Robert Burns—Poet.
THE WORKS OF ROBERT BURNS:
with
AN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE,
and
CRITICISM ON HIS WRITINGS.

BY JAMES CURRIE, M.D.

PHILADELPHIA,
PUBLISHED BY JOHN LOCKEN.
1835.
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OF
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WITH
AN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE,
AND
CRITICISM ON HIS WRITINGS.
TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,
SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE CHARACTER AND CONDITION
OF THE SCOTTISH PEASANTRY.

BY JAMES CURRIE, M. D.

A NEW EDITION,
FOUR VOLUMES COMPLETE IN ONE.
WITH MANY ADDITIONAL POEMS AND SONGS,
AND
AN ENLARGED AND CORRECTED GLOSSARY.
From the last London Edition of 1834.

PHILADELPHIA:
JOHN LOCKEN, No. 6 GEORGE STREET.
1835.
Robert Burns was born on the 29th day of January, 1759, in a small house about two miles from the town of Ayr in Scotland. The family name, which the poet modestly altered to Burns, was originally Burns or Burnes. His father, William, appears to have been early buried to poverty and hardships, which he bore with pluck resignation, and endeavoured to alleviate by industry and economy. After various attempts to gain a livelihood, he took a lease of seven acres of land, with a view of commencing nurseryman and public gardener; and having built a house upon it with his own hands (an instance of patient ingenuity to go more uncouth, and to involve his humble life,) he married, December 1774, Agnes Brown. The first fruit of his marriage was Robert, the subject of the present sketch.

In his sixth year, Robert was sent to a school, where he made considerable proficiency in reading and writing, and where he discovered an inclination for books not very common at so early an age. About the age of thirteen or fourteen, he was sent to the parish school of Dalrymple, where he increased his acquaintance with English Grammar, and gained some knowledge of the French. Latin was also recommended to him; but he did not make any great progress in it.

The far greater part of his life, however, was employed on his father's farm, which, in spite of much industry, became so unproductive as to involve the family in great distress. His father having taken another farm, the speculation was yet more fatal, and involved his affairs in complete ruin. He died, Feb. 12, 1784, leaving behind him the character of a good and wise man, and an affectionate father, who, under all his misfortunes, struggled to procure his children an excellent education; and endeavoured, both by precept and example to form their minds to religious and virtuous.

It was between the fifteenth and sixteenth year of his age, that Robert first "committed the sin of rhyme." Having formed a boyish affection for a female who was his companion in the toils of the field, he composed a song, which, however extraordinary from one at his age, and in his circumstances, is far inferior to any of his subsequent performances. He was at this time "an ungraceful, awkward boy," unacquainted with the world, but who occasionally had picked up some notions of history, literature, and criticism, from the few books to which he had access. These books informs us, were Salmon's and Guthrie's Geographical Grammars, the Spectator, Pope's Works, some plays of Shakespeare, Tull and Dickson on Agriculture, the Pantheon, Locke's Essays on the Human Understanding, Stackhouse's History of the Bible, Justice's British Gardener's Directory, Boyle's Lectures, Allan Ramsay's Works, Taylor's Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin, a select collection of English Songs, and Hervey's Meditations. Of this motley assemblage, it may readily be supposed, that some would be studied and some read superficially. There is reason to think, however, that he perused the works of the poets with such attention as, assisted by his natural vigorous capacity, soon directed his taste; and enabled him to avoid the want of sublimity and sublimity from affectation and bombast.

It appears that from the seventeenth to the twenty-fourth year of Robert's age, he made no considerable literary improvement. His accessions of knowledge, or opportunities of reading, could not be frequent, but no extraordinary endowment of mind was necessary to supply the peculiarities of his character from displaying themselves. He was distinguished by a vigorous understanding, and an untaeable spirit. His resentments were quick and, although not durable, expressed with a volatility of indignation which could not but silence and overwhelm his humble and illustrious associates; while the occasional effusions of his muse on temporary subjects which were handed about in manuscript, raised him to a local superiority that seemed the earnest of a more extended fame. His first motive to compose verses, as has been already noticed, was his early and warm attachment to the fair sex. His favourites were in the humblest walks of life; but during his possession, he elevated them to Laurus and Saccharissas. His attachments, however, were of the purer kind, and his constant theme the happiness of the married state; to obtain a suitable provision for which, he engaged in partnership with a flax-dresser, hoping, probably to attain by degrees the rank of a manufacturer. But this speculation was attended with very little success, and was finally ended by an accidental fire.

On his father's death he took a farm in conjunction with his brother, with the honourable view of providing for their large and orphan family. But here, too, he was doomed to be unfortunate, although, in his brother Gilbert, he had a coadjutor of excellent sense, a man of uncommon powers both of thought and expression.

During his residence on this farm he formed a connexion with a young woman, the consequences of which could not be long concealed. In this dilemma, the imprudent couple agreed to make a legal acknowledgment of a private marriage, and projected that she should remain with her father, while he was to go to Jamaica "to push his fortune." This proceeding however, romantic as it may appear, would have rescued the lady's character, according to the laws of Scotland, but it did not satisfy her father, who insisted on having all the written documents respecting the marriage cancelled, and by this unfeeling measure, he intended that it should be rendered void. Divorced now from all he held dear in the world, he had no resource but in his projected voyage to Jamaica, which was prevented by one of those circumstances that in common cases, might pass without observation, but which eventually laid the foundation of his future fame. For once, his poverty stood his friend. Had he been pro
vivd with money to pay for his passage to Jamaica, he might have set sail, and been forgotten. But he was prudent enough to circulate the necessary subscriptions; and was therefore advised to raise a sum of money by publishing his poems in the way of subscription. These accordingly printed at Kilmarnock, in the year 1786, in a small volume, which was encouraged by sub- 

It is hardly possible to express with what eager ad- 

merition he was engaged. The public, who were very received. Old and young, high and low, learned and ignorant, all were alike delighted. Such transports would naturally find their way into the bosom of the author, especially when he found that, in the midst of his exile from his native land, he was now encouraged to go to Edinburgh and superintend the publication of a second edition. 

In the metropolis, he was soon introduced into the 

and taste; and his appearance and behaviour at 

delighted. He was not capriciously affected; his elbowed manner and decorous deportment could not escape the attention of his hearers by sallies of wit, which, from one of his birth and education, had all the fascination of wonder. His introduction, about the same time, into certain convivial clubs of higher rank, was attended with so much success that he was frequently engaged to return to the plough, and to the simple and frugal 

During his residence at Edinburgh, his finances were considerably improved by the new edition of his poems; and this enabled him to visit several other parts of his native country. He left Edinburgh, May 6, 1787, and in the course of his journey was hospitably received at the houses of many gentlemen of worth and learning. He afterwards travelled into England as far as Carlisle. In the beginning of June he arrived in Yorkshire, after an absence of six months, during which he had experienced a change of fortune, to which the hopes of few men in his situation could have aspired. His companion in some of these tours was a Mr. Mackenzie, who was engaged to Burns not only by the warmth of his friendship, but by a certain congeniality of sentiment and agreement in habits. This sympathy, in some other instances of social poetical pursuits, unerringly led to companionship, who, in the eyes of men of more regular conduct, were insufferable. 

During the greater part of the winter 1787-8, Burns again resided in Edinburgh, and entered with peculiar relish into its gayeties. But as the singularities of his manner displayed themselves more openly, and as those who were accustomed to them were surprised to see him in Edinburgh, the following month of Febru- 

BURNS was always much in his company, and was adopted by him, on whom they bestowed the honours of genius, in a situation where his exertions might have been interrupted by the fatigues of labour, and the calls of want. Disappointed in this, he formed a design of applying for the office of exciseman, as a kind of resource in case his expectations from the farm should be baffled. By the interest of his family the object was accomplished; and after the usual forms were gone through, he was appointed exciseman, or, as it vulgarly called, gauger of the district in which he lived.

"His farm was now abandoned to his servants, while he betook himself to the duties of his new ap- 

About this time (1792), he was solicited to give his assent to Mr. Thomson's Collection of Scottish Songs. He wrote, with attention and without delay, for this work, all the songs which appear in this volume; to which we have added those he contributed to John- 

Burns also found leisure to form a society for pur- 

While at Dumfries, his temptations and irregularities, as well as his new and eagerly expected his reco-

of the unhappiness of the world, and the immense number of such airy fabrics. If we may form any judgment, however, from his correspondence, his expectations were not very extravagant, since he expected only that some of his illustrious patrons would found him, on whom they bestowed the honours of genius, in a situation where his exertions might have been interrupted by the fatigues of labour, and the calls of want. Disappointed in this, he formed a design of applying for the office of exciseman, as a kind of resource in case his expectations from the farm should be baffled. By the interest of his family the object was accomplished; and after the usual forms were gone through, he was appointed exciseman, or, as it vulgarly called, gauger of the district in which he lived.

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OF THE AUTHOR.

ing his fame by those admirable compositions he sent to Mr. Thomson: and his temporary sallies and flashings, in the midst of the meditative, still bespoke a genius of wonderful strength and captivities. It has been said, indeed, that extraordinary as his poems are, they allure but inadequate judgements. And yet, by dint of their acuteness of observation, and expression, he displayed on common topics in conversation. In the society of persons of the meanest and refracted indulgences, which, among his more constant companys, probably formed his chief recommendation.

The emoluments of his office, which now composed his whole fortune, soon appeared insufficient for the maintenance of his family. He did not, indeed, from the first, expect that they could; but he had hopes of promotion and would probably have attain’d it, if he had not forfeited the favour of the Board of Excise, by some conversations on the state of public affairs, which were deemed highly improper, and were probably reported to the Board in a way not calculated to lessen their effect. That he should have been deceived by the affairs in France during the early periods of the revolution, is not surprising he only caught a portion of an enthusiasm which was then very general; but that he should have raised his imagination to a warmth beyond his fellows, will appear very singular, when we consider that he had hitherto dined with the lowest and accosted the hackney house of Stewart. Yet he had uttered opinions which were thought dangerous; and information being left, however, to the conduct, that result of which, although rather favourable, was not so much as to re-instate him in the good opinion of the commissioners. Interest was necessary to enable him to train his office; and he was informed that his promotion was deferred, and must depend on his future behaviour.

He is said to have defended himself, on this occasion, in a letter addressed to one of the Board, with much spirit and skill. He wrote another letter to a gentleman, who, hearing that he had been dismissed from his situation, proposed a subscription for him. In this last, he gives an account of the whole transaction, and endeavours to vindicate his loyalty; he also contends for an independence of spirit, which he certainly possessed, but which yet appears to have partaken of that extravagance of sentiment which are fitter to point a stanza than to conduct a life.

A passage in this letter is too characteristic to be omitted.—"Often," says our poet, "in blasting anticipation have I listened to some future hackney scribler, with heavy malice of savage stupidity, exulting in the thought only, how A. Burns being daily favor’d of independence to be found in his works, and after having been held up to public view, and to public estimation, as a man of some genius, yet quite destitute of resources within himself to support his borrowed dignity, dwindled into a pitiful excise-man; and sunk out the rest of his insignificant existence, in the meanest of pursuits, and among the lowest of mankind."

This passage has no doubt often been read with sympathy. That Burns should have embraced the only opportunity in his power to provide for his family, was no occasion of such a indiscriminate censure. If the value incompatable with the cultivation of genius be the business of an excise-man may be, there is nothing of moral turpitude or disgrace attached to it. He might be a good excise-man: he might be a good husband and father; and he laid hold of it. But that he should not have found a patron generous or wise enough to place him in a situation better suited to his talents and the man than so easily beset him: it is a circumstance on which the admirers of Burns have found it painful to dwell.

Mr. Mackenzie, in the 97th number of the Lounger, after mentioning the poet’s design of going to the West Indies, concludes that paper in words to which sufficient attention appears not to have been paid: "I trust means may be found to prevent this resolution from taking place. The world is full of poverty; the tax is no worse than justice, when I suppose her ready to stretch out the hand to cherish and retain this native poet, whose ‘wood notes wild’ possess so much excellence. To repair the neglect, and to call forth genius from obscurity in which it had pined ignominous, and place it were it may profit or despise it. For these are exercises which give to wealth and endurable superiority, to greatness and to patronage a laudable pride.

Although Burns deprecated the reflections which might be made on his occupation of exciseman, it may be necessary to add, that from this humble step, he foresaw all the contingencies and gradations of promotion up to a rank on which it is not usual to look with contempt. In a letter dated 1794, he states that he is the list of supervisors; that in two or three years, he should be at the head of that list, and be appointed, as a matter of course; but that then a friend might be of service in getting him into a part of the kingdom which he would like. A supervisor’s income varies from about 120l. to 260l. a year; but the business is ‘an incessant drudgery, and would be nobody, and as very splendid a reward.’ He proceeds, however, to observe, that the moment he is appointed supervisor he might be nomi- nated on the Collector’s list; ‘I shall not have such a result, for I am a bedy of political patronage. A collectorship varies from much better than two hundred a year to near a thousand. Collectors also come forward by presentment. A saddle, a horse, and an income, a life of complete leisure. A life of literary leisure with a decent competence, is the summit of my wishes.’

He was doomed, however, to continue in his present employment for the remainder of his days, which were not many. His constitution was now rapidly decaying; yet, his resolutions of amendment were but feeble. His temper became irritable and gloomy, and he was even insensible to the kind forgiveness and soothing attentions of his affectionate wife. In the month of June, 1796, he removed to Brown, about ten miles from Dumfries, to try the effect of sea-bathing; a remedy that at first, he imagined, relieved the rheumatic pains in his limbs, with which he had been afflicted for some months; but this was immediately followed by a new attack of fever. When brought back to his house at Dumfries, on the 18th of July, he was no longer able to stand upright. The fever increased, attended with delirium and delirious, and on the 21st he expired, in the thirty-eighth year of his age.

He left a widow and four sons, for whom the inhabitants of Dumfries opened a subscription, which being extended to England, produced a considerable sum for their immediate necessities. This has since been augmented by the profits of the edition of his works, printed in four volumes, 8vo; to which Dr Currie of Liverpool, prefixed a life, written with much elegance and taste.

As to the person of our poet, he is described as being nearly five feet ten inches in height, and of a form that indicated agility as well as strength. His well-raised forehead, his aquiline nose, his curling hair, expressed uncommon capacity. His eyes were large, dark, full of ardour and animation. His face was well formed, and his countenance uncommonly interesting. His conversation is ingeniously allow’d to have been un-
commonly fascinating, and rich in wit, humour, whim, and occasionally in serious and apposite reflection. This excellence, however, proved a lasting misfortune to him; for while it procured him the friendship of men of character and taste, in whose company his humour was guarded and chaste, it had also allurements for the lowest of mankind, who know no difference between freedom and licentiousness, and are never so completely gratified as when genius condescends to give a kind of sanction to their grossness. He died poor, but not in debt, and left behind him a name, the fame of which will not soon be eclipsed.
ON

THE DEATH OF BURNS.

BY MR. ROSCOE.

REAR high thy bleak majestic hills,
Thy shelter'd valleys proudly spread,
And, Scotia, pour thy thousand rills,
And wave thy heaths with blossoms red;
But, ah! what poet now shall tread
Thy airy heights, thy woodland reign,
Since he the sweetest bard is dead
That ever breathed the soothing strain?

As green thy towering pines may grow,
As clear thy streams may speed along;
As bright thy summer suns may glow,
And wake again thy feathery throng;
But now, unheeded is the song,
And dull and lifeless all around,
For his wild harp lies all unstrung,
And cold the hand that wak'd his sound.

What tho' thy vigorous offspring rise
In arts and arms thy sons excell;
Thy beauty in thy daughters' eyes,
And health in every feature dwell;
Yet who shall now their praises tell,
In strains impassion'd, fond, and free,
Since he no more the Song shall swell
To love, and liberty, and thee!

With step-dame eye and frown severe
His hapless youth why didst thou view?
For all thy joys to him were dear,
And all his vows to thee were due:
Nor greater bliss his bosom knew,
In opening youth's delightful prime,
Than when thy favouring ear he drew
To listen to his chanted rhyme.

Thy lonely wastes and frowning skies
To him were all with rapture fraught;
He heard with joy the tempests rise
That wak'd him to sublimer thought;
And oft thy windling dells he sought,
Where wild flowers pour'd their rath perfume,
And with sincere devotion brought
To thee the summer's earliest bloom.

But, ah! no fond maternal smile
His unprotected youth enjoy'd;
His limbs hour'd to early toil,
His days with early hardships tried:
And more to mark the gloomy yold,
And bid him feel his misery,
Before his infant eyes would glide
Day-dreams of immortality.

Yct, not by cold neglect depress'd,
With sinewy arm he turn'd the soil,
Sunk with the evening sun to rest,
And met at morn his earliest smile.
Wak'd by his rustic pipe, meanwhile
The powers of fancy came along,
And soothed his lengthen'd hour of toil
With native wit and sprightly song.

—Ah! days of bliss, too swiftly fled,
When vigorous health from labour springs,
And bland contentment smooths the bed,
And sleep his ready opiate brings;
And hovering round on airy wings
Float the light forms of young desire,
That of unutterable things
The soft and shadowy hope inspire.

Now spells of mightier power prepare,
Bid brighter phantoms round him dance;
Let flattery spread her viewless snare,
And fame attract his vagrant glance;
Let sprightly pleasure too advance,
Unveil'd her eyes, unclasp'd her zones,
Till lost in love's delicious trance
He scorches the joys his youth has known.

Let friendship pour her brightest blaze,
Expanding all the bloom of soul;
And mirth concentre all her rays,
And point them from the sparkling bowl;
And let the careless moments roll
In social pleasures unconfin'd,
And confidence that spurns control,
Unlock the inmost springs of mind.

And lead his steps those bowers among,
Where elegance with splendour vies,
Or science bids her favour'd throng
To more refin'd sensations rise;
Beyond the peasant's humbler joys,
And freed from each laborious strife,
There let him learn the bliss to prize
That waits the sons of polished life.

Then whilst his throbbing veins beat high
With every impulse of delight,
ON THE DEATH OF BURNS

Dash from his lips the cup of joy,
And shroud the scene in shades of night;
And let despair, with wizard light,
Disclose the yawning gulf below,
And pour incessant on his sight,
Her spectredills and shapes of woe;

And show beneath a cheerless shed,
With sorrowing heart and streaming eyes,
In silent grief where droops her head,
The partner of his early joys;
And let his infant's tender cries
His fond parental succour claim,
And bid him hear in agonies
A husband and a father's name.

