom
Inspires my muse to gie 'm his dues,
For dei a hair I roose him.
May powers aboon unite you soon,
And fructify your amours,—
And every year come in mair dear
To you and Willie Chalmers.

ANSWER TO A POETICAL EPISTLE FROM A TAILOR.

What ails you now, ye lousie b—h,
To thresh my back at sic a pitch?
Losh man! hae mercy wi' your natch,
Your bodkin's baud,

Thomas Walker, a tailor, residing at Poole, near Ochiltree, and one of a pious turn of mind, sent a rhyming epistle to Burns, remonstrating with him on his alleged misdemeanours, particularly in regard to the fair sex. The epistle shows good intention on the part of the poor tailor, but nothing more, being alike...
POEMS AND SONGS.

I did na suffer half sae much
Frac Daddie Auld.  

[A stanza omitted.]

King David, o' poetic brief,
Wrought 'mang the lasses sic mischief,
As fill'd his after life wi' grief
An' bloody rants,
An' yet he's rank'd among the chief
O' lang-syne saunts.

And maybe, Tam, for a' my cauts,
My wicked rhymes, an' drucken rants,
I'll gie an' cloven Clootie's haunts
An' unco' slip yet,
An' snugly sit among the saunts
At Davie's lip yet.

But, f'gs, the Session says I maun
Gie fa' no' anither plan,
Than garrin' lasses cowp the cran
Clean heels o'we body,
And snarly tho' their mothers' lan,
Afore the howdy.

This leads me on to tell for sport,
How I did with the Session sort—
Auld Clinkum at the Inner port
Cried three times, "Robin!
Come hither, lad, an' answer for't,
Ye're blaud for jobbin.'"

The answer of Burns to this ludicrous doggerel, was
the production given above. In the Ayrshire Contemporaries of Burns it is stated that this answer was not
written by Burns, but by William Simson, the
schoolmaster of Ochiltree, to whom Burns addresses
one of his epistles. Simson, according to this authority,
was in Walker's secret with regard to the letter he had
sent to Burns, and as Burns returned no answer,
Simson, as a joke, wrote the above with the signature
of Robert Burns, and despatched it to the tailor. We
have no evidence to gainsay this, beyond the internal
evidence of the piece itself, which, according to our
judgment, displays more of Burns' vigour and humour,
than any other production of William Simson's which we have seen.
Besides, the poem was printed in Stewart and Melkie's
Tracts, in 1790, and ascribed to Burns. Both Simson
and Walker, who long survived this date, could not
but have seen these Tracts, and they never challenged
the Burns authorship.

1 See vol. i. p. 31.
Wi' pinch I put a Sunday's face on,  
An' snoor'ed awa' before the Session—  
I made an open, fair confession,  
I scorn'd to lie;  
An' syne Mess John, beyond expression,  
Fell foul o' me.

A fornicator loon he call'd me,  
An' said my faut free bliss expell'd me;  
I own'd the tale was true he tell'd me,  
"But what the matter?"

[Three stanzas and two lines omitted here.]

But, Sir, this please'd them worst awa',  
An' therefore, Tam, when that I saw,  
I said, "Guid night," and cam awa',  
And left the Session;  
I saw they were resolved a'  
On my oppression.

THE BRIGS OF AYR,

A POEM.

INSCRIBED TO JOHN BALLANTINE, ESQ., AYR.

The simple Bard, rough at the rustic plough,  
Learning his tuneful trade from every bough—  
The chanting linnet, or the mellow thrush,  
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn bush;  
The soaring lark, the perching red-breast shrill,  
Or deep-ton'd plovers, gray, wild-whistling o'er the hill—  
Shall he, nurs'd in the peasant's lowly shed,  
To hardy independence bravely bred,

1 The two bridges of Ayr, crossing the river of the same name, and connecting Ayr proper with Wallace-town and Newton-upon-Ayr, are respectively known as the Auld Brig and the New Brig. The Auld Brig is the upper of the two, being about 150 yards from the New Brig. It seems to have been erected sometime between 1770 and 1828, though it is commonly held, but without any proof, to have been erected at a much earlier date. It consists of four lofty arches of solid architecture, but being steep and narrow, a new bridge was raised in 1785-88 to give additional accommodation for traffic. For any public advantages derived from this latter structure the community was chiefly indebted to Mr. Ballantine, who was provost during the time of its erection, and who died in 1812. To this gentleman, a banker by profession, Burns had been introduced by Mr. Robert Allan, his earliest Ayr patron; and Mr. Ballantine proved his sense of the poet's personal and poetical merits by generously offering to advance the sum necessary for printing the second edition of his poems, but at the same time advised him to publish in Edinburgh instead of in Kilmarnock, which he shortly afterwards did, and with so much success. It was therefore for more than one reason that Burns inscribed to him the present poem. The new bridge was designed by Robert Adam, and was a neat structure of five arches (see plate). It was so much injured by the floods of 1877 that it had to be taken down and rebuilt (1878-79), thus fulfilling the prophecy of the Auld Brig—

I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless ruin.

The Auld Brig is still serviceable.—The poem of the "Brigs of Ayr" was one of those added in the first Edinburgh edition of the poet's works (1787).
generously
inviting the
same time
instead of in
then did, and
for more
him the
five arches
the floods of
built (1878-
Brig-

or

poem of
ended in the
(1787).
The town and as the Aul is the upper New I time between held, but a much greater solid as new bridge accommodated derived chiefly from during the To this great had been an Ayr place.
By early poverty to hardship steel'd,
And train'd to arms in stern misfortune's field—
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
The servile mercenary Swiss of rhymes?
Or labour hard the panegyric close,
With all the venal soul of dedicating prose?
No! though his artless strains he rudely sings,
And throws his hand uncooly o'er the strings,
He glows with all the spirit of the bard,
Fame, honest fame, his great, his dear reward!
Still, if some patron's gen'rous care he trace,
Skill'd in the secret to bestow with grace;
When Ballantyne befriends his humble name,
And hands the rustic stranger up to fame,
With heartfelt throes his grateful bosom swells;
The godlike bliss, to give, alone excels.

'Twas when the stacks get o' their winter-hap,
And thack and rape secure the toil-won crap;
Potatoe-bings are snug'd up frae seath
Of coming winter's biting, frosty breath;
The bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils,
Unnumber'd lunds' an' flow'res' delicious spoils,
Seal'd up wi' frugal care in massive waxen piles,
Are doom'd by man, that tyrant o'er the weak,
The death o' devils smoord wi' brimstone reek:
The thundering guns are heard on every side,
The wounded coveries, reeling; scatter wide;
The feather'd field-mates, bound by Nature's tie,
Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie:
(What warm, poetick heart, but inly bleeds,
And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds!)
Nae mair the flower in field or meadow springs;
Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
Except perhaps the robin's whistling glee,
Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree:
The hoary morns precede the sunny days,
Mild, calm, serene, wide spreads the noon-tide blaze,
While thick the gossamour waves wanton in the rays,

'Twas in that season, when a simple Bard,
Unknown and poor, simplicity's reward,
As night, within the ancient brugh of Ayr,
By whim inspir'd, or haply press'd wi' care,
He left his bed, and took his wayward route,
And down by Simpson's he wheel'd the left about—

1 A noted tavern at the Auld Brig end.—R. B.
Whether impell'd by all-directing Fate,
To witness what I after shall narrate;
Or whether, rapt in meditation high,
He wander'd out he knew not where or why.
The drowsy Dungeon-clock had numbered two,
And Wallace Tower¹ had sworn the fact was true:
The tide-swept with, with sullen-sounding roar,
Through the still night dash'd hourse along the shore:
All else was hush'd as Nature's closed eye:
The silent moon shone high o'er tower and tree:
The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crept, gently-crushing, o'er the glittering stream.—

When, lo! on either hand the listening Bard,
The clanging sigh of whistling wings is heard;
Two dusky forms dart thro' the midnight air,
Swift as the gos² drives on the wheeling hare:
Ane on th' Auld Brig his airy shape uprears,
The other flutters o'er the rising piers:
Our warlock Rhymer instantly descried
The Sprites that owre the Briggs of Ayr preside
(That barns are second-sighted is nae joke,
And ken the lingo of the spiritual folk;
Fays, spunkies, kelpies, a', they can explain them,
And ev'n the very devils they brawly ken them.)
Auld Brig appear'd of ancient Pictish race,
The vera wrinkles Gothic in his face:³
He seem'd as he wi' Time had warst'ld lang,
Yet tioorly doure, he bade an unco bung toughly obsurate
New Brig was buskit in a braw new coat,
That he, at Lou'rin, fine ane Adam⁴ got;
In's hand five taper staves as smooth's a bead,
Wi' virils and whirligigins at the head.

¹ The two steeples.—R. B.—The Dungeon-clock,
albuted to above, was placed at the top of an old
steeple which stood till the year 1526, in the Sand-
gate, the street which is seen in the accompanying
plate opening from the farther end of the new bridge.
Its connection with an ancient jail of the burgh, re-
moved at an earlier period, was what conferred upon
the clock and tower this ominous appellation—

The drowsy Dungeon-clock had numbered two,
And Wallace Tower had sworn the fact was true.
The Wallace Tower was an anomalous piece of old
masonry which stood in the eastern part of the High
Street of Ayr, at the head of a lane named the Mill
Vennel, which leads to the ford known as the Burn
Stream. The lower part was in reality one of those
towers or peels which formerly stood at the entrances
of many Scottish towns for defence; and the wooden
steeple above, containing a clock and surmounted by
a vase, had been, as appeared from indubitable cir-
cumstances, the addition of a comparatively recent
era. Tradition represented this tower as the place in
which William Wallace was confined, as stated by
Blind Harry; but it is possible that the name, derived
from some other circumstance, may be the true origin
of this dubious statement. Having become ruinous,
an attempt was made in 1839 to repair it, which
failed in the complete demolition of the ancient
structure, and the erection of a new one on the same
site, the top of which is seen immediately over the
end of the old bridge. The new Wallace Tower is a
Gothic building, 113 feet high, containing at the top
the clock and bells of the Dungeon steeple, and
ornamented in front with a statue of William Wallace,
executed by Mr. Thom, the well-known self-taught
sculptor.
² The gos-hawk, or falcon.—R. B.
³ This would no doubt have been highly gratifying
to Pinkerton to learn: that the picts were a Gothic
people was part of his religion.
⁴ Robert Adam, the well-known architect, born
1728, died 1792.
POEMS AND SONGS.

The Goth was stalking round with anxious search,
Spying the time-worn flaws in ev'ry arch;
It chanced his new-comer neighbor took his ee,
And even a vex'ed and angry heart had he!
Wt' thievish sneer to see his modish men,
He, down the water, gies him this guid-c'en—

AULD BRIG.

I doubt na, frien', ye'll think ye're nee sheep-shank
Ance ye were streakit o'er 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 whimsicalries in your noddle.

NEW BRIG.

Auld Vandal, ye but show your little sense,
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 hulk o' stane and lime,
Compare wi' bonnie brigs o' modern time?
There's men o' taste would tak the Ducat Stream,
Tho' they should cast the very sark an' swim,
Ere they would grate their feelings wi' the view
Of sic an ugly Gothic hulk as you.

AULD BRIG.

Conceited gowk! puff'd up wi' windy pride!
This monie a year I've stood the flood an' tide;
And tho' wi' crazy eil'd I'm sair forfain,
I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless caim!
As yet ye little ken about the matter,
But twa-three winters will inform you better.
When heavy, dark, continued, a'-day rains,
Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains;
When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
Or stately Lugar's mossy fountains boil,
Or where the Greenock winds his moorland course,
Or haunted Garpal draws his feeble source,
Arous'd by blust'ring winds an' spotting thowes,
In many a torrent down his snow-broo rowses;
While crashing ice, borne on the roaring speat,
Sweeps dams, an' mills, an' brigs, a' to the gate;

1 Think yourself no unimportant personage—a proverbial expression.
2 A noted ford, just above the Auld Brig.—R. B.—
3 The banks of Garpal Water is one of the few places in the West of Scotland, where those fancy-scareing beings, known by the name of Ghaisers, still continue pertinaciously to inhabit.—R. B.
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 gummie jaups up to the pouring skies:
A lesson sadly teaching, to your cost,
That Architecture’s noble art is lost!

NEW BRIG.
Fine Architecture, thowth, I needs must say o’t!
The L—d be thankit that we’ve tint the gate o’t!
Gaunt, ghastly, ghastly-alluring edifices,
Hanging with threatening jut, like precipices;
O’er-arching, moidly, 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 craż’d creations of misguided whim;
Forms might be worship’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 caifs of later times, who 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 provess’s, an’ monic a baillie,
Wha in the paths o’ righteousness did toil aye;
Ye divinity deacons, and ye dounce conveners,
To whom our现代s are but causey-cleaners;
Ye godly counsell wha len blest this towne;
Ye godly brethren of the sacred gown,
Wha meekly gae your lounlies to the smilers;
And (what would now be strange) ye godly writers:
A’ ye dounce 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;

1 The source of the river Ayr. — R. B.
2 A small landing place above the large quay. — R. B.
3 The provost in a Scotch town is equivalent to a mayor in an English; the bailie to an alderman; a deacon is the president of an incorporated trade, the convener having the function of calling the meetings.
4 This is as much as to say that the Ayr writers or solicitors were by no means godly in Burns’s time.
And, agovizing, curse the time and place
When ye begat the base, degenerate 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' dounse,
Meet owre a pint, or in the council-house;
But stamned, corky-headed, graceless gentry,
The herryment and ruin of the country;
Men, three-parts made by tailors and by barbers,
Wha waste your weel-haun'd gear on d—d new brigs and harbours!

NEW BRIG.

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

What farther dishmachalaver might been said,
What bloody wars, if Sprites had blood to shed,
No man can tel'; but all before their sight,
A fairy train appear'd in order bright:
Adown the glittering stream they feally danc'd;
Bright to the moon their various dresses glance'd;
They footed o'er the watry glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet:
While arts of Minstrelsy among them rang,
And soul-enobling bards heroic ditties sung.
O had M'Lanachlan, thairm-inspiring Sage,
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,
When thr'd his dear Strathspeys they bore with Highland rage;

1 A well-known performer of Scottish music on the violin. — B. E. — He was a Highlander who came to reside in Ayrshire, and was patronized by the Eglington family.
Or when they struck old Scotia's melting airs,
The lover's raptur'd joys or bleeding cares;
How would his Highland lass been nobler fir'd,
And ev'n his matchless hand with finer touch inspir'd!
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 advance'd 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 moulding corn;
Then Winter's time-bleach'd locks did hoary show,
By Hospitality with cloudless brow.
Next follow'd Courage with his martial stride,
From where the Feal wild-woodsy coverts hide;
Benevolence, with mild, benignant air,
A female form, came from the tow'rs of Stair:—
Learning and Worth in equal measures trode
For in simple Catrie, their long-lov'd abode:
Long, white-ro'd Peace, crown'd with a hazel wreath,
To rustic Agriculture did bequeath
The broken iron instruments of death;
At sight of whom our Sprites forget their kindling wrath.¹

¹ "Feal is a small stream which runs near Collisfield, then the seat of Colonel Montgomery."—GILBERT BURNS. More commonly written Fail. Colonel Hugh Montgomery, lately twelfth Earl of Eglinton, was a soldier and a patriotic landed proprietor.

² "The poet alludes here to Mrs. Stewart of Stair. Stair was then in her possession. She removed to Afton Lodge, on the banks of the Afton, a stream which he afterwards celebrated in a song entitled 'Afton Water.'"—CURIÉ. She was among the first of the wealthiest classes to take notice of Burns, some of his poems having been brought under her eye.

³ "A sweet little place on the banks of the Ayr, belonging to Professor Dunblane Stewart, where he used to reside during the intervals of his labours in the university (as his father had done before him), till banished from it by the erection of a cotton-mill village immediately adjoining."—GILBERT BURNS.

⁴ "Ferguson wrote a dialogue between the 'Causeway and the Plainstones' of Edinburgh. This probably suggested to Burns his dialogue between the Old and New Bridge over the river Ayr. The nature of such subjects requires that they shall be treated

humorously, and Ferguson has attempted nothing beyond this. Though the Causeway and the Plainstones talk together, no attempt is made to personify the speakers. A cadet heard the conversation, and reported it to the poet. In the dialogue between the 'Brigs of Ayr,' Burns himself is the auditor, and the time and occasion in which it occurred are related with great circumstantiality. The poet, 'press'd by care,' or 'inspired by white,' had left his bed in the town of Ayr, and wandered out alone in the darkness and solitude of a winter night, to the moon of the river, where the stillness was interrupted only by the rushing sound of the current of the tide. It was after midnight. The Dungeon-clock had struck two, and the sound had been repeated by the Wallace Tower. All else was hushed. The moon shone brightly and

The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crest, gently-crusting, o'er the glittering streas

In this situation, the listening bard hears the "clanging sigh" of wings moving through the air, and especially he perceives two beings reared the one on the old, the other on the new bridge, whose form
A PRAYER.

LIVING AT A REVEREND FRIEND'S HOUSE ONE NIGHT THE AUTHOR LEFT THE FOLLOWING VERSES IN THE ROOM WHERE HE SLEPT.

O Thou dread Pow'r, who reign'st above!  
I know thou wilt me hear,  
When, for this scene of peace and love,  
I make my pray'r sincere.

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

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

Their hope, their stay, their darling youth,  
In manhood's dawning blush;

and utter he describes, and whose conversation with each other he remembers. These guilt enter into a comparison of the respective edifices over which they preside, and afterwards, as is usual between the old and the young, compare modern characters and manners with those of past times. They differ, as may be expected, and taunt, and scoff each other in broad Scotch. This conversation, which is certainly humorous, may be considered as the proper business of the poem. As the debate runs high and threatens serious consequences, all at once it is interrupted by a new scene of wonder:

A fairy train appear'd in order bright.

Next follow a number of other allegorical beings, among whom are the four Seasons, Rural Joy, Fidelity, Hospitality, Courage, &c.

"This poem, irregular and imperfect as it is, displays various and powerful talents, and may serve to illustrate the genius of Burns. In particular it affords a striking instance of his being carried beyond his original purpose by the powers of imagination."—

Currie.—Robert Ferguson's poem, "The Ghosts, a Kirkyard Elegy," in which a dialogue is maintained between Watson's and Heriot's Hospitals, was also plainly in Burns's eye when composing "The Brig o' Ayr."

The "reverend friend" here meant was Dr. George Lawrie, parish minister of Londonderry, in Ayrshire. He was born in 1729, was ordained minister of Londonderry in 1764, and died in 1799. He was an intimate friend of Principal Robertson, Dr. Hugh Blair, Dr. James Macknight, Dr. Blacklock, and several other eminent members of the republic of letters in his own day. He married a daughter of Dr. Archibald Campbell, professor of church history, New College, St. Andrews. He had a large family, and the manse at St. Margaret's Hill was the home of one of the happiest of households. Gilbert Burns says,—"The first time Robert heard the spinet played was at the house of Dr. Lawrie, minister of London... Dr. Lawrie has several accomplished daughters; one of them played the spinet; the father and mother lay down the diners; the rest of the sisters, the brother, the poet, and the other guests, mixed in it. It was a delightful family scene for our poet, then lately introduced to the world. His mind was roused to a poetic enthusiasm, and the stanzas were left in the room where he slept," Dr. Archibald Lawrie, son of Dr. Lawrie, and his successor as minister of Londonderry, remembered that next morning the family were waiting breakfast, as Burns had not come down. Young Mr. Lawrie was sent upstairs to see what had detained him. He met him coming down. "Well, Mr. Burns, how did you sleep last night?" "Sleep, my young friend! I have scarcely slept at all—I've been praying all night. If you go up to the room, you will find my prayers on the table." Mr. Lawrie did so, and found the above verses. Dr. Lawrie had read, and greatly admired the unpretentious Kilmarnock edition of Burns's poems, and had sent the book to his friend Dr. Blacklock, in Edinburgh, who returned an answer expressing high admiration of the poems. Dr. Lawrie had this letter placed in the hands of Burns through the medium of Gavin Hamilton. The letter will be found quoted in Lockhart's Life (vol. i. p. 22), and the effect which it produced on Burns may be read there, and in the poet's letter to Dr. Moore (vol. i. p. 147). Portraits of Dr. Lawrie and Dr. Blacklock will be found in vol. iv. of this work in connexion with letters of the poet to them.
Bless him, thou God of love and truth,
Up to a parent's wish!

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

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

**SONG—THE GLOOMY NIGHT IS GATH'RING FAST.**

**TUNE—"Roedin Castle."**

"I had for some time been skulking from covert to covert, under all the terrors of a jail; as some ill-advised, ungrateful people had uncoupled the merciless legal pack at my heels. I had taken the last farewell of my few friends; my chest was on the road to Greenock; I had composed a song, 'The gloomy night is gathering fast,' which was to be the last effort of my muse in Caledonia, when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to a friend of mine, overthrew all my schemes, by rousing my poetic ambition." So wrote Burns in the celebrated letter to Dr. Moore. (See vol. 1. p. 147.) In the Glenfield copy of Johnson's *Miscellaneous* he wrote: "I composed this song as I conveyed my chest so far on the road to Greenock, where I was to embark in a few days for Jamaica—I meant it as a farewell dirge to my native land."