'Tis done—the powerful charm succeeds;
His high reluctant soul goes on:

In bitterness of soul he bleeds,
Nor longer with his fate contends.
An idiot laugh the welkin rends
As genius thus degraded lies;
Till pitying Heaven the veil extends
That shrouds the Poet's ardent eyes.

—Rear high thy blenk, majestic hills,
Thy shelter'd valleys proudly spread,
And, Scotia, pour thy thousand rills,
And wave thy heaths with blossoms red;
But never more shall poet tread
Thy airy heights, thy woodland reign,
Since he the sweetest bard is dead
That ever breathed the soothing strain.
PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EDITION

OF

BURNS' POEMS,

PUBLISHED AT KILMARNOCK IN 1786.

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

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

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

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

OF THE

SECOND EDITION

OF THE

POEMS FORMERLY PRINTED.

TO THE

NOBlemen and Gentlemen

OF THE

Caledonian Hunt.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

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

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

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

I have the honour to be,

With the sincerest gratitude,

and highest respect,

My Lord, &c. and Gentlemen,

Your most humble servant,

ROBERT BURNS

Edinburgh,
April 4, 1787.
POEMS,

CHIEFLY SCOTTISH.

THE TW A DOGS.—A TALE.

'Twas in that place o' Scotland's isle, That bears the name o' Auld King Coil, Upon a bonnie day in June, When weiring thro' the afternoon, Tw a dogs that were nae thrang at home, Forgather'd ane upon a time.

The first I'll name, they ca'd him Caesar, Was keepit for his Honour's pleasure; His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs, Show'd he was nae one o' Scotland's dogs; But whapit some place far abroad, Where sailors gaung to fish for Cod.

His locked, letter'd, braw brass collar, Show'd him the gentleman and scholar; But though he was o' high degree, Tha fent a pride, na pride had he; But wad hae spent an hour caressin', Ev'n wi' a tinkler-gypsy's messin.

At kirk or market, mill or smiddie, Nae twated tyke, tho' er'ree sae buddle, But he wad stawa', as glad to see him, And straun't on stanes an' hillocks wi' him.

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

He was a gash an' faithfu' tyke, As ev'ry lap a sheugh or dyke. His honest, sonnie, hawa'nt face, Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black; His gawzie tail, wi' upward curl, Hung o'er his hurdies wi' a swirl.

Nae doubt but they were fain o' ither, An' unco pack an' thich thegither; Wi' social nose whyles smuff'd and snowkit, Whyles mice an' moudie words they howkit; Whyles scour'd awa' in lang excursion; An' worry'ld ither in diversions; Until wi' daffin weary gown, Upon a knawe thye sat them down.

* Cuchullin's dog in Ossian's Fingal.

And there began a lang digression About the lords o' the creation.

CESAR.

I've often 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 racked rents, His coals, his kain, and a' his stents, He rises when he likes himself; 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, thare, thro' the steekes The yellow letter'd Geordie keeks.

Free morn to e'en it's nought but tell ing At baking, roasting, frying, boiling; An' tho' the gentry first are stecchin', Yet ev'n the ha' folk fill their pechan Wi' sauce, ragouts, and siclike trashtrie. That's little short o' downright wastrie. Our Whippet-in, wee blastit wonder; Poor worthless elf, it eats a dinner, Better than any tenant man His Honour has in a' the lan'; An' what poor cot-folk pit their pinch in, I own it's past my comprehension.

LUATH.

Trowth, Caesar, whyles they're flesh'nt enough; A cottar howlin in a sheugh, Wi'dirty stanes biggin a dyke, Baring a quarry, and sic like, Himself, a wife, he thus sustains, A smyrie o' wee doubbe weans, An' nought but his han' darg, to keep Them right and tight in thack an' rape.

An' when they meet wi' sair disasters, Like loss o' health, or want o' masters, Ye maist wad think, a wee touch langer, An' they maun starvoo' cauld an' hunger; But, how it comes, I never kenn'd ye, They're maistly wonderful' contented;
Burn's
dear

12

They're
Their
Or
Tho'constantly
An' stuff'd, and cuff'd, and disrespected! I — d, man, our gentry care as little For delvers, diggers, an' sic cattle; They gang as saucy by poor fo'k, As I wad by a sinking brook.

I've notice'd on our Laird's court-day, An' moany a time my heart's been wae, Poor tenant bodies scant o'cash, How they maun thole a factor's snash: He'll stamp an' threaten, curse an' swear, He'll apprehend them, point their gear; While they maun, staun', wi' aspect humble, An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble.

I see how folk live than has riches; But sure how poor folk maun be wretches?

Luath.

They're nae sae wretched's ane wad think; Tho'constantly on porrith'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 ay in less or mair provided; An' tho' fatigued wi' close employment, A blink o' rest's a sweet enjoyment.

The dearest comfort o' their lives, Their gruible weans an' faithful wives; The prating things are just their pride, That sweetness a' their fire-side.

An' whybles twalpenny worth o' nappy Can mak the bodies ucco happy; They lay aside their private cares, To mend 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 Lon'on.

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

That merry day the year begins, They bar the door on frosty winds; The nappy reeks wi' mantling ream, An' sheds a heart-inspiring steam; The luntine pipe, an' assinish mill, Are handed round wi' richt guide will; The cantle auld folks crackin crouse, The young anes rantin thro', the house,— My heart has been sae fain to see them, That I for joy has barkit wi' them.

Still it's owre true that ye has said, Sic game is now owre aften play'd.

There's monie a creditable stock, O' decent, honest, fawnsome folk, Are riven out bath root and branch, Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench, Wha thinks to knit himsel the faster In favour wi' some gentle master, Wha, a'bluss, thrang a-parlimentin, For Britain's guide his saul indentin—

Luath.

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

O would they stay aback frae courts, An' please themsels wil' kintra sports! It wad for ev'ry ane be better, The Laird, the Tenant, and the Cotter For thes frank, rantin, ramblin billies, Fient haet o' them's ill-hearted fellows; Except for breakin o' their trimmer, Or speakin lighty o' their limmer, Or shootin o' a hare or moor-cock, The ne'er a bit they're ill to poor folk.

But will ye tell me, Master Caesar, Sure great folk's life's a life o' pleasure? Nae cauld nor hunger e'er can steer them, The vera thought o' net need na fear them.

Caesar.

L—d, man, were ye but whybles where I am, The gentles ye wad ne'er ev'ry cm.
It's true they need na strave or sweat, Thro' winter's cauld, or simmer's heat; They've nae sair wark to craze their bances, An' ill auld age wil' grips an' grames:
SCOTCH DRINK

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

Solomon's Proverbs xxx, 6, 7.

I sing the juice Scots beer can make us,
In glass or jug.

O thou, my Muse! guild auld Scotch Drink:
Whether thro' wimping worms thou jink,
Or, richly brown, ream o'er the brink,
In glorious stem,

Inspire me, till I lips and wink,
To sing thy name!

Let husky Wheat the laughs adorn,
An' Aits set up their avvie horn,
An' Pease and Beans at e'en or morn,
Furricane the plain,

Leeze me on thee, John Barleycorn,
Thou king o' grain!

On thee a'; Scotland shows her cood,
In scoupe a' ows, the wale o' food
Or tumblin in the boiling-flood
W' kail an' beef;
But when thou pours thy strong heart's blood,
There thou shines chief.

Food fills the wame, an' keeps us livin';
Tho' life's a gift no worth receivin',
When heavy dragg'd wi' pine an' grievin',
But, oill'd by thee,

The wheels o' life gae down-hill, scrivenin',
W' rattlin glee.

Thou clears the head o' doited Lear;
Thou cheers the heart o' droopin Car;
Thou strings the nerves o' Labour sair,
At's weary toil;
Thou even brightens dark Despair
W' gloomy smile.

Aft, clad in massy siller weed,
W' Gentles thou ertects thy head;
Yest humbly kind in time o' need,
The poor man's wine
His wee drop patrich, or his bread,
Thou kitchens fine.

Thou art the life o' public haunts;
But thee, what were our fairs and rants?
Ev'n godly metings o' the saums,
By thee inspir'd,
When gaping they besiege the tents,
Are doubly fir'd.

That mercy night we get the corn in,
O sweetly then thou reams the horn in!
Or reekin on a New-morning year
In cog or bicker,
An' just a wee drop spiritual burn in,
An' gusty sucker!

When Vulcan gies his bellows breath,
An' ploughmen gather wi' their grail
O rare! to see thee flaz an' breath
At' th' loggit ca;
Then Burnewin* comes on like dear
At every cha.

* Burnewin—burn-the-wind the Blacksmith—an appropiate title. E.
Nae mercy, then, for air or steel;  
The brawny, brawtie, ploughman chief,  
Brings hard owrehip, wi' sturdy wheel,  
The strong forhammer,  
Till block an' studdie ring an' reel  
Wi' diansome clament.

When skirlin weanies see the light,  
Thou makes the gossip clutter bright,  
How fumblin duifs their deairies slight;  
Wae worth the name!  
Nae howdie gets a social night,  
Or plack free them.

When neeborn anger at a plees,  
An' just as wad as wud can be,  
How easy can the barley breae  
Cement the quarrel!  
It's aye the cheapest lawyer's fee  
To taste the barrel.

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

Wae worth that broadly burning trash!  
Pell source o' monie a pain an'brush  
Twins monie a poor, doyht, drunken hash,  
O' half his days  
An' sends' besides' auld Scotland's cash  
To her warst foes.

Ye Scots, wha wish auld Scotland well!  
Ye chief, to you my tale I tell,  
Poor plackless deevils like mysel!  
It sets you ill,  
Wi' bitter, deartful' wines to mell,  
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 owre a glass o' seakity punch  
W' honest men.

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

Three, Ferintosh! O saily lost!  
Scotland, lament frae coast to coast!  
Now colic gripes, an' barkin hoist  
May kill us a';  
For royal Forbes' charter 'tis boast  
Is ta'en awa!

Thae curst horse-leeches o' the Excise,  
Wha mak the Whisky Steals their price!  
Hand up thy hen', Dell i' once, twices, thrice!  
There, seize the blinkers!  
And bake them up in brontane pies  
For poor d—n' drinkers.

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

THE AUTHOR'S

EARNEST CRY AND PRAYER

TO THE SCOTCH REPRESENTATIVES,
IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Dearest of Destillation! last and best:  
—How art thou lost!  

Parody on Milton

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

Alas! my roupset Muse is harse;  
Your honours' hearts wil' grief 'twad pierce,  
To see her sitin on her a—  
Low i' the dust,  
An' scriechin out prosaic verse,  
An' like to brust!

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

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

Does any great man glunch an' gloom?  
Speak out, an' never fash your thumb!  
Let posts an' pensions sink or soon  
Wi' them wha grant 'em;  
If honestly they cana come,  
Far better want e'em.

* This was written before the act anent the Scotch Distilleries, of session 1736; for which Scotland and the Author return their most grateful thanks.
In gath'ring votes you were na slack;
Now stand as tightly by your tack;
Ne'er claw your lug, an' fidge your back,
An' ham an' haw;
But raise your arm, an' tell your crack
Before them a'.

Paint Scotland greeting ewre her thrissle;
Her mutchkin story as toun'sa whistle:
An' d—an' d Excusen in a bussle,
Seizin a Steal,
Triumphant crushin't like a mussel
Or lanspit shell.

Then on the tither hand present her,
A backguard Smugler right behind her,
An' check for-dow, a chuffie Vintner,
Collegaung join,
Picking her pouch as bare as winter
Of a' kind coon.

Is there, that bears the name o' Scot,
But feels his heart's blood rasing hot,
To see his poor auld Mither's pot
Thus dang in staves,
An' plunder'd o' her kindmost great
By gallows knaves?

Ains! I'm but a nameless wight,
Trole' I the mire clean out o' sight;
But could I like Moundog'ries fight,
Or gab like Boswell
There's some sark-necks I wad draw tight,
An' tie some hose well.

God Bless your Honors, can ye see't
The kind, auld, cantie Carlin greet,
An' no get warmily to your feet,
An' gair them hear it,
An' tell them wi' a patriotic heat,
Ye winna hear 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 wrang.

Dempster, a true blue Scot, I'se warran;
Thee ath-tit-testing, chaste Kilkerran;•
An' that glib-gabbed Highlant Daron,
The Laird o' Graham,†
An' ane, a chap that's d—mond'd aublifarran,
Dundas his name.

Erskine, a sparklie Norland billie;
True Campbell, Frederick an' Roy;
An' Livingston, the hand Sir Willie;
An' monie ither
Whom auld Demonsthenes or Tully
Might own for britheris.

Arouse, my boys! exert your mettle
* Sir Adam Ferguson. E.
† The present Duke of Montrose. (1800.) E.

To get auld Scotland back her kittle;
Or faith! I'll wad my new plough-pettle,
Ye'll see't, or lang,
She'll teach you, wi' a reckin whistle,
Anither sang.

This while she's been in crankous mood,
Her last Militia fired her bluid;
(Deel na' they ever ma'er do guid,
'Play'd her that pliskie!)
An' now she like to rin red-wul
About her Whisky.

An' I—d, if ance they pit her till',
Her tartan petticoat she'll kilt,
An' durk an' pistol at her belt,
She'll tak the streets,
An' rin her whistle to the bit;
'I th' first she meets!

For G—d sake, Sirs! then speak her fair,
An' struk her channie wi' the hair,
An' to the muckle house repair,
Wi' instant speed,
An' strive wi' a' your Wit and Lorr,
To get remade.

You ill-tongued tinkler, Charlie Fox,
May taunt you wi' his jeers and mocks;
But give him'et, my hearty cocks!
E'en cowe the caddie;
An' send him to his dicing box
An' aportin lady.

Tell you guid bluid o' auld Boconnocks,
I'll be his debt twa musham bonnoks,
An' drink his health in auld Nas'm Tinnock* Nine times a-week,
If he some scheme, like tea an' winnock's
Wad kindly seek.

Could he some commutation broach,
I'll pledge my aith in guil braid Scotch,
Ie need na fear their foul reproach
Nor erudition,
Yon mistle-matxie queer hotch-potch,
The Coalition.

Auld Scotland has a raucle 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,
May still your Mither's heart support ye;
Then, though a Minister grow dory,
An' kick your place,
Ye'll snap your fengers, poor an' hearty,
Before his face.

God bless your Honours a' your days,
Wi' sowps o' kail and brats o' claise.
* A worthy old Hostess of the Author's in Mauchline,
where he sometimes studied Politics over a glass of
guil auld Scotch Drink.
In spite 'o a' the thievish knee,
That haunt St. Jamie's
Your humble Poet 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 their Whisky.

What tho' their Fhebus kinder' warms,
While fragrance blooms and beauty charms;
When wretches rage, in fanish'd swarms,
The scent'd groves,
Or hounded forth, dishonour arms
In hungry draves.

Their gun's a burden on their shouther,
They downa bide the stink o' powther;
Their baudest thoughts a' handk'ring swither
To stan', or run,
Till skelp—a shout—they're aff, a' thrower,
To save their skin.

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

Nae cauld, faint-hearted doublings teas him;
Death comes, wi' fearless eye he sees him;
Wil' bluidy hand a welcome gies him:
An' when he fa's,
His latest draught o' breath he sees him
In faint huzzas.

Sages their solemn een may steck,
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' white's ye moistify your leather,
Till whare ye sit, on craps o' leather,
Ye tine your dam;
Freedom and Whisky gang thegither!
Tak' aff your dram.

THE HOLY FAIR.*

A robe of seeming truth and trust
Hid crafty observation;

* Holy Fair is a common phrase in the West of Scotland for a Sacramental occasion.

And secret hung, with poison'd crest,
The dirk of Defamation;
A mask that like the gorge show'd,
Dye-varying on the pigeon;
And for a mantle large and broad,
He wrapt him in Religion.

Hypocrisy a-la-mode.

I.

UPON a simmer Sunday morn,
When Nature's face is fair,
I walked forth to view the corn,
An' sm'll the caller air,
The rising sun owre Galston mura,
Wi' glorious light was glistnin;
The hare's were hirplin down the fur,
The lav'rocks they were chantin
Fu' sweet that day

II.

As lightsomely I gloaws'd abroad,
To see a scene sae gay,
Three Hizzies, early at the road,
Cam skelpin up the way;
Twa had mantecles o' dolefu' black,
But ane wi' laryt lining;
The third, that gazed a wee a-back,
Was in the fashion shining

Fu' gay that day.

III.

The teens appear'd like sisters twin,
In feature, form, an' claes!
Their visage, wither'd, lang, an' thin,
An' sour as oun claes;
The third cam up, hap-step-an'-lowf,
As light as any lambie,
An' wi' a curchie low did stoop,
As soon as e'er she saw me,

Fu' kind that day.

IV.

Wil' bannet 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 hands,
"Ye, for my sake, hae, gie' me the ilk
Of a' the ten commands
A screed some day.

V.

"My name is Fun—your cromie near,
The nearest friend ye hae;
An' this is Superstitution here,
An' that's Hypocrisy.
I'm cunnig to ******** Holy Fair,
To spend an hour in duffin;
Whase ain dear lass, that he likes best,
Comes clinkin down beside him!
Wt' arm reposed on the chair back,
He sweetly does compose him!
Which, by degrees, slips round her neck,
An' koope upon her bosom
Unkon'd that day.

XII.

Now a' the congregation o'er,
Is silent expectation;
For ***** speals the holy door,
Wt' tidings o' dam-n —.
Should Hornie, as in ancient days,
'Mang sons o' — present him,
The vera sigh o' *****'s face,
To's ain koope had sent him
Wt' fright that day.

XIII.

Hear how he clears the points o' faith,
Wt' ratin an' wt' thumpin!
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath,
He's stampin an' he's jumpin!
His lengthen'd chin, his turn'd up snout,
His clerkish squeal and gestures,
Oh how they fire the heart devout,
Like cantharidian plasters,
On a' a day!

XIV.

But bark! the tent has chang'd its voice;
There's peace an' rest nae longer:
For a' the real judges rise,
They canna sit for anger.
***** opens out his cauld harrasses,
On practice and on morals;
An' aff the godly pour in throng,
To gie the jers an' barrels
A lift that day.

XV.

What signifies his barren shine
Of moral pow'rs and reason?
His English style, an' gesture stil,
Are a' clean out o' season.
Like Socrates or Antonine,
Or some auld pagan Heathen,
The moral man he does define,
But ne're a word o' faith in
That's right that day.

XVI.

In guild time comes an antidote
Against sic poison'd nostrum;
For ***** frace the water-fit,
Ascends the holy rostrum;
See, up he's got the word o' —
An' meek an' mir has view'd it;
While Common-Sense has ta'en the road.
An' aff, an' up the Cowgate,
Fast, fast, that day.

* A street so called, which faces the tent in—
The half asleep start up with fear, 
An' think they hear it roarin',
When presently it does appear,
'Twas but some nebboor soorin
Sleep that day.

'Twad be owre lang a tale, to tell
How monie stories past,
An' how they crowded to the yell
When they were a' dimmist;
How drink gaed round, in cogs an'caups,
Amaug the furms an' benches;
An' cheese an' bread frae women's laps,
Was dealt about in lunchees,
An' daubs that day

In comes a guandie gash Guidwife,
An' sits down by the fire,
Syne draws her kebbuck an' her knife,
The lasses they are sayer.
The Auld Guidmen about the grace,
Fae side to side they bother,
Till some aye by his bonnet lays,
An' gies them' like a tether,
Fu' lang that day

Waesucks! for him that gets nase lass,
Or lasses that hae maething!
Smit' need has he to say a grace,
Or melve his brow clathing!
O wives, be mindiu', ance yoursel,
How brumie lads ye wanted,
An' dins, for a kebbuck-heal,
Let lasses be afronted
On sic a day!

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

How monie hearts this day converts
O' sinners and o' lasses!
Their hearts o' stane, gin night are gane,
As saft as any flesh is.
There's some are fou o' love divine;
There's some are fot o' brandy;
An' monie jobs that day begin,
May end in Houghmangandie
Someither day.
DEATH AND DR. HORNBOOK.
A TRUE STORY.

Some books are lies from end to end, And some great lies were never penned, Er’n Ministers, they have been kenn’d In holy rapture, A rousing whid, at time to vend, And nail’d wi’ Scripture.

But this that I am gaun to tell, Which lately on a night befell, Is just as true’s the Deil’s in h—l Or Dublin city: That e’er he nearer comes oursel ‘Is a muckie pity The Clachan yill had made me cauty, I was na fou, but just and plenty; I stacher’d whyles, but yet took tent ay To free the ditches; An’ hillocks, stanes, an’ bushes kenn’d ay Frae gHNais an’ witches. The rising moon began to glow’t The distant Cumnock hills out-owre; To count her horns, wi’ ain’ my pow’r, I sent mysel; But whether she had three or four, I cou’d na tell. 

I was come round about the hill, And toddlin down on Willie’s mill, Setting my staff wi’na’ my skill, To keep me slicker: Tho’ laudward whyles, against my will, I took a bicker. 

I there wi’ Something did forgather, That put me in eerie swither; An’ awful fithe, out-owre as showther, Clear-dangling, hang; A three-tae’d leister on theither Lay, large an’ lang.

Its stature seem’d lang Scotch clls twa, The queerest shape that e’er I saw, For sient a wane it had ava! And then, its shanks, They were as thin, as sharp an’ sma’ As cheeks o’ branks.

“Guid-een,” quo’ I; “Friend I hae ye been mawin, Whenither folk are busy sawin’” * It seem’d to mak a kind o’ stan But naething spak; At length, says I, “Friend, where ye gaun, Will ye go back?” *

It spake right hove;—”My name is Death, But be na fley’d.”—Quoth I, “Guid faith, Ye’re may be come to stap my breath; But tent me, billie:” *

This rencontre happened in seed-time, 1785.

I red ye weel, tak care o’ skaith, See, there’s a gully!“

“Guidman,” quo’ he, “put up your whittle, I’m no design’d to try its mettle; But if I did, I wad be kittle To be mistrur’d, I wad na mind it, no, that spittle Out-owre my beard.

“Well, weel!” says I, “a bargain be’t; Come, gies your hand, an’ sae we’re gree’t; We’ll ease our shanks an’ tak a seat, Come, gies your news This while* ye hae been monie a gate At monie a house.”

“Ay, ay l!” quo’ he, an’ shook his head, “It’s e’en a lang, lang time indeed Sin’ I began to nick the thread, An’ choke the breath Folk maun do something for their bread, An’ sae maun Death.

“Sax thousand years are near hand fled Sin’ I was to the butching bred, An’ monie a scheme in vain’s been laid, To stap or scar me: Till ane Hornbook’s t’ ta’em up the trade, An’ faith, he’ll waun me

“Ye ken Jock Hornbook!’ the Clachan, Deil mak his king’s hood in a spleanchan! He’s grown sae well acquaint wi’ Buchan An’ither chap, That weans hand out their fingers laughin’ And pouk my lips. 

“See, here’s a sithe, and there’s a dart, They hae pierc’d mony a gallant heart; But Doctor Hornbook, wi’ his art, And cursed skill, Has made them baith not worth a f—t, Damn’d haet they’ll kill.

’Twas but yestreen, nae futher gaun, I threw a noble throw at ane; Wit’ less, I’m sure, I’ve hundreds slain; But deil-ma-care, It just pley’d dirl on the bane, But did nae mair.

“Hornbook, was by, wi’ ready art, And had sae fortly’d the part, That when I looked to my dart, It was sae blunt, Fient haet o’ wad hae pierc’d the heart Of a kail-runt.

* An epidemical fever was then raging in that country.

† This gentleman, Dr. Hornbook, is professionally, a brother of the Sovereign Order of Ferula; but, by intuition and inspiration, is at once an Apothecary Surgeon, and Physician.

‡ Buchan’s Domestic Medicine.
"I drew my sith in sic a fury,  
I nearhand cowpit wi' my hurry  
But yet the baud! Apothecary  
Withstood the shock;  
I might as weel hae try'd a quarry  
O' hard whin rock.

"Ev'n them he canna get attended,  
Alto' their face he ne'er had kent it,  
Just — in a kilt-blade, and send it,  
As soon he smelled it,  
Bait their disease, and what will mend it  
At once he tells it.

"And then a' doctors' saws and whittles,  
Of a' dimensions, shapes, an' mettles,  
A' kinds o' boxes, mugs, an' bottles,  
He's sure to hae;  
Their Latin names as fast he rattles  
As A B C.

"Calces o' fossils, earth, and trees;  
True Sal-marinum o' the seas;  
The Farina o' beans and peas,  
It has it plenty;  
Aqua-fontis, what you please,  
He can content ye.

"Forget some new uncommon weapons,  
Urinus Spiritus o' capons;  
Or Mite-born shavings, filings, scrapings,  
Distilled per se;  
Sal-alkali o' Midge-tail-clippings,  
And monie mae."

"Waes me for Johnny God's Hole now;*"  
Quo' I, "if that the news be true!  
His braw calf-ward where gowans grew,  
Sae white and bonnie,  
Nae doubt they'll rive it wi' the plow;  
'They'll ruin Johnnie!"

The creature grain'd an eldritch laugh,  
And says, "Ye need na yoke the plough,  
Kirkyards will soon be till'd enough,  
Tak ye me fear:  
They'll a' be trench'd wi' monie a sheugh  
In twa-three year.

"Where I kill'd one a fair stray death,  
By loss o' blood or want o' breath,  
This night I'm free to tak my aith,  
That Hornbook's skill  
Has clad a score I' their last clath,  
By drap an' pill."

"An honest Webster to his track,  
Whose wife's twa nieves were scarce wee bred,  
Gat tippence-worth to mend her head,  
When it was sair;  
The wife slade cannie to her bed,  
But ne'er spak mair."

"A kintre Laird had ta'en the hatts,  
Or some curmuring in his guts,  
His only son for Hornbook sets,  
An' pays him well.  
The lad, for twa guid gimmer pets,  
Was laird himsel.

"A bonnie lass, ye kend her name,  
Some ill-browen drink had hov'rd her wame;  
She trusts hersel, to hide the shame,  
In Hornbook's care;  
Horn sent her aff to her lang home,  
To hide it there.

"That's just a swatch o' Hornbook's way;  
Thus goes he on from day to day,  
Thus does he poison, kill an' slay,  
An's weel paid for't;  
Yet stops me o' my lawful prey,  
Wi' his d-m'd dirt:

"But, hark! I'll tell you of a plot,  
The' dimma ye be speaking o';  
I'll niall the self-conceited Scot,  
As dead's a herrin':  
Next time we meet, I'll' wad a great,  
He gets his fairin'!"

But just as he began to tell,  
The auld kirk-hammer strak the bell  
Some wee short hour an'ant the twaal,  
—Which rais'c us haith:  
I took the way that plans'd my sel'  
And was did Death.

———

THE BRIGS OF AYR,  
A POEM.

INSCRIBED TO J. B*********, ESQ. AYR.

The simple Bard, rough at the rustic plough,  
Learning his tuneful trade from every bough;  
The chanting linet, or the mellow thrush,  
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn bush;  
The soaring lark, the perching red-brest shrill,  
Or deep-ton'd, plovers, gray, wild, whistling o'er the hill;  
Shall he, nest in the peasant's lowly shed,  
To hardy independence bravely bred,  
By early poverty to hardships steel'd,  
And train'd to arms in stern Misfortune's bow,  
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,  
The servile mercenary Swiss of rhymes?  
Or labour hard the paneyscopic close,  
With all the venal soul of dedicating? rose?  
Not! though his artless strains he rudely sings,  
And throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,  
He glows with all the spirit of the Bard,  
Pame, honest fame, his great, his dear reward.  
Still, if some: avon's generous care he trace,  
Skill'd in the secret, to bestow with grace;  
When B********* befriens his humone name,
And hauds the rustic stranger up to fame,
With heart-felt throes his grateful bosom swells,
The godlike bliss, to give, alone excels.

---

'Twas when the stacks get on their winter-hap,
And thack and rape secure the toll won-crap;
Potato-bings are smuggled up frae skaitch
Of coming Winter's biting, frosty breath;
The bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils,
Unnumber'd buds an' flowers' delicious spoils,
Seal'd up with frugal care in massive waxen piles,
Are doom'd by man, that tyrant o'er the weak,
The death o' devils smoor'd wi' brimstone reek:
The thundering guns are heard on every side,
The wounded cowses, reeling, scatter wise;
The feather'd field-mates, bound by Nature's tie,
Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie:
(What warm, poetic heart, but inly bleeds,
And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds!)
Nae mair the flowers in field or meadow springs;
Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
Except perhaps the Robin's whistling praise,
Proud o' the height of some bit half-lang tree;
The hoary morus precede the sunny days,
Mild, calm, serene, wide spreads the moon-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 inspird, or hasty prest wi' care;
He left his bed, and took his wayward route,
And down by Simpson's wheel the left about:
(Whether impelli'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 nor why:
The drowsy Dungeon-clock had number'd two,
And Wallace Tower had sworn the fact was true.
The side-swoln Firth with sullen sounding roar,
Through the still night dash'd home on the shore:
All Jae was hush'd as Nature's close e'e;
The silent moon shone high o'er tower and tree:
The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crepid, gently crusting, o'er the glittering stream.

When, lo! on either hand the list'ning Bard,
The clanging sigh of whistling wings is heard;
Two drousy forms dart thro' the midnight air,
Swift as the Goshawk drives on the wheeling hare;
Ane on th' Auld Brig his airy shape upears,
Theither flutters o'er the rising piers:
Our warlock Rhymner instantly descry'd
The Sprites that owre the Brigs of Ayr preside.
(That Bards are second-sighted is nae joke,
And ken the lingo of the spiritual folk;)
Paya, Spunkies, Kelpies, a', they can explain them)
And ev'n the very deils they brawly ken them.)
Auld Brig appear'd o' ancient illustrious race,
The vern wrinkles Gothic in his face:
He seem'd as he wi' Time had warrit'd lang,
Yet toughly doure, he bade an unco bang.
New Brig was butkist in a braw new coat,
That he, at Lon' on, frae one Adame, got;
It's hand five taper staves no smooth's a head,
Wi' irs, and whirligigums at the head.
The Goth was stalking round with anxious search,
Springing the time-worn flaws in ev'ry arch;
It chanc'd his new-com neebor took his e'e,
And e'en a vex'd and angry heart had he!
Wi' thieveless nac'er to see his modish mien,
He, down the water, gies him this guid'len:

auld brig.

I doubt na, frien', y' will think ye're nae shank sheep,
Ance ye were streekit o' er frae banke to bank,
But gin ye be a brig as ancle as me,
Tho' faith that day, I doubt, ye'll never see
There'll be, if that date come, I'll wad a boddle,
Some fewwer whigmeleeries in your noddle.

New Brig.

Auld Yan'el, ye but show your little mene,
Just mouch about it wi' your scanty sense;
Will your poor, narrow foot-path of a street,
Where two wheel-barrowes tremble when they meet,
Your ruin'd, formless bulk o' stane an' 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 bulk 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 e'il I'm sein for'airs,
I'll be a Brig, when ye're a shapeless cairn!
As yet ye little ken about the matter,
But twa-three winters will inform 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 moreland course,
Or haunted Garpal draws his feebie source,
Arous'd by blast'in winds an' spotting thowes,
In many a torrent down his snaw-broo rowes;
While crashin ice, borne on the roaring speat,
Sweepes dams, an' mills, an' brigs, a' to the gate;
And from Glenbuck, down to the River-key,
Auld Brig is just one lengthin'd, tumbling sea;
Then down ye'll hur, deil nor ye never rise!
And dash the gummie jumps up to the poring skies:
A lesson sadly teaching, to your cost.
That Architecture's noble art is lost!

* A noted ford, just above the Auld Brig.

† The banks of Garpal Water is one of the few places in the West of Scotland, where those fancy-scorning beings, known by the name of Ghaisle, still continue pertinaciously to inhabit.
‡ The source of the river Ayr.
§ A small landing place above the large key.
NEW BRIG.

Fine Architecture, troth, I needs must say’t o’t! The L—d be thank’t that we’ve tint the gate o’t! Gaunt, ghastly, ghast-a-lurking edifices, Hanging with threat’ning jut’, like precipices; O’er arching, moul’d, gloom-inspiring coves Supporting roofs fantastic, stony groves: Windows and doors, in nameless sculpture drest, With order, symmetry, or taste unblest: Forms like some bedlam statuary’s dream, The crad’ed creations of misguided whim; Forms might be worship’d on the bend’d knee, And, still the second dream content be free, Their likeness is not found on earth, in air, or sea. Manious that would disgrace the building taste Of any mansion, reptile, bird, or beast; Fit only for a doted Monkish race, Or frosty maid’s forsown the dear embrace, Or cuits of latter times, wha held the notion That sullen gloom was sterling true devotion; Fancties that our gold Brugh deuies 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 Proverbs, an’ mony a Baille, Wha in the paths o’ righteounness did toil’ ay; Ye dainty Deacom, and ye dauce Cowenaers, To whom our moderns are but caresey-cleaners; Ye godly Cowcais wha hae blest this town; Ye godly Brethren of the sacred gown, Wha meekly gie your haurties to the smitters; And (what would now be strange) ye godly Writers: A’ ye dance folk I’ve borne about the broo, Were ye but here, what would ye say or do? How would your spirits groan in deep vexation, To see each melancholy alteration; And, agonizing, curse the time and place When ye begat the base, degnerate race! Nae langer Rev’rend Men, their country’s glory, In plain braid Scots help forth a plain braid story! Nae langer thrifty Citizens, an’ dauce, Meet owre a pint, or in the Council-house: But: staunmell, cory-hecad, graceless Gentry, The herremint and ruin of the country; Men, three-parts mad by Tailors and by Barbers, Wha waste your well-knit’d gear on d—d new Brigs and Harbours!

NEW BRIG.

Now hand you there! for faith ye’ve said enough, And muckle mair than ye can make 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 well be spar’d; To liken them to your auld-world squad, I must needs say, comparisons are old, In Ayr, Wag-wits na mair can hae a handle To mock a “Citizen,” a term o’ scandal; Nae mair the Connell waddles down the street, In all the pomp of ignorant conceit; Man who grew wise priggin owre hopes an’ raisins Or gather’d lib’ral views in Bonds and Selinas. If happy Knowledge, on a random tramp, Had abor’d them with a glimmer of his lamp, And would to Common-sense, for once betray’d them. Plain, dull Stupidity kept kindly in to aid them.

What farther clishmaclaver might been said, What bloody wars, if Sprites had blood to shed, No man can tell; but all before their sight, A fairy train appear’d in order bright; Adown the glittering stream they fealty dance’d; Bright to the moon their various dresses glane’d. They footed o’er the watry glass so neat, The infant ice scarce beat at’neath their feet. While arts of Minsmeay among them rung, And soul-enmbling Bard’s heroic ditties sung. O had M’Lauchlan, that thairn-inspiring Sage, Been there to hear his heavenly band engage, When thro’ his dear Stratspesye’s ey’lors with High-land rage, Or when they struck old Scotia’s melting airs, The lover’s raptur’d joys or bleeding cares; How would his Highland lug 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 rang in every part, While simple melody pair’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-likee crowns’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 bay, came rural Joy, And Summer, with his fervid-beaming eye: All-cheering heav’ty, with her flowing horn, Led yellow Autumn wraith’d with nodding 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 Fest wild woody coverts hide; Benevolence, with mild, benignant air, A female form, came from the tow’ra Stair’s: Learning and Worth in equal measures trode From simple Catrine, their long lov’d abode; Last, white-ro’d lence, crown’d with a hazel wreath, To rustic Agriculture did bepeaeth The broken iron instruments of death; At sight of whom our Sprites forget their kin’l’s wrath.

* A well known performer of Scottish music on the violin.
THE ORDINATION.

For sense they little owe to Frugal Heaven—
To please the Mob they nate the little given.

I.
Kilmarnock Websters fudge an' claw
An' pour your crcshie nations;
An' ye wha lesser sax an' draw,
Of a' denominations,
Swift to the Laigh Kirk, ane an' a'
An' there tak up your stations;
Then aff to B-gu— s'm in raw,
An' pour divine headons
For joy this day.

II.
Curst Common Sense that imp o' h'll,
Cam in wi' Maggie Lander;*
But O ****** aft made her yell,
An' R ****** sam misca'd her?
This day Mr. ****** takes the spear,
And he's the boy will blind her!
He'll clap a Minion on her tail,
An' set the bairns to daub her
Wi' dirt this day.