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;

1 Professor Walker gives a somewhat different account of the origin of this fine poem, the fact being communicated by the poet himself when the professor met him at Dr. Blacklock's in Edinburgh. "He had left Dr. Lawrie's family after a visit (see not. to the verses, immediately proceeding,) which he expected to be the last, and on his way home had to cross a wide stretch of solitary moor. His mind was strongly affected by parting for ever with a scene where he had tasted so much elegant and social pleasure, and depressed by the contracted gloom of his prospects. The aspect of nature harmonised with his feelings. It was a lowering and heavy evening in the end of autumn. The wind was up and whistled through the rushes and long spear-grass which bent before it. The clouds were driving across the sky; and cold pelting showers at intervals added discomfort to cheerfulness of mind. Under these circumstances, and in this frame, Burns composed his poem." It remains to be added here that Professor Walker's chronology is somewhat faulty. The vessel in which Burns had taken his passage was timed to sail about the 1st September, 1786, and the letter from Dr. Blacklock was dated 4th September. Now according to Burns it was before this that the poem was composed. The song, too, was one of a set sent to Mrs. Stewart of Stair later on in that month. Instead, therefore, of "the end of autumn," as Walker puts it, the beginning seems the correct date of the composition of the song.
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 death's shroud;
Tho' death in ev'ry shape appear,
The wretched have no more to fear!
But round my heart the ties are bound,
That heart transpire'd with many a wound;
These bleed afresh, those ties I tear,
To leave the bonnie banks of Ayr.

Farewell, old Coila's hills and dales,
Her hilly 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!

---

LINES ON MEETING LORD DAER.¹

This wot ye all whom it concerns,
I, Rhymer Robin, alias Burns,
October twenty-third,
A never-to-be forgotten day,
Sae far I strauchled up the brae,
I dinn'd wi' a Lord.

I've been at drucken writers' feasts,
Nay, been bitch-fou 'mong godly priests,
Wi' rev'rence be it spoken;

¹ The meeting celebrated in this poem took place at Catrine, the seat of Professor Donald Stewart, October 23d, 1786—and the impression made on the poet's mind by the kindness and frankness of Lord Daer, was never effaced. His lordship was eldest son to Dunbar, fourth Earl of Selkirk, and had been a pupil of the professor's. Of an ardent and enterprising disposition, he entered with enthusiasm into the views of the reformers of the time. He was a member of the society of the friends of the people, and the friend and correspondent of Lavoisier, Condorcet, and Rochfoucault. He was also a skilful and extensive agricultural improver. In the "mid-time of his days," and too soon for his country, he was cut off by consumption, Nov. 6th, 1794. Burns had been taken to Professor Stewart a house by Dr. Mackenzie of Machline. His natural embarrassment at being brought face to face with the famous Edinburgh literary magnate, was increased by the accidental arrival of Lord Daer. The professor, in a communication to Dr. Currie, gives a very interesting account of the poet's deportment on this trying occasion. It will be found at p. 165, vol. 1, of this work. In a letter to Dr. Mackenzie Burns says the verses were "really extempore, but a little corrected since."
POEMS AND SONGS.

I've even join'd the honour'd jorum,
When mighty Squireships of the quorum,
Their hydra drouth did sloken.

But wi' a Lord!—stand out, my shin!
A Lord—a peer—'an Earl's son!
Up higher yet my bonnet!
An' sic a Lord!—lang Scotch ells twa,
Our Peerage he o'erlooks a',
As I look o'er my sonnet.

But, oh! for Hogarth's magic pow'r:
To show Sir Bardie's willyart glow'r,
And how he star'd and stammer'd,
When goavin', as if led wi' branks,
An' stumpin' on his ploughman shanks,
He in the parlour hammer'd.

I sidling shelter'd in a nook,
An' at his Lordship steal't a look,
Like some portentous omen:
Except good-sense and social glee,
An' (what surprised me) modesty,
I marked nought uncommon.

I watch'd the symptoms o' the great,
The gentle pride, the lordly state,
The arrogant assuming;
The fient a pride, nae pride had he;²
Nor sauc', nor state that I could see,
Mair than an honest ploughman.

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

---

SONG—THE SONS OF OLD KILLIE.³

TUNE—"Shawbey."

Ye sons of old Killie, assembled by Willie,
To follow the noble vocation;

¹ He was not properly speaking a peer, since his father was still alive and he had no seat in the House of Lords.
² But though he was o' high degree,
The fient a pride, nae pride had he.
³ A Mr. William Parker, a Kilmarnock gentleman, was the "Willie" of the first line of this song. He was master of the Kilmarnock Kilwinning Lodge on the occasion of the poet's being made an honorary member of the lodge, 20th October, 1786. He was a banker by profession.
slake

over six feet

bewildered stare

stole

pride of rank

the deuce
POEMS AND SONGS.

Your thrifty old mother has scarce such another
To sit in that honoured station.
I've little to say, but only to pray,
As praying's the ton of your fashion;
A prayer from the Muse you well may excuse,
'Tis seldom her favourite passion.
Ye powers who preside o'er the wind and the tide,
Who marked each element's border;
Who formed this frame with beneficent aim,
Whose sovereign statute is order;
Within this dear mansion, may wayward contention
Or withered Envy ne'er enter;
May secrecy round be the mystical bound.
And brotherly Love be the centre!

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY.

When this worthy old sportsman went out, last mulfowl season, he supposed it was to be, in Ossian's phrase, "the last of his fields," and expressed an ardent wish to die and be buried in the mairs. On this hint the author composed his elegy and epitaph.—R. B., 1787.

An honest man's the noblest work of God.—Pope.

Has anil Kilmanock seen the devil?
Or great Mackintosh thawn his heel?
Or Robertson again grown weel,
To preach an and read?
"Na, waur than a!" cries ilka chiel,
"Tam Samson's dead!"

1 Mr. Thomas Samson, one of the early friends of Burns, was a nurseryman and seedsman in Kilmanock, much addicted to shooting, fishing, and curling, and was at the same time an enthusiastic and genial freemason. The origin of the elegy is explained by Burns himself. Mr. Samson died in reality on the 12th December, 1795, aged seventy-two—nearly ten years after his elegy was written. On his gravestone at the west end of the church at Kilmanock, is inscribed, verbatim, the epitaph which Burns had prepared for him so long before. "It may be worth while to add, as a curious coincidence, that the remains of the Rev. Dr. Mackintosh and the Rev. John Robertson, who are mentioned with Mr. Samson in the first verse of the elegy, are buried so near to the 'weel-worn clay' of the worthy sportsman, that they all occupy one spot in the churchyard, as do one stanza in the poem—the dust of the two former being separated from that of the latter by only a few inches of ground."—McKAY's History of Kilmanock, p. 139.

2 A certain preacher, a great favourite with the million. Vide the "Ordination," stanza ii.]—R. B.

3 Another preacher, an equal favourite with the few, who we at that time ailing. For him, see also the "Ordination," stanza ix.]—R. B. Notices of these preachers will be found in previous notes.

4 Kilmanock is the principal seat of population in the county of Ayr, and one of the most active and successful of the manufacturing towns of Scotland. It is connected with the history of Burns—from whose residence at Mossgiel it is about nine miles distant—by its being the place where his poems were first printed in 1786, while some of the leading men in and about the town were among the earliest of his patrons. Kilmanock and its citizens are repeatedly mentioned or referred to in Burns's writings. Erected in 1591 into a burgh of barony, under the family of Boyd, subsequently Earls of Kilmanock—whose chief residence, named Dean Castle, is in the neighbourhood—this town was distinguished early in the seventeenth century for efforts of a humble kind in the woollen manufacture. In the days of Burns the making of blue bonnets for the peasantry, of carpets, and of boots and shoes, was practised in it to a considerable extent, which will enable the reader to comprehend the more obscure than elegant distich with which the poem of the "Ordination" commences. The town then consisted chiefly of a cluster of mean
Kilmarnock lang may grunt an' grane,
An' sigh, an' sob, an' greeat her lane,
An' eel the barns, man, wife an' wean,
In mourning weed;
To Death, she's dearly paid the kane:
Tam Samson's dead!

The brethren of the mystic level
May bing their head in woefu' bevel,
While by their nose the tears will revel,
Like any head;
Death's gien the lodge an' uce deyel:
Tam Samson's dead!

When winter muffles up his cloak,
And binds the mire like a rock;
When to the loothes the curlers flock,
Wi' glesome speed,
Wha will they station at the cock?
Tam Samson's dead!

He was the king o' a' the core,
To guard, or draw, or wick 1 a bore,
Or up the rink 2 like Jahn roar
In time of need;
But now he lays on Death's hog-score: 3
Tam Samson's dead!

Now safe the stately sawmont sail,
And trouts bedropp'd wi' crimson hail,
And eel's well kend for supplie tail,
And geds for greed,
Since dark in Death's fish-creeel we wail
Tam Samson dead!

Rejoice, ye birring patricks a';
Ye cootie mouroocs, crousely crau;

groan
weep alone
cloths child
rent in kind
hung
terrible blow
ponts
mark
corps
salmon
well known supplie
pikes
whirring partridges
feathery-legged boldy

---

1 These, as well as cock, above, are technical terms in the game of curling. Wick is defined by Burns himself as "to strike a stone in an oblique direction."
2 Rink, the course of the curling-stones, or the area set apart for the game on the ice.
3 Hog-score, a kind of distance line, or curling, drawn across the rink. The game itself, which is still a great favourite in Scotland, is briefly described in a note to the "Vision," see p. 111.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Ye maunies, cock your fud fu' braw,
Withouten dread;
Your mortal fae is now awa':
Tam Samson's dead!

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

In vain auld age his body batters;
In vain the gout his meales setters;
In vain the burns cam down like waters,
An aere braid!
Now ev'ry auld wife, greetin', clatters,
"Tam Samson's dead!"

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

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

Ilk hoary hunter mourn'd a brither;
Ilk sportsman youth bemoan'd a father;
You auld gray stane, anang the heather,
Marks out his head,
Whare Burns has wrote, in rhyming blether,
"Tam Samson's dead!"

There low he lies, in lasting rest;
Perhaps upon his mould'ring breast
Some spitefu' moorfowl bigs her nest,
To hatch an' breed;
Alas! nee mair he'll them molest!
Tam Samson's dead!

When August winds the heather wave,
And sportsmen wander by you grave,
Three volleys let his mem'ry crave,
O' pouther an' lead,
Till Echo answer from her cave,  
"Tam Samson's dead!"

Heav'n rest his soul, whare'er he be!  
Is th' wish o' mony mae than me:  
He had twa fants, or may be three;  
Yet what remeeth?  
Ac social, honest man want we;  
Tam Samson's dead!

THE EPITAPH.
Tam Samson's weel-worn clay here lies,  
Ye canting zealots, spare him!  
If honest worth in heaven rise,  
Ye'll mend or ye win near him.

PER CONTRA.
Go, fame, an' canter like a filly  
Thro' a' the streets an' neuk's o' Killie,  
Tell ev'ry social, honest billie  
To cease his grievin',  
For yet, unscathe'd by Death's gleg gullie,  
Tam Samson's livin'.

EPISTLE TO MAJOR W. LOGAN.
Hail, thairm-inspirin', rattlin' Willie!  
Though fortune's road be rough an' hilly  
To every fiddling, rhyming billie,  
We never heed,  
But tak it like the unslack'd filly,  
Proud o' her speed.

When idly goavin' whyles we saunter;  
Yirr! fancy barks, awa' we canter,  
Up hill, down brae, till some mishunter,  
Some black bog-hole,  
'Arrests us, then the seathie an' banter,  
We're forc'd to thole.

1 Killie is a phrase the country-folks sometimes use for the name of a certain town in the west [Kilmarnock].—R. B.
2 Burns, it is said, recited the elegy to the worthy old sportsman whose name it bears. He exclaimed vigorously against being thus prematurely conveyed to the tomb. The poet, willing to gratify the veteran old sportsman, retired to the window and added the per contra.
3 Major Logan was a retired military officer, who resided at Parkhouse, near Ayr, with his mother and sister, both of whom are alluded to in the last verse but one of the epistle. The major was a distinguished player on the fiddle, and also noted for his wit and humour. The poet had been a visitor at Parkhouse. The above epistle was discovered in 1828, in an old cabinet among the major's papers.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Hale be your heart! hale be your fiddle!
Lang may your elbow jink and dandle,
To cheer you through the weary widdle
O' this wild war',
Until you on a crummock dandle
A grey-hair'd carle.¹

Come wealth, come poortith, late or soon,
Heaven send your heart-strings aye in tune,
And screw your temper-pins aboon,
A fifth or mair,
The melancholious, lazy croon
O' cankrie care!

May still your life from day to day
Nae 'lente largo' in the play,
But 'allegretto forte' gay
Harmonious flow:
A sweeping, kindling, baud strathspey—
Encore! Bravo!

A blessing on the cheery gang,
Wha dearly like a jig or sang,
An' never think o' right an' wrang
By square an' rule,
But as the clegs o' feeling stang
Are wise or fool!

My hand-wal'd curse keep hard in chase
The harpy, hoodeck, purse-proud race,
Wha count on poortith as disgrace—
Their tuneless hearts!

May fireside discords jar a bass
To a' their parts!

But come—your hand, my careless brither—
I' th' ither war', if there's anither—
An' that there is, I've little swither
About the matter,
We cheek for chow shall jog thegither,
I'ee ne'er bid better.

We've faults and failings—granted clearly,
We're frail backsliding mortals merely,
Eve's bonnie squad, priests wyte them sheerly,
For our grand fa';
But still—but still—I like them dearly—
God bless them a'!

Ochon! for poor Castalian drinkers,
When they fa' fool o' earthly jinkers,

¹This stanza is almost identical with one in the "Second Epistle to Davie, a Brother Poet." See p. 50.
The witching, curd, delicious blinkers
Has put me byte,
And gart me wee my waukrie winkers,
Wi' giein' spite.
But by you moon!—and that's high swearin'—
An' every star within my hearin'!
An' by her een wha was a dear ane!
I'll ne'er forget;
I hope to gie the jadis a clearin'
In fair play yet.
My loss I mourn, but not repent it,
I'll seek my purse where I tint it,
Ance to the Indies I were wonted,
Some cantrip hour,
By some sweet elf I'll yet be dinted,
Then, vui! l'amour!

Fraîtes mes buisemâins respectueuses,
To sentimental sister Susie,
An' honest Lucky; no to roose ye,
Ye may be proud,
That sic a couple fate allows ye
To grace your blood.

Nac mair at present can I measure,
An', trouth, my rhyme's ware's me treasure;
That sic a couple fate allows ye
To grace your blood.

RUSTICITY'S UNGAINLY FORM

Rusticity's ungainly form
May cloud the highest mind;
But when the heart is nobly warm
The good excuse will find.

1 "It is quite impossible to say if, at this time, the poet had been made acquainted with the fate of his poor Highland Mary, who within a few days before or after the date of this lively production, must have been laid beneath the cloths in the West Churchyard at Greenock. If he forgets her in this interval of glee, he does not fail to remember the twa pawky een of Jean Armour, and other

--- curd, delicious blinkers, that put him byre,
And gart him weet his waukrie winkers wi' giein' spite."

—W. Scott Douglas.

2 It is said that on the occasion of a visit by Burns to the Rev. George Lawrie (see note to "A Prayer—
O Thou dread Pow'r"), the subject of Miss Margaret Kennedy's intimacy with MacDonal of Logan had been started, and that Mrs. Lawrie, rightly regarding the
POEMS AND SONGS.

Propriety's cold, cautious rules
Warm fervour may overlook;
But spare poor Sensibility
Th' ungentle, harsh rebuke.

A WINTER NIGHT.

In a letter to John Ballantyne enclosing this piece, and dated 20th Nov. 1786, Burns writes:
"Enclosed you have my first attempt in that irregular kind of measure in which many of our finest odes are wrote. How far I have succeeded I don't know, but I shall be happy to have your opinion."

Poor naked wretches, wherever you are,
That hide the pelting of the pitiless storm
How shall your homeless heads, and unshod feet,
Your hope'd and window'd mansions, defend you
From so many such as these?

When biting Boreas, fell and drear,
Sharp shivers thru' the leafless bower;
When Phoebeus gies a short-liv'd gloomer
Far south the lift,
Dim-dark'ning thru' the flaky shower,
Or whirling drift:

At night the storm the steeples rocked,
Poor labour sweet in sleep was locked,
While burns, wi' sawy wreaths up-choked,
Wild-eddying swirl,
Or thru' the mining outlet bocked,
Down headlong hurt.

List'ning the doors an' winnocks rattle,
I thought me on the ourie cattle,
Or silly sheep, wha hide this brattle
O' winter war,
And thru' the drift, deep-flaring sprattle,
Beneath a scurr'

The activity of the mind, and introduce whatever association can supply."—PROFESSOR WALKER.

2 Who o'er the brim with many a torrent swell
And the mix't rush of its banks crouse'd
At last the homed-up river pours along:
Restless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes
From the rude mountain and the moose wild
Tumbling o'er rocks abrupt and sounding far;
Then o'er the sunded valley floating spreads
Calm, sluggish, silent: till again constrained
Between two meeting hills it bursts a way
Where rocks and woods o'ershade the turbid stream:
There gathering triple force, rapid and deep
It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through.

—Thomson's Winter.
Ilk happing bird, wee, helpless thing,
That, in the merry months o' spring,
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee?
Where wilt thou cover thy chittering wing,
An' close thy ee?
Ev'n you on murd'ring errants toil'd,
Lone from your savage homes exil'd,
The blood-stain'd roost, and sheep-cote spoil'd
My heart forgets,
While pitiless the tempest wild
Sore on you beats.

Now Phoebe, in her midnight reign,
Dark muf'f'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 unrepenenting,
Than heav'n-illumin'd man on brother man bestows!

See stern Oppression's iron gripe,
Or mad Ambition's gory hand,
Sending, like blood-hounds from the slip,
Woe, want, and murder o'er a land!
Ev'n in the peaceful rural vale,
Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale,
How 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 glittering show,
A creature of another kind,
Some coarser substance unrefin'd,
Plac'd for her lowly use thus far, thus vile below.

1 "Not man only, but all that envious man in the material and moral universe, is lovely in his sight: the moary hawthorn, the troop of gray plover, the solitary curlew, all are dear to him; all live in this Earth along with him; 'all he is knit as in mysterious brotherhood.' How touching is it, for instance, that, amidst the gloom of personal misery, brooding over the wintry desolation without him and within him, he thinks of the 'curie cattle,' and 'silly sheep,' and their sufferings in the pitiless storm. . . . The tenant of the mean hut, with its 'ragged roof and chinky wall,' has a heart to pity even these! This is worth several homilies on Mercy: for it is the voice of Mercy herself."—THOMAS CARLYLE.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Where, where is Love's fond, tender thee,
With lordly Honour's lofty brow,
The powers you proully 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 snores,
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-satisfy' 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 slumber's piles the drifty heap:
Think on the dungeon's grim confine,
Where guilt and poor misfortune pine!
Guilt, erving man, relenting view,
But shall thy legal rage pursue
The wretch, already crushed low
By cruel fortune's undeserved 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 poutry swar,
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.1

1 "The 'Winter Night,' like the 'Brigs,' sets out with description very powerfully executed, and in language decidedly Scotch, but it passes abruptly to English, and in my apprehension, to a tone more nearly within the compass of an ordinary poet. . . . It has always appeared to me that we might conceive the two different portions of this poem to be the work of different authors, or of the same author at hours when the tide of inspiration had risen to very unequal heights. Other writers are no doubt liable to similar inequalities; but in Burns they were greater, from the superior vehemence and proportional remission of feeling, under the pressure of which he was urged to composition. When a subject ceased to interest him strongly, it was abandoned for a new one which possessed this power; and when he did not write with all the vivida vita animi he was apt to let the vigour of his conceptions relax with the vitality of his emotions."—Professor WALKER.—See also Prof. Wilson's Essay in vol. v.
SONG—YON WILD MOSSY MOUNTAINS.

TUNE—" You wild mossy mountains."

"This tune," says Burns, "is Oswald's. (It appears under the name of "Phoebe" in Oswald's fourth volume.) "The song alludes to a part of my private history, which is of no consequence to the world to know."

You wild mossy mountains so lofty and wide,
That nurse in their bosom the youth o' the Clyde,
Where the grouse lead their coveys thro' the heather to feed,
And the shepherd tends his flock as he pipes on his reed.

Not Gowrie's rich valley, nor Forth's sunny shores,
To me hae the charms o' you wild mossy moors;
For there, by a lonely, sequester'd clear stream,
Resides a sweet lassie, my thought and my dream.

Aman that wild mountains shall still be my path,
Ilk stream foaming down its ain green, narrow strath;
For there, wi' my lassie, the day lang I rove,
While o'er us unheeded ly the swift hours o' love.

She is not the fairest, altho' she is fair;
O' nice education but smart is her share:
Her parentage humble as humble can be;
But I love the dear lassie because she loves me.

To beauty what man but nae yield him a prize,
In her armour of glances, and blushes, and sighs!
And when wit and refinement has polished her darts,
They dazzle our een, as they flee to our hearts.

But kindness, sweet kindness, in the f sein sparkling ee,
Has lastre outshining the diamond to me;
And the heart-beating love, as I'm clasp'd in her arms,
O, these are my lassie's all-conquering charms!

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

This beautiful address was composed on the poet's first visit to Edinburgh, and must have been written shortly after his arrival, as it is alluded to in a letter (dated Dec. 27, 1786) to William Chalmers within a month after that event.—See GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and towers,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat Legislation's sov'reign powers!