III.
Mak haste an' turn king David owre,
An' lik wi' helly changor;
O' double verse come gie us four,
An' skirt up the Bangor:
This day the kirk kicks up a stoure,
Nae mair the knives shall wrong he,
For Heresy is in her pow'r,
An' gloriously shall winning her
Wi' path this day.

IV.
Come, let a proper text be read,
An' touch it all wi' vigour,
How graceless f'rent laugh at his Dad,
Which made Common a niger;
Or Phineas I drove the murdering blade,
Wif whi re abhorring rigour;
Or Zipporah, the saucin' Jade,
Was like a bloody tiger
Pitch in that day.

V.
There, try his mettll on the creed,
And bind him down wi' caution,

* Alluding to a scoffing ballad which was made on the admission of the late Reverend and worthy Mr. L. to the Laigh Kirk.
† Genesis, chap ix. 22. ‡ Numbers, ch. xxv. ver. 5. § Exodus, ch. iv. ver. 20.

That Sippend is a carnal weed
He takes but for the fashion;
An' gie him o'er the flocks, to feed,
And punish each transgression;
Especial, rame that cross the breed,
Gie them sufficient threshin,
Spare them nae day.

VI.
Now aubh Kilmarnock cock thy tail,
And toss thy horns fu' canty,
Nae mair thou'lt route owre the daile,
Because thy pasture's scanty;
For laird'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 lika day.

VII.
Nae mair by Babel's streams we'll weep,
To think upon our Zion;
And hing our laddies up to sleep,
Like baby-shouts a-dryin:
Come, screw the pegs wi' tunefu' cheek,
And o'er the thatrians be tryin;
Oh, rare I to see our elckas wheep,
An' a' like lamb-tails flyin
Fu' fast this day!

VIII.
Lang Patronage, wi' rol o' a'ing,
Has shor'd the Kirk's undon,
As lately F-neac' air for lairn,
'Is proven to its ruin:
Our I airon, honest man! Glencairn,
He saw mischief was brewin;
And like a godly elect lairn,
He's wald' us out a true one,
And sound this day.

IX.
Now R ****** harangue nae mair,
But steek your gab for ever:
Or try the wicked town of A**
For there they'll think you clever
Or, nae reflection on your leir,
Ye may commence a Shaver
Or to the N-nut-a repair,
And tura a Carpet-weaver
All hand this day.

X.
M ****** and you were just a match,
We never had sic twa drones;
Ald Hornie did the Laigh Kirk watch,
Just like a wiskin bairds;
And ay' he catch'd the other wretch
To fry them in his caufons;
But now his honour maun detach,
Wi' a' his stane squadrons,
Fast, fast this day.

XI.

See, see an'nd Orthodoxy's face,
She's swingen in th' city;
Hark, how the nine-tail'd cat she plays,
I vow it's unco pretty.
There, Learning, with his Grecian face,
Grouts out some Latin dirty;
And Common Sense is gaun, she says,
To mak to Jamie Beattie
Her 'plaint this day.

XII.

But there's Mortality himsel,
Embracing all opinions;
Hear, how he gies the tither yell,
Between his twa companions;
See, how she peels the skin an' fall,
As ane were peelin onions.
Now there—they're packed aff to hell,
And banish'd our dominions.
Henceforth this day.

XIII.

O happy day! rejoice, rejoice!
Come bouse about the porter!
Morality's demure decoy
Shall here nae ma'ir find quarter:
Mr. * * * * *, R. * * * are the coys,
That Heresy can torture;
They'll gie her on a rape and hoysie,
And cow her measure shorter.
By th' head some day.

XIV.

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 ma'ir they leave us with their din,
Or Parsonage intrusion,
We'll light a spunk, ant, ev'ry skin,
We'll rin them aff in fusion.
Like oil, some day.

THE CALF.

TO THE REV. MR.:—

On his Text, Malachi, ch. iv, ver. 2. "And they shall go forth, and grow up, like calves of the stall."

RIGHT, Sir! your text I'll prove it true,
Though Heretics may laugh;

* New Light is a. * ant phrase in the West of Scotland, for those religious opinions which Dr. Taylor of Nor-\n
Wich has defended wt. these usually.

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 na, Sir, but then we'll find,
Ye's still are great a Stick.

But, if the Lover's rap'tur'd hour
Shall ever be your lot,
Forbid it, ev'ry heavenly Power,
You c'er should be a Sot!

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 rovte,
Few men o' sense will doubt your claims
To rank amang the nobte.

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

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL.

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

MILTON

O THOU! whatever title suit thee,
Auld Hornie, Satan, nick, or Cloctie,
Wha in yon cavern grim an' sootie,
Closed under hatches

Spairges about the brunstane cootle,
To scaud poor wretches

Hear me, anid Hangie, for a wee,
An' let poor damned bodis be;
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
E'en to a deil,

To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me,
An' hear us squeal!

Great is thy pow'r, an' great thy fame;
Far kend and noted is thy name;
An' tho' you lowin hugh's thy hame,
Thou travels far;
An' faith! thou's neither lag nor hame.
Nor blate nor scour

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

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

When twilight did my Grumies summon  
To say her prayers, douce, honest woman I  
Aft yont the dyke she's heard you hummin,  
Wi' eerie drone;  
Or, rustlin', thro' the bootrees comin.  
Wi' heavy groan.

As dreary, windys, winter night,  
The stars shot down wi' skelhtin light,  
Wi' you, mysel, I gat a fright;  
Ayon the lough;  
Ye, like a rash-bush, stood in sight,  
Wi' waving sigh.

The cudgel in my niece did shake,  
Each bristl'd hair stood like a stake,  
When wi' an eldritch, stour, quack-—quack—  
Among the springes,  
Awa ye squatter'd, like a drake,  
On whistling wings.

Let warlocks grim, an' wicker'd lages,  
Tell how yi' you on ragweed mags  
They skim the mulirs, an' dizzy craigs,  
Wi' wicked speed;  
And in kirk yards renew their leagues,  
Owre howkit dead.

Thence kintra wives, wi' toil an' pain,  
May plunge an' plunge the kim in vain;  
For, oh I the yellow treasure's ta'en  
By witching skill;  
An' dawtiti, twal-pint Haskeil's guen  
As yeil's the Bill.

Thence mystic knots mak great abuse,  
On young Guidman, fond, keen, an' e'rous;  
When the best wark-lume i' the house,  
By cautrir wit,  
Is instant made no worse a louse,  
Just at the bit.

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

An' ait your moss-traversing Spunkies  
Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is:

The bleezin, curat, mischievous monkeys  
Duhde his eye,  
Till in some miry slough he sunk is,  
Ne'er mair to rise.

When Mason's mystic word an' grip  
In storms an' tempestes raise you up,  
Some cock or cat your rage maun stop,  
Or strange to tell!  
The youngest Bro'thrye wad whip  
Aff straight to hell!

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 swaird  
In shady bow'r:

Then you, ye auld, an ice-drawing dog!  
Ye came to Paradise incog,  
An' play'd on man a cursed brogue,  
Black be your fa'!  
An' gied the infant waird a shog,  
'Maist ruin'd a'

D'ye mind that day, when in a biz  
Wi' reckit duds, an' restit gizz,  
Ye did present your smoultie phiz,  
'Mang better fo',  
An skledent on the man of Uzz  
Your spitefu' joke

An' how yi' gat him i' your thrall,  
An' brak him out o' house an' hall,  
While scabs an' blotches did him gall  
Wi' bitter claw,  
An' lowa'd his ill-tongu'd, wicked Scawl,  
Was warst awa?

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

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

But, fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben!  
O wad ye tak a thought an' men'!  
Ye abhias might—I dianna ken—  
Still hae a stake—  
I'm wa' to think upo' you den,  
Ev'ru for your saik!

* Vide Milton, Book VI.
DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF POOR MAILIE;

AN UNCO MOURNFUL' TALE

As Mailie, an' her lamb she thegither
Were ae day nibbling on the tether,
Upon her clowt she coast a hutch,
An' o'we she warg'd in the ditch.
There, groaning, dying, she did lie
When Hughie! he cam dootin by.

Wi' glowin een, an' lifted hand's,
Poor Hughie like a statue stan's;
He saw her days were near-hand ended,
But, wae my heart! he could na mend it!
He gyged wide, but neathling spak!
At length poor Mailie silence brak.

"O thou, whase lamentable face
Appears to monr my woeful case!
My dying words attentive hear,
An' bear them to my master dear.

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

"Tell him, he was a master kin',
An' ay was guid to me and mine;
An' now my dying charge: gie him,
My helpless lambs I trust them wi' him.

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

"An' may they never learn the gacts
Ofither vile wamestrist' pets!
To sink thro' slips, an' reave an' steal,
At stacks o' peasne, or stocks o'kail.
So may they, like their great Forbeares,
For monie a year come thro' the sheers:
So wives will gie them bits o' bread,
An' bairns greet for them when they're dead.

*A neeber herd-callan.

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

"An',niest my yowie, silly thing,
Gude keep thee frae a tether string!
O, may thou never forgether up
Wi' my blastit, Moorland tompy;
But ay keep mind to moopan' well,
Wi' sheep o' credit like thysel!

"And now, my bairns, wi' my last breath,
I lea'e my 'bessin wi' you bith:
An when you think up' your Mither,
Mind to be kin' to ane another.

"Now, honest Hughie, dinna fail,
To tell my master a' my tale;
An' bid him burn this cursed tether,
An', 'for 't jains, thou'se get my blather.'

This said, poor Mailie turn'd her head,
An' clos'd her e'en amang the dead.

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY.

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

It's na the loss o' warl's a' gear,
That could sae bitter draw the tear
Or mak our bardie, powie, wear
The mourning weed:
He's lost a friend and neebor dear,
In Mailie dead.

Thro' at the town she trotted by him;
A laug ha' mile she could descrie him;
Wi' kindly beat, when she did spy him,
She ran wi' speed;
A friend mair faithfu' ne'er cam nigh him,
Than Mailie dead.

I wat she was a sheep o' sense,
An' could behave herself wi' mense;
I'll say't, she never brak a fence,
Thro' thievish greed;
Our baelie, lanely, keeps the spence
Sin' Mailie's dead.

Or, if he wanders up the howe,
Her living image in her yowes
Comes bleating to him, owre the knows,
For bits o' bread;
An down the briny pearls ruwe
For Mailie dead
She was rue get o' moorland tips,
Wi' tawfed ket, an hairy lips;
For her forbear were brought in ships
Free'ont the Tweed.
A bonnier seek'ner cross'd the clips
Than Mailie dead.

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

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

TO J. S****.

Friendship! myster'ne cement of the soul!
Sweet'ner of life, and soder of society!
I owe the much.—

BLAIR.

DEAR S****, the sleek, rankie thief,
That e'er attempted stealth or rief,
Ye surely has some warlock breef
Ower human hearts;
For e'er a bosh yet was brief
Against your arts.
For we I sweer by sun an' moon,
And o' the stars that blinks aboon,
Y'el've cost me twenty pair o' shoon
Just gaun to see you;
And ev'ryither pair that's done,
Mair ta'en I'm wi' you.

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

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

Some rhyme, a neebor's name to lash;
Some rhyme, (rain thought!) for need'fu' cash;
Some rhyme to court the kliutra 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 ground;
But in requit, Has bless'd me wi' a random shot
O' kintra wit.

This while my notion's ta'en a skent,
To try my fate in guid black prent!
But still the mair I'm that way bent,
Something crew, "Hook!
I red you, honest men, tak' tent!
Ye'll shaw your folly.

"There's ither poets, much your betters,
Far seen in Greek, demen o' letters,
Hae thought they had enfur'd their debtors,
A future ages;
Now moths deform in shapeless tetters,
Their unknown pages."

Then farewell hopes o' laurel-boughs,
To garland my poetic brouws!
Henceforth I'll rove where busy ploughs
Are whistling thrang,
An' teach the lanely heights an' bowes
My rustic song.

I'll wander on, with tenteless 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 dale,
Then top and mair top crowd the soil,
Heave care o'er side!
And large, before enjoyment's gale,
Let's tak' the tide.

This life, see far's I understand,
Is a' enchantmit, fairy land,
Where pleasure is the magic wand,
That wielded right,
Mak's hours, like minutes, had in hand,
Dance by fu' light.

The magic-wand then let us wield;
For ane that five-and'-forty's speel'd,
Sceer crazy, weary, joyless cold,
Wi' wrinkl'd face,
Comes hostin, birelliu owre the field,
Wi' creepin pace.

When ance life's day draws near the gloamin,
Then farewell vacant careless roamin;
An' fareweel, cheerful' tankards foundin,
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 warning.
We flinch away,
Like school-boys' at thy expected warning,
To joy and play.

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

Some, lucky! find a flow'ry spot,
For which they never toil'd nor sat;
They drink the sweet, and eat the fat,
But care or pain;
And, haply, e'er the barren hot
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 cozie place,
They close the day.

And others, like your humble servant;
Poor wights! I nae rules nor roads observin';
'Twixt right or left, eternal swervin';
They zig-zag on;
Till crust with age, obscure an' starvin',
They aften groan.

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

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

"Gie dreeping roasts to kintra lairds,
Till icedees frin their boards,
Gie fine braw class to fine life-guards,
And maids of honour;
And yill an' whisky gie to cairds,
Until they sconnor.

"A title, Dempster merits it;
A garter gie to Willie Pitt;
Gie wealth to some bejewled'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,
As lang's the muses dina fall
To say the grace.

An anxious e'e I never throws
Beneath my hag, or by my nose;
I jokk beneath misfortune's blows
As weel's I may;
Sworn foe to sorrow, care and prose,
I rhyme away.

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

Hac hair-brain'd, sentimental traces
In your unletter'd, nameless faces
In ariose trills and grace
Ye never stray,
But, gravissimo, solemn bases
Ye hum away.

Ye are sae grave, nae doubt ye're wise
Nae ferly tho' ye do de-sae;
The hairum-acnirum, ram-stam boys,
The rattlin squad:
I see you upward cast your eyes—
—Ye ken the road.—

Whilst I—but I shall hame me there—
Wit' you I'll scarce gang any where—
Then, Jamie, I shall say nae mair,
But quat my sang,
Content wi' you to mak a pair,
Where'er I gang.

A DREAM.


Thoughts, words, and deeds, the statute blames with reason;
But surely dreams were ne'er indicted treason.

[On reading, in the public papers, the Laureat's Ode, with the other parade of June 4, 1786, the author was no sooner dropped asleep, than he imagined himself to the birth-day levee; and in his dreaming fancy made the following Address.]

I.

GUID-MORNING to your Majesty!
May heav'n augment your blessings,
On every new birth-day ye see,
A humble poet wishes!
My hardship here, at your levee,
On sic a day as this is,
To sure an uncoth sight to see,
Among the birthday dresses
Sae true this day.

II.
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 ay;
The poets, too, a venal gang,
Wi' rhymes weel-turn'd and ready,
Wad gie you row ye ne'er do wrang;
But ay unerring steady,
On sic a day.

III.
For me I before a monarch's face,
E'er there I winna flatter;
For neither pension, post, nor place,
Am I your humble debtor:
So, nae reflection on your grace,
Your kingly lap to bespatter;
There's monie war been o' the race,
And ailsins aine been better
Than you this day.

IV.
'Tis very true my sovereign king,
My skill may weel be doubted:
But facts are chiefs that winna ding,
An' downs be disputed:
Your royal nest, beneath your wing,
Is e'en right reft an' cloated,
And now the third part of the string,
An' less, will gang about it
Than din'de day.

V.
Far be't frae me that I aspire
To bane your legislation,
Or say, ye wisdom want, or fire,
To rule this mighty nation!
But, faith! I mussick doubt, my Sire,
Ye've trusted ministration
To chaps, wina, in a barn or byre,
Wad better fill'd their station
Than courts you day.

VI.
And now ye've gienauld Britain peace,
Her broken shint to plaster
Your sair tax'ton does her fleece,
Till she's scarce a teaster;
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.

VII.
I'm no mistrusting Willie Pitt,
When taxes be enlarged,
(An' Will's a true guid follow's get,
A name not envy spairges.)
That he intends to pay your debt,
An' lessen a' your charges;
But, G-d-sake I let nae savourful
Abridge your bounie barges
An' boats this day.

VIII.
Adieu, my Liege! may freedom gace
Beneath your high protection;
An' may ye rax corruption's neck,
And gie her for dissection!
But since I'm here, I'll no neglect,
In loyal, true affection,
To pay your Queen, with due respect,
My fealty an' subjection
This great birth-day.

IX.
Hail, Majesty Most Excellent!
While nobles strive to please ye,
Will ye accept a compliment
A simple poet gies ye?
Thee bonnie buirdtime, Heav'n has lent,
Still higher may they heeze ye
In bliss, till fate some day is sent,
For ever to release ye
Frai care that day.

X.
For you, young potentate o' W——,
I tell your Highness fairly,
Down pleasure's stream, wi' swelling sails,
I'm tauld ye're driving rarely;
But some day ye may gnaw your nails,
An' curse your folly sairly,
That e'er ye brak Diana's paleb,
Or, ratt'd dide wi' Charlie,
By night or day.

XI.
Yet ait a ragged counte's been known
To make a noble siver;
So, ye may dounly fill a throne,
For a' their clish ma-claver;
There, him at Agincourt what shoes,
Few better were or braver;
And yet, wi' funny, queer Sir John,‡
He was an unco shaver
For monie a day.

XII.
For you, right rev'rend O——,
Name sets the lawn-sleeve sweeter,
Although a riband at your lug
Wad been a dress completer!

*King Henry V.
‡Sir John Falstaff: wide Shakespeare.
As ye disown ye pauchiy dog
That bears the keys of Peter,
Then, with'! an' get a wife to hug,
Or, truth ! ye'll stain the mitre
Some luckless day.

XIII.

Young, royal Tarry Brecke, I learn,
Ye've lately come athwart her;
A glorious galley,° stern an' stern,
Well rigged for Venetian barter;
But first hang out, that she'll discern
Your hymenial charter,
Then heave aboard your grapple a'rn,
A',large up' her quarter,
Come full that day.

XIV.

Ye, laely, bonnie blossoms a',
Ye royal ladies dainty
Heavin mak ye guid as weel as braw,
An' gle ye ladies a-sentry:
But a' snear nae British boys awa',
For kings are uncoscant ay.
An' German gentles are but sma',
They're better just than was: or
On one day.