1 Stenhouse leads us to infer that Highland Mary is the theme of the song; but it has been suggested by Allan Cunningham that the heroine is probably "Nannie." From the locality assigned to the subject of the song (the upland region where the Clyde has its early course), and the mystery of the note, we are inclined to think that the heroine was a different personage altogether from any whom he has elsewhere celebrate. It is really, however, "of no consequence to the world to know."
From marking wildly-scatter'd flowers,
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 liberal mind,
Above the narrow, rural vale;
Attentive still to Sorrow's wail,
Or modest Merit's silent chain;
And never may their sources fail!
And never envy blot their name!

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn!
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptur'd thrill of joy!
Fair Burnett strikes th' adoring eye,
Heav'n'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 poud'rous wall and massy bar,
Grim-rising o'er the rugged rock;
Have oft withstood assailing war,
And oft repel'd the invader's shock.

With awe-struck thought, and pitying tears,
I view that noble, stately dome,^2

---

1 Allusion is here made to Elizabeth Burnett, daughter of Lord Menbodho, a young lady of surpassing beauty, who at this time formed the charm and ornament of Edinburgh society. Mrs. Alison Cockburn, authoress of "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beginning," and who died in 1796, wrote about the time this address was composed:—"The town is at present all agog with the 'Ploughman Poet,' who receives adulation with native dignity, and is the very figure of his profession, strong, but coarse; yet he has a most enthusiastic heart of love. He has seen Duchess Gordon and all the gay world. His favourite, for looks and manners, is Miss Burnett—no bad judge, indeed!" We shall have occasion to speak farther of her when we come to the elegy which the poet wrote on her death, in 1780.

2 This refers to Holyrood Palace, dome being here used (as by Pope) in the general sense of edifice.
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'rering roam,
The' 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:
Ev'n I who sing in rustic lore,
Haply my sires have left their shed,
And face'd grim danger's lowest rear,
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 low'r's,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

TO A HAGGIS.1

Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great chieftain o' the puddin'-race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,
Pinch, tripe, or thairm: paunch small intestine
Weel are ye wordy of a grace
As lang's my arm.

1 A haggis is a pudding, supposed to be peculiar to Scotland, composed of the minced heart, liver, &c., of a sheep, mixed with oatmeal and suet, seasoned with salt, pepper, &c., and boiled in the carefully cleansed stomach of the animal. The poet's description of this phenomenon in cookery is faithful as it is graphic. Its appearance is very apt to startle an Englishman, however bold he may be as a tancher-man: but by a Scotsman, who knows its intrinsic worth, and honours the country to which it belongs, it is always welcomed at table with hearty applause. Formerly, in Burns's time, and before it, when the style of living in Scotland was simpler and humbler than it now is, the haggis was one of the principal luxuries of the farmer and labouring man, and the poet's description of the husbandman with which it was devoured is not overcharged. At the present day, however, it forms a much less prominent figure in rustic dietetics, though it has still its patrons in town as well as in country. There are different accounts as to the composition of the poem, but it first appeared in the Caledonian Mercury on the 29th December, 1786, subsequently in the Scots Magazine for January, 1787, and was reprinted in that year's edition of the poet's works. The concluding verse originally stood thus:—

Ye powers, who give us a' that's good,
Still bless and Caledon's bread,
With great John Barleycorn's heart's-blood
In stumps or haggis,
And on our board, that king of food,
A glorious Haggis!
The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your lurdies like a distant hill,
Your pin1 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 sight,
An' cut you up with ready sight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright
Like any ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin', rich!

Then horn2 for horn they stretch an' strive,
Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,
Till a' their weel-swallow'd kytes beleeve
Are bent like drums;
Then auld guidman, 'maist like to ryve,
'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 scanner,
Looks down wi' sneerin', 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 wale nieve a blade,
He'll mak it whistle;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will sned,
Like taps o' thistle.

Ye pow'rs, wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware
That jumps in haggis;3
But, if ye wish her grateful' pray'r,
Gie her a Haggis!

1 A wooden skewer by means of which the opening in the bag is firmly closed up.
2 The spoons formerly used at the tables of the farmers and farm-labourers, and others in a similar station of life, were made of horn; and indeed such spoons may be met with yet.
3 Wooden dishes resembling small tubs, being made of staves and hoops with ear-shaped handles.
TO MISS LOGAN,¹

WITH BRATTIE'S POEMS AS A NEW YEAR'S GIFT, JANUARY 1, 1787.

Again the silent wheels of time
Their annual round have driven,
And you, tho' scarce in maiden prime,
Are so much nearer Heaven.

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

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

EXTEMPORÉ IN THE COURT OF SESSION.²

TUNE—"Killicrankie."

THE LORD ADVOCATE.

He clenched his pamphlets in his fist,
He quoted and he hinted,
Till in a declamation-mist,
His argument he tint it:

He gaped for't, he grasped for't,
He faud it was awa, man;
But what his common sense came short,
He eked out wi' law, man.

MR. ERKINE.

Collected, Harry stood a wee,
Then open'd out his arm, man;
His lordship sat wi' rueful ee,
And ey'd the gathering storm, man:

Like wind-driv'n hail it did assail,
Or torrents owre a linn, man;
The Bench sae wise lift up their eyes,
Half-waken'd wi' the din, man.

¹ Miss Logan was the "sentimental sister Susie," of Major Logan, to whom the epistle in a preceding page is addressed.

² Mr. Bay Campbell, afterwards Lord President, was then Lord Advocate. Mr. Erskine (Harry Erskine) was Dean of Faculty.
POEMS AND SONGS.

ON WILLIAM SMELLIE.¹

AUTHOR OF "THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATURAL HISTORY."

Shrewd Willie Smellie² to Crochallan came,
The old cock'd hat, the gray surtout, the same;
His bristling beard just rising in its might,
'Twas four long nights and days to shaving-night—
His uncombed grizzly locks wild searing, thatch'd
A head for thought profound and clear unmatch'd;
Yet tho' his caustic wit was biting, rude,
His heart was warm, benevolent, and good.

INSCRIPTION ON THE TOMBSTONE OF FERGUSON.

HERE LIES ROBERT FERGUSON, POET,
BORN, SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1731. DIED, 16TH OCTOBER, 1774.

No sculptur'd marble here, nor pompous lay,
"No storied urn, nor animated bust,"³
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way
To pour her sorrows o'er her poet's dust.

ADDITIONAL STANZAS.⁴

She mourns, sweet tuneful youth, thy hapless fate.
The powers of song thy fancy fir'd,
Yet Luxury and Wealth lay by in state,
And thankless starv'd what they so much admir'd.

This humble tribute with a tear he gives,
A brother Bard, he can no more bestow;
But deign to fame thy Song immortal lives,
A nobler monument than Art can show.

¹This, with some trifling variations, was introduced into an uncompleted poem "The Poet's Progress."
²William Smellie was one of the printer Creich's partners at the time of Burns's residence in Edinburgh. He was born in 1740 and originally bred a printer, and his sterling integrity and habits of invincible application raised him to a distinguished rank in his profession, and in the republic of letters. To give some idea of his perseverance, it may be mentioned that he studied Hebrew, in order to qualify himself to correct the proof-sheets of a grammar of that language which was about to be printed by his employers! Smellie died in June, 1796. The "Crochallan Fencibles," alluded to in the first line, was a club of literary wits which met weekly in a tavern in Edinburgh. They assumed the name from the burden of a Gaelic song which the landlord used to sing. Smellie was a fellow of the Royal Society, and secretary to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. He translated Buffon's Natural History into English, and planned, compiled, and superintended the first edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1771, 3 vols.).
³Gray's "Elegy."
⁴The two additional stanzas were first published in the Globe edition of Burns's Works (Macmillan & Co.), edited by Alexander Smith. They appear in the Edinburgh Common-place Book.—On the 6th February, 1787, Burns petitioned the Managers of the Kirk and Kirkyard Funds of the Parish of Canongate as follows: "To the honorable Bailies of Canongate, Edinburgh.—Gentlemen, I am sorry to be told that the remains of Robert Ferguson, the so justly celebrated poet, a man whose talents for ages to come will do honour to our Caledonian name, lie in your churchyard among the ignoble dead, unnoticed and unknown. Some memorial to direct the steps of..."
POEMS AND SONGS.

VERSES

WRITTEN UNDER THE PORTRAIT OF ROBERT FERGUSON, IN A COPY OF HIS WORKS
PRESENTED TO A YOUNG LADY, MARCH 19, 1787.

Curse on ungrateful man, that can be pleas'd,
And yet can starve the author of the pleasure!
O thou my elder brother in misfortune,
By far my elder brother in the muses,
With tears I pity thy unhappy fate!
Why is the hard unpitied by the world,
Yet has so keen a relish of its pleasures?

TO MRS. SCOTT OF WAUCHOPE.

GUIDWIFE,

I mind it well, in early date,
When I was beardless, young, and blate,
An' first could thrash the barn;
Or haul a yokin' at the plough,
An' tho' forfoughten sair enough,
Yet unco proud to learn;
When first amang the yellow corn
A man I reckon'd was,
An' wi' the love ilk merry morn
Could rank my rig and lass,
Still shearing, and clearing
The tither stook'd raw,
Wi' clavers, an' haivers,
Wearing the day awa,—

the lovers of Scottish song when they wish to shed
a tear over the 'narrow house' of the bard who
is no more is surely a tribute due to Ferguson's
memory—a tribute I wish to have the honour of pay-
ing. I petition you then, gentlemen, to permit me
to lay a simple stone over his revered ashes, to remain
an unalienable property to his deathless fame. On
the 22d of February at a meeting of the managers the
petition was read and unanimously granted, and on
the reverse side of the stone the following words were
engraved: "By special grant of the managers to
Robert Burns, who erected this stone, this burial-
place is to remain for ever sacred to the memory of
Robert Ferguson." Referring to this last clause
Chambers remarks, "If this order of the managers
was designed to set aside the ground from all future
use as a part of the general place of sepulture, I am
sorry to remark that it has been, through inadvert-
tence in some quarter, violated, as I was present some
years ago, when the remains of Mr. John Inverarity,
a nephew of Ferguson, were deposited in the grave
of the poet." This was written immediately after the poet had
obtained permission from the Managers of the Kirk
and Kirkyard Funds of Canongate "to erect a head-
stone at the grave of Ferguson." The "curse" had
been previously more forcibly and pointedly launched
in the epistle to William Simson, vol. i. p. 256:

My curse upon your waster's heart,
Ye Releaguer scoundry!
The tyrbe o' what ye waste at cartes,  
Wad stow'd his pantry!

but Ferguson was more the victim of misfortune
than of the hard-heartedness and callousness of man-
kind.

[1787.]
POEMS AND SONGS.

E'en then a wish—I mind its power—
A wish, that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast,
That I for poor and Scotland's sake,
Some useful plan, or book could make,
Or sing a song at least.¹

The rough burr-thistle, spreading wide
Among the bearded bear,
I turn'd the weeder-clips aside,
An' spair'd the symbol dear;²
No nation, no station,
My envy e'er could raise;
A Scot still, but blot still,
I knew me higher praise.

But still the elements o' sang
In formless jumble, right as' wrang,
Wild floated in my brain:
Till on that har'st I said before,
My partner in the merry corps,
She rous'd the forming strain:
I see her yet, the sousie queen,
That lighted up my jingle,
Her witching smile, her pawkie een
That gart my heart-strings tingle;
I fir'd, inspir'd,
At ev'ry kindling keek,
But bashing, and dash'd:
I feared aye to speak.³

Health to the sex! ilk guid chiel says,
Wi' merry dance in winter-days,
An' we to share in common:
The gust o' joy, the balm of woe,
The soul o' life, the heav'n below,
Is rapture-giving woman.
Ye early sampibs, who hate the name,
Be mindfu' o' your mither:

¹ The reader will notice that this long sentence is incomplete, a verb, or expression containing a verb, being wanted to give full sense.
² "He is hardly to be envied who can contemplate without emotion this exquisite picture of young nature and young genius. It was amidst such scenes that this extraordinary being felt those first indelible stirrings of immortal ambition, which he has himself shadowed out under the magnificent image of the 'blind gropings of Homer's Cyclops around the walls of his cave.'"—J. G. LOCKHART.
³ "You know our country custom of coupling a man and woman together as partners in the labours of harvest. In my fifteenth autumn my partner was a bewitching creature, who just counted an anthum less. My scarcity of English denies me the power of describing her justice in that language, but you know the Scottish bimo—who was a banote, sweet, sousie less, . . . In short, she, altogether unwittingly to herself, initiated me into a certain delicious passion. . . . How she caught the contagion I can't say, . . . but I never expressly told her that I loved her."—Burra's AUTO-BIOGRAPHICAL LETTER TO DR. MOORE. The girl's name was Nell, Kilpatrick; she was the heroine of the song "Handsome Nell," the first known composition of the poet. See vol. i. p. 180.
POEMS AND SONGS.

She, honest woman, may think shame
That ye're connected with her.
Ye're wae men, ye're wae men,
That slight the lovely dears;
To shame ye, disclaim ye,
Ilk honest bairkie swears.

For you, no brel to barn and byre,
Wha sweetly tune the Scottish lyre,
Thanks to you for your line.
The maird plaid ye kindly spare,
By me should gratefully be ware;
'Twad please me to the nine.
I'll be mair vauntie o' my hap,
Douse hingin' o'er my cuple,
Than any crumple ever hap,
Or proud imperial purple.

Farewelled then, lang heal then,
An' plenty be your fa':
May losses and crosses
Ne'er at your hallan calle.'1

ROBERT BURNS.

Mrs. Scott of Wauchope, near Jedburgh, in Roxburghshire, a painter and a poetess, addressed a rhyming epistle to Burns, entitled, "The Goldwife of Wauchope-house to Robert Burns," expressing her admiration of his poems, and her doubts as to the correctness of the report, that they were the production of a ploughman. But it may be as well to let her tell her own tale, and thus afford a specimen of her poetic powers:

My honest, witty, rhyming ploughman,
I haffine doubt it is an true man,
That ye between the stiffs were brel,
Ye ploughman's school'd, ye ploughman's fed.
I doubt it na, ye've drawn your knowledge greatly.

Either free grammar-school or college,
Gold truth, your soul and body bath.
War better be, I'll gie my aith.
Than theirs, who sup sour-milk and parrich,
An' 'run mall they're the Singil Curchie, Jesu! Shetler Caledon.

Wha ever heard the ploughman speak,
Could tell giff Homer was a Greek?
Hed'll sea as soon upon a cudgel,
As get a single line of Virgil.
An' then ses she ye cneck your jokes
'O' Willie Pitt, and Charlie Fox,
Our green men a are well descriptive,
An' how to gie the nation thrive,
An' being wid war ye dwalt among them,
An' ye saw them, see ye sang them.
But ye ploughman, be ye peer,
Ye are a funny blade, I swear;
An' though the lads I'll can hide,
Yet twenty miles, an' mair, I'll ride,
O'er moss, an' mair, an' never grumble,
The' my auld lad should gie a stumblie,
To crack a winter-light w' thee,
And hear thy songs and sonnets sée.

1 Mrs. Scott of Wauchope.

BURNS immediately answered her epistle by addressing her the above poem. In his Border tour he visited Wauchope: regarding its inmates we find the following entry in his journal—"Wauchope—Mr. Scott exactly the figure and face commonly given to Sancho Panza—very shrewd in his farming matters, and not infrequently stumbles on what may be called a strong thing rather than a good thing. Mrs. Scott all the sense, taste, incorruptibility of face and bold critical decision, which usually distinguish female authors." Of a certain Mrs. Pall, also encountered on his Border tour, he remarks—"Full more clever in the fine arts and sciences than my friend Lady Wauchope, without her consummate assurance of her own abilities." (See vol. i. pp. 177 and 178.) Mrs. Scott's maiden name was Elizabeth Rutherford, and she was niece to Mr. Cockburn (quoted in reference to Burns on p. 105 above), authoress of the favourite song, "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling," also known as the "Flowers of the Forest."
POEMS AND SONGS.

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. WOODS ON HIS BENEFIT NIGHT,† MONDAY, APRIL 16TH, 1787.

When by a generous Public's kind acclaim,
That dearest need is granted—honest fame:
When here your favour is the actor's lot,
Nor even the man in private life forgot;
What breast so dead to heavenly virtue's glow,
But leaves impression'd with the grateful throe?

Poor is the task to please a barbarous throng,
It needs no Siddons' powers in Southern's song;
But here an ancient nation's name's afar,
For genius, learning, high, as great in war—
Hail! Caledonia! name for ever dear,
Before whose sons I'm honour'd to appear!
Where every science—every nobler art—
That can inform the mind, or mend the heart,
Is known; as grateful nations oft have found,
Far as the rude barbarian marks the bound.

Philosophy, 2 no idle, pedant dream,
Here holds her search by heaven-taught Reason's beam;
Here History 2 paints with elegance and force,
The tide of Empire's fluctuating course;
Here Douglas' 3 forms wild Shakespeare into plan,
And Harlequin raises all the God in man.

When well-form'd taste, and sparkling wit, unite
With manly lore, or female beauty bright,
(Beauty, where faultless symmetry and grace,
Can only charm us in the second place.)
Witness my heart, how oft with panting fear,
As on this night, I've met these judges here!
But still the hope Experience taught to live,
Equal to judge—you're candid to forgive.
No hundred-headed Riot here we meet,
With Decency and Law beneath his feet,
Nor Insolence assumes fair Freedom's name;
Like Caledonians, you applaud or blame.

O Thou, dread Power! whose empire-giving hand
Has oft been stretch'd to shield the honour'd hand!

† Mr. Woods was known to Ferguson as the poet, as well as to Burns. He was long a popular actor in Edinburgh, and was styled the Scottish Roscius. He was born in 1731, retired from the stage in April, 1802, and died in December of the same year.

‡ Thomas Reid at Glasgow, and Dugald Stewart at Edinburgh.

§ The historians Hume and Robertson.

4 Home's tragedy of Douglas.—"In April in course of a prologue for the benefit of the veteran Scotch Roscius (Mr. Woods) Burns, after referring to Hume, Robertson, and Reid, as glories of Caledonia, perpetrated his worst criticism—

Here Douglas forms wild Shakespeare into plan."

——PROFESSOR NICHOL.

4 Henry Mackenzie in The Man of Feeling.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Strong may she glow with all her ancient fire!
May every son be worthy of his sire!
Firm may she rise with generous disdain
At Tyranny's, or dire Pleasure's chain!
Still self-dependent in her native shore,
Bold may she brave grim Danger's loudest roar,
Till Fate the curtain drop on worlds to be no more.

VERSES
INTENDED TO BE WRITTEN BENEATH A NOBLE EARL'S PICTURE.

Whose is that noble, dauntless brow?
And whose that eye of fire?
And whose that generous princely mien
E'en rooted foes admire!
Stranger! to justly show that brow,
And mark that eye of fire,
Would take His hand whose vernal tints
His other works admire.
Bright as a cloudless summer sun
With stately port he moves;
His guardian Seraph eyes with awe
The noble Ward he loves.
Among the illustrious Scottish sons
That Chief thou mayst discern;
Mark Scotia's fond returning eye,
It dwells upon Glencairn.

SONG—MY LADY'S GOWN THERE'S GAIRS UPON'T.

TUNE—"Gregg's Pipers."

My lady's gown there's gairs upon't,
And gowden flowers sue rare upon't;

The "noble earl" is the Earl of Glencairn, one of the poet's most servile and grateful patrons. (See note to the "Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn," also letters in vol. iv., in which is given a portrait of this nobleman.) The above verses are more inspired and entertaining than the Muse. The earl refused the poet's request for liberty to print them, and they first appeared in Cunningham's edition of 1838. Cunningham suggests that the word "admire" closing the second stanza is a slip of the pen for "inspire."

2"This song," says Stenhouse, "was written for the Museum in 1788... Johnson long hesitated to admit it... but being blamed for such fastidiousness he at length gave it a place." It appears in the sixth volume, adapted to a reel tune composed by James Gregg, a dancing master and musical composer of some local eminence in his day in Ayrshire, who died at a good old age in 1817.——The stanza which serves as a chorus seems older than Burns's time; perhaps the whole is after an old model.
POEMS AND SONGS.

But Jenny's jimps and jirkinet,
My lord thinks meekle mair 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, &c.

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

My lady's gown, &c.

Out o'er you moor, out o'er you moss,
Where gor-cocks thro' the heather pass,
There wons an' Colin's bonnie lass,
A lily in a wilderness!

My lady's gown, &c.

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

My lady's gown, &c.

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, &c.

HUNTING SONG—THE BONNIE MOOR-HEN.1

TUNE—"I rede ye beware at the hunting."

The heather was blooming, the meadows were mawn,
Our lads gaed a-hunting ne day at the dawn,
O'er moors and o'er mosses, and mony a glen,
At length they discover'd a bonnie moor-hen.

I rede ye beware at the hunting, young men;
I rede ye beware at the hunting, young men;
Tak some on the wing, and some as they spring,
But cannily steal on a bonnie moor-hen.

1 The date of this song is uncertain. Burns sent a copy of it early in 1788 to Curnock, who expresses his opinion of it in a letter of 6th February, thus: "Do not publish the 'Moor-hen;' do not, for your sake and for mine." It was found among the loose MSS. handed by Mrs. Burns to Cromek.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Sweet brushing the dew from the brown heather bells,
Her colours betray'd her on you mossy fells;
Her plumage onlustr'd the pride o' the spring,
And O! as she wanton'd she gay on the wing.
  I rede ye, &c.

Auld Phoebus himself', as he peep'd o'er the hill,
In spite, at her plumage, he tried his skill;
He level'd his rays where she bask'd on the brae—
His rays were outshone, and but mark'd where she lay.
  I rede ye, &c.