XV.

God bless you a'! consider now,
Ye're unco muckle doutet;
But, are the course o' life to be thre',
It may be bittar santet:
An' I has seen their coggie fou',
That yet has tarrow at it;
But or the day was done, I trow,
The lagen they has clautet
Fu' clean that day

THE VISION.

DUAN FIRST.†

THE sun had clos'd the winter day,
The curlers quat their rearin play,
An' hunger'd maunie ta'en her way
To kail-yards green,
While faithless snows ilk step betray
Where she has been.

The thrower's weary fingin-tree
The lee-lang day had tired me
And when the day had clos'd his e'e,
Far'! the west,

° Alluding to the newspaper account of a certain royal sailor's amour.
† Duon, a term of Osian's for the different divisions of a digressive poem. See his Cath-Loda, vol. ii. of M'Pherson's translation.

Ben i' the spence, right pensivelie,
I gaed to rest.

There, lanely, oy the ingle-cheek,
I sat and say'd the swearing reek,
That fill'd, wi' hoast-provoking sneek,
The auld clay biggin;

An' heard the restless rattons squeak
About the riggin.

All in this mottle, misty clime,
I backward mus'd on wasted time,
How I had spent my youthfu' prime,
An' done nae-thing,

But stringin' bladders up in rhyme,
For fools to sing.

Had I to guid advice but harkit,
I might, by this, ha'e led a market,
Or strutted in a bank an' clarkit
My cash account :

While here, half-mad, half fed, half-sarkit,
Is a' th' amount.

I started, mutt'ring, blockhead I coof!
And heav'd on high my waukit loof,
To swear by a' you starry roof,
Or some rash aith,

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

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

Ye need na doubt, I held my whisht,
The infant aith, half form'd, was crusht;
I glower'd as eerie's I'd been douht
In some wild glen;
When sweet, like modest worth, she blushit,
And stepped ben.

Green, slender, leaf-clad holly-boughs
Were twisted, graceful, round her brows;
I took her for some Scottish Muse,
By that same token;

An' come to stop those reckless vows,
Wou'd soon been broken.

A "hair brain'd, sentimental trace,"
Was strongly marked 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 scrimpin' seen;
And such a leg! my bonnie Jean
Could only peer it;

Sae straight, sae taper, tight, and clean,
Nama else came near it.
BURNS' POEMS.

31

Her mantle large, of greenish hue,
My gazing wonder chiefly drew;
Deep lights and shades, bold-mingling threw,
A lustre grand;

And seem'd, to my astonish'd view,
A well known land.

Here, rivers in the sea were lost;
There, mountains to the skies were lost;
Here, tumbling billows mark'd the coast,
With surging foam;

There, distant alone Art's lofty boast,
The lordly dome.

Here, Doon pour'd down his far-fetch'd floods;
There, well-fed Ivrine 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.

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 race* heroic wheel,
And brandish round the deep-joy'd steel
In sturdy blows;

While back-recoiling seem'd to reel
Their stubborn foes.

His country's saviour, mark him well I
Bold Richardson's heroic swell!
The chief of Sark$ who glorious fell,
In high command;

And he whom ruthless fates expel
His native land.

There, where a scepter'd Pictish shade,\nStalk'd round his ashes lowly laid,
I mark'd a martial race, portray'd
In colours strong;

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

* The Wallaces.     † William Wallace.
† Adam Wallace, of Richardson, cousin to the immortal preserver of Scottish independence.

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

¶ Collin, king of the Ficts, from whom the district of Kyle is said to take its name, lies buried, as tradition says, near the family-seat of the Montgomeries of Coll's field, where his burial-place is still shown.

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

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

With deep-struck reverential awe,\nThe learned sire and son 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.

Brydone's brave ward; I well could spy,
Beneath old Scotin's smiling eye;
Who call'd on fame, low standing by,
To hand him on,

Where many a patriot name on high,
And hero shone.

DUAN SECOND.

WITH musing-deep, astonish'd stare,
I view'd the heavenly-seeming fair;
A whispering throb did witness bear,
Of kindred sweet,

When with an elder sister's air
She did me greet,

"All hail! my own inspired bard!
In me thy native muse regard!
Nor longer mourn thy fate is hard,
Thus poorly low!

I come to give thee such reward
As we bestow.

"Know, the great genius of this land
Has many a light aerial band,
Who, all beneath his high command,
Harmoniously,

As arts or arms they understand,
Their labours ply.

"They Scotin's race among them share;
Some fire the sc.\lter on to dare;
Some rouse the patriot up to bare
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 vernal senate's roar,
They, sightless, stand,

To mend the honest patriot-lore,
And grace the hand.

"And when the bard, or hoary sage,
Charm or instruct the future age,

* Barrakimbing, the seat of the Lord Justice-Clerk.
† Catrine, the seat of the late doctor and present professor Stewart.
† Colonel Fullarton.
BURNS' POEMS.

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

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

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

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

"Some hint the lover's harmless wile;
Some grace the maiden's artless smile;
Some sooth the lab'ring'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—Colita my name;
And this district as mine I claim,
Where once the Campbell, chiefs of fame,
Held ruling pow'r:
I mark'd thy embryo tuneful flame,
Thy natal hour.

"With future hope, I oft would gaze
Fond, on thy little early ways,
Thy rudely caroll'd chiming phrase,
In smooth rhymes,
Fir'd at the simple, artless lays
Of other times.

"I saw thee seek the bounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar;
Or when the north his fleet store
Drove thro' the sky,
I saw grim nature's visage hear
Struck thy young eye.

"Or, when the deep green-man'd'd earth
Warm cherish'd ev'ry flow'ret's birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
In ev'ry grove,
ADDRESS OF THE UNCO GUID,
OR, THE
RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS.

My son, these maxims make a rule,
And lump them aye thegither;
The Rigid Righteous is a fool,
The Rigid Wise anither:
The cleanest corn that e'er was sight
May have some pyles o' chaff in;
So ne'er a fellow-creature slight
For random fits o' daftin.

Solomon.—Eccles. ch. vii. ver. 16.

I.
O YE wha are sae guid, yoursel,
Sae plous and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
Your neebor's faults and folly!
Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill,
Supply'd wi' store o' water,
The heapet happer's eddying still,
And still the clay plays clatter.

II.
Hear me, ye venerable core,
As counsel for poor mortals,
That frequent pass douce Wisdom's door
For glakit Polly's portals;
I, for their thoughtless, careless akes,
Would here propose defences,
Their douzie tricks, their black mistakes,
Their fallings and mischances.

III.
Ye see your state wi' theirs compair'd,
And shudder at the niffer,
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.

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

---

V.
See social life and glees sit down,
All joyous and unthinking,
Till, quite transmogrify'd, they're grown
Debauchery and drinking:
O, would they stay to calculate
Th' eternal consequences;
Or your more dreaded hell to taste,
D
donation of expenses!

VI.
Ye high, exalted, virtuous dames,
Ty'd up in godly laces,
Before ye gie poor frailty names,
Suppose a change o' cases;
A dear lov'd lad, convenience sung,
A tremendous inclination—
But, let me wisper i' your log,
Ye're aiblins nee temptation.

VII.
Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman;
Tho' they may gang a kennin wrang;
To step aside is human:
One point must still be greatly dark;
The moving why they do it;
And just as lamely can ye mark,
How far perhaps they rue it.

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

---

TAM SAMSON'S* ELEGY.

An honest man's the noblest work of God.

*This when this worthy old sportsman went out last mair-fowl 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 morn. On this hint the author composed his elegy and epitaph.

To preach an’ read.

---

POPE.
When at his heart he felt the dagger,  
He reel'd his wounded bottle-sawger,  
But yet he drew the mortal trigger.

...Wit weel aim'd heed;  
"L—d, fire!" he cry'd an' ower did stagger;  
Tam Samson's dead!

Ilk horry hunter mourn'd a' brither;  
Ilk sportsman youth bernand a' father;  
Yon auld gray stane, amang the heather,  
Marks out his head.

Where Burns has wrote, in rhyming bether,  
Tam Samson's dead!

There low he lies, in lasting rest;  
Perhaps upon his milk'ring breast  
Some spittit' uniforn' ligs her nest,  
'To hatch an' breed.

Alas! nac mai't he'll them molest!  
Tam Samson's dead!

When August winds the heather wave,  
And sportsmen wander by your grave,  
Three volleys let his mem'ry crave  
O' pouther an' lead.

Till Echo answer frea her cave,  
Tam Samson's dead!

I lav'n rest his hound, whare'er he be!  
Is th' wish of minnie mae than me;  
He had twa faults, or may be three;  
Yet what remend?

Ae social, honest man want we:  
Tam Samson's dead!

THE EPITAPH.

TAM SAMSON'S weel-worn clay here lies;  
Ye ean'ting sealots, spare him!  
If honest worth in heav'n rise  
Ye'll mend or ye win near him.

PER CONTRA.

Go, Pame, an' cant er like a ffilly  
ThRo' at the streets an' monks o' Killie,*  
Tell ev'ry societ,honest billy  
To cease his grievin.

For yet, unskait'd by death's glec gullie,  
Tam Samson's livin.

HALLOWEEN.†

The following Poem will, by many readers, be well 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

*Killie is a phrase the country-folks sometimes use for Kinross.

† Is thought to be night when witches, devils, and other mischievous beings, are all abroad on their baseful, midnight errands; particularly those aerial people the Fairies, are said on that night, to hold a grand anniversary.
BURNS' POEMS.

35

give some account of the principal charms and spells of
that night, singing with prophecy to the peasantry in
the west of Scotland. The passion of putting into tu-
	

larity 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 humour the author with a perusal,
to see the remains of it, among the more unenlighten-
ed in our own.

---

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

GOLDSMITH.

I.

UPON that night, when fairies light,
On Cassilis Downums' dance,
Or owre the hay, in splendid blaze,
On sprightly courser's prance;
Or for Coless the route is ta'en,
Beneth the moon's pale beams;
There, up the covert to stray an' rove.
Among the rocks and streams
To sport that night.

II.

Among the bonnie winding banks,
Where Doon runs, wimpiling clear,
Where Bruce, once ruled the martial ranks,
An' shook his Carrick spear,
Some merry, friendly, countra folks,
Together did convene,
To burn the mists, an' pou their stock,
An' laud their Halloween
Fu' blythe that night.

III.

The lasses feat, an' cleanly neat,
Mair brav than when they're fine;
Their faces by the, fu' sweetly kythe,
Hearts leal, an' warm an' kin':
The lads sae trig, wi' woos-bats,
Weel knotted on their gate,
Some unco blate, an' some wi' gabs,
Gar lasses' hearts gang startin
Whiles fast at night.

* Certain little, romantic, rocky, green hills, in the

neighbourhood of the ancient seat of the Earls of Cas-

Silla.

† A noted cavern near Coleslaw-house, called The Cove

Coleslaw; which, as Cassilis Downums, is famed in

country story for being a favourite haunt of fairies.

‡ The famous family of that name, the ancestors of

Robert, the great deliverer of his country, were Earls

of Carrick.

IV.

Then first and foremost, thro' the kail,
Their stocks maun a' be sought an'ce;
They seek their een' an' graip an' wale,
For muckle aces an' straight aces.
Poor lass! Will fell aft the drift,
An' wander'd thro' the bow-kilt,
An' pow't for want o' etter shift.
A runt was like a sow-tail.
See bow't that night.

V.

Then, straight or crooked, yird or nane,
They roar and cry a' throuther;
The vera wee things, todlin, rin
Wi' stocks out-owre their showther.
An' gif the custo's sweet or sour,
Wi' jocdless they taste them,
Sync coseely, abow the door,
Wi' cannie care they place them
To lie that night.

VI.

The lasses swaie frae 'mang them a'
To pou their steidles o' corn;
But Itl slips out, an' jinks a'toat,
Behint the muckle thor.
He grippet Nelly hard an' fast;
Lond skirl'd a' the lasses;
But her toppickie maist was lost,
When kithia in the fane-house.

Wi' him that night.

VII.

The auld guildwife's weel horded nits
Are round an' round divided.

* The first ceremony of Halloween is, pulling each a

stock, or plant of kail. They must go out, hand in

hand, with eyes shut and pull the first they meet with:
its being big or little, straight or crooked, is prophetic
of the site and shape of the grand object of all their
spells—the husband or wife. If any yird, or earth, stick
to the root, that is tocker, or fortune; and the taste of
the custo', that is, the heart of the stem, is indicative
of the natural temper and disposition. Lastly, the stems,
or, to give them their ordinary appellation, the runs,
are placed somewhere above the head of the door; and
the Christian names of the people whom chance brings
into the house, are, according to the priority of placing
the runs, the names in question.

† They go to the barnyard and pull each, at three sev-

eral times, a stalk of oats. If the third stalk wants the
toppickie, that is, the grain at the top of the stalk, the
party in question will come to the marriage-bed any
thing but a maid.

‡ When the corn is in a doubtful state, by being too

green, or wet, the stalk-builder, by means of old timber
&c., makes a large apartment in his stack, with an open-
ing in the side which is fairest exposed to the wind:
this he calls a fance-house.

§ 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 togeth-
er, or start from beside one another, the course and is-

sue of the courtship will be.
An' monie lads' and lasses' fates,
Are there that night decided:
Some kindle, contile, side by side
An' burn thegither trimly;
Some start awa wi' saucie pride,
And jump oat owre the chimlie
Fu' high that night.

VIII.

Jean slips in twa, wi' tentle e'ie;
Wha 'twas she wadna tell;
But this is Jock, an' this is me,
She says in to hersel;
He blees'd owre her, an' she owre him,
As they wad never mair part;
Till fu'll he started up the lum,
And Jean had co'en a sair heart
To see't that night.

IX.

Poor Willie, wi' his bonu-brill runt,
Was brunt wi' primacie Mallie;
An' Mallie, nae doubt, took the brunt,
To be compar'd to Willie;
Mall's sit lap out wi' prided' fling,
An' her ain fit burnt it;
While Willie lap, and swore by jing,
'Twas just the way he wanted
To be that night.

X.

Nell had the fause-house in her min',
She pits hersel an' Rob in;
In loving blesse they sweetly join,
T. white in aze they're sobbin';
Nell's heart was dancin at the view,
She whisper'd Rob to leek for't;
Rob, stowlins, prie'd her bunnie mou,
Fu' cozie in the neuk for't;
Unseen that night.

XI.

But Merran sat behint their backs,
Her thoughts on Andrew Bell;
She lea'es them gashin at their craks,
And slips out by hersel;
She thro' the yard the nearest taks,
An' to the kiln she goes then,
An' darkins grapit for the bunks,
And in the blue-clue' throws then,
Right fu'll that night.

XII

An' ay she win't, an' ay she swat,
I wat she made nae jaukin';
* Whoever would, with success, try this spell, must strictly observe these directions: Steal out, all alone, to the kiln, and, darkling, throw into the pot a clue of blue yarn; wind it in a new clue off the old one; and, towards the latter end, something will hold the thread: demand who haude' i. e. who holds? an answer will be returned from the kiln-pot, by naming the Christian and surname of your future spouse.

Till something held within the pat,
Guld I.—d! but she was quakin'!
But whether 'twas the Deil himsell,
Or whether 'twas a bauken,
Or whether it was Andrew Bell,
She did na wait on talkin'
To spier that night.

XIII.

Wae Jenny to her Grannie says,
"Will ye go wi' me, grannie?
I'll eat the apple at the glass,
I gat frae uncle Johnie.";
She suft;'s her pipe wi' sick a lunt,
In wrath she was nae vap'rin,
She nocht na, an' axle brunt,
Her braw new worstet apron
Out thro' that night.

XIV.

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

XV.

"Ae hairst afoot the Sherra-moor,
I mind't as weel' yeestreen,
I was a glipsey then, I'm sure
I was nae past fifteen:
The simmer had been cauld an' wat,
An' stuff was unco green;
An' ay a rantin kirm we gat,
An' just on Halloween
It fell that night.

XVI.

"Our stibble-rig was Rab McGraen,
A clever, sturdy fellow;
He's sin gat Eppie Sim wi' wean,
That liv'd in Achmacjilla;
He gat hemp-seed,† I mind it weel,
As he made unco light o't;
* 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 nac of your conjugal companion, to be, will be seen in the glass, as if peeping over your shoulder.
† Steal out unperceived, and sow a handful of hemp seed; harrowing it with any thing 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 paw thee." Look over your left shoulder, and you will see the appearance of the person invoked, in the attitude of pulling hemp. Some traditions say, "come after me and shaw thee," that is, show thyself; in which case it simply appears. Others omit the harrowing, and say, "come after me, and harrow thee."
BURNS' POEMS.

But monie a day was by himself,
He was see airily frightened
That vera night.

XVII.
Then up got fechtin Jamie Fleck,
An' he swoor by his conscience,
That he could saw hemp-seed a peck;
For it was a' but nonsense;
The auld guidman might down in the pock,
An' out a handful gied him;
Syne had him slip fra' 'mang the folk
Sometimes when nae ane see'd him,
An' try't that night.

XVIII.
He marches thro' amang the stackes,
Tho' he was something sturtin;
The grazip he for a barrow takes,
An' haurls in his curpin:
An' ev'y now an' then, he says,
"Hemp-seed I saw thee,
An' her that is to be my lass,
Come after me, and draw thee,
As fast this night."

XIX.
He whistl'd up Lord Lenox' march,
To keep his courage cheerie;
Allo' his hair began to arch,
He was see fley'd an' eerie:
Till presently he hears a squeak,
An' then a grane an' grundle;
He by his shouter gae a keek,
An tumbl'd wi' a whistle
Out-owre that night.

XX.
He roar'd a horrid murder-shout,
In dreadful despiration!
An' young an' auld came rinin out,
To hear the sad narration;
He swoor it was hitchin Jean McCraw,
Or cruchie Merran Humphie,
Till stop I she trotted thro' them a';
An' who was it but Grumphie
Asteer that night.

XXI.
Meg sain wad to the barn geen
To win three weekes o' naething;

* This charm must likewise be performed unperceiv-
ed, 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 in-
scription used in winnowing the corn, which, in our
country dialect, we call a wecht; and go through at
the attitudes of letting down corn against the wind.
Repeat it three times; and the third time an appar-
tion 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 employ-
ment or station in life.

But for to meet the dell her lane,
She put but little faith in:
She gies the herd a pickle nits,
An' twa red cheekit apples,
To watch, while for the barn she sits,
In hopes to see Tam Kipples
That vera night.