They hunted the valley; they hunted the hill,
The best o' our lads, wi' the best o' our skill;
But still as the fairest she sat in their sight,
Then, whirr! she was over a mile at a flight.
  I rede ye, &c.

---

EPIGRAM ON AN ARTIST.

Dear ---, I'll gie ye some advice,
You'll tak it no uncivil:
You shouldna paint at angels mair,
But try and paint the devil.
To paint an angel's kittle wark,
Wi' Nick there's little danger:
You'll easy draw a lang-kent face,
But no sae weel a stranger.

VERSES
ADDRESSED TO THE LANDLADY OF THE INN AT ROSSLYN.

My blessings on you, soony wife;
I ne'er was here before;
You've gie' us watch for horn and knife,
Nae heart could wish for more.

Heav'n keep you i' ee care and strife,
Till far a'ayont fourscore;
And while I taddle on through life,
I'll ne'er gang by your door.

---

1 According to Robert Chambers, Burns was once introduced to a celebrated Edinburgh artist in his studio; the artist was at the time engaged on a picture, the subject of which was Jacob's Dream. After a minute inspection of the painting the poet wrote the above lines on the back of a little sketch which is still preserved in the painter's family. Chambers refrains from satisfying our curiosity as to the name of the artist.

2 Where Burns is said, after a walk to the Pentland Hills, with Alexander Nasmyth, portrait-painter, to have breakfasted so much to his satisfaction that he presented his hostess with these lines, scratched on the back of a wooden platter.
EPGRAM ON ELPHINSTONE'S TRANSLATION
OF MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS.

To Clarinda in 1787 Burns wrote:—"Did I ever repeat to you an epigram I made on a Mr. Elphinstone, who has given a translation of Martial, a famous Latin poet? The poetry of Elphinstone can only equal his prose-notes. I was sitting in a merchant's shop of my acquaintance, waiting for somebody; he put Elphinstone into my hand, and asked my opinion of it: I begged leave to write it on a blank leaf, which I did."

O thou whom Poetry abhors,
Whom Prose has turned out of doors,
Heardst thou that groan—proceed no further,
'Twas laurel'd Martial roaring murther.

EPGRAM—THE BOOKWORMS.¹

Through and through the inspired leaves,
Ye maggots, make your rudings;
But, Oh! respect his lordship's taste,
And spare his golden bindings.

EPGRAM ON MISS BURNS.²

Cease, ye prudes, your envious railing;
Lovely Burns has charms—confess!
True it is, she has one failing—
Had a woman ever less?

EPITAPH ON THE SCHOOLMASTER OF CLEISH PARISH,
FIFESHIRE.³

Here lie Willie Michie's bames,
O Satan! when ye tak him,
Gie him the schoolin' o' your weans;
For clever Deils he'll mak them!

¹ Burns, it is said, calling one day on a nobleman, was shown into the library. Being kept waiting, he had time to inspect his lordship's collection. Among the rest was a splendidly-bound copy of Shakespeare, little used and much worm-eaten. Burns rashly wrote on the blank leaf of one of the volumes the above epigram, which was found long after the poet's death, by some one accidentally attracted, perhaps, to the same neglected volume.

² Miss Burns was a well-known frail one in Edinburgh during the poet's residence there. She was noted for her personal attractions. We shall have to speak of her further when we come to the Correspondence.

³ Burns probably crossed the Forth occasionally during his first stay in Edinburgh, and may have met and admired the Cleish schoolmaster whose cleverness he here celebrates.
POETICAL ADDRESS TO MR. WILLIAM TYTLE,

AUTHOR OF "AN INQUIRY, HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL, INTO THE EVIDENCE AGAINST MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS."

WITH A PRESENT OF THE BARD'S PICT ME.

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

Tho' something like moisture conglobes in my eye,2
Let no one misdeem me disloyal;
A poor friendless wand'rer may well claim a sigh,
Still more, if that wand'rer were royal.

My fathers that name have rever'd on a throne;
My fathers have fallen to right it;
Those fathers would spurn their degenerate son,
That name should be scoffingly slight it.3

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

But why of that epocha make such a fuss,
That gave us the Hanover stem;
If bringing them over was lucky for us,
I'm sure 'twas as lucky for them!4

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

1 William Tytler, Esq., of Woodhouselee, was a member of the society of Writers to the Signet, and besides being author of the above-mentioned work in favour of Queen Mary, wrote various other dissertations and essays, and edited the Poetical Remains of James I. of Scotland. He was born in 1711, and died 12th Sept. 1792. His son was the well-known Lord Woodhouselee, and his grandson, Patrick Fraser Tytler, was author of the well-known and excellent history of Scotland, published in 1828-48.

2 "In May, writing to Mr. Tytler of Woodhouselee on the Vindication of Mary Stuart, [Burns perpetrated] his worst lines,—

The something like moisture conglobes in my eye,
Let no one misdeem me disloyal."

—PROFESSOR N P HOD.

3 The question as to whether any of Burns's fathers had been concerned in the Stuart cause is discussed in a note on "The Paternal Ancestry of Burns" appended to Lockhart's Life. That any of them fell in the cause seems to be mere speculation on Burns's part.

4 It strongly marks the cautious spirit of the times, that Dr. Currie omitted the last three lines of this stanza from his edition of the poet's works. Burns felt when he wrote it that he was treading on dangerous ground. A jest on loyalty was then regarded as an unmoving proof of disaffection to government, and the peculant author as a legitimate mark for the bolts of authority. These prejudices were strengthened by the progress of events ere the piece passed under the editorial hands of Currie. He paused—and deemed it better to expunge the verse than to subject himself, as well as the author, to the withering charge of disloyalty.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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

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

EPIGRAM TO MISS AINSLIE\(^2\) IN CHURCH.

Fair maid, you need not take the hint,
Nor idle texts pursue:
'Twas guilty sinners that he meant,
Not Angels such as you.

EPISTLE TO WILLIAM CREECH, BOOKSELLER, EDINBURGH.

Auld chuckie Reekie's\(^3\) sair distress,
Sandy down droops her ance weil-burnish'd crest,
Nae joy her bonnie buskit nest
Can yield a'na,
Her darling bird that she lo'es best,
Willie's awa!

O Willie was a witty wight,
And had o' things an unco slight;
Auld Reekie aye he keepit tight,
An' tric an' braw:
But now they'll busk her like a fright—
Willie's awa!

\(^1\) The "Bird's Picture" mentioned in the title is generally understood to have been a silhouette portrait by an artist named Miers, then practising his art in Edinburgh; but Mr. William Scott Douglas says it was a presentation copy of Burns's engraving, which was, at the time of his writing, in the possession of Dr. David Laing.

\(^2\) Miss Ainslie was the sister of one of Burns's Edinburgh friends, Robert Ainslie. The two friends made a trip to the south of Scotland in the summer of 1787, in the course of which the poet was introduced to Ainslie's parents, and brothers and sisters. (See vol. i. p. 176.) On Sunday, May 6, Burns attended the church at Dunse along with the family, and the clergyman (Dr. Bowman) gave out a text containing special threatenings against hardened sinners. Observing Miss Ainslie searching for it, Burns asked for her Bible, and immediately wrote the above lines on the inner side of one of the boards.

\(^3\) Auld Reekie in common use, for Reekie, a name often appended to the surname, being called "Reekie" from the smoke (Scotticd reek) hanging over the town from its many chimneys. The epithet is said to have been first applied to it by James IV., on looking at the town early in the morning from the Fife coast, while the citizens were kindling their fires for the day. "Chuckie," literally a hen, represents the city in her maternal relation, as grieving for the absence from the nest of her "darling bird," William Creech.
The stiffest o' them a' he bow'd,
The bauldest o' them a' he cow'd;
They durst nae mair than ho allow'd,
That was a law:
We've lost a birkie weed worth gowil—
Willie's awa!

Now gawkies, tawpies, gowks and fools,
Frae colleges and boarding schools,
May sprout like simmer puddock-stools,
In glen or shaw;
He wha could brush them down to mools,
Willie's awa!

The brethren o' the Commerce-Chamber\(^1\)
May mourn their loss wi' doolfu' chamour;
He was a dictionair and grammar
Among them a';
I fear they'll now make mony a stammer—
Willie's awa!

Nae mair we see his levee door
Philosophers and Poets pour,\(^2\)
And toothy critics by the score,
In bloody raw!
The adjutant o' a' the core,
Willie's awa!

Now worthy Gregory's Latin face,
Tytler's and Greenfield's modest grace;
Mackenzie, Stewart, such a brae
As Rome ne'er saw;\(^3\)
They a' maun meet some ither place,
Willie's awa!

Poor Burns e'en Scotch drink cauna quicken,
He cheeps like some bewilder'd chicken,
Sear'd frae its minnie and the sleekin'
By hoodie-craw;
Grief's gi'en his heart an unco kickin',
Willie's awa!

Now ev'ry sour-mon'd girtin' bledium,
And Calvin's folk are fit to fell him;

\(^1\) The Chamber of Commerce of Edinburgh, of which Mr. Creech was secretary.—R. B.
\(^2\) Many literary gentlemen were accustomed to meet at Mr. Creech's house at breakfast.—R. B.
\(^3\) The gentlemen receiving friendly mention in this stanza were:—Dr. James Gregory, author of the Com-
spectvs Medicinae; Tytler of Woodhouselee, author of the Defence of Mary Queen of Scots; Dr. William
Greenfield, professor of rhetoric in the Edinburgh University; Henry Mackenzie, author of The Man
of Feeling; and Dugald Stewart, professor of moral philosophy.
POEMS AND SONGS.

And self-conceited critic skellum
His quill may draw;
He who could brawlie ward their bellum,
Willie’s awa!

Up wimping stately Tweed I’ve sped,
And Eden scenes on crystal Jed,
And Ettrick banks now roaring red,
While tempests blow;
But every joy and pleasure’s fled—
Willie’s awa!

May I be slander’s common speech;
A text for infamy to preach;
And lastly, streekit out to bleach
In winter snaw;
When I forget thee, Willie Creech,
Though far awa!

May never wicked fortune touzle him!
May never wicked men lamboozle him!
Until a pow as auld’s Methusalem
He canty claw!
Then to the blessed New Jerusalem,
Fleet wing awa!

EPIGRAM WRITTEN AT INVERARY. 3

Who'e'er he be that sojourns here,
I pity much his case,
Unless he come to wait upon
The Lord their God, his Grace.

There’s naething here but Highland pride,
And Highland scab and hunger;
If Providence has sent me here,
’Twas surely in his anger.

1 This epistle addressed to his publisher, then on a visit to London, was written by Burns during his Border tour. See letter to Creech of 13th May, 1787, enclosing this piece. It may be here stated, that Burns afterwards found reason to change his opinion of his publisher. Creech’s great failing was an indisposition to part with money. Burns could hardly wring the profits of his poems out of his hands after months spent in eager and unremitting solicitation. In other respects, however, Creech was a man above the common run—told a good story with unfailing effect—wrote, without much vigour, it is true, but with considerable power of irony, a volume since reprinted—and delighted in the society and conversation of men of letters. His shop was the lounge for all the men of talent in the Scottish capital, and his morning conversations were long remembered as “Creech’s levees.” Mr. Creech died 14th January, 1815, aged 70.

2 This refers to some unpleasant incident of his West Highland tour in the summer of 1787. Perhaps some of the numerous visitors at the castle had to seek accommodation at the inn, and more attention might be paid to them than to the irascible, and then comparatively unknown, poet. See vol. i. p. 72.
POEMS

EPIGRAM ON MISS JEAN SCOTT.

Oh! had each Scot of ancient times,
Been Jeanie Scott, as thou art;
The bravest heart on English ground,
Had yielded like a coward.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF SIR JAMES HUNTER BLAIR.

To a copy of this piece presented to Capt. Riddell of Glenriddell Burns appended the following note: "This performance is but mediocr, but my grief was sincere. The last time I saw the worthy, public-spirited man—a man he was! how few of the two-legged breed that pass for such, deserve the designation!—he pressed my hand and asked me with the most friendly warmth if it was in his power to serve me; and if so, that I would oblige him by telling him how. I had nothing to ask of him; but if ever a child of his should be so unfortunate as to be under the necessity of asking anything of so poor a man as I am, it may not be in my power to grant it, but by G— I shall try."—See also letter of the poet to Robert Aiken, July, 1787.

The lamp of day, with ill-presaging glare,
Dim, cloudy, sunk beneath the western wave;
Th' inconstant blast how'd thr' the darkening air,
And hollow whistled in the rocky cave.

Lone as I wander'd by each cliff and dell,
Once the lov'd haunts of Scotia's royal train; 3
Or mna'd where limpid streams, once hallow'd, well, 4
Or mould'ring ruins mark the sacred fauce: 5

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

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

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

1 All that is known of Jeanie Scott is that she was a native of Ayr.
2 This gentleman was a native of Ayr, and partner in the banking-house of Sir William Forbes and Company. He died 1st July, 1787, in the forty-seventh year of his age. He was Lord-provost of Edinburgh from October 1784 to October 1786. To a copy sent to his friend, Robert Aiken, writer in Ayr, Burns appended these words:—"The melancholy occasion of the foregoing poem affects not only individuals but a country."
3 The King's Park, at Holyrood-house.—R. B.
4 St. Anthony's Well.—R. B.
5 St. Anthony's Chapel.—R. B.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Revers'd that spear, redoubtable in war;
Reclin'd that banner, erst in fields unfurl'd,
That like a deathful meteor gleam'd afar,
And brav'd the mighty monarchs of the world.—

"My patriot son fills an untimely grave!"
With accents wild and lifted arms—she cried;
"Low lies the hand that oft was stretch'd to save,
Low lies the heart that swell'd with honest pride!"

"A weeping country joins a widow's tear,
The helpless poor mix with the orphan's cry;
The drooping Arts surround their patron's bier,
And grateful Science heaves the heartfelt sigh.—

"I saw my son resume their ancient fire;
I saw fair Freedom's blossoms richly blow;
But ah! how hope is born but to expire!
Relentless fate has laid this guardian low.—

"My patriot falls, but shall he lie unsung,
While empty greatness saves a worthless name!
No; every muse shall join her tuneful tongue,
And future ages hear his growing fame.

"And I will join a mother's tender cares,
Thro' future times to make his virtues last,
That distant years may boast of other Blairs"—
She said, and vanish'd with the sweeping blast.

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

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

1 Miss Isabella Mc'Leod, a daughter of the Laird of Rossay, that Laird who was visited at Rossay by Dr. Johnson and Boswell. Her elder sister, Miss Flora Mc'Leod, had married Colonel James Mure-Campbell of Rowallan, who succeeded to the earldom of Loudoun. She died immediately after giving birth to a daughter, Flora, who became Countess of Loudoun at her father's death in 1780. Miss Isabella Mc'Leod was, therefore, the aunt of the young countess, and to her and the Mc'Leod family Burns had been introduced by his friend Gavin Hamilton, factor for the Loudoun estate. John Mc'Leod died on July 20th, 1787, while Burns was residing at Moss-giel for a short time after his sojourn in Edinburgh. Burns was on an intimate footing with the Mc'Leods during his winter campaign in the capital, and had been much taken with Isabella. She is the subject of the song "Raving winds around her blowing."
Sweetly deckt with pearly dew
The morning rose may blow;
But cold successive noontide blasts
May lay its beauties low.

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

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

Dread Omnipotence, alone,
Can heal the wound he gave;
Can joint the blemish'd grief-worn eyes
To scenes beyond the grave.

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

TO MISS FERRIER,

ENCLOSING THE ELEGY ON SIR J. H. BLAIR

Nae heathen name shall I prefix
Frae Pindus or Parnassus;
Auld Reekie lings them a' to sticks
For rhyme-inspiring lasses.

Jove's tuneft' dochters three times three
Made Homer deep their debtor;
But, g'en the boly half an ec,
Nine Ferriers wad done better!

1 In the original MS. after the fourth verse occurs the following lines:—

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

In Cunningham's edition of Burns these lines have been restored; the propriety of this may be questioned, as they form only part of a proposition, which would require to be completed in a new stanza. Evidently Burns deliberately sacrificed them, the poem being perfect without them.

2 The Miss Ferrier here addressed was a daughter of Mr. James Ferrier, W.S., afterwards, with Sir Walter Scott, one of the principal clerks of the Court of Session. He resided in George Street, as may be inferred from the above verses. A younger sister of Miss Ferrier was Miss Susan Edmonston Ferrier, sometimes called "the Scottish Miss Edgeworth," authoress of Marriage, The Inheritance, and Destiny. Miss Ferrier was aunt of the subtle and brilliant metaphysician James Frederick Ferrier, professor of moral philosophy in the University of St. Andrews, and editor of the collected works of Professor John Wilson, one of whose daughters he had married.
POEMS AND SONGS.

Last day my mind was in a fog,
    Down George's Street I stoitéd;
    A creeping could prosaic fog
    My very senses doited.

Do what I sought to set her free,
    My soul lay in the mire;
    Ye turned a neuk—I saw your eye—
    She took the wing like fire!

The mounrin' sang I here enclose,
    In gratitude I send you;
    And pray, in rhyme as weel as prose,
    A' gude things may attend you!

---

EPIGRAMMATIC VERSES.¹
WRITTEN ON A WINDOW OF THE INN AT CARRON.

We can na here to view your warks,
    In hopes to be mair wise,
    But only, lest we gang to hell,
    It may be we surprise;

Ent when we tiriéd at your door,
    Your porter dought na hear us;
    Sue may, should we to hell's yets come,
    Your billy Satan sair us!

---

LINES WRITTEN ON A PANE OF GLASS AT STIRLING.²

Here Stuarts once in glory reign'd,
And laws for Scotia's weal ordain'd;

¹ The day Burns and his travelling companion, Mr. William Nicol, teacher, sought admission to Caron Iron-works was Sunday, and so their exclusion was nothing remarkable. Burns expressed his disappointment by writing the above lines, in a very questionable taste and temper, with a diamond on the window-pane.
² Burns paid a visit to Stirling in his Highland tour, in August 1787. The sight of its castle, celebrated as in former times the favourite residence of royalty, roused his half-submerging Jacobitism. He vested his feelings in the above lines, which he scratched on the window of the inn. The concluding couplet, however, contains some grossly unjust expressions. A friend is said to have pointed out to the poet the impropriety of the verses. He defended them, asserting they were true. The other retorted, that this might be looked on in the light of an aggravation. "Stay," said Burns, "I will reprove myself;" and immediately wrote the "Reproach," on the same pane which contained the offending verses. Some one—it has been charged on the Rev. Mr. Hamilton, the minister of Glenfinart—expostulated with the poet for his attack on royalty in a set of verses more distinguished by their loyalty than their point or judgment. The "Reply," was written in answer to this "expostulation." In the Gomadell MSS. a slightly different version is found with an introductory statement as follows: "My immoderate lines were answered, very pertinently, by Somebody, I believe a Rev. Mr. Hamilton. In a MS. where I met the answer, I wrote below:—"

With Kepp's blow, Burns says, sore I feel
    Each other blow, but d—n that ass's heel."
But now unroof'd their palace stands,
Their sceptre's sway'd by foreign hands;
Fallen indeed, and to the earth,
Whence grovelling reptiles take their birth.
The injured Stuart line is gone!
A race outlandish fills their throne;
An idiot race, to honour lost;
Who know them best despise them most.

A REPROOF BY THE WRITER OF THE LINES.

Rash mortal, and slanderous poet, thy name
Shall no longer appear in the records of fame;
Dost not know that old Mansfield, who writes like the Bible,
Says the more 'tis a truth, sir, the more 'tis a libel!

REPLY TO A HOSTILE CRITIC OF THE LINES.

Like Esop's lion, Burns says, "sore I feel
All others' scorn—but damn that ass's heel!"

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL OVER THE CHIMNEY-PIECE

IN THE PARLOUR OF THE INN AT KENMORE, TAYMOUTH.

Burns visited Taymouth on 29th August, 1787, when on his Highland tour in company with his
friend W. Nicol of the High School, Edinburgh. His brief note of the visit in his Journal runs:
"Taymouth—described in rhyme—meets the Hon. Charles Townshend."

Admiring Nature in her wildest grace,
These northern scenes with weary feet I trace;
'Er many a winding dale and painful steep,
Th' abodes of covert'd grouse and timid sheep,

"Taymouth Castle, the seat of the Marquis of Breadalbane, is situated in a beautiful valley in Perthshire; at the eastern extremity of Loch Tay, the waters of which here begin to form the river of the same name. In the accompanying engraving, besides the house and its splendid park, the eye catches sight of the little village of Kenmore and its bridge over the young Tay—the lake, and the range of hills bounding it to the north-west, including the grand hill of Ben Luiers. Taymouth Castle consists of a large modern quadrangular pile, with round towers at the corners, and a square central tower terminating in an airy pavilion. To the west projects the remnant of the former mansion, a strong tower built in the reign of James VI.; while to the east extends a range of outhouses and offices. The Tay passes behind the house, towards Aberfeldy and Dunkeld, skirted on each side by magnificent woods. Among these there is an avenue of lines extending to a mile, which is said to convey to most minds the impression of some more than usually august Gothic cathedral.

The Breadalbane family is descended from Sir Colin Campbell of Glenorchy, a younger son of the first ennobled person of the house of Campbell; he was one of the knights of Rhodes, subsequently designated of Malta. The fourth in descent from this warrior, also named Sir Colin Campbell of Glenorchy, built the original house just alluded to, the name of which was till a comparatively recent period Balloch, that is balloch, a mouth or gap, expressive of the situation of the mansion at the opening of the valley of the Tay."
in company with his

in his journal runs:

This is said to convey to

in descent from Sir

in this warrior, also

of the

of the valley of

expressive of the situation.
My savage journey, curious, I pursue,
Till fam’d Breadalbane opens to my view.
The meeting cliffs each deep-sunk glen divides,
The woods, wild scatter’d, clothe their ample sides;
The outstretched lake, embosom’d ’mong the hills,
The eye with wonder and amazement fills;
The Tay, meandering sweet in infant pride,
The palace, rising on its verdant side;
The lawns, wood-fringe’d in Nature’s native taste;
The hillocks, dropped in Nature’s careless haste;
The arches, striding o’er the new-born stream;
The village, glittering in the noon-day beam—
Poetic ardours in my bosom swell,
Lone wand’ring by the hermit’s mossy cell;
The sweeping theatre of hanging woods;
The incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods—
Here Poesy might wake her heav’n-taught lyre,
And look through Nature with creative eye;
Here to the wrongs of half redress’d,
Misfortune’s lighten’d steps might wander wild;
And Disappointment, in these lonely bounds,
Find balm to soothe her bitter, rankling wounds;
Here heart-struck Grief might heav’n-ward stretch her scan,
And injur’d Worth forget and pardon man.

[Left unfinished.]

SONG—THE BIRKS OF ABERFELDY.

TUNE—“The Birks of Aberfeldie.”

Burns says “I composed these stanzas standing under the Falls of Moness, near Aberfeldy.” The chorus belongs to an old song, called “The Birks of Aberfeldie,” of which there are several versions. One of them is given, along with this song, in Johnson’s Museum.

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

Now simmer blinks on flowery braes,
And o’er the crystal streamlets plays,
Come let us spend the lightsome days
In the birks of Aberfeldy.

Bonnie lassie, &c.

It was in the course of his Highland tour, August—September 1787, that Burns visited the celebrated waterfalls of Moness, in the neighborhood of the village of Aberfeldy in Strath Tay. These falls, which occur in a deep and narrow chasm behind Moness House, are described by Pennant in language sufficiently complimentary—”an epitome (he calls them) of everything that can be admired in the curiosity of
POEMS AND SONGS.

The little birds blithely sing,
While o'er their heads the hazels swing,
Or lightly flit on wanton wing
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

The braes ascend like lofty wa's,
The foamy stream deep-roaring fa's,
O'er-hung wi' fragrant spreading shaws,
The birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

The hoary cliffs are crown'd wi' flowers,
White o'er the limbs the burnie pours,
And rising, weets wi' misty showers
The birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

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, &c.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER; 1
TO THE NOBLE DUKE OF ATHOLE.

In his letter to Mr. Walker, tutor to the duke's family, from Inverness, 5th September, in which this poem was enclosed, Burns writes:—"I have just time to write the foregoing, and to tell you that it was, at least the most part of it, the effusion of a half hour I spent at Bruar. I do not mean it was extempore, for I have endeavoured to brush it up as well as Mr. Nicol's chat and the jogging of the chaise would allow."

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,

..." waterfalls." They comprehend not only the usual phenomenon of a rivulet dashing down a rocky recess in the side of a range of hills, but several accessory cascades, which pour down the precipitous sides of that recess, and unite their waters with those of the principal stream below. The visitor of this beautiful scene first enters a glen, called the Ben of Moness, clothed with hazel and mountain-ash in great luxuriance. As he advances, the sides of this glen become sheer precipices, of about two hundred feet in height, so near each other that the trees shooting out from their respective sides almost intermingle their branches. When visited by Burns, the beautiful domain of Moness was the property of a gentleman named Fleming. It now belongs to the Breadalbane family.

The introduction of the birks into this picturesque locality by Burns is a poetical license, suggested by the almost identical chorus of the old song the "Birks of Aberfeldie." We quote in reference to this from the "Otaguace Gazetteer of Scotland" (Edin. 1882):—"Strange that ... Aberfeldy should most be famed for what it has not, and seemingly never had, the 'birks' of Burns's lyric. Ramónes there are in abundance, and a myth has of course arisen that these have superseded the birks; but the absence of the latter from Aberfeldy in 1803 is as certain as their presence at Aberfeldy years before Burns's day." The absence of the birches in 1803 was noted by Dorothy Wordsworth. Aberfeldy Castle is on Decide, near Balnoral.

1 Bruar Falls in Athole are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful; but their effect is much impaired by
hang

to hill-sides

groves

steep rocks brooklet
wets

from

September, in which
missing, and to tell you
Brunt. I do not
incock's chat and the

Grimmer,

ence, suggested by the
in old song the "Kirks
reference to this from
Scotland (Edin. 1882):—
should must be famed
meaningly never had, the
pains there are in abun-
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ence of the latter from
as their presence at
of it's day." The absence
referred by Dorothy Words-
on Deeside, near Bal-
ceedingly picturesque
but is much impaired by
DAKED OF ABERFIELD.
DAKED OF THE MUSE.
POEMS AND SONGS.

How saucy Phoebus' scorching beams,
In flaming summer-pride,
Dry-withering, waste my foamy streams,
And drink my crystal tide.

The lightly-jumping glowing trout,
That thro' my waters play,
If, in their random, wanton spouts,
They near the margin stray;
If, hapless chance! they linger long,
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 shou'd me;
But had I in my glory been,
H2, kneeling, wid ador'd me.

the want of trees and shrubs. — R. B. The Brun, a stream of northern Perthishire, a tributary of the Garry, is poured through a chasm in the hills which bound the vale of the Garry on the north, two or three miles to the west of Blair-Athole, and near the line of the road between Perth and Inverness. In its descent it makes two falls, or rather sets of falls, of which that delineated in the engraving is the upper. The whole scene, as it existed in the days of Burns, is thus described by Dr. Garnett: "Before we reached Blair we passed the small village of Brun, which takes its name from a turbulent stream, called Brun Water, that rolls along its rocky bed under a bridge. We went up the left bank of this river, whose channel is the most rugged that can be conceived; the rocks which form it have been worn into the most grotesque shapes by the fury of the water. A footpath has lately been made by the Duke of Athole, which conducts the stranger in safety along the side of the chasm, where he has an opportunity of seeing, in a very short time, several very fine cascades; one over which a bridge is thrown, forms a very picturesque object. This is called the lower fall of Brun. The water here rushes under a bridge, and falls in a full broad sheet over the rocky steep, and descends impetuously through a natural arch into a dark black pool, as if to take breath before it resumes its course, and rushes down to the Garry.

"Proceeding up the same side of the river, along the footpath, we came in sight of another rustic bridge, and a noble cascade, consisting of three falls or breaks, one immediately above another; but the lowest is equal in height to both the others taken together. This is called the upper fall of the Brun. Crossing the bridge over this tremendous cataract, with trembling steps, we walked down the other bank of the river, to a point from whence we enjoyed the view of this fine fall to great advantage. The shelving rocks on each side of the bridge, with the water precipitating itself from rock to rock, and at last shooting headlong, filling with its spray the deep chasm, form a scene truly sublime."

Burns visited the Falls of Brun during his northern tour. Professor Walker (whom he had met, in the spring of this year, at the house of Dr. Blacklock), at that time living in the family of the Duke of Athole in the capacity of tutor, has left us a sketch of the poet's visit to the scenery of Blair-Athole, in which he says:—"I had often, like others, experienced the pleasures which arise from the sublime or elegant landscape; but I never saw those feelings so intense as in Burns. When we reached a rustic hut on the river Tilt, where it is overhung with a woody pres- pice, from which there is a noble waterfall, he threw himself on the healthiest spot, and gave himself up to a tender, abstracted, and rapturous enthusiasm of imagination. . . . It was with much difficulty I prevailed on him to quit this spot, and to be introduced in proper time to supper. . . . After leaving Blair, he, by the duke's advice, visited the Falls of Brun, and in a few days I received a letter from Inverness, with the verse enclosed." See also Lockhart's Life, pp. 77, 78, where additional particulars of his visit to Blair are given. Brun Water no longer mourns the absence of "lofty firs and ashes cool." The duke complied with the poet's suggestion, and caused a great number of trees to be planted, which have added greatly to the charms of the scene.
Here, tumbling down the shelvy rocks,
In twisting strength I run,
There, high my boiling torrent smokes,
Wild-roaring o'er a rim:
Enjoying large each spring and well,
As nature gave them me,
I am, altho' I say't myself,
Worth gann 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 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 mankin 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;
POEMS AND SONGS.

Or, by the reaper’s nightly beam,
Mild-chequeing thro’ the trees,
Rave to my darkly-dashing stream,
Horse-swelling on the breeze.

Let lofty firs, and ashes cool,
My lovely banks overspread,
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 hand,^ 1
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!”

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL,
STANDING BY THE FALL OF FYERS, NEAR LOCH-NESS. 2

Among the heathy hills and rugged woods,
The roaring Fyers pours his mossy floods;
Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds,
Where, thro’ a shapeless breach, his stream resounds.
As high in air the bursting torrents flow,
As deep recoiling surges form below,
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,
And viewless echo’s ear, astonish’d, rends.

1 The three daughters of the duke, the eldest twelve years of age, the next seven, the third an infant.
2 From Burns’s journal we learn that this visit to the Fall of Fyres (or Fyers) was on Wednesday, 5th September, 1787. In the evening he dined with Mr. William Inglis, afterwards Provost of Inverness, and it was observed that he was rather thoughtful and silent, being probably under strong emotion produced by the majesty and sublimity of the scene which he had just visited.

“The Fyers is not a very large stream, except in rainy weather; consequently there are great variations in the aspect of the cascade. In its medium fullness it pours through a narrow gullet in the rock in a round unbroken stream, which gradually whitens as it descends, like an old Jew’s beard, till it falls into a half-

3 seen profound, two hundred and forty feet below the point of descent. A dense mist is constantly seen rising from the broken water, like the heavenward aspirations of an afflicted and tortured spirit. The noise is usually very loud. About a quarter of a mile further up the ravine there is another cascade, usually called the Upper Fall; a fearful gulf, down which the water descends by three leaps, and over which a bridge has been thrown, by way of station, for a sight of the cataract. All this stupendous ravine is covered by birches, on whose every leaf a vapoury dew continually hangs. Dr. Clarke, on visiting Fyers, declared it to be a finer cascade than that of Tivoli, and of all he had ever seen inferior only to Tern.”—Robert Chambers.—Dr. Johnson visited the fall in his tour in Scotland, but the stream was then very small.
Dim-seen, thro' rising mists and ceaseless show'rs,
The hoary cavern, wide-surrounding, low'rs.
Still thro' the gap the struggling river toils,
And still below the horrid caldron boils—

[Left unfinished.]

---

**EPICRAM—THE HIGHLAND WELCOME.**

**COMPOSED AND REPEATED BY BURNS, TO THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE ON TAKING LEAVE AT A PLACE IN THE HIGHLANDS, WHERE HE HAD BEEN HOSPITABLY ENTERTAINED.**

> When death's dark stream I ferry o'er,
A time that surely shall come—
In Heaven itself I'll ask no more,
> Than just a Highland welcome.

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**STRATHALLAN'S LAMENT.**

**TUNE—"Strathallan's Lament."**

"This air," says Burns in the Clarendon copy of Johnson's *Dictionary* already referred to, "is the composition of one of the worthiest and best-hearted men living—Alain Masterton, schoolmaster in Edinburgh. As he and I were both sprouts of Jacobitism, we agreed to dedicate the words and air to that cause.—To tell the matter of fact, except when my passions were heated by some accidental cause, my Jacobitism was merely by way of *civis in hostiliter.*"

Thickest night, o'erhang my dwelling!
Howling tempests, o'er me rave!
Turbid torrents, wintry swelling,
Still surround my lonely cave!

Crystal streamlets, gently flowing,
Busy haunts of base mankind,
Western breezes, softly blowing,
Suit not my distempered mind.

In the cause of right engaged,
Wrong injurious to redress,
Honour's war we strongly waged,
But the heavens denied success.

Ruin's wheel has driven o'er us,
Not a hope that dare attend,
The wide world is all before us—
But a world without a friend!

---

1 Several localities have been mentioned as identified with this production, as Dunham's bridge, Killnave, &c. There would be many experiences of the warmest hospitality during the Highland tour.

2 Viscount Strathallan commanded a squadron of horse at the battle of Culloden, where he fell. The words of the song are supposed to be uttered by his son James Drummond, after the events of that fatal day had for ever blasted the hopes of the adherents of the unfortunate house of Stuart.
show'rs, toils, —

WELCOME.

ON TAKING LEAVE AT A PLACE 

ENTERTAINED.

o'er, allriot....

SKEPTIC.

Allan Masterton, schoolmaster already referred to, "is the

Allan Masterton, schoolmaster referred to dedicate the words and

words and were hearkened by some acci-

dence!

of Cadogan, where he fell. The

are supposed to be offered by his

cond, after the events of that fatal

lated the hopes of the adherents

house of Stuart.
POEMS AND SONGS.

SONG—CASTLE GORDON.

TUNE—"Morning." [But see the end of the note to the words.]

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

Spicy forests, ever gay,
Shading from the burning ray,
Hapless wretches sold to toil,
Or the ruthless native's way,
Bent on slaughter, blood, and spoil:

1 In the Edinburgh Commonplace Book are the following variations: (1) unmitned, (2) hands, (3) the, (4) Torrid.

2 Gordon Castle, one of the finest mansions north of the Firth of Forth, is situated in the parish of Bellie and county of Moray, on the north bank of the Spey, and at a distance from about five miles from the effects of that river into the Moray Firth. The house lies in a beautifully wooded park, generally of level ground, and covering a very large area. The grand entry is by an arched building close beside the village of Fochabers; from which a road winds about a mile to the front of the castle. The front of the building, 506 feet in length, broken into strong light and shade by the recession of some of its parts, and gaining dignity from a lofty tower surmounting the centre, is of that grandeur which suits to the most princely rank and influence. From the house the view outwards is equally fine. The site of the castle, in the Bog of Gight, was selected as a defensible position for the erection of a feudal tower by George, second Earl of Huntly, who died in 1591. This house was accessible by a narrow causeway through a morass, and by a drawbridge across the moat. It was called the House of the Bog, or the Bog, the name constantly given to it by Spalding in his many references to it in connection with the troubadour affairs of the civil war. Each of the noble line who lived in it, successively earls of Huntly, marquises of Huntly, and dukes of Gordon, was also popularly distinguished by the familiar appellative of The Godman of the Bog. Additions and alterations took place at different times, until in the latter part of the eighteenth century, George, fourth duke of Gordon, erected the present magnificent mansion—retaining, however, the original fortitude of the fifteenth century, towering high and proud over all the rest. With the fifth duke of Gordon, May 28, 1836, expired the main line of this great historical family, the title of duke becoming extinct, while Gordon Castle, with the connected territory, to the value of £20,000 per annum, then became the property of the Duke of Richmond, son of the eldest sister of the deceased duke. The representation of the family and the title of Marquis of Huntly devolved at the same time upon George, Earl of Atholl, descended from a younger son of the second marquis, who was beheaded in 1619. The dukedom of Gordon has latterly been conferred on the Duke of Richmond, who is now Duke of Richmond and Gordon (as also of Lennox).

George, fourth duke of Gordon—himself a clever writer of verses—and his beautiful and witty duchess, Jane Maxwell, were, it is well known, fond of the society of literary men. Bentell was their frequent guest at this noble mansion, and an intimate correspondent of the duchess. Burns, during the first winter that he resided in Edinburgh, was introduced to her grace, whose name appears in the list of the subscribers to his first metropolitan edition, for twenty-one copies. In the course of his Highland tour with Mr. Nicol (September, 1757), coming to Fochabers, and presuming, says Dr. Currie, on his acquaintance with the duchess, he proceeded to Gordon Castle, leaving Mr. Nicol at the inn in the village. At the castle our poet was received with the utmost hospitality and kindness, and the family being about to sit down to dinner, he was invited to take his place at the table as a matter of course. This invitation he accepted, and after drinking a few glasses of wine he rose up and proposed to withdraw. On being pressed to stay, he mentioned for the first time his engagement with his fellow-traveller; and his noble host offering to send a servant to conduct Mr. Nicol to the castle, burns insisted on undertaking the office himself. He was, however, accompanied by a gentleman, a particular acquaintance of the duke, by whom the invitation was delivered in all the forms
POEMS AND SONGS.

Woods that ever verdant wave,
I leave the tyrant and the slave;
Give me the groves that lofty brave
The storms by Castle Gordon.

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

---

SONG—LADY ONLIE. 1

TEXT.—“The Ruffian's Rant.”

A' the lads o' Thornie-bank,
When they go to the shore o' Bucky,
They'll stop in and tak' a pint
Wi' Lady Onlie, honest lucky!
Lady Onlie, honest lucky,
Brews gude ale at shore o' Bucky,
I wish her sale for her gude ale,
The best on a' the shore o' Bucky.

of politeness. The invitation came too late; the pride of Nicol was inflamed into a high degree of passion by the neglect which he had already suffered. He had ordered the horses to be put to the carriage, being determined to proceed on his journey alone, and they found him parading the streets of Fochabers, before the door of the inn, venting his anger on the postillion for the slowness with which he obeyed his commands. As no explanation nor entreaty could change the purpose of his fellow-traveller, our poet was reduced to the necessity of separating from him entirely, or of instantly proceeding with him on their journey. He chose the last of these alternatives; and settling himself beside Nicol in the post-chaise with mortification and regret, he turned his back on Gordon Castle, where he had pronounced himself so happy days. Sensible, however, of the great kindness of the noble family, he made the best return in his power, by composing the above song; which he sent to James Hoy, librarian at Gordon Castle. How much the poet felt the abruptness of his departure may be gathered from a passage in one of his letters to Mr. Hoy:—“I shall certainly, among my legacies, leave my latest curse to that unlucky predicament which hurried—tore me away from Castle Gordon. May that obstinate son of Latin prose be cursed to Scotch mile periods, and damned to seven league paragraph; while declension and conjugation, gender, number, and tense, under the ragged banners of dissonance and disarrangement, eternally rank against him in hostile array.” Mr. Hoy’s reply runs: “Your song I shared without producing the author, and it was judged by the duchess to be the production of Mr. Balfour. I sent a copy of it, by her grace’s desire, to a Mrs. M’Pherson in Buckhaven, who sings ‘Moraig’ and all other Gaelic songs in great perfection. When the duchess was informed that you were the author, she wished you had written the verses in Scotch.”

“Moraig,” the tune above alluded to, cannot be sung to the above poem, as may be seen by comparing its measure with that of the song (a few pages farther on) beginning “Land blaw the frosty breeze,” to which the air is suitable.

1 This ditty was composed in the autumn of 1757 and appeared in the second volume of the Mavuina. It is probably founded on some snatches of a song Burns had heard during his northern tour, Buckie being a fishing town on the Banffshire coast. The air formerly named as above is now better known as “Roy’s Wife of Abidvailoch.”
of Latin prose be cured to
damn'd to seven league para-
tation and conjugation, gender,
er the ragged bann's of dis-
ment, eternally rack against
Mr. Hoy's reply runs: "Your
producing the author, and it
ness to be the production of
pity of it, by her grace's desire,
Badenoch, who sings 'Morag'
gings in great perfection. When
inal that you were the author,
then the verses in Scotch,"
re alluded to, cannot be sung
may be seen by comparing its
song (a few pages farther on)
the frosty breezes," to which

enced in the autumn of 1787
second volume of the Minerva,
son some snatches of a song
'his northern tour, Buckie
the Banffshire coast. The
above is now better known as
rock."
POEMS AND SONGS.

H.e house sae bien, her eurch sae clean,
I wat she is a dainty duddy;
And cheerful blinks the ingle-glees!
Of Lady Ounio, honest lucky!
Lady Ounio, honest lucky, &c.

---

SONG—THENIEL MÈNZIES' BONNIE MARY.

TUNE—"The Reffan's Rant." 1

In coming by the brig o' Dye, 2
At Darlet we a blink did tarry;
As day was dawnin in the sky,
We drank a health to bonnie Mary.
Theniel Menzies' bonnie Mary,
Theniel Menzies' bonnie Mary;
Charlie Gregor tinct his plaidie,
Kissin' Theniel's bonnie Mary.

Her een sae bright, her brow sae white,
Her haffet looks as brown's a berry;
And aye they dimpl't wi' a smile,
The rosy cheeks o' bonnie Mary.

Theniel Menzies, &c.

We lap and danced the lee-lang day,
Till piper lads were wear and weary;
But Charlie gat the spring to pay,
For kissin' Theniel's bonnie Mary.

Theniel Menzies, &c.

---

ON SCARING SOME WATER FOWL IN LOCH-TURIT,

A WILD SCENE AMONG THE HILLS OF OUCHTERTYRE. 3

"This was the production of a solitary forenoon’s walk from Ouchtertyre House. I lived there,
the guest of Sir William Murray, for two or three weeks, and was much flattered by my hospitable
reception."—BURNS, GLENRIDDLE MSS.

Why, ye tenants of the lake,
For me your wat'ry haunt forsake!
Tell me, fellow-creatures, why
At my presence thus you fly?

---

1 See note to preceding song.
2 The Dye is a Kincardineshire stream, a tributary of the Fench, which falls into the Dee near Banffby.
The "brig" is on the line of the main road connecting Banffshire and Deeside.
3 Ouchtertyre, or Auchtertyre, is a place of famed beauty in Perthshire, situated about two miles from
Crieff, on what may be described as the last and lowest terrace of the Highlands, with a view towards
the more fertile south. By the readers of Burns it
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POEMS AND SONGS.