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

XXIII.
They hoyt' out Will, wi' air advice:
"They hecht him some fine braw ane;
It chanc'd the stack he faddon't thrice,"
Was timber propt far thrawin:
He tacks a swirlie, and moss-oak,
For some black, grousome carlin;
An' loot a winze, an' drow a stroke,
Till skin in byplies came haurlin
All's nieves that night.

XXIV.
A wanton widow Leesie was,
As canty as a kitten;
But Och! that night, amang the shaws,
She got a fearles' settlin!
She thro' the whins, an' by the caurn,
An' owre the hill gaed scrievin,
Where three lairds' lands met at a burn;
To dip her left sark-sleeve in,
Was bent that night.

XXV.
Whyles owre a linn the burnie plays,
As thro' the glen it wimplt;
Whyles round a rocky scar it strayt;
Whyles in a weil it tilimpit;
Whyles glitter'd to the nightly rays,
Wi' bickering, dancing dazle;
Whyles cookit underneath the brass,
Below the spreading hazel,
Unseen that night.

* Take an opportunity of going, uncotic'd, to a Ba
stack, and fathom it three times round. The last fatt
om of the last time, you will catch in your arms the ap-
pearance of your future conjugal yoke-fellow.

† 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 mid
night, an apparition, having the exact figure of the
grand object in question, will come and turn the sleeve,
as it to dry the other side of it.
THE AULD FARMER'S NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION TO HIS AULD MARE MAGGIE, On giving her the accustomed Ripp of Corn to hannel in the New-Year.

A GUID New-year I wish thee, Maggie! Ha! there's a ripp to thy auld baggie: Thou' sou's howe-backit, now, an' knaggy, I've seen the day, Thou could hae gaen like any staggy. Out-owre the hay.

' Tae 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.

I sowens, with butter instead of milk to them is always the Halloween Supper.

Tho' now thou's dowie, stuf, an' cress, An' thy auld hide's as white's a daisy, I've seen thee dappit', sleek, and gaitle, A bonnie gray:
He should been tight that daurn't to raise thee, Ane in a day.

Tho' an' could hae flown out-owre a stank, Like ony bird.

It's now some nine an' twenty year, Sin' thou was my good father's meere; He gied me thee, o' tocher clear, An' dirty mark;
Tho' it was sma', 'twas wee-won gear, An' thou was stark.

When first I gae'd to woo my Jenny, Ye then was trottin' wi' your minnie: Thou' ye was trickle, slee, an' funnie, Ye ne'er was dossie;
But banely, tawie, quiet, an' cannie, An' unco sousie.

That day, ye pranced wi' milkle pride When ye bured hame my bonnie bride: An' sweet, an' gracefully she did ride, W' ma'den air!
Kyle Stewart I could bragged wide, For sic a pair.

Tho' now ye dow but hoyte an' hobble An' wittle like a saumout-cole, That day ye was a jiker noble, For heels an' win! An' ran them till they a' did warble, Far, far behin'.

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

When thou was corn't, an' I was mellow, We took the road ay like a swallow: At Brossee thou had ne'er a fellow, For pith an' speed:
But ev'ry tall thou pays't them hollow, Where'er thou gae'd.

The sma', droop-rumpit', hunter cattle, Might aiblins waurn't thee for a brattle; But sax Scotch miles thou try't their mettle, An' gar's them whaize:
Nae whip nor spur, but just a wattle O'laugh or hazel.

Thou was a noble fittle-lan', As e'er in tug or tow was drawn.
At thee an' I, in aught hours gaun,
On guid March weather,
Hae turn'd sax rood beside our ban',
For days thegither.

Thou never braundg't, an' fetch't, an' flisklit,
But thy auld tail thou wad hae whistlet,
An' spread abroad thy week-fill'd brisklet,
W' pitch, an' pow'r',
Till sprittly knowing wad rair't and risket,
An' slypet owre.

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

In cart or car thou never reestit;
The steyest brue thou wad hae facet it:
Thou never lap, and sten't, and breasstit,
Then stood to blow;
But just thy step a wee thing hastit,
Thou snoov't awa.

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

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

And think na, my auld trusty servan',
That now perhaps thou'less deservin',
An' thy auld days may end in starvin',
For my last fou,
A heapit stimpard, I'll reserve ane
Laid by for you.

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

I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murdering pattle!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WEE, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
O, what a, anic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!

A WINTER NIGHT.

Poor naked wretches, where'er ye are,
That hide the pelting of this pittyless storm!
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
Your loopt'd and window'd raggedness, defend you?
From seasons such as these?—

WHEN biting Boreas, fell and doure,
Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bow'r;
When Phabus gies a short-liv'd blow'r
Far south the lift,
Dim-dark'ning thro' the flaky show'r,  
Or whirling drift:

At night the storm the steeples rock'd
Poor labours sweet in sleep was lock'd,
While burns, wi' snawy wreaths up-chock'd,
Wild-eddying swirl,
Or thro' the mining outlet bock'd,  
Down headlong hurl.

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

Ilk happing bird, wee, helpless thing,
That, in the merry months o' spring,
Delighted to hear thee sing,

What comes o' thee?

Whare wilt thou cow'th thy chatterin wing.
An' close thy e'e?

Ey'vou you on murr'd'ring errands tol'd,
Lone from your savage homes exil'd,
The blood-stain'd roost, and sheep-cote spoil'd
My heart forgets,
While pityless the tempest wild
Sore on you beats.

Now Phoebe, in her midnight reign
Dark muf'd, view'd the dreary scene,
Still crowding thoughts, a pensive train,
Rise 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, unremitting,
Then heav'n illumined man on brother man bestows!
See stern oppression's iron grip,
Or mad ambition's gory hand,
Sending, like blood hounds from the slip,
Wo, want, and murder o'er a land!
Ev'n in the peaceful rural vale,
Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale,
How pamper'd luxury. flattery by her side,
The parasite empoisoning her ear,
With all the servile wretches in the rear,
Looks o'er proud property, extended wide;
And eyes the simple rustic hide,
Whose toil upholds the glittering show,
A creature of another kind,
Some coarser substance, unrecon'd,
Plac'd for her lordly use thus far, thus vile below;
Where, where is love's fond, tender throne,
With lordly honour's softly brow,
The pow'rs ye proudly own

Is there beneath love's noble name,
Can harbour, dark, the selfish aim,
To bless himself alone!
Mark maiden-innocence a prey
To love-pretending scars,
This boasted honour turns away
Shunning soft pity's rising sway,
Regardless of the tears, and unavailing pray'r's
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'd keen nature's clam'rous call,
Stretch'd on his straw he lays himself to sleep,
While thro' the ragged roof and chilly wall,
Chill o'er his slumber's piles the drifty heap!
Think on the dungeon's grim confines,
Where guilt and poor misfortune pine!
Guilt, erring man, relating view
But shall thy legal rage pursue
The wretch, already crushed low
By cruel fortune's underserved blow?
Affliction's sons are brothers in distress,
A brother, to relieve, how exquisite the bliss!

I heard nae mair, for Chanticler
Shook off the pouthery snaw,
And hail'd the morning with a cheer,
A cottage-rousing craw.
But deep this truth impress'd my mind—
Thro' all his works abroad,
The heart, benevolent and kind,
The most resembles God.

—EPISTLE TO DAVIE,—
A BROTHER POET.*

January——

WHILE winds frae aff Ben Lomond blaw,
And bar the doors wi' driving snaw,
And bing us owe the inlge,
I set me down to pass the time,
And spin a verse or twa o rhyme,
In hamely westlin jugle.
While frosty winds blaw in the drift,
Ben to the chinla jug,
I grudge a wee the great folks' gift,
That live sae bien an snug:
I tent less, and want less
Their roomy fire-side;
But hanker and canker,
To see their cursed pride.

* David Silvar, one of the club at Tarbolton, and author of a volume of Poems in the Scottish dialect. E.
I.

It's hardly in a body's pow'r,
To keep, at times, frae being sour,
To see how things are shar'd;
How best o' chiel is whiles in want,
While coo's on countless thousands rant,
And ken na how to wair's:
But, Davie, lad, ne'er fash your head
Tho' we hae little gear,
We're fit to win our daily bread,
As lang's we're hale and fier:
"Mair spier na', nor fear na,"
Auld age ne'er mind a' feig,
The last o', the worst o',
is only for to beg.

III.

To lie in kilns and barns at a' en,
When braes are craz'd and bluid is thin,
Is doubtless, great distress!
Yet then content could mak us blest;
Ev'n then, sometimes we'd snatch a taste
Of trust'nd happiness.
The honest heart that's free frae a'
Intended fraud or guile,
However fortune kick the ba',
Has aye some cause to smile,
And mind still, you'll find still,
A comfort this nae ama;
Nae mair then, will care then,
Nae farther can we fa'.

IV.

What tho', like commoners of air,
We wander out, we know not where,
But either house or hall?
Yet nature's charms, the hills and woods
The sweeping vales, and foaming floods,
Are free alike to all.
In days when daisies deck the ground,
And blackbirds whistle clear,
With honest joy our hearts will bound
To see the coming year:
On braes when we please, then,
We'll sit an' sowth a tune;
Synes rhyme till't, we'll time till't
And sing when we hae done.

V.

It's no in titles nor in rank;
It's no in wealth like Low'ran bank,
To purchase peace and rest;
It's no in makin' muckle mair:
It's no in books; it's no in last,
To make us truly blest;
If happiness hae nor her seat,
And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest;

* Ramsay.

Nae treasures, nor pleasures,
Could make us happy lang;
The heart ay's the part ay,
That makes us right or wrang.

VI.

Think ye, that sic as you and I
Wha drudge and drive thro' wet and dry
Wi' never-ceasing-till;
Think ye, an' we less blest then they
Wha scarcely tent us in their way,
As hardly worth their while?
Alas! how aften in haughty mood,
God's creatures they oppress!
Or else, neglecting a' that's guid,
They riot in excess!
Baith careless, and fearless
Of either heav'n or hell!
Esteeming, and deeming
It's a' an idle tale!

VII.

Then let us cheerfu' acquiesce;
Nor make our scanty pleasures less,
By pining at our state;
And, even should misfortunes come,
I, here wha sit, hae met wi' some,
An's thankful' for them yet.
They gie the wit of age to youth;
They let us ken oursel;
They make us see the naked truth,
The real guid and ill.
Tho' losses, and crosses,
Be lessons right severe,
There's wit there, ye'll get there,
Ye'll find nae other where.

VIII.

But tent me Davie, see o' hearts!
(T'o say aught less wad wrang the cartes,
And flatt'ry I detest)
This life has joys for you and I;
And joys that riches ne'er could buy;
And joys the very best.
There's a' the pleasures o' the heart,
The lover an' the frien';
Ye hae your Mag, your dearest part,
And I my darling Jean;
It warms me, it charms me,
'To mention but her name;
It heants me, it beets me,
And sets me a' on flame!

IX.

O' all ye pow'rs who rule above!
O Thou, whose very self art love!
Thou know'st my words sincere!
The life-blood streaming thro' my heart;
Or my more dear, immortal part,
Is not more fondly dear!
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 wo!

Home.

I.

O Thou pale orb, that silent shines,
Whose care-outroubled mortals sleep!
Thou seest a wreck that inky pines,
And wonderst here to wall and weep!
With wo I nightly vigile keep,
Beneath thy wan unwarming beam;
And mourn, in lamentation deep,
How life and love are all a dream.

II.

I joyless view thy rays adorn
The faultily-marked distant hill;
I joyless view thy trembling horn,
Reflected in the gurgling rill.
My fondly-fluttering hear, be still!
Thou holy pow'r! Rememberance, cease!
Ah! I must the agonizing thrill
For ever bar returning peace!

III.

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'r above:
The promis'd Father's tender name:
These were the pledges of my love!

IV.

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 bear my groan?
And is she ever, ever lost?

V.

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

VI.

Ye winged hours that o'er us pass,
Enraptur'd more, the more enjoy'd,
Your dear remembrance in my breast,
My fondly-treasur'd 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!

VII.

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

And when my nightly coach I try,
Sore-harrass'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 affliction:
Ev'n day, all-bitter, brings relief,
From such a horror-breathing night.

IX.

O! thou bright queen who o'er th' expanse,
Now highest reign'st, with boundless sway!
Oft has thy silent-marking glance
Ox's our fondly-wandering, stray!
The time, unheeded, sped away,
While love's luxurious pulse beat high,
Beneath thy silver-gleaming ray,
To mark the mutual kindling eye.

Oh! scenes in strong remembrance set:
Scenes, never, never, to return!
Again I feel, again I burn!
From ev'ry joy and pleasure torn,
Life's weary vale I'll wander thro'!
And hopeless, comfortless, I'll mourn!
A faithless woman's broken vow.

DESPONDENCY,

AN ODE.

I.

OPPRESS'D with grief, oppress'd with care,
A burden more than I can bear
I sit me down and sigh:
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 caring, despairing,
Must be my bitter doom;
My woes here shall close ne'er,
But with the closing tomb!

II.

Happy, ye sons of busy life,
Who equal to the bustling strife,
No other view regard!
E'en when the wished end's deny'd,
Yet while the busy means are ply'd,
They bring their own reward:
Whilst I, a hope-abandon'd wight,
Unfit 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,
Flung every prospect vain.

III.

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 unrequited 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.

IV.

Than I, no lonely hermit plac'd
Where never human footstep tro'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?

V.

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!
Ye tiny elves that guiltless sport,
Like linnets in the bush,
Ye little know the ills ye court,
When manhood is your wish!
The losses, the crosses,
That active man engage!
The fears all, the tears all,
Of dim-Declining age.
WINTER.

A DIRGE.

I.

THE wintry west extends his blast,
And hail and rain does blow;
Or, the stormy north sends driving forth
The blinding sleet and snav;
While tumbling brown, the burn comes down,
And roars free bank to brae;
And bird and beast in covert rest
And pass the heartless day.

II.

"The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast,"
The joyless winter-day,
Let others fear, to me more dear
Than all the pride of May:
The tempest's howl, it soothes my soul,
My griefs it seems to join,
The leafless trees my fancy please,
Their fate resembles mine.

III.

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

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

INSCRIBED TO R. A • • • • •, ESQ.

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

GRAY.

I.

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 meed, a friend's esteem and praise:
To you I sing in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways:

What A • • • • in a cottage, would have been,
Ah! tho' his worth unknown, far happier there I ween.

II.

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

III.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant see-things, toddlin, stancher thro'
To meet their Dad, 'wi' flitcherin noise an' glee,
His wee bi' ingle, blinkin bonnily,
His clean heart stane, his thrifty wife's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary, carking cares beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his toil.

IV.

Belyve the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, among the farmers room;
Some ca' the plough, some heard, some tontie rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town:
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown,
In youthful bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes home, perhaps, to show a braw new grown,
Or deposit her sair-won penny-fee.
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

V.

Wi' joy unsign'd brothers and sisters meet,
An' each for other's weelfare kindly spire;
The social hours, swift-wing'd unnotic'd fleet;
Each tells the uncous that he sees or hears;
The parents, partial eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view.
The mother, wi' her needle an' her shears,
Gara audl claes look amast as weel's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

VI.

Their master's an' their mistress' command.
The youngers a' are warned to obey;
"An' mind their labours wi' an eydent hand,
An' we'er, tho' out o' sight to junk or play;
An' O! be sure to fear the Lord alway!
An' mind your dutes, duly, mora an' night!
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore his counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord alrigt!"
VII.

But bark! a rap comes gently to the door:
Jenny, win kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neibor 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 eye, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck anxiety, inquires his name,
While Jenny halfly is afraid to speak;
Weel please'd the mother hears, it's nae wild, worthless rake.

VIII.

Wi' kindly welcome Jenny brings him ben;
A strappan youth; he take the mother's eye;
By the Jenny sees the visit's no ill ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngest's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But blate and laithfu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu'an sae grave;
Wael please'd to think her bairn's respected like the lave.

IX.

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,
'1a when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In others arms breath out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale.'"

X.

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 loquac, virtue, conscience, all exild?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents foudling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction wild?

XI.

But now the supper crowds their simple board,
The halesome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food:
The soups their only Hauckie does afford,
That 'tount the hallau snugly chows her cood;
The same brings forth in compliment mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-haund'd kebback, fell,
An' aft he's great, an' aft he ca's it guid;
The frugal wife, garrulous, will tell,
How 'twas a tomondauld, sin' lant was 'l the bell.

XII.

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

XIII.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise:
They tune their hearts, by far the nobiest aim:
Perhaps Dundee's wild warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive Martyrs, worthy of the name:
Or noble Elgin beats the heart'nward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compare'd with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tick'd ear's no heart-felt raptures raise:
Nae unison has they with our Creator's praise.

XIV.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Analek'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.

XV.

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 they say to many a land;
How he who lone in Patmos banished,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand;
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounce' ven's command.

XVI.

Then kneeling down, to Heaven's Eternal Rung,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing;" That thus they all shall meet in future days:
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No move 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.

XVII.

Compar'd with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art,
* Pope's Windsor Forest.
When men display to congregations wide,  
Devotion's ev'ry grace, except the heart  
The Pows', incens'd, the pageant will desert,  
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;  
But haply, 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.

XVIII.

Then homeward all tak off their sev'ral 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 clam'rous 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.

XIX.

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 of the wretch of human kind,  
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refin'd!

XX.

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

XXI.

O Thou! who pour'st 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 bard,  
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.

A DIRGE.

WHEN chill November's surly blast  
Made fields and forests bare,
More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, remorse, and shame!
And man, whose heaven-erected face
The smiles of love adorn,
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn!

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

IX.
"If I'm design'd yon lordling's slave,—
By nature's law design'd,
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty or scorn?
Or why has man the will and pow'r
To make his fellow mourn?"

X.
"Yet, let not this, too much, my son,
Disturb thy youthful breast;
This partial view of human-kind
Is surely not the last!
The poor, oppressed, honest man,
Had never, sure, been born,
Had there not been some recompense
To comfort those that mourn"

XI.
"O death! the poor man's dearest friend,
The kindest and the best!
Welcome the hour my aged limbs
Are laid with thee at rest!
The great, the wealthy, fear thy blow,
From pomp and pleasure torn;
But, Oh! a bless'd relief to those
That weary-laden mourn!"