Why disturb your social joys,
Parent, filial, kindred tie—
Common friend to you and me,
Nature's gifts to all are free:
Peaceful keep your dimpling wave,
Busy feed, or wanton love;
Or beneath the sheltering rock,
Bide the surging billow's shock.

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

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

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

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

* * *

is so carefully distinguished from another place of the same name, on the Teith, near the southern border of Perthshire, and not far from Stirling, which the poet also visited, it being then the residence of his friend Mr. Ramsay. He visited the former Teithtertyre in October, 1787. The proprietor Sir William Murray, and his wife Lady Augusta, did all that lay within their enlightened and liberal natures to render the poet's stay in their home agreeable to him. In a letter to his friend Nicol, written from the house on the 15th of that month, he says, "I find myself very comfortable here, neither oppressed by ceremony nor mortified by neglect. Lady Augusta is a most engaging woman, and very happy in her family, which makes one's sojourns and inmosts very agreeable." The beautiful Euphemia Murray of Untrose, the "Flower of Strathmore," was present to add to the charms of one of the loveliest spots in Scotland. The young lady was a cousin of Sir William, and frequently an inmate of his house. (See notes to song "Mythe was she," on next page.) Teithtertyre is still in the hands of Sir William Murray's descendants.
Lady Augusta is a most endearing member of her family, which inclinations very agreeable."

Murray of Lintrose, the eldest son was present to add to the venerable spot in Scotland. The family of Sir William, and frequently (See notes to song "Blythe"

Ochteryre is still in the Murray's descendants.
POEMS AND SONGS.

SONG—BLYTHE WAS SHE.

TEXT—"Amid auld his cutty gow."  

"This song was composed," says Burns, "on Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose [a cousin of Sir William Murray of Ochtertyre], commonly and deservedly called the Flower of Strathmore." The verses were produced during his residence at Ochtertyre (near Crieff). (See note to preceding poem.)

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

By Auchertye grows the aik,  
On Yarrow banks the birken shaw;  
But Phenie was a bonnier lass  
Than bracs o' Yarrow ever saw.  

Blythe, blythe, &c.

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

Blythe, blythe, &c.

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

Blythe, blythe, &c.

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

Blythe, blythe, &c.

EPITAPH FOR WILLIAM NICOL, HIGH SCHOOL, EDINBURGH.

Ye maggots, feed on Nicol's brain,  
For few such feasts you've gotten;  
And fix your claws in Nicol's heart,  
For deil a bit o't's rotten.

1 Glenturret, a glen of Perthshire through which Torret Burn runs a course of 8½ miles, when it falls into the Earn, half a mile west of the town of Crieff.  
2 In these two lines, according to the general opinion of the young lady's friends, Burns had felicitously indicated the peculiar style of beauty of the "Flower of Strathmore." The reader will to some extent be able to judge for himself by means of the accompanying portrait. The affability and beauty of Miss Murray, then about eighteen years of age, charmed the heart of the poet. This lady was married in 1794, to David Smyth, Esq., of Methven, a judge in the Court of Session, with the title of Lord Methven, by whom she had several children.  
3 The above epitaph is of course a compliment to the poet's cross-grained friend Nicol, who accompanied him on his northern tour in the autumn of 1787.
EPITAPH ON MR. W. CRUICKSHANK.  

Honest Will to heaven's gone,  
And many shall lament him,  
His faults they a' in Latin lay,  
In English name e'er kent them.

SONG—A ROSE-BUD BY MY EARLY WALK.  

A rose-bud by my early walk,  
Adown a corn-inclosed bawk,  
See gaily be a' its thorny stalk,  
All on a dewy morning.

Ere twice the shades o' dawn are fled,  
In a' its crimson glory spread,  
And drooping rich the dewy head,  
It scents the early morning.

Within the bush, her covert nest  
A little linnet fondly prest,  
The dew sat chilly on her breast  
Sae early in the morning.

She soon shall see her tender brood,  
The pride, the pleasure o' the wood,  
A' among the fresh green leaves bedew'd,  
Awake the early morning.

So thou, dear bird, young Jennie fair!  
On trembling string or vocal air,  
Shall sweetly pay the tender care  
That tends thy early morning.

---

1 Cruickshank was one of the classical masters of Edinburgh High School, and consequently a colleague of William Nicol. In his house in St. James's Square Burns resided for some time during his stay in Edinburgh. Jenny Cruickshank, his daughter, is the subject of the two following poems.

2 Professor Walker in writing of meeting Burns at Mr. Cruickshank's (see preceding note) says: "At the end of October 1 called for him at the house of a friend, whose daughter, though not more than twelve, was a considerable proficient in music. I found him seated by the harpsichord of this young lady, listening with the keenest interest to his own verses, which she sang and accompanied, and adjusting them to the music by repeated trials of the effect." Miss Cruickshank, the young lady referred to, was married in 1804 to James Henderson, writer, Jedburgh. Robert Chambers speaks of a beautiful oil-painting in the possession of Mr. Henderson's only surviving son, which justifies the appellation of "Rose-bud," as, judging from the Hebe-like appearance of the portrait, she must have been a strikingly beautiful girl.

3 This air is a production of David Siller, the poet's friend and brother poet and also a fiddler; it shows little sign of its composer being possessed of much musical genius.

4 A path (usually a ridge left untilled) in a cornfield.
POEMS AND SONGS.

So thou, sweet rose-bud, young and gay,
Shall beauteous blaze upon the day,
And bless the parent's evening ray
That watch'd thy early morning.

——

TO MISS CRUICKSHANK,
A VERY YOUNG LADY.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF A BOOK, PRESENTED TO HER BY THE AUTHOR.

Beauteous rose-bud, young and gay,
Blooming on thy early May,
Never may'st thou, lovely flow'r,
Chilly shrink in sleepless show'r!
Never Eros' hoary path,
Never Eurus' poisonous breath,
Never baleful stellar lights,
Taint thee with untimely blights!
Never, never reptile thief
Riot on thy virgin leaf!
Nor even Sol too fiercely view
Thy bosom, blushing still with dew!

May'st thou long, sweet crimson gem,
Richly deck thy native stem;
Till some ev'ning, sober, calm,
Dropping dews, and breathing balm,
While all around the woodland ring;
And ev'ry bird thy requiem sings;
Thou, midst the dirgeful sound,
Shed thy dying honours round,
And resign to parent Earth
The loveliest form she e'er gave birth.

——

SONG—THE BANKS OF THE DEVON.

TUNE—“Dhamareach dthon an chrí.”

"These verses were composed on a charming girl, Miss Charlotte Hamilton, who is now (1789) married to James M'Kintosh Adair, Esq., physician. She is sister to my worthy friend Gavin Hamilton of Munchline, and was born on the banks of Ayr; but was at the time I wrote these lines (1787), residing at Harriston in Clackmannanshire, on the romantic banks of the little river Devon."—BURNS, GLENRIDDLE MSS.

How pleasant the banks of the clear winding Devon,
With green-spreading branches, and flowers blooming fair!

1 Charlotte Hamilton was a half-sister of the poet; twice married. Her mother was a sister of Margaret friend Gavin Hamilton, their common father being Chalmers's mother (see next note). Burns seems to
POEMS AND SONGS.

But the bonniest flower on the banks of the Devon,
Was once a sweet bud on the braves of the Ayre.
Mild be the sun on this sweet blushing flower,
In the gay rosy morn as it bathes in the dew!
And gentle the fall of the soft vernal shower,
That steals on the evening each leaf to renew.

O, spare the dear blossom, ye orient breezes,
With chill heary wing as ye usher the dawn!
And far be thou distant, thou reptile, that seizures
The verdure and pride of the garden and lawn!
Let Bourbon exult in his gay gilded lilies,
And England triumphant display her proud rose;
A fairer than either adorns the gree; valleys
Where Devon, sweet Devon, meandering flows.

SONG—WHERE, BRAVING ANGRY WINTER'S STORMS.

TUNE—"Neil Gow's Lamentation for Abercrombie." 

"This song I composed on one of the most accomplished of women, Miss Peggy Chalmers that was, now Mrs. Lewis Hay of Forbes and Co.'s bank, Edinburgh." — R. B.

Where, braving angry winter's storms,
The lofty Ochils rise,
Far in their shade my Peggy's charms
First blest my wondering eyes;

have imbued a feeling of high admiration and respect for her. Immediately after their first interview he thus speaks of her in a letter to Gavin Hamilton (26th August, 1762): "O, Charlotte! I cannot speak in common terms of admiration; she is not only beautiful but lovely. Her form is elegant; her features not regular, but they have the smile of sweetness, and the settled complacency of good nature in the highest degree; and her complexion, now that she has happily recovered her wonted health, is equal to Miss Burnet's. . . . Her eyes are fascinating; at once expressive of good sense, tenderness, and a noble mind." In a letter written somewhat later to Margaret Chalmers, he says: "Talking of Charlotte, I must tell you I have, to the best of my power, paid her a poetical compliment now completed. The air is admirable, true Old Highland. It was the tune of a Gaelic song, which an Inverness lady sung to me when I was there. I was so charmed with it that I begged her to write me a set of it from her singing; for it never had been set before. . . . I don't say the poetry is first-rate; though I am convinced it is very well; and what is not always the case with compliments to ladies, it is not only sincere, but just." The poetical compliment was the above song. On a second visit to Harvester's Burns was accompanied by Dr. Adair of Harrogate, whom he introduced to Miss Hamilton, and who afterwards made her his wife. See in appendix to Life, Dr. Adair's account of the Charnman tour. "I was indebted to Burns," says the doctor, "for a connection, from which I have derived, and expect further to derive, much happiness." 1 Margaret for "Peggy"; Chalmers was the youngest daughter of James Chalmers, Esq., of England. By her mother, Euphemia Murdoch, daughter of the last Lord of Chalmers in the Stewartry of Kircudbright, she was connected with the family of Burns's friend, Gavin Hamilton of Manochline, his mother being sister to Gavin Hamilton's stepmother, and aunt to Charlotte Hamilton celebrated in the preceding poem. The poet became acquainted with Miss Chalmers at Dr. Blacklock's in Edinburgh, and he removed his acquaintance a little later when she was staying at the house of her uncle by marriage, Mr. Tait of Harvester's, at the foot of the Ochil Hills, the place referred to in the song. Her personal elegance and accomplished mind appear to have made a deep impression on him. She was then the bosom friend of her cousin Charlotte Hamilton, and frequently resided at Harvester. The poet in his letters usually speaks of the two ladies together. Eleven or twelve letters addressed to her will be found among the poet's correspondence.

1 The musical editor of Johnson's Museum says of
POEMS AND SONGS.

As one who, by some savage stream,
A lonely gem surveys,
Astonish'd doubly, marks it beam
With art's most polish'd blaze.

Blest be the wild, sequester'd shade,
And bless the day and hour,
Where Peggy's charms I first survey'd,
When first I felt their pow'r!

The tyrant death, with grim control,
May seize my fleeting breath;
But tearing Peggy from my soul
Must be a stronger death.

SONG—MY PEGGY'S FACE.

TUNE—"My Peggy's face."

Referring to this song, and the one immediately preceding it, Burns writing in the end of 1787 to Miss Margaret Chalmers, the heroine of both, remarks: "I have complimented you chiefly, almost solely, on your mental charms. Shall I be plain with you? I will; so look to it. Personal attractions, madam, you have much above par—wit, understanding, and worth you possess, in the first class. . . . I wish to show to the world the odds between a poet's friends and those of simple prosemen."

My Peggy's face, my Peggy's form,
The frost of hermit age might warm;
My Peggy's worth, my Peggy's mind,
Might charm the first of human kind.

I love my Peggy's angel air,
Her face so truly, heavenly fair,
Her native grace, so void of art,—
But I adore my Peggy's heart.

The lily's hue, the rose's dye,
The kindling lustre of an eye;
Who but owns their magic sway!
Who but knows they all decay!

The tender thrill, the pitying tear,
The genial purpose, nobly dear,
The gentle look, that rage disarms,—
These are all immortal charms.

this tune: "The air which Neil Gow composed on the death of Mr. Murray of Abercornley is an excellent slow strathpey, and is well adapted to the violin, pianoforte, and other musical instruments; but the melody is not at all suitable for the voice, the leaps of eleven notes from E to A in one line are entirely forbidden in vocal composition, such sudden skips from the natural to the falsetto being utterly destructive of every good effect." We may add that not many professional vocalists could sing it, its compass being two octaves.

1 The song was written in 1787 for the second volume of the "Museum," Burns saying he had a very strong private reason for wishing it in that volume. It would seem, however, to have been mislaid, as it did not make its appearance until the sixth volume.
SONG—THE YOUNG HIGHLAND ROVER.¹

TEXT—"Moyne."

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

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

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT DUNDAS, ESQ., OF ARNISTON,²
LATE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF SESSION.

"I have two or three times in my life composed from the wish rather than from the impulse, but I never succeeded to any purpose. One of these times I shall ever remember with gnashing of teeth. 'Twas on the death of the late Lord President Dundas."—BURNS.

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

¹ The Highland rover alluded to was, according to Stenhouse, the Young Chevalier, Prince Charles Stuart, who had been once received as a welcome guest at Gordon Castle before the disastrous day of Culloden.
² Robert Dundas of Arniston, elder brother of Lord Melville, was born in 1712, appointed president of the Court of Session in 1760, and died on 31st December, 1787. His eldest son, who was for many years Lord Advocate of Scotland, and afterwards Lord Chief Baron, died in 1819. Burns sent a copy of the poem to him, but received no answer. In a letter to Dr. Geddes he says: "I sent a copy of it, with my best prose letter, to the son of the great man, the theme of the piece, by the hand, too, of one of the noblest men in God’s world, Alexander Wood, surgeon, when, behold! his Solicitorship took no more notice of my poem or me than I had been a strolling fiddler, who had made free with his lady’s name over a silly new reel! Did the gentleman imagine that I looked for any dirty gratuity?" The poem was written at the suggestion of Alexander Wood, surgeon, Edinburgh, and Charles Hay, advocate, afterwards Lord Newton, but Burns felt the task an ungrateful one, and said that his muse’s fire was damped by the suspicions
Ye hills, ye plains, ye forests, and ye caves,
Ye howling winds, and wintry-swelling waves!
Unheard, unseen, by human ear or eye,
Sad, to your sympathetic scenes I fly;
Where, to the whistling blast and waters' roar,
Pale Scotia's recent wound I may deplore.

O heavy loss, thy country ill could bear!
A loss these evil days can never repair!
Justice, the high vicegerent of her God,
Her doubtful balance ey'd, and sway'd her rod;
Hearing the tidings of the fatal blow,
She sunk, abandon'd to the wildest woe.

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

Mark ruffian Violence, distained with crimes,
Rousing clate in these degenerate times;
View unsuspecting Innocence a prey,
As guileful Fraud points out the erring way:
While subtle Litigation's plant tongue
The life-blood equal sucks of Right and Wrong:
Hark! injur'd Want recounts th' unlisten'd tale,
And much-wrong'd Mis'ry pours th' unpitied wail

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

always created by the spillings of the rhyming tribe
over the ashes of the great. He never forgot, and
recounted keenly till the close of his life, the silence
of the lord advocate. In a letter to Alexander Cun-
ninghun, 11th March, 1759, he writes: "Highly as I
respect the talents of their family, I never see the
name Dunlas in the column of a newspaper, but my
heart seems straitened for room in my bosom; and if
I am obliged to read aloud a paragraph relating to
one of them, I feel my forehead flush, and my nether
lip quiver." In January, 1796, when a Tory majority
elected the Honorable Henry Erskine from the post
of Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, and elected in
his place the lord advocate, Robert Dunlas, Burns
soothed his injured amour propre of eight years' stand-
ning by giving "plains Bob" a sample of his art
in a set of vigorous verses. See the "Dean of Faculty,
a Ballad," in vol. iii.
BIRTHDAY ODE

FOR 31ST DECEMBER, 1787.

Afar the illustrious exile roams,
Whom kingdoms on this day should hail;
An inmate in the casual shed,
On transient pity's bounty fed,
Haunted by busy memory's bitter tale!
Beasts of the forest have their savage homes,
But He, who should imperial purple wear,
Owns not the lap of earth where rests his royal head!
His wretched refuge, dark despair,
While ravening wrongs and woes pursue,
And distant far the faithful few
Who would his sorrows share.

False flatterer, Hope, away!
Nor think to lure us as in days of yore.
We solemnize this sorrowing mortal day,
To prove our loyal truth—we can no more,
And owning Heaven's mysterious sway,
Submissive, low adore.
Ye honoured mighty Dead,
Who nobly perished in the glorious cause,
Your King, your Country, and her laws,
From great Dundee, who smiling Victory led,
And fell a Martyr in her arms,
(What breast of northern ice but warms!) To bold Balmerino's undying name,
Whose soul of fire, lighted at Heaven's high flame,
Deserves the proudest wreath departed heroes claim:
Not unrevenged your fate shall lie,
It only lags, the fatal hour,
Your blood shall, with incessant cry,
Awake at last th' unsparing Power;
As from the cliff, with thundering course,
The snowy ruin smokes along
With doubling speed and gathering force,

---

1 It appears that a select club of Jacobites were in the practice of meeting to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Prince Charles, the Young Pretender (born at Rome, 1st December, 1720), and that Burns had been requested to write a birthday ode for the year 1787. In reply the bard sent them the above spasmoodle effusion. Dr. Currie published only the second of the three sections of the ode, breaking off abruptly at the word "Vengeance" in the fourth last line, excusing himself from giving the whole production on account of its want of originality, a considerable part of it, he considered, being rant. The poem was transcribed by its author into the Glenriddell Collection, now in the library of the Liverpool Athenaeum. Burns's Jacobitism, it is well known, was of a merely sentimental romantic kind. It may be mentioned that Robert Chambers assigns 1786 as the date of the composition of this poem; Currie is the authority for the year later. The prince died at Florence exactly a month after the birthday thus celebrated.
Till deep it, crashing, whelm the cottage in the vale;
So Vengeance' arm ensanguined, strong,
Shall with resistless might assail,
Usurping Brunswick's pride shall lay,
And Stewart's wrongs and yours, with tenfold weight, repay.

Perdition, baleful child of night!
Rise and revenge the injured right
Of Stewart's royal race:
Lead on the unmanzled hounds of hell,
Till all the frighted echoes tell
The blood-notes of the chase!
Full on the quarry point their view,
Full on the base usurping crew
The tools of faction, and the nation's curse!
Hark how the cry grows on the wind;
They leave the lagging gate behind,
Their savage fury, pitiless, they pour;
With murdering eyes already they devour;
See Brunswick spent, a wretched prey,
His life one poor despairing day
Where each avenging hour still ushers in a worse!
Such havoc, howling all abroad
Their utter ruin bring;
The base apostates to their God,
Or rebels to their King.

---

SONG—THE BONNIE LASS OF ALBANIE.¹

TUNE—"Mary woe! no more for me."

My heart is wae, and unco wae,
To think upon the raging sea
That roars between her gardens green
And the bonnie lass of Al burnie.

¹ The above song is entered in Burns's Commonplace Book (first published complete in 1579) on p. 29 immediately following the song "Castle Gordon." It was originally published by Robert Chambers in 1852 from a portion of a manuscript book in Burns's handwriting, which is now in the possession of Mr. R. Nightingale, London. Chambers's version differs in no essential respect from the above except that in stanza second "royal" is substituted for "noble." There is nothing to show exactly when the song was written, but from the date in the Common-place Book it must have been by 1788. We put it along with the above as being connected in subject.

"The bonnie lass of Al burnie" was Charlotte Stuart, daughter of Prince Charles (the Young Pretender), and of Clementina Walkinshaw, with whom the prince had lived for many years, and to whom some believed he was married. The daughter was legitimized by the title of Duchess of Albany in 1784. The duchess lived in near constant attention on her father, and died 14th November, 1789, less than two years after the grave had closed over the ruined prince. The "isle of high degree" (3rd stanza) is Bute; the "town of fame" is Rothesay (the county town), which gave the title of Duke of Rothesay to the eldest sons of the kings of Sceath nd, which title is still borne by the eldest son of the British sovereign. The "witness youth" (4th stanza) was the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, whose reputation even at the date this song was written was far from being spotless.
This lovely maid's of noble blood,
    That ruled Albion's kingdoms three;
But oh, alas! for her bonnie face!
    They hae wrang'd the lass of Albanie.

In the rolling tide of smiling Clyde,
    There sits an isle of high degree;
And a town of fame whose prince name
    Should grace the lass of Albanie.

But there's a youth, a witless youth,
    That fills the place where she should be;
We'll send him o'er to his native shore,
    And bring our ain sweet Albanie.

Alas the day, and woe the day,
    A false usurper wan the gree,
That now commands the towers and lands
    The royal right of Albanie.

We'll daily pray, we'll nightly pray,
    On bended knee most ferventlie,
That the time may come, with pipe and drum,
    We'll welcome home fair Albanie.

SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

Exttempore reply to verses addressed to the author by a lady
under the signature of Clarinda.1

25th December, 1787.

When dear Clarinda, matchless fair,
    First struck Sylvander's raptured view,
He gazed, he listened to despair,
    Alas! 'twas all he dared to do.

Love, from Clarinda's heavenly eyes,
    Transfixed his bosom thro' and thro';
But still in Friendship's guarded guise,
    For more the demon feared to do.

That heart already more than lost,
    The imp beleaguered all perdue;
For frowning Honour kept his post—
    To melt that frown he shrunk to do.

1 For a notice of the poet's heroine (Mrs. M'Lachlan) whom he has celebrated under the name of Clarinda see our introduction to the Clarinda Correspondence, vol. iv. In a letter dated 25th December, 1787, to this lady, with whom he had but recently become acquainted, Burns says: "I have written you this scrawl because I have nothing else to do." Fastening on this phrase the witty lady dashed off and sent him some verses commencing:

| When first you saw Clarinda's charms, |
| What rapture in your bosom grew! |
| Her heart was shot to Love's alarms, |
| But then—you'd nothing else to do, &c. |

His reply was the extempore effusion in the text.
His pangs the Bard refused to own,
Th' half he wished Clarinda knew;
But Anguish wrung th' unwept groan—
Who blames what frantic Pain must do?

That heart, where motley follies blend,
Was sternly still to Honour true
To prove Clarinda's fondest friend,
Was what a lover sure might do.

The Muse his ready quill employed,
No nearer bliss he could pursue;
That bliss Clarinda cold deny'd—
"Send word by Charles how you do!"

The chill behest disarm'd his muse,
Till passion all impatient grew;
He wrote, and hinted for excuse,
"Twas 'cause 'he'd nothing else to do."

But by those hopes I have above!
And by those faults I dearly rue!
The deed, the boldest mark of love,
For thee, that deed I dare to do!

O could the Fates but name the price
Would bless me with your charms and you!
With frantic joy I'd pay it thrice,
If human art and power could do!

Then take, Clarinda, friendship's hand,
(Friendship, at least, I may avow;)
And lay no more your chill command,—
I'll write whatever I've to do.

TO CLARINDA.

ON THE POET'S LEAVING EDINBURGH.

These verses, written before the end of January, 1788, appeared in the second volume of Johnson's Museum, published the same year, along with music set to them by Mr. J. G. C. Scheth, a German violinist of some note, with whom Burns had formed an acquaintance. In a note to Clarinda he writes:—"I have been with Mr. Scheth, the musician, and he has set the song finely." In another note to the same lady he says: "I have called the song 'Clarinda.' I have carried it about in my pocket and hummed it over all day." Despite, however, the beauty of the words, and Burns's satisfaction with the setting, the melody never became popular.

Clarinda, mistress of my soul,
The measured time is run!
The wretch beneath the dreary pole,
So marks his latest sun.
POEMS AND SONGS.

To what dark cave of frozen night
Shall poor Sylvander hie;
Depriv’d of thee, his life and light,
The sun of all his joy.

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

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

SONG—I AM MY MAMMIES AE BAIRN.

TUNE—"I'm o'er young to marry yet."

Of this song, the 167th in Johnson’s Museum, Burns says: “The chorus of this song is old, the rest of it, such as it is, is mine”

I am my mammy’s ae bairn,
Wi’ unco folk I weary, Sir;
And lying in a man’s bed,
I’m fley’d it mak me eerie, Sir.
I’m o’er young, I’m o’er young,
I’m o’er young, I’m o’er young to marry yet;
I’m o’er young—’twad be a sin
To tak’ me frae my mammy yet.

Hallowmas is come and gane,
The nights are lang in winter, Sir;
And you and I in ae bed,
In treath, I darena venture, Sir.
I’m o’er young, &c.

Fu’ loud and shill 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 o’er young, &c.

One strange
Afraid timorous
One truth
Shrill timber (or trees)
Way ere

1 The poet did not leave Edinburgh for a short time after this poem was written, his departure taking place on the 18th February. In April following he made Jean Armour his wife, “glimmering planet” as at this time no doubt she appeared to him in com-
SONG—TO THE WEAVER'S GIN YE GO.

TUNE—"To the weaver's gin ye go."

"The chorus of this song," writes Burns to Johnson, "is old. Here let me once for all apologize for many silly compositions of mine in this work. Many of the beautiful airs wanted words. In the hurry of other avocations, if I could string a parcel of rhymes together anything near tolerable, I was fain to let them pass. He must be an excellent poet whose every performance is excellent."

My heart was once as blithe and free
As simmer days were lang,
But a bonnie, westlin weaver lad
Has gart me change my sang,
To the weaver's gin ye go, fair maids,
I rede you right, gang ne'er at night,
To the weaver's gin ye go.

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

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

I sat beside my warpin'-wheel,
And aye I ca'd it rou';
But every shot and every knock,
My heart it gae a stoun.
To the weaver's, &c.

The moon was sinking in the west
Wi' visage pale and wan,
As my bonnie westlin weaver lad
Convo'ld me thro' the glen.
To the weaver's, &c.

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

1 The fancied singer of the above verses has been identified with Jean Armour, who, to avoid the pressure of her father's displeasure, went in March, 1786, to Paisley, where she resumed acquaintance with a townsman of hers, Robert Wilson, a handsome young weaver. Wilson's frequent visits to Jean formed the subject of some scandalous reports which reached the poet's ears.

The length of the strings is long,
And the treadle moves as fast as a woman's step.

"glimmering planet"

appeared to him in contemplation.
SONG—MACPHERSON'S FAREWELL.

TUNE—"Macpherson's Rant."

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 dauntlingly gae he;
He play'd a spring, and dance'd it round,
Below the gallows-tree.

O what is death but parting breath?—
On mony a bloody plain
I've dair'd his face, and in this place
I scorn him yet again!
Sae rantingly, &c.

1 "Macpherson's Lament," says Sir Walter Scott, "was a well-known song many years before the Ayrshire bard wrote those additional verses which constitute its principal merit (see below). This noted freebooter was executed at Inverness about the beginning of the last century. When he came to the fatal tree, he played the tune, to which he has been accustomed his name, upon a favourite violin, and holding up the instrument, offered it to any one of his clans who would undertake to play the tune over his body, at his lyke-wake; as none answered, he dashed it to pieces on the executioner's head, and flung himself from the ladder." Scott has erred, however, in naming Inverness as the place of Macpherson's execution. The records of his trial are still extant, and have been published. He was tried at Raiff, along with three others, and convicted of being "repute an Egyptian and vagabond, and oppressor of the majesty's free liege, in a bawdrie (prudent) manner, and going up and down the country armed, and keeping markets in a hostile manner," and was sentenced to be executed at the cross of Raiff, November 15, 1700, eight days after his conviction. Tradition asserts that the magistrates hurried on the execution early in the morning, and that Macpherson suffered several hours before the specified time. The motive for this inhuman haste is said to have been a desire to defeat a reprieve, then on the way. An anonymous article in the first volume of the New Monthly Magazine supplies some particulars of his lineage and exploits. "James Macpherson was born of a beautiful gypsy who, at a great wedding, attracted the notice of a half-intoxicated Highland gentleman. He acknowledged the child, and had him reared in his house, until he lost his life in bravely pursuing a hostile clan, to recover a spread of cattle taken from Badenoch. The gypsy woman hearing of this disaster in her rambles, the following summer came and took away her boy, but she often returned with him, to wait upon his relations and clansmen, who never failed to clothe him well, besides giving money to his mother. He grew up in beauty, strength, and stature rarely equalled. His sword is still preserved at Duff House, a residence of the Earl of Fife, and few men of our day could carry far less well it as a weapon of war; and if it must be owned that his prowess was delineated by the exploits of a freebooter, it is certain no act of cruelty, no robbery of the widow, the fatherless, or the distressed, and no murder, was ever perpetrated under his command. He often gave the spoils of the rich to relieve the poor; and all his tribe were restrained from many atrocities of rapine by the awe of his mighty arm. Indeed it is said that a dispute with an aspiring and savage man of his tribe, who wished to rob a gentleman's house while his wife and two children lay on the border for interment, was the cause of his being tried to the vengeance of the law. . . . He was betrayed by a man of his own tribe, and was the last person executed at Raiff previous to the abolition of heritable jurisdiction."

The words of the first stanza and the chorus of the "Lament" alluded to by Sir W. Scott, and composed by the freebooter in prison while he was under sentence of death, to the stirring air (= rant) which bears his name, are as follows:—

1. I've spent my time in roving,
   Bowed down my health and strength;
   I squandered fast as paradise came,
   And felt to shame at length.
   But dauntlingly, and wantonly,
   I'll play a tune, and dance it round,
   Beneath the gallows-tree.

2. For Carlyle's remarks on this song, see his Essay on Burns in the present volume.
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.
Sae rantingly, &c.

I've liv'd a life of start and strife;
I die by treacherie:
It burns my heart I must depart
And not avenged be.
Sae rantingly, &c.

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, &c.

---

SONG—STAY, MY CHARMER, CAN YOU LEAVE ME.\(^1\)

**TUNE—“An Gille dubh ciar-dhubh.”**

Stay, my charmer, can you leave me!
Cruel, cruel to deceive me!
Well you know how much you grieve me;
Cruel charmer, can you go?
Cruel charmer, can you go?

By my love so ill requited;
By the faith you fondly plighted;
By the pangs of lovers slighted:
Do not, do not leave me so!
Do not, do not leave me so!

---

SONG—MY HOGGIE.\(^3\)

**TUNE—“O what will I do gin my Hoggie die.”**

What will I do gin my Hoggie die?
My joy, my pride, my Hoggie!
My only beast, I had nae maie,
And vow but\(^2\) I was vogie!

---

\(^1\) This song was written to be sung to the simple and pathetic air known to the Sassenach as “The Black Haired Lad.” It was a favourite melody of Burns’s, who had a set of it transmitted to him from the Highlands.

\(^2\) For but has here the meaning of indeed, in truth, let me tell you.

\(^3\) This song is perhaps not an improved version of an old ditty. Stenhouse, however, expressly asserts that it was composed by Burns “as appears from the
POEMS AND SONGS.

The lee-lang night we watch'd the fauld,
Me and my faithful doggie;
We heard nought but the roaring linn,
Amang the brans we scorrigie;
But the hound cried frae the castle wa',
The bitter frae the hoggie,
The tod replied upon the hill,
I trembled for my Hoggie.

When day did daw, and cocks did crow,
The morning it was foggy;
An unco tyke lap o'er the 'lyke,
And maist has kill'd my Hoggie.

RAVING WINDS AROUND HER BLOWING.

TUNE—"Macgregor of Ruairi's Lament."

Burns says of this song; "I composed these verses on Miss Isabella M'Leod of Raza (Rassay or Raasay), alluding to her feelings on the death of her sister, and the still more melancholy death of her sister's husband, the Earl of Londoan, who shot himself out of sheer heartbreak at some mortifications he suffered owing to the deranged state of his finances."

Raving winds around her blowing,
Yellow leaves the woodlands strawing,
By a river harsely roaring,
Isabella stray'd deploring—
"Farewell, hours that late did measure
Sunshine days of joy and pleasure;
Hail, thou gloomy night of sorrow,
Cheerless night that knows no morrow!"

In his own handwriting now before me." Cromek in introducing this effusion into his Select Scottish Songs (1810) criticises it thus: "It is a silly subject treated sublimely. It has much of the fervor of the 'Vision.' (Q) Log, of which hoggie is the diminutive, means a young sheep before it is first shorn. Burns says of the tune: "Dr. Walker, who was minister at Moffat in 1772, and is now [179?] Professor of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, told Mr. Ed- dell the following anecdote concerning this air. He said, that some gentlemen, riding a few years ago through Liddesdale, stopped at a hamlet, consisting of a few houses, called Mossopaul; they were struck with this tune, which an old woman, spinning on a rock at the door, was singing. All she could tell concerning it was, that she was taught it when a child, and it was called 'What will I do gin my Hoggie die.' No person except a few females at Mossopaul knew this fine old tune, which in all probability would have been lost, had not one of the gentlemen [Stephen Clarke, organist, Edinburgh] who happened to have a flute with him, taken it down."

We have already spoken of this lady and her family. See note p. 215. We extract the following from a letter of the poet's to Mrs. Dunlop under date 16th August, 1788. "I was yesterday at Mr. Miller's [of Dalswinton House] to dinner for the first time. My reception was quite to my mind; from the lady of the house quite flattering. In the course of conversation Johnson's Musical Museum, a collection of Scottish songs with the music, was talked of. We got a song on the harpsichord, beginning 'Raving Winds around her blowing.' The air was much admired; the lady of the house asked me whose were the words. 'Mine, madam—they are indeed my very best verses;' she took not the smallest notice of them! The Scottish proverb says well, 'King's calf is better than other folks' corn.' I was going to make a New Testament quotation about 'casting pearls,' but that would be too virulent, for the lady is actually a woman of sense and taste."—Something may be said in the lady's defence. The song is not one of the poet's best, and the air to which it was set is rhythmically unsuitable.
POEMS AND SONGS.

"O'er the past too fondly wandering,
On the hopeless future pondering;
Chilly grief my life-blood freezes,
Fell despair my fancy seizes.
Life, thou soul of every blessing,
Load to misery most distressing,
O how gladly I'd resign thee,
And to dark oblivion join thee!"

SONG—UP IN THE MORNING EARLY.¹

TUNE—"Cauld blaw the wind."

"The chorus of this song," says Burns, "is old; the two stanzas are mine."

Cauld blaws the wind frae east to west,
The drift is driving sairly;
Sae loud and shrill I hear the blast,
I'm sure it's winter fairly.
Up in the morning's no for me,
Up in the morning early:
When a' the hills are covered wi' snow
I'm sure it's winter fairly.

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

Up in the morning, &c.

SONG—HOW LONG AND DREARY IS THE NIGHT.²

FIRST SET.

How long and dreary is the night,
When I am frae my dearie!
I sleepless lie frae e'en to morn,
Tho' I were ne'er sae weary.

How long and dreary is the night,
When I am frae my dearie!
I sleepless lie frae e'en to morn,
Tho' I were ne'er sae weary.

¹ The air is one of the finest and oldest of Scottish melodies. From an anecdote given in Sir John Hawkins' History of Music, it appears to have been a favourite of Queen Mary's, the consort of William III., and Purcell the distinguished musician composed a birthday ode to the queen in which this air, almost note for note, was made to serve as the bass part. Before this, however, John Hilton in 1625 published the tune as the third-voice part to what is called a Northern Catch for three voices, beginning "I'm gone with thee, sweet Peggy." The tune is also united to one of the songs of Gay's Beggar's Opera. There is an excellent song of five double verses on the same subject and to the same air, by John Hamilton, a music-seller in Edinburgh (who died in 1814), which is popular over Scotland.

² This song was written by Burns in 1788 to a Gaelic melody which he picked up in the Highlands and sent to Johnson's Museum. In October, 1794, he altered it slightly and added a chorus to suit the air of "Cauld kail in Aberdeen" for Thomson's Melodies of Scotland.
POEMS AND SONGS.

When I think on the happy days
I spent wi’ you, my dearie,
And now what lands between us lie,
How can 1 be but eerie! 1
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.
It was na sae ye glinted by
When I was wi’ my dearie.

SONG—THERE WAS A LASS, THEY CA’D HER MEG. 2

TUNE—“Duncan Davison.”

There was a lass, they ca’d her Meg,
And she held o’er the moors to spin;
There was a lad that follow’d her,
They ca’d him Duncan Davison.
The moor was dreich, and Meg was skeigh,
Her favour Duncan couldna win;
For wi’ the rock she wad him knock,
And aye she shook the temper-pin. 3

As o’er the moor they lightly foor,
A burn was clear, a glen was green,
Upon the banks they cas’d 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 flang them a’ out o’er the burn.

We’ll big a house—a wee, wee house,
And we will live like king and queen,
Sae blythe and merry we will be
When ye set by the wheel at e’en.

1 Nervous, or lonely and ill-at-ease, would perhaps best suit the context.
2 The note by Steinhouse accompanying this tyde runs:—“This very humorous song was composed by Burns, although he did not openly choose to own it. I have recovered his original manuscript copy of this song, which is the same as that inserted in the Museum.” The tune (“Duncan Davison”) to which the words are set is an old and still popular strathspey. The last four lines have no connection with the rest, and are probably borrowed from an old song. The present writer has heard one in which occur similar lines:

I can drink and no be drunk;
I can fight and no be slain;
An’ 1 can kiss my neibor’s wife,
An’ 1 can come welcome to my ain.

3 The wooden pin used for tempering or regulating the motion of the spinning-wheel.
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.

SONG—MUSING ON THE ROARING OCEAN.

TUNE—"Drunken Jigh."  

"I composed these verses," says Burns, "out of compliment to a Mrs. McLaughlin, whose husband is an officer in the East Indies."

Musing on the roaring ocean,  
Which divides my love and me;  
Wearying heaven, in warm devotion,  
For his wear, where'er he be.  

Hope and fear's alternate billow  
Yielding late to nature's law;  
Whisp'ring spirits round my pillow  
Talk of him that's far away.

Ye whom sorrow never wounded,  
Ye who never shed a tear,  
Care-untroubled, joy-surrounded,  
Gaudy day to you is dear.

Gentle night, do thou befriend me;  
Downy sleep, the curtain draw;  
Spirits kind, again attend me,  
Talk of him that's far away!

SONG—TO DAUNTON ME.

TUNE—"To daunton me" (otherwise known as "Thee, Johnie Lad").  

The blude-red rose at Yule may blaw,  
The simmer lillies bloom in snow,  
The frost may freeze the deepest sea;  
But an auld man shall never daunton me.  

To daunton me, and me so young,  
W' th' his false heart and flattering tongue,  
That is the thing you ne'er shall see;  
For an auld man shall never daunton me.

For a' his meal and a' his maut,  
For a' his fresh beef and his saunt,  
For a' his gold and white monie,  
An auld man shall never daunton me.  

To daunton me, &c.
His gear may buy him kye and yowes,
His gear may buy him glens and knowes;
But me he shall not buy nor fee,
For an auld man shall never daunton me.
To daunton me, &c.

He hirplis twa-fauld as he dow,
Wi' his toothless gab and his auld beld pow,
An' the rain rains down frae his red blenc'd ce —
That auld man shall never daunton me.
To daunton me, &c.

TO CLARINDA.
WITH A PRESENT OF A PAIR OF DRINKING GLASSES.

Fair Empress of the Poet's soul,
And Queen of Poetesses;
Clarinda, take this little boon,
This humble pair of glasses;—

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

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

SONG—THE BONNIE LAD THAT'S FAR AWA'.

TEXT—"The bonnie lad that's far awa'."

O how can I be blythe 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'!

1 The old songs sung to the air "To daunton me" are Jacobitical. The air is found in Oswald's collection, 1740.
2 "This little lamentation of a desolate damsel," says Jeffrey, "is tender and pretty." Herd's Collection supplies the germ of this song, in which it is supposed the poet has contrived to speak the feelings of Jean Armour, when the sternness of her father obliged her to leave home for the second time, and seek shelter under the roof of William Muir, the honest miller of Tarbolton, owing to the result of her renewed intimacy with Burns. This, according to Chambers, was "in the middle of winter" (1787-88). In the month of March following she gave birth to twin daughters, who died in a few days. See letter of Burns to Robert Ainslie, 3rd March, 1788.
It's no the fristy winter wind,
It's no the driving drift and snow;
But aye the tear comes in my eye,
To think on him that's far awa'.

My father put me free his door,
My friends they hae disown'd me n',
But I hae me will tak my part,
The bonnie lad that's far awa'.

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

The weary winter soon will pass,
And spring will eed the birken shaw;
And my sweet baby will be born,
And he'll come hame that's far awa'.

---

SONG—THE CHEVALIER'S LAMENT. 1

TUNE—"Captain O'Kean." 2

"Yesterday," says Burns in a letter to Robert Cleghorn, dated 31st March, 1788, "as I was riding through a tract of melancholy, joyless miles, between Galloway and Ayrshire, it being Saturday, I turned my thoughts to psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; and your favourite air, 'Captain O'Kean,' coming at length into my head, I tried these words to it. . . . I am tolerably pleased with these verses, but as I have only a sketch of the tune, I leave it with you to try if they suit the measure of the music."

The small birds rejoice in the green leaves returning,
The murmuring streamlet winds clear through the vale;
The hawthorn trees(1) blow in the dews of the morning,
And wild scattered cowslips bedeck the green vale;
But what can give pleasure, or what can seem fair,
While(2) the lingering moments are numbered? by Care?
No flowers daily springing, nor birds sweetly singing,(3)
Can soothe the sad bosom of joyless despair.

The deed that I dar'd, could it merit their malice,
A KING and a FATHER to place on his throne?
His right are these hills, and his right are these valleys,
Where the(1) wild beasts find shelter, but I can find none.

1 The letter quoted in the head-note belonged the first eight lines of the "Chevalier's Lament." Cleghorn replied that he was delighted with the words, and that they suited the tune to a hair; adding that he would like a verse or two more, and suggesting that they should be in the Jacobite style. "Suppose," says he, "it should be sung after the fatal field of Culloden, by the unfortunate Charles." Burns took the hint; he added a second stanza, infusing into the lines the strong Jacobitical spirit which his friends desiderated. Culloden was fought April 17th, 1746; Prince Charles escaped to France in September.
SONG—OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW.²

TUNE—"Miss Admiral Gordon's Strathspey."

"The air is by Marshall. The song I composed out of compliment to Mrs. Burns. N.B.—It was during the honeymoon."—BURNS.

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's³ 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:

¹The Edinburgh Common-place Book has the following different readings: (1) purple was for hard-worn trees; (2) when for while; (3) No birds sweetly singing, nor flowers gayly springing— a transposition merely; (4) the is struck out; (5) faith for deeds; (6) it for you. The song was first published in Thomson's Collection, vol. ii. (July 1780).

²"As precious a love-offering, as genius in the passion of hope ever laid in a virgin's bosom."—PROFESSOR WILSON.