——

A PRAYER IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

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

II.
If I have wander'd in those paths
Of life I ought to shun;
As something, loudly, in my breast,
Remonstrates I have done;

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

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

V.
Where with intention I have err'd,
No other plea I have;
But, Thou art good; and goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.

STANZAS

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

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

Pain would I say, "Forgive my soul offence!"
Pain promise never more to disobey;
But, should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair virtue's way;
Again in folly's path might go astray:
Again exult the brute and sink the man;
Then how should I for heavenly mercy pray,
Who acts so counter heavenly mercy's plan?
Who sin so oft have mourn'd, yet to temptation ran?

O thou, great Governor of all below!
If I may dare a lifted eye to Thee,
Thy nod can make the tempest cease to blow,
Or still the tumult of the raging sea;
With that controlling pow'r assist ev'n me,
Those headlong furious passions to confine;
For all unfast I feel my pow'r's to be,
To rule their torrent in th' allowed line;
O, aid me with thy help, Omnipotence Divine!
LYING AT A REVEREND FRIEND'S HOUSE
ONE NIGHT, THE AUTHOR LEFT
THE FOLLOWING VERSES
IN THE ROOM WHERE HE SLEPT.

I.

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.

II.

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.

III.

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

IV.

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

V.

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

VI.

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

THE FIRST PSALM.

The man, in life wherever plac'd,
Hath happiness in store,
Who walks not in the wick'd's way,
Nor learns their guilty lore!
Nor from the sent of scornful pride
Casts forth his eyes abroad,
But with humility and awe
Still walks before his God.

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

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

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

A PRAYER,

UNDER THE PRESSURE OF VIOLENT ANGUISH.

O THOU Great Bung! what thou art
Surpasses me to know;
Yet sure I am, that known to thee
Are all thy works below.

Thy creature here before thee stands,
All wretched and distress'd;
Yet sure those lills that wring my soul
Obey thy high behest.

Sure thou, Almighty, canst not act
From cruelty or wrath!
O, free my weary eyes from tears,
Or close them fast in death!

But if I must afflicted be,
To suit some wise design;
Then man my soul with firm resolves
To hear and not repine!

THE FIRST SIX VERSES OF THE NINETIETH PSALM

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

Before the mountains heav'd their heads
Beneath thy forming hand,
Before this pond'rous globe itself,
Arise at thy command:

That pow'r which rais'd and still uphold's
This universal frame,
From countless, unbeginning time
Was ever still the same.

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

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE
PLOUGH IN APRIL 1786.

WEE, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r,
Thou'st met me in an evil hour;
For I mean crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas! it's no thy nebor sweet,
The bonnie Lark, companion meet!
Bending thee'mang the dawy west!
Wël spruckled breast.
When upward-springing, blythe to greet
The purpling east.

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

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High sheltering woods and wa's maun shield
But thou beneath the random bled
O' clad or stane,
Adorns the hiatic stubble-field,
Unseen, alone.

There in thy scanty mantle clad,
Hy swansy boom sun-ward spread,
Thou lift's thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the thorne uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless Maid,
Sweet flow'rest of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soil'd is laid
Low in'the dust.

TO RUIN.

I.

ALL hail! inexorable lord!
At whose destruction-breathing word,
The mightiest empires fall!
Thy cruel wo-delighted train,
The ministers of grief and pain,
A sullen welcome, all!
With stern-resolv'd, despairing eye,
I see each aimed dart;
For one has cut my dearest tie,
And quivers in my heart.
Then low'ring, and pouring,
The storm no more I dread;
Tho' thick'ning and black'ning,
Round my devoted head.

II.

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 throbbing cease,
Cold mud'ring in the clay?
No fear more, no tear more,
To stain my lifeless face;
Encased, and grasped
Within thy cold embrace!

TO MISS L—,

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

AGAIN the silent wheels of time
Their annual round have driv'n,

THOU giv'at the world: Thy creature, man,
In to existence brought:
Again thou say'st, "Ye sons of men,
Return yo into nought!"

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

They flourish like the morning flow'r,
In beauty's pride array'd;
But long ere night cut down it lies
All wither'd and decay'd.

Such is the fate of simple Bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd I
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent love,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whirl him o'er!

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

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Steri Ruin's plough-share drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom!
And you, tho' scarce in maiden prime,  
Are so much nearer Heav'n.

No gifts have I from Indian coasts,  
The infant year to hail;  
I send you more than Indian 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!

---

EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND.  
MAY—1786.

I.

I LANG has thought, my youthful' friend,  
A something to have sent you,  
Tho' it should serve nce 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 song  
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

II.

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

III.

I'll no say, men are villains a';  
The real, harden'd wicked,  
Wha has nae check but human law,  
Are to a few restricted;  
But och! mankind are unco weak,  
An' little to be trusted;  
If self the wavering balance shake,  
It's rarely right adjusted.

IV.

Yet they wha fa' in fortune's strife,  
Their fate we should nce censure,  
For still th' important end of life,  
They equally may answer;  
A man may have an honest heart,  
Tho' poorith hourly stare him;  
A man may tak a neebor's part,  
Yet has nce cash to spare him.

V.

Ay free, aff han' your story tell,  
When wi' a bosom crow;  
But still keep something to yourselves.  
Ye scarcely tell to ous.  
Conceal yoursel as weel's ye can  
Frue critical dissection;  
But keek thro' ev'ry other man,  
Wi' sharpen'd, sleek inspection.

VI.

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

VII.

To catch dame Fortune's golden smash,  
Assiduous wait upon her;  
And gather gear by ev'ry wile  
That's justified by honour:  
Not for to hide it in a hedge,  
Not for a train-attendant;  
But for the glorious privilege  
Or being independent.

VIII.

The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip,  
To hand the wretch in order;  
But where ye feel your honour grip,  
Let that ay be your border;  
Its slightest touches, instant pause—  
Debar a' side pretences;  
And resolutely keep its laws  
Uncaring consequences.

IX.

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 uts profuse to range,  
Be complaisance extended;  
An Atheist's laugh's a poor exchange  
For Deity offended!

X.

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'in,  
A conscience but a canker—  
A correspondence fix'd wi' Heav'n,  
Is sure a noble anchor!

XI.

Adieu, dear, amiable youth!  
Your heart can ne'er be wanting;  

---
May prudence, fortitude, and truth,
Erect your brow unshaken!
In ploughman phrase, "God send you speed,"
Still daily to grow wiser:
And may you better reck the rede,
Than ever did th' adviser!

ON A SCOTCH BARD.
GONE TO THE WEST INDIES.
4.'ye wha live by soups o' drink,
A' ye wha live by crambu-chak.
A' ye wha live and never think,
Come mornin' wi' me!

Our billie 's gien us a' a jink,
An' owre the sea.

Lament him a' ye rating core,
Wha dearly like a random-splore,
Sae 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 weil may was him,
And in their dear petition place him:
The widows, wives, an' a' may bless him,
Wit' tearfu' e's.

For weel I wrait they'll sairly miss him,
That's owre the sea.

O Fortune, they hae room to grumble?
Rast thought'nae aff some drowsy bummle,
Wha can do nought but fyke an' fumble,
'Twad been, nae plea;

But he was gleg as ony wumble,
That's owre the sea.

Auld, cantic Kyle may weepers wear,
An'stain them wit' the saut, saut tear;
'Twill mak her poor auld heart I fear,
In flinders free;

He was her laureate monie a year,
That's owre the sea.

He saw misfortune's cauld nor-west
Lang mustering up a bitter blast;
A jilet brak his heart at last,
Ill may she be!

So, took a birth afore the mast,
An' owre the sea.

To tremble under Fortune's cunnock,
On scarce a bellyfu' o' drummock,
Wi' his proud, independent stomach,
Could ill agree;

So, row't his harrdies in a hammerock,
An' owre the sea.

He ne'er was gien to great misguiding,
Yi't coat his pounches was na bide in;
Wi' him it neer 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 castie bie:
Ye'll find him ay a dainty chiel,
And for' o' glee;

He wad na wrang'd the vera deil,
That's owre the sea.

Farewell, my rhyme-composing billie!
Your native soil was right ill-willie;
But may ye flourish like a lily,
Now bonnillie!

I'll toast ye in my hindmost gillie,
Tho' owre the sea.

TO A HAGGIS.
FAIR fa ye honest, sonnie face,
Great chief tain o' the puddin-race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place.

Painch, tripe, or toarm:
Weel ar ye worthy of a grace
As lang's my arm.

The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hardies like a distant hill,
Your pin wad help to mend a mill.

In time o' need,
While thro' your pores the dewy distill
Like amber bead.

His knife see rustic labour plight,
An' cut you up with ready slight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright
Like one ditch;

And then, O what a glorious sight
Warm-reekin, rich,

Then horn for horn they stretch an' stirre,
Dell tak the hindmost, on they drive,
Till a' their weel-swall'd kytes belyve

Are bent like drumts;
Then auld guidman, maist like to ryve,
Bethankit huns.

Is there that o'er his French ragout,
Or o'it that wad staw a sow,
Or fricassee wad mak her spew
Wi' perfect sneering,
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view
On sic a dinner?

Poor devil! see him owre his trash,
As feckless as a wither'd rach
His spindle shank a guid whip lash,
His niew a nit;
Thro' bloody flood or field to dash,
O how unfit!

But mark the rustick, haggis-fed
The trembling earth resounds his tread
Clap in his walle nieve a blade,

He'll mak it whistle!
A DEDICATION

TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

EXPECT na, Sir, in this narration,
A fewthin' dedicatin' dedication,
To arose you up, an' ca' you guid,
An' sprung o' great an' noble bluid,
Because ye're surnam'd like his grace,
Perhaps related to the race;
Then when I'm tir'd— and sae are ye,
Wi' mony a folsome, sinfu' lie,
Set up a face, how I stop short,
For fear your modesty be hurt.

This may do— maun do, Sir, wi' them wha
Maun please the folk for a wamefou;
For me I see laight I needna bow,
For, Lord be thankit, I can plough;
And when I doona yoke a naig,
Then, Lord, be thankit, I can beg;
Sae I shall say, an' that's sae flatterin',
It's just sic poet an' sic patron.

The Poet, some grade angel help him, or
Je, else, I fear some ill ane skelp him,
He may do well for a' he's done yet,
But only he's no just begun yet.

The Patron, (Sir, ye maun forgie me,
I winna lie, come what will o' me)
On evry hand it will allow'd be,
He's just— nae better than he should be,
I readily and freely grant,
He doona see a poor man want;
What's no his ain he winna tak it,
What ause he says he winna break it;
Ought he can lend he'll no refuse,
Till acht his guidness is abuse'd;
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, na thanks to him for a' that;
Nae godly symptom ye can ca' that;
It's nothing but a milder feature,
Of our poor, sinfu', corrupt nature.
Ye'll get the best o' moral works,
Mang black Gentoo and pagan Turks,
Or hunters wild on Ponotasi,
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 o' d-man-don;
It's just a carnal inclination.

Morality, thou deadly bane,
Thy tens o' thousands thou hast slain!
Vain is his hope, whose stay and trust is
In moral mercy, truth, and justice!

No— stretch a point to catch a plack;
Abuse a brother to his back;
Steal thro' a witnock frae a wh-re,
But point the rake that taks the door:
Be to the poor like one winnesstane,
And haud their noses to the granstane,
Ply every art o' legal thieving.

No matter, stick to sound believing.

Learn three-mile pray'r's, and half-mile graces
Wi' veel-spread looves, an' lang wry faces;
Grunt up a solomn, 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 C'la-n,
For gundae dube of your ain dairn!
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;
When Ruin, with his sweeping besom,
Just frets till Heavy commission gien, &c. &c.
While o'er the karp pale mis'ry moons,
And strikes the ever deep'ning tones,
Still louder shrieks, and heavier groans!

Your pardon, Sir, for this digression,
I maist forgat my dedication;
But when divinity comes cross me,
My readers still are sure to lose me.

So, Sir, ye see 'twas nae daft vapour,
But I maturely thought it proper,
When a' my work I did review,
To dedicate them, Sir, to You:
Because (ye need na tak it ill)
I thought them something like yourself.

Then patronise them wi' your favour,
And your petitioner shall ever—
I had amain said, ever pray,
But that's a word I need na say:
For prayin' I ha'e little skill o' t;
I'm baith dead-awear, an' wretched ill o' t;
But I see repeat each poor man's pray'r,
That kens or hears about you, Sir—
'May ne'er misfortune's growing bark,
Howl thro' the dwelling o' the Clerk;
May ne'er his gen'rous, honest heart,
For that same gen'rous spirit smart!
May K———'s far honour'd name
Lang beest his hymeneal flame,
Till H———, at least a dizen,
Are frae their nuptial labours risen.
TO A LOUSE.

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

HA! whar ye gaun, ye crowlin curlie!  
Your Impudence protects you sairly:  
I canna say but ye strunt rarely,  
O were gause and lace!  
Tho' faith, I fear ye dine but sparely  
On sic a place.

Ye ugly, creepis, blanst wemon,  
Detasted, shunn'd by saunt an' sinner,  
How dare ye set your fit upon her,  
Sae fine a lady!  
Somewhere else and seek your dinner  
On some poor body.

Swith, in some beggar's haffet squattle;  
Where ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle  
Wit'ither kindred, jumpin cattle,  
In shoals and nations;  
Where horn or bone ne'er dare unsettle  
Your thick plantations.

Now haul ye there, ye're out o' sight,  
Below the fatt'rilas, snug an' tight;  
Na, faith ye yet! ye'll no be right  
Till ye've got on it.

The vera tapmoss, tow'ring height  
O' Miss's bonnet.

My sooth! right Msuld ye set your nose out,  
As plump and gray as oole grezet;  
O for some rank, mercurial roset,  
Or fell, red smoddum,  
I'd glie you sic a hearty doze o',  
Wad dress your dreddum.

I wad na been surpris'd to spy  
You on an auld wfe's faimen toy;  
Or aiblins some bitt duddie boy,  
On's wyliecoat;  
But Miss's fine Lunardi! fie,  
How dare ye do't!

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

O wad some pow'r the giftie gie us  
To see oursels as others see us!  
It wad frae monie a blunder free us  
And foosis notion:  
Wi' at airs in dress an' gait wad lea's us,  
And ev'n Devotion!

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGIL.

I.

EDINA! Scottie's darling seat!  
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,  
Where once beneath a monarch's feet  
Sat legislations's sov'reign pow'r!  
From masking wildly-scatter'd flow'rs,  
As on the banks of Apr'l stray'd.  
And slinging, lone, the hagg'ring hour,  
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

II.

Here wealth still swells the golden tide,  
As busy trade his labours plies;  
There architecture's noble pride  
Bids elegance and splendor rise;  
Here justice, from her native skies,  
High wielding her balance and her rod;  
There learning, with his eagle eyes,  
Seeks science in her coy abode.

III.

Thy Sons, Edina, social, kind,  
With open arms the stranger hail;  
Their views enlarg'd, their liberal mind!  
Above the narrow, rural vale;
POEMS.

EPISTLE TO J. LAPR

AN OLD SCOTTISH BARD.

APRIL 1st, 1785.

WHILE briers and woodhoses budding @
An' pastricks scraubhin loud at e'en,
An' morning poussies whiddle seen,

Inspire my muse,
This freedom in an unknown frien',
I pray excuse.

On fasten-een we had a roackin,
To ca' the crack and weave or stockin;
And there was muckle fun an' jokin,
Ye need na doubt;

At length we had a harty yokin,
At sang about.

There was an' sang amang the rest,
Aboon the; I pleased me best,
That some kind husband had addrest

To some sweet wife;
It thir'd the heart strings thro' the breast,
A' to the life.

I've scarce heard ought describes ane weel,
What gen'rous, manly booms feel;
Thought I, "Can this be Pope, or Steele,
Pr Beattie's wark?" I
They told me 'twas an odd kind chiel
About Mairkirk.

It pat me fidgin-fain to hear 't,
And ae about him there I spier't
Then a' that ken't him round declar'd
He had ingen,
That nane excell'd it, few cam near't,
It was sae fine.

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

Then up I gat, an' swoor an' aith,
Thou! I shouk! paw my plenuth and graith,
Or die a caider pow'nis death,
At some dyke-back,
A pint an' gill I'd gie them baith
To hear your crack.

But, first an' foremost, I should tell,
Amaist as soon as I could spell,
I to the crambo-jingle toll,
Tho' rude an' rough,
Yet crowning to a body's sel,
Does well enough.

I am nae poet, in a sense,
But just a rhyme, like, by chance,
An' hae to learning nae pretense,
Yet, what the matter?
BURNS' POEMS. 55

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

Awa, ye selfish wary race,
Who think that havin', sense, an' grace,
Ev'n love an' friendship, should give place
To catch-the-plack!
I dinna like to see your face,
Nor hear you crack.

But ye whom social pleasure charms,
Whose heart the tide of kindness warms,
Who hold your being on the terms,
Each aid the others'
Come to my bowl, cor'-to my arms,
My friends, my bro.

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

TO THE SAME.

APRIL 21st, 1785.

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

Forjesket sair, with weary legs,
Rattlin' the corn out-owre the rigs,
Or dealing thro' among the nails
Their ten-hours' bite,
My awkward muse sair pleasing and begs
I would na write.

The tapeless ramsees'd hizzie,
She's saft at best, and something lazy,
Quo' she, "Ye ken, we've been sae busy,
This month an' mair,
That trouth my head is grown right dizzie
An' something sair."

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

"Shall bauld Lapraik, the king o' hearts,
Tho' mankind were a pack o' cartes,
Roose ye sae weel for your desert,
In terms so friendly
Yet ye'll neglect to shew your parts,
An' thank him kindly!"

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

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

My worthy friend, ne'er grudge an' carp,
The fortune sue ye bairn an' sharp;
Come, kittle up your moorland harp
Wi' gleesome touch i;
Ne'er mind how fortune waft an' warp;
She's but a bitch.

She's gien me monie a jirt an' fleeg,
Sin' I could striddle ower a rig;
But, by the L—d, tho' I should beg
Wi' lyart pow,
I'll laugh, an' sing, an' shake my leg,
As lang's I dow!

Now comes the sax an' twentieth simmer
I've seen the bud up; the thimmer,
Still persecuted by the limmer
Froe year to year:
But yet, despite the kittle kimmer,
I, Rob, am here.

Do ye envy the city Gent,
Behint a kist to lie and skilent,
Or purse-proud, big wi' cent. per cent.
And muckle wame,
In some bit brugh to revereent
A Ballie's name?