³The "honeymoon" (June, 1788) alluded to in the head-note was mostly passed by Burns in a miserable hovel at Ellisland, while he was occupied in building his new farm-house. He found time, however, to spend a few days now and again with his "Jean" at Mossiel, where she had gone to reside for a while with the poet's family.

We have given the song as it appears in Johnson's Museum. In Wood's Songs of Scotland and other collections the last four lines of the first stanza read:

Though wild v'ros grow and rivers row
And mony a hill between;
Bath day and night, &c.

Stanza second is made to this thus:

I see her in the dewy flower
She lovely, sweet and fair;
I hear her voice in ilk bird
WF music charm the air.

We are not aware that there is any authority for the altered readings. In many collections of Scottish songs the following stanzas are appended to this beautiful lyric.

O blaw, ye westlin winds, blaw soft
Among the leafy trees;

WF gentle sole, free mair and dale, from
Bring home the laden beam;
And bring the lassie back to me
That's eye me neat and clean.
As smile ye her and loathly care
Sez lovely is my Jean.

What sighs and vows, among the knowes, knowes
How fast and true are twa!
How fast to meet, how man to part, very
That day she said awa!
How the powers ooon can only ken,
To whom the heart is seen.
That name can be so dear to me none
As my sweet lovely Jean.

Their author was John Hamilton, a music-seller in Edinburgh about the beginning of the century. They by no means disgrace their companion verses and are often sung along with them; but they do not exactly suit the facts of the case. Burns's song being written at Ellisland, he could hardly have spoken of Jean going away and coming back to that place, since he had never yet seen it. Two additional stanzas written by William Reid, bookseller, Glasgow, in the same measure and in praise of a "bonnie Jean" are sometimes printed in Scottish song-books in connection with this lyric, but they are much inferior to the foregoing.—The air was partly composed by William Marshall, butler to the Duke of Gordon, by adding a second strain to an old melody called the "Lows" of Holland.

²That is "there are wild woods that grow, and rivers that roll, and also many a hill between us."

³The use of the singular form in "there's" is quite in accordance with the Scotch and Northern English dialect.
I hear her in the tuneful 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.

---

**EPISTLE TO HUGH PARKER, MERCHANT, KILMARNOCK.**

*June, 1788.*

In this strange land, this uncouth clime,  
A land unknown to prose or rhyme;  
Where words ne'er cross the Muse's heckles,  
Nor limpet in poetic shackles;  
A land that Prose did never view it,  
Except when drunk he stach(er) tho' it;  
Here, ambush'd by the chimla cheek,  
Hid in an atmosphere of reek,  
I hear a wheel thrum i' the neuk,  
I hear it—for in vain I seek.—

The red peat gleams, a fiery kernel,  
Emuisked by a fog infernal:  
Here, for my wond'ring rhyming raptures,  
I sit and count my sins by chapters;  
For life and spunk like other Christians,  
I'm dwindled down to mere existence;  
Wi' me converse but Gallowa' bodles;  
Wi' me ken'd face but Jenny Geddes;  
Jenny, my Pegasean pride!  
Dowie she saunters down Nithside,  
And aye a westlin' lenk she throws;  
While tears hap o'er her auld brown nose!  
Was it for this, wi' canny care,  
Thou bare the Bard through many a shire?  
At howes or hillocks never stummbled,  
And late or early never grummbled?—

---

1 Hugh Parker was a brother of William Parker, banker, Kilmarnock, an old friend of the poet, to whom the song—

Ye sons of old Killie, assembled by Willie,  
refers. Hugh Parker is referred to only once in the correspondence. In a letter to Mr. Robert Muir, Kilmarnock, written from Stirling on 20th August, 1787, Burns says, "I hope Hughes is going on and prospering with God and Miss M'Causlin." The epistle in the text was found among Parker's papers at his death.

2 **Heckles.** An apparatus consisting of a series of long metallic teeth, through which hemp, flax, &c., are drawn, so as to comb the fibres out straight, and ill them for the subsequent operations. The propriety of the use of the term here is obvious.

3 Ellisland is close to the eastern border of the stewartry (or county) of Kirkcudbright, one of the divisions of the district called Galloway, Wigtownshire being the other.

4 His old mare.

5 A look westward, that is Ayrshire-ward, Ayrshire being north-west of Ellisland. Jean, now Mrs. Burns, was still at Manchline, since he had not as yet a house to put her into. This epistle was written in June, 1788, from the howe in which he was temporarily residing, and it was the end of November before he had accommodation for his wife and household.
O, had I power like inclination,
I'd heeze thee up a constellation,
To canter with the Sagitarre,
Or loop the ecliptic like a bar;
Or turn the pole like any arrow;
Or, when auld Phcebus bids good-morrow,
Down the zodiac urge the race,
And cast dirt on his godship's face;
For I could lay my bread and kail
He'd ne'er cast salt upo' thy tail.—
Wf' a' this care and a' this grief,
And sma', sma' prospect of relief,
And naught but pent-reek i' my head,
How can I write what ye can read!—
Tarbolton, twenty-fourth o' June,
Yell find me in a better tune;
But till we meet and weet our whistle,
Tak this excuse for nae epistle.

ROBERT BURNS.

SONG—O, WERE I ON PARNASSUS' HILL.1

TUNE—"My love is lost to me."

O, were I on Parnassus' hill!
Or had of Helicon my fill,
That I might catch poetic skill,
To sing how dear I love thee.
But Nith maun be my muse's well,
My muse maun be thy bonnie sel';
On Corsineon 2 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.
I see thee dancing o'er the green,
Thy waist sae jum, thy limbs sae clean,
Thy tempting lips—thy roguish een—
By heaven and earth, I love thee!

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

1 This song was composed in honour of Mrs. Burns during the poet's first weeks' residence at Ellisland.
—The plaintive melody "My love is lost to me" is a composition of Oswald's and was published in his Caledonian Pocket Companion.

2 Corsineon or Corsaneone is a lofty conical hill (height 1547 feet) in New Cumnock parish, Ayrshire, about 25 miles from Burns's farm, Ellisland. Near the foot of it the river Nith crosses from Ayrshire into Dumfriesshire.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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 love thee.

SONG—NAEBODY.¹

TUNE—"Naebodty."

I hae a wife o' my ain—
I'll partake wi' naebodty;
I'll tak euckold frae mune,
I'll gie euckold to naebodty.
I hae a penny to spend,
There—thanks to naebodty,
I hae naething to lend,
I'll borrow frae naebodty.

I am naebodty's lord—
I'll be slave to naebodty;
I hae a guid braid sword,
I'll tak dunts frae naebodty.
I'll be merry and free,
I'll be sad for naebodty;
If naebodty care for me,
I'll care for naebodty.

SONG—LOUIS, WHAT RECK I BY THEE.²

TUNE—"Louis, what reck I by thee?"

Louis, what reck I by thee,
Or Geordie on his ocean?
Dyvor, beggar lounis to me,—
I reign in Jeanie's bosom.

Let her crown my love her law,
And in her breast enthrone me:
Kings and nations,—swith awa'!
Reif mundayes, I disown ye!

¹The above verses were written shortly after the poet's marriage, and are characterized by Lockhart as a welcome to his wife under her roof-tree at Ellisland. "At this period," says Dr. Currie, "sentiments of independence buoyed up his mind, pictures of domestic content and peace rose on his imagination, and a few days passed away, as he himself informs us, the most tranquil, if not the happiest, he had ever experienced." In this situation he expressed his feelings in the above vigorous verses. They are formed on the model of an old lyric beginning:—

²This song, rather bald and abrupt in style, was written probably about the date of the poet's marriage, and appeared first in the fifth volume of the Museum. "Jeanule," of course, is Mrs. Burns.

They were sent to Johnson's Museum, where they appeared set to a sprightly air taken from Oswald's Pocket Companion.
POEMS AND SONGS.

TO ALEXANDER CUNNINGHAM, ESQ., WRITER, EDINBURGH.

EILISLAND, NITHDALE, July 27th, 1788.

My god-like friend—may, do not stare,
You think the phrase is odd-like;
But "God is Love" the saints declare,
Then surely thou art god-like.

And is thy ardour still the same?
And kindled still at Anna?
Others may boast a partial flame,
But thou art a volcano!

Ev'n Wedlock asks not love beyond
Death's tie-dissolving portal;
But thou omnipotently fond,
May'st promise love immortal.

Thy wounds such healing powers defy,
Such symptoms dire attend them,
That last great antihectic try—
Marriage perhaps may mend them.

Sweet Anna has an air—a grace
Divine, magnetic, touching;
She talks, she charms—but who can trace
The process of bewitching?!

SONG—"ANNA, THY CHARMS."

TUNE—"Bonnie Mary."

Anna, thy charms my bosom fire,
And waste my soul with care;
But ah! how bootless to admire,
When fated to despair!

Yet in thy presence, lovely Fair,
To hope may be forgiv'n;
For sure 'twere impious to despair,
So much in sight of heav'n. 1

1 The above lines form part of an epistle which will be found under the above date in the General Correspondence.—The Anna (a celebrated beauty, daughter of John Stewart, Esq., of East Craig) alluded to as Cunningham's adored one, jilted him, and became the wife of Mr. Forrest Dewar, surgeon, and subsequently a town-councillor of Edinburgh. Cunningham felt the lady's deceit very deeply, and was greatly sympathized with by his friend the poet, who composed the songs "She's fair and false," "Had I a cave," and "Now Spring has clad," in reference to this incident. See note to last-mentioned song.

2 Mr. Scott Douglass in his Edinburgh Edition of Burns suggests that this brief epigrammatic song is "simply a vicarious effusion, intended to proceed from the lips of the author's forlorn friend (Alexander) Cunningham." In support of this he quotes from a hitherto unpublished letter the preceding stanzas, in which the poet banter his friend on his consuming love for Anna. See previous note.
EPISTLE TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ., OF FINTRY;
REQUESTING A FAVOUR.

In a letter to Mr. Graham, written from Ellishand on 10th September, 1788, the following epistle was enclosed. Burns in his letter states that having got his excise commission, which he regarded as his sheet-anchor in life, and his farm being certain to prove a ruinous concern by itself, he wished to be enabled to meet the responsibilities of his married life, and to extricate himself from his embarrassments by getting an appointment as officer in the district in which Ellishand was situated. Through Mr. Graham’s influence he had obtained his commission to the excise in February of that year, and next year the favour now asked was granted, the poet being made officer in the district of his residence.

When Nature her great master-piece design’d,
And fram’d her last, best work, the human mind,
Her eye intent on all the mazy plan,
She form’d of various parts the various man.

Then first she calls the useful many forth;²
Plain plodding industry, and sober worth:
Thence peasants, farmers, native sons of earth,
And merchantise’ whole genus take their birth,
Each prudent cit a warm existence finds,
And all mechanics’ many-apron’d kinds.
Some other rarer sorts are wanted yet,
The lead and buoy are needful to the net;
The caput mortuum of gross desires
Makes a material for mere knights and squires;
The martial phosphorns is taught to flow;
She kneads the lumpish philosophic dough,
Then marks th’ unyielding mass with grave designs—
Law, physics, politics, and deep divines:
Last, she sublimes th’ Aurora of the poles,
The flashing elements of female souls.
The order’d system fair before her stood,
Nature, well pleas’d, pronounced it very good;
But e’er she gave creating labour e’er,
Half jest, she tried one curious labour more.
Some sparmy, fiery, ignis fatuus matter;
Such as the slightest breath of air might scatter;
With arch-alacrity and conscious glee
(Nature may have her whim as well as we,
Her Hogarth-art perhaps she meant to show it)
She forms the thing, and christens it—a Poet:

Footnotes:
1 "The first epistle to Graham of Fintry," says Currie, "is not equal to the second, but it contains too much of the characteristic vigour of its author to be suppressed."—It was an attempt to comply with the advice of many of his literary friends, viz. to write in English so as to increase the circle of his readers and admirers. It is an imitation, or rather, as Burns himself says (in letter to Miss Chalmers of 10th September, 1788), "in the manner of" Pope’s Moral Epistles, and "was," says Alexander Smith, "the poet’s earliest attempt in the manner of Pope. It has its merits of course; but it lacks the fire, ease, and sweetness of his earlier epistles to Lapraik, Smith, and others."
2 Variation in the holograph copy in the British Museum:

The useful many, first she calls them forth.
Creature, thro' oft the prey of care and sorrow,
When blest to-day unmindful of to-morrow.
A being form'd t' amuse his graver friends,
Admir'd and prais'd—and there the homage ends;
A mortal quite unfit for Fortune's strife,
Yet oft the sport of all the ills of life;
Prone to enjoy each pleasure riches give,
Yet haply wanting wherewithal to live:
Longing to wipe each tear, to heal each gash;
Yet frequent all unheeded in his own.

But honest Nature is not quite a Turk,
She laugh'd at first, then felt for her poor work.
Pitying the propless climber of mankind,
She cast about a standard tree to find;
And, to support his helpless woodbine state,
Attach'd him to the generous truly great,
A title, and the only one I claim,
To lay strong hold for help on bounteous Graham.

Pity the tuneful Muses' hapless train,
Weak, timid landsmen on life's stormy main!
Their hearts no selfish stern absorbent stuff,
That never gives—the humblest takes enough;
The little fate allows, they share as soon,
Unlike sage, proverb'd Wisdom's hard-wrung boon.
The world were blest did bliss on them depend,
Ah, then 'the friendly e'er should want a friend!'
Let Prudence number o'er each sturdy son,
Who life and wisdom at one race began,
Who feel by reason, and who give by rule,
(Instinct's a brute, and sentiment a fool!)
Who make poor will do wait upon I should—
We own they're prudent, but who feels they're good?
Ye wise ones, hence! ye hurt the social eye!
God's image rudely etch'd on base alloy!
But come ye who the godlike pleasure know,
Heaven's attribute distinguish'd—to bestow!
Whose arms of love would grasp the human race:
Come thou who giv'st with all a courtier's grace;
FRIEND OF MY LIFE, true patron of my rhymes!
Prop of my dearest hopes for future times.
Why shrinks my soul half blushing, half afraid,
Backward, abash'd to ask thy friendly aid?
I know my need, I know thy giving hand,
I crave thy friendship at thy kind command;
But there are such who court the tuneful Nine—
Heavens! should the branded character be mine!

1 In British Museum MS. "wages." 2 MS. "viewing." 3 round the truly great." 4 MS. "Generous." 5 MS. "In pity for." 6 MS. "She clasped his tendril."
"Helpless." 7 MS. "Tax."
Whose verse in manhood's pride sublimely flows,
Yet vilest reptiles in their begging prose.
Mark, how their lofty independent spirit
Soars on the spurning wing of injur'd merit!
Seek not the proofs in private life to find;
Pity the best of words should be but wind!
So, to heaven's gates the lark's shrill song ascends,
But grovelling on the earth the carol ends.
In all the clam'rous cry of starving want,
They dun Benevolence with shameless front;
Oblige them, patronise their tinsel lays—
They persecute you; all your future days!
Ere my poor soul such deep damnation stain,
My hungry fist assume the plough again;
The piebald jacket let me patch once more;
On eighteen-pence a week I've liv'd before.
Though, thanks to Heaven, I dare even that last shift,
I trust meantime my boon is in thy gift:
That, plac'd by thee upon the wish'd-for height,
Where, man and nature fairer in her sight,
My Muse may imp her wing for some sublimier flight.

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SONG—THE FÊTE CHAMPEÏÈRE.

TEXT—"Killiecrankie."

"The occasion of this ballad was as follows:—When Mr. Cunningham of Enterkin came to his estate, two mansion-houses upon it, Enterkin and Annbank, were both in a ruinous state. Wishing to introduce himself with some éclat to the county, in the autumn of 1788, he got temporary erec-
tions made on the banks of Ayr, tastefully decorated with shrubs and flowers, for a supper and ball, to which most of the respectable families in the county were invited. It was a novelty in the county, and attracted much notice. A dissolution of parliament was soon expected, and this festivity was thought to be an introduction to a canvass for representing the county. Several other candidates were spoken of, particularly Sir John Wetherell, then residing at Glencairn, commonly pronounced Glencairn, and Mr. Bowell, the well-known biographer of Dr. Johnson ("the meikle Ursa-Major"). The political views of this festive assemblage, which are alluded to in the ballad, if they ever existed, were laid aside, as Mr. Cunningham did not canvass the county."—GILBERT BURNS.

O wha will to Saint Stephen's House,
To do our errands there, man!
O wha will to Saint Stephen's House,
O' th' merry lads o' Ayr, man?
Or will we send a man o' law?
Or will we send a soldier?
Or him wha led o'er Scotland a'
The meikle Ursa-Major!

Come, will ye court a noble lord,
Or buy a score o' lairds, man?
For worth and honour pawn their word,
Their vote shall be Glencairl's, man.
Ane gies them coin, ane gies them wine,
Anither gies them clatter;
Annibank, wha guess'd the ladies' taste,
He gies a Fête Champêtre.

When Love and Beauty heard the news,
The gay green-woods amang, man;
Where gathering flowers and busking bowers
They heard the blackbird's sang, man:
A vow, they seal'd it with a kiss,
Sir Politics to fetter,
As theirs alone, the patent-bliss,
To hold a Fête Champêtre.

Then mounted Mirth, on glesome wing,
O'er hill and dale she flew, man;
Ilk wimpling burn, ilk crystal spring,
Ilk glen and shaw she knew, man;
She summon'd every social sprite,
That sports by wood or water,
On th' bonnie banks o' Ayr to meet,
And keep this Fête Champêtre.

Cauld Boreas, wi' his boisterous crew,
Were bound to stakes like kye, man;
And Cynthia's car, o' silver fu',
Climb up the starry sky, man;
Reflected beams dwell in the streams,
Or down the current chatter:
The western breeze steals thro' the trees,
To view this Fête Champêtre.

How many a robe sae gaily floats!
What sparkling jewels glance, man!
To harmony's enchanting notes,
As moves the mazy dance, man.
The echoing wood, the winding flood,
Like Paradise did glitter,
When angels met, at Adam's yett,
To hold their Fête Champêtre.

When Politics came there, to mix
And make his ether-stane, man!
He circled round the magic ground,
But entrance found he name, man:
He blush'd for shame, he quat his name,
Forswore it, every letter,
Wit humble prayer to join and share
This festive Fête Champêtre.

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1 Certain small annular stones with streaked colouring are called adder-stones, and were supposed by the superstitious to be produced by adders and to have magical powers.
POEMS AND SONGS.

SONG—THE DAY RETURNS, MY Bosom BURNS.¹

TUNE—"Seventh of November."

"I composed this song out of compliment to one of the happiest and worthiest married couples in the world, Robert Riddell, Esq., of Glenriddell, and his lady. At their fireside I have enjoyed more pleasant evenings than at all the houses of fashionable people in the country put together; and to their kindness and hospitality I am indebted for many of the happiest hours in my life."—Burns' notes to Johnson's Museum.

The day returns, my bosom burns,
The blissful day we twa did meet,
Tho' winter wild in tempest toil'd,
Ne'er summer-sun was half so sweet.
Than a' the pride that loads the tide,
And crosses o'er the sultry line;
Than kingly robes, than crowns and globes,
Heaven gave me more,—it made thee mine!

While day and night can bring delight,
Or nature anght of pleasure give;
While joys above my mind can move,
For thee, and thee alone, I live!
When that grim foe of life below
Comes in between to make us part;
The iron hand that breaks our hand,
It breaks my bliss,—it breaks my heart.

A MOTHER'S LAMENT FOR THE DEATH OF HER SON.³

As to the origin of these lines see letter of Burns to Mrs. Dunlop, September 27th, 1788.

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

¹ The song is transcribed into a letter to Miss Chalmers, dated 16th September, 1788. The air, which displays so little musical talent, is the composition of Mr. Riddell himself, who named it from the day of his marriage, The Seventh of November.

² Burns says himself:—"The 'Mother's Lament' was composed partly with a view to Mrs. Fergusson of Craigdarroch, and partly to the worthy patroness of my early unknown muse, Mrs. Stewart of Aiton." Mrs. Fergusson's son died November 19, 1787, at the age of eighteen, after leaving college. Mrs. Stewart of Stair, the early patroness whom Burns had complimented in the "Brigs of Ayr," lost her only son, Alexander Gordon Stewart, only some days later (at Strassburg, 5th December, 1787); and the circumstances of the two mothers resembling each other so closely it is not to be wondered at that Burns included a copy of this lament to Mrs. Stewart also, without subjecting himself to the charge of cheap sympathy and silly-feigned poetic pains.
POEMS AND SONGS.

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

———

SONG—THE LAZY MIST.

TUNE—"The Lazy Mist."

This song, along with the preceding, was inclosed in a letter to Dr. Blacklock, dated 15th November, 1788, and containing the remark concerning them: "I have only sent you two melancholy things, and I tremble lest they should too much suit the tone of your present feelings."

The lazy mist hangs from the brow of the hill,
Concealing the course of the dark winding rill;
How languid the scenes, late so sprightly, appear,
As autumn to winter resigns the pale year!

The forests are leafless, the meadows are brown,
And all the gay foppery of summer is flown:
Apart let me wander, apart let me muse,
How quick time is flying, how keen fate pursues!

How long I have liv'd—but how much liv'd in vain!
How little of life's scanty span may remain!
What aspects, old Time, in his progress, has worn!
What ties, cruel fate in my bosom has torn!

How foolish, or worse, till our summit is gain'd!
And downward, how weaken'd, how darken'd, how pain'd!
This life's not worth having with all it can give,
For something beyond it poor man sure must live.

END OF VOL. II.