Or is't the naughty feudal Thane,
Wi' ruffl'd eark an' glanclin' ane,
Wha thinks himsel nae sheep shank bane,
But lordly stalks,
While caps and bonnets all are ta'en,
As by he walks?

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

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

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

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

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

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

TO W. S.*** K."

OCHILTREE.

May, 1755.

I GAT your letter, winsome Willie:
Wi' grateful heart I thank you brawlie;
Tho' I micht say I wad be silly,
An' unco vain,
Should I believe my coxkin' billie,
Your futterin' strain.

But I se believe ye kindly meant it,
I sud be faith to think ye hinted
Ironic satire, sidelin' skilent
On your poor Music;
Tho' in sic phrases terms ye've pu'd it:
I scarce excuse ye.

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

(O Ferguson! thy glorious parts
Ill suited law's dry, musty arts!
My curse upon your whimstane hearts,
Ye Embrugh Gentry!
The tythe o' what ye waste at currie,
Wad stow'd his poetry!)

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

Auld Coila now may fidge fu' fain,
She's gotten Peats o' her ain.
Chielis wha their chanters winna hain,
But tune their lays,
Till echoes a' resound again
Her weel-sang praise.

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

Ramsey an' famous Ferguson
Said Forth an' Tay a lift aboon;
Yarrow an' Tweed to monie a tune,
Owre Scotland rings.
While Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, an' Doon,
Nae body sings.

Th' Illusive, Tiber, Thames, an' Seine,
Glide sweet in monie a tune's line!
But Willie, set your fit to mine,
An cock your crest,
We'll gar our streams and burnies shine
Up wi' the best.

We'll sing auld Coila's plains an' falls,
Her moors red-brown wi' heather bells,
Her banks an' brass, her dene and dells,
Where glorious Wallace
At brea the gree, as story tells,
Frae southron billies.
At Wallace' name what Scottish blood
But boils up in a spring-tide flood!
Oft have our fearless fathers strode
By Wallace' side,
Still pressing onward, red-wat-shod,
Or glorious dy'd.

O, Sweet are Coila's haun's an' woods,
When lintwhites chant amang the buds,
And jinkin hares, in amorous walks,
Their loves enjoy,
While thro' the braes the cushion croods
With waifful cry!

Ev'n winter bleak has charms for me
When winds rave thro' the naked tree;
Or frosts on hills of Ochil-tree
Are hoary gray;
Or blindin drifa wild-furoous lee,
Dark'ning the day!

O Nature! a' thy shows an' forms
To feeling, pensive hearts nae гаран
Whether the simmer kinny warms,
Wi' life an' light,
Or winter nows, in gusty storms,
The lang, dark night!

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

The wary race may drudge an' drive,
Hog-shonther, jandie, stretch, an' strive,
Let me fair Nature's face describ,
And I, wi' pleasure,
Shall let the busy, grumbling hive
Bum owre their treasures.

Fareweel, "My rhyme-composing brither!
We've been owre lang unkennd toither!
Now let us lay our heads thegither,
In love fraternal;
May Enny wallop in a tether,
Black fiend, infernal!

While highlandmen hate tolls and taxes;
While moorlan' herds like guild fat braxies;
While terra firma on her axis
Diurnal turns,
Count on a friend, in faith an' practice,
In Robert Burns.

POSTSCRIPT.

MY memory's no worth a preen;
I had amast forgotten clean,
Ye bade me write you what they mean
By this New-Light,*
"'Bout which our herds nae aft has been
Mairst like to fight.

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

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

This past for certain, undisputed
It ne'er cam' i' their heads to doubt it,
Till chielis gat up an' wad confute it
An' ca'd it wrong;
An' muckle din there was about it,
Baith loud and lang.

Some herds, weel learn'd upo' the beuk,
Wad threap auld folk the thing misteuk;

* See note, page 18.
For 'twas the auld moon turn'd a neuk,  
An' out o' sight,  
An' backlines-comin, to the leek,  
She grew mair bright.

This was deny'd, it was affirm'd;  
The herds an' hissels were alarm'd:  
The rev'rend gray-beards raved an' storm'd,  
That beardless laddies
Should think they better were inform'd  
Than their auld daddies.

Fraise less to mair it gaed to sticks;  
Fraise words an' aitches to clothe an' nicks;  
An' monie a fellow gat his licks,  
WI' hearty crunt;
An' some, to learn them for their tricks,  
Were hang'd an' burnt.

This game was play'd in monie lands,  
An' auld-light caddies bire sic hands,  
That faith the youngsters took the sands  
WI' nimble shanks,
The lairds forbade, by strict commands,  
Sic bluddy pranks.

But new-light herds gat sic a cowe,  
Folk thought them ruin'd stick-an'stowe,  
Till now anaisist on ev'ry knowe,  
* Ye'll find ane plac'd;  
An' some, their new-light fair a'ow,  
Just quite baefac'd.

Nae doubt the auld-light shocks are beatin';  
Their zealous herds are vex'd an' sweatin';  
Mysel, I've even seen them gretin  
WI' ginnin spite,
To hear the moon sae gladly lie'd o'  
By word an' write.

But shortly they will cowe the louns!  
Some auld-light herds in neebor towns  
Are min'il, in things they ca' balloons,  
To tak a flight,
An' stay a month amang the moons  
An' see them right.

Guid observation they will gie them,  
An' when the auld moon's gaun to lea'e them,  
The hind-nost shaird, they'll fetch it wi' them  
Just i' their pouch,
An' when the new-light billies see them,  
I think they'll crouch t

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

**EPISTLE TO J. R.**

**ENCLOSING SOME POEMS.**

**O ROUGH,** rude, ready-witted, R*****,  
The wale o' cocks for fun an' drinkin

'There's mony godly folks are thickin,  
Your dreams* an' tricks  
Will send you, Korah-like, a-shinin,  
Straight to auld Nick.'s.

Ye hae sae monie cracks an' cants,  
And in your wicked drunken rants,  
Ye mak a devil o' the saunt,  
An' fill them fou;
And then their failings, flaws, an' wants,  
Are a' seen thro'.

Hypocrisy, in mercy spare it!  
That holy robe, O dinna tear it
Spare 't for their sakes wae aften wear it,  
The lads in black!
But your caust wit, when it comes near it,  
Rives 't aff their back.

Think, wicked sinner, wha ye're skaiting,  
Its just the blue-gown badge an' claithing  
O' saunts; tak that, ye lea'e them naething  
To ken them by,
Fraise ony unregenerate heathen  
Like you or I.

I've sent you home some rhyming ware,  
A' that I bargain'd for an' mair;  
Sae, when ye has an hour to spare,  
I will expect
Yen sang, je'll sen't wi' cannie care,  
And no neglect.

Tho' faith, sma' heart hae I to sing!  
My muse dow scarcey spread her wing l
I've play'd mysel a bonnie spring,  
An' danc'd my fill l
I'd better gane an' sail'd the king,  
At Bunker's Hill.

'Twas ae night lately in my fun,  
I gaed a roving wi' the gun,  
An' brought a pa'trick to the grun,  
A bonnie hen,
And, as the twilight was begun,  
Thought none wed ken.

The poor wee thing was little hurt:  
I strakiet it a wee for sport,  
Ne'er thinkin they wad fash me for't;  
But, deil-in-a-care l
Somebody tells the poacher-court  
The hail affair.

Some auld us'ld hands ha' ta'en a note,  
That sic a hen had got a shot;  
I was suspected for the plot:  
I scorn'd to lie
So gat the whistle o' my great,  
An' pay't the fee.

* A certain humorous dream of his was then mak a noise in the country-side.
† A song he had promised the Author.
BURNS’ POEMS.

Bht, by my gun  o’ guns the wa,e,
An’ by my pouther an’ my ball,
An’ by my hen, az’ by her tail,
I vow an’ swear !
The game shall pay o’er moor an’ dale,
For this, next year.

As soon’s the clockin-time is by,
An’ the wee points begun to cry,
L—d, I’se hae sportin by and by,
For my gowd guinea:
Tho’ I should herd the buckskin kye
For’t in Virginia.

Trowth, they had muscle for to blame !
’Twas neither broken wing nor limb,
But twa-three draps about the wame
Scarce thro’ the feathers;  
An’ baith a yellow George to claim
An’ thole their brethren !

It pits me ay as mad’s a hare ;
So I can rhyme nor write nae mair ;
But pennyworths again is fair,
When time’s expedient:
Meanwhile I am, respected Sir,
Your most obedient.

JOHN BARLEYCORN,*

A BALLAD.

I.

THERE were three kings into the east,
Three kings both great and high,
An’ they hae sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn should die.

II.

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

III.

But the cheerful spring came kindly on;
And show’ra began to fall;
John Barleycorn got up again,
And sore surprised them all.

IV.

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

* This is partly composed on the plan of an old song known by the same name.

V.

The sober autumn entered mild,
When he grew wan and pale;
His bending joints and drooping head
Show’d he began to fail.

VI.

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

VII.

They’ve ta’en a weapon lang and sharp,
And cut him by the knee;
Then ty’d him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgery.

VIII.

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

IX.

They fill’d up a darksome pit
With water to the brim,
They heaved in John Barleycorn,
There let him sick or swim.

X.

They laid him out upon the floor,
To work him farther we,
And still as sign of life appear’d,
They toss’d him to and fro.

XI.

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

XII.

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

XIII.

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

XIV.

’Twill make a man forget his woes;
’Twill heighten all his fey.
BURNS' POEMS.

'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
Tho' the tear were in her eye.

XV.
Then let us toast Juv. Harleycorn,
Each man a glass in hand;
And may his greatest posterity
Ne'er fall in old Scotland!

A FRAGMENT.
Tune—"Gilliecrankte."

I.
WHEN Guilford good our pilot stood,
And did our helm throw, man,
Ae night, at tea, began a plea,
Within America, man;
Then up they gat the maskin-pat,
And in the sea did jaw, man;
An' did nae less, in full congress,
Than quite refuse our law, man.

II.
Then thro' the lakes Montgomery takes,
I wat he was a slaw, man;
Down Lourie's burn he took a turn,
And Carleton did ca', man:
But yet, what reck, he, at Quebec,
Montgomery-like did fa', man,
Wi' sword in hand, before his band,
Aman' his en'mies a', man.

III
Poor Tammy Gage, within a cage
Was kept at Boston ha', man;
Till Willie Howe took o'er the knowe.
For Philadelphia, man:
Wi' sword an' gun he thought a sin
Guid christian blood to draw, man;
But at New-York, wi' knife an' fork,
Sire-join be hacket sma', man.

IV
Burgoyne gaed up, like spur an' whip,
Till Fraser brave did fa', man;
Then lost his way, ae misty day,
In Saratoga shaw, man,
Cornwallis fought as lang's he doubted,
An' did the buckskins claw, man;
But Clinton's gaiwe frae rust to save,
He hung it to the wa', man.

V
Then Montague, an' Guilford too,
Began to fear a fa', man;
And Sackville dour, who stood the stoure,
The German chief to throw, man:

For Paddy Burke, like ony Turk,
Nae mercy had at a', man;
And Charlie Fox threw by the box,
An' lows'd his tinkler jaw man.

VI
Then Rockingham took up the game;
Till death did on him ca', man;
When Shelburne meek held up his cheek,
Conform to gospel law, man;
Saint Stephen's boys, wi' jarring noise,
They did his measures throw, man,
For North an' Fox united stocks,
An' bore him to the wa', man.

VII
Then clubs an' hearts were Charlie's cartes
He swept the stakes awa', man,
Till the diamond's ace, of Indian race,
Lied him a sair fause pas, man;
The Saxon lads, wi' loud placads,
On Chatham's boy did ca', man;
An' Scotland drew her pipe an' blew,
"'Up, Willie, waurn them a', man!"

VIII
Behind the throne then Grenville's gone,
A secret word or twa, man;
While see Dundas aroos'd the class
Be-north the Roman wa', man;
An' Chatham's wrath, in heavenly graith,
(Insipired bardies saw man)
Wi' kindling eyes cry'd, "Willie, rise!"
Would I ha'e fear'd them a', man?

IX
But, word an' blow, North, Fox, and Co.
Gowf'd Willie like a ba', man,
Till Southen raise, and coost their clais.
Behind him in a raw, man;
An' Caledon throw by the drone,
An' did her whittle draw, man;
An' swoor fu' rule, thro' dirt an' blood
To make it guilt in law man.

* * * *

SONG.
Tune—"Corn rige are bonnie."

I
IT was upon a Lammas night,
When corn rige are bonnie,
Beneath the moon's undoubted light,
I held awa to Annie;
The time flew by wi' teuntless heed,
Till 'ween the late and early;

For Paddy Burke, like ony Turk,
Nae mercy had at a', man;
And Charlie Fox threw by the box,
An' lows'd his tinkler jaw man.

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* * * *

SONG.
Tune—"Corn rige are bonnie."

I
IT was upon a Lammas night,
When corn rige are bonnie,
Beneath the moon's undoubted light,
I held awa to Annie;
The time flew by wi' teuntless heed,
Till 'ween the late and early;
The woodcock haunts the lonely dells
The soaring hern the fountains:
Thro' lofty groves the chuehat roves,
The path of man to shun it;
The hazel bush o'erhangs the thrush,
The spreading thorn the linnet.

III.
Thus ev'ry kind their pleasure find,
The savage and the tender;
Some social joy, and leagues combine;
Some solitary wander;
Avaunt, away! the cruel away,
Tyrannic man's dominion;
The sportsman's joy, the murd'ring cry,
The flutt'ring gory pinion!

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

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

SONG.
TUNE—"My Nannie, O."

I.
Behind you hills where Lugar* flows,
'Mang moors and mosses many, O,
The wintry sun the day has clos'd,
And I'll awa' to Nannie, O.

II.
The westlin wind blows loud an' thrill;
The night's baith mairk an' rainy, O;
But I'll get my plaid, an' out I'll steel,
An' owre the hills to Nannie, O.

III.
My Nannie's charming, sweet, an' young
Nae artif' wiles to win ye, O:

* Originally, Stinch. 
May ill bea' the flattering tongue
That wad beguile my Nannie, O.

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

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

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

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

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

GREEN GROW THE RASHES.

A FRAGMENT.

CHORUS.

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

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

Green grow, &c.

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

Green grow, &c.

III.
But gie me a canny hour at e'en,
My arms about my dearie, O;
An' warly cares, an' warly men,
May a' gae tapealterie, O!

Green grow, &c.

IV.
For you sae douse, ye sneer at this,
Ye'er nought but senseless ases, O:
The wisest man the warly e'er saw,
He dearly lov'd the rashies, O.

Green grow, &c.

V.
Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O;
Her 'prentice han' she try'd on man,
An' then she made the rashies, O.

Green grow, &c.

* * * * *

TUNE—"Jockey's Grey Brooks"

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

CHORUS.*

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

II.
In vain to me the cowslips blow,
In vain to me the vi'lets spring;
In vain to me, in glen or show,
The mavis and the lintwhite sing.

And maun I still, &c.

III.
The merry ploughboy cheers his team,
Wi' joy the tente seedman, stakie,
But life to me is a weary dream,
A dream of ane that never wauks.

And maun I still, &c.

* This chorus is part of a song composed by a gentleman in Edinburgh, a particular friend of the author's.

† Menie is the common abbreviation of Mariannes
IV.

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

And maun I still, &c.

V.

The sheep-herd steeks his faulding slap,
And owre the moorlands whistles still,
Wi' wild, unequal, wandring step
I met him on the dewy hill.

And maun I still, &c.

VI.

And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Byth the waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts and signs on fluttering wings,
A wo-worn ghaist I hameward glide.

And maun I still, &c.

VII.

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

CHORUS.

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

SONG.

TUNE——"Roslin Castle!"

I.

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

* We cannot presume to alter any of the poems of our bard, and more especially those printed under his own direction; yet it is to be regretted that this chorus, which is not of his own composition, should be attached to these fine stanzas, as it perpetually interrupts the train of sentiment which they excite. E.

II.

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

III.

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

IV.

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

SONG.

TUNE——"Guilderoy!"

I.

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.

II.

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 the latest sigh!
THE FAR E W E L L O W

TO THE

BRETHREN OF ST. JAMES’S LODGE

TARBOLTON.

TUNE—"Good night, and joy be with you a!"

I.

ADIEU, a heart-warm, fond adieu!
Dear brothers of the mystic yule!
Ye favour’d, ye enlighten’d few,
Companions of my social joy!
Tho’I to foreign lands must hie,
Pursuing Fortune’s slipp’ry ba’
With melting heart, and brimful eye,
I’ll mind you still, tho’ far awa’.

II.

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

III.

May freedom, harmony, and love,
Unite us in the grand design,
Beneath th’ omniscient eye above,
The glorious architect divine!
That you may keep th’ unerring line,
Still rising by the plummets’ law,
Till order bright completely shine,
Shall be my pray’r when far awa’.

IV.

And you farewell! whose merits claim,
Justly, that highest badge to wear!
Heav’n 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’.

SONG.

TUNE—"Prepare, my dear brethren, to the Tavern
let’s fly."

I.

No churchman am I for to rail and to write,
No statesman nor soldier to plot or to fight,
No sly man of business contriving a snare,
For a big-belly’d bottle’s the whole of my care.

II.

The peer I don’t envy, I give him his bow;
I scorn not the peasant, though ever so low;
But a club of good fellows, like those that are here,
And a bottle like this, are my glory and care.

III.

Here passes the squire on his brother—his horse;
There centum per centum, the cit, with his purse;
But see you the Crown how it waves in the air,
There, a big-belly’d bottle still eases my care.

IV.

I once was persuaded a venture to make;
A letter inform’d me that all was to wreck;
But the purdy old landlord just waddled up stairs,
With a glorious bottle that ended my cares.

VI.

"Life’s cares they are comforts,"—a maxim laid
down
By the bard, what d’ye call him, that wore the black
gown;
And faith I agree with th’ old prig to a hair;
For a big-belly’d bottle’s a hea’n of care.

A Stanza added in a Mason Lodge.

Then fill up a bumper and make it o’erflow,
And honours masonic prepare for to throw;
May every true brother of the compass and square
Have a big-belly’d bottle when harass’d with care.

WRITTEN IN

FRIARS-CARSE HERMITAGE,

ON NITI’SIDE.

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

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

As youth and love with sprightly dance,
Beneath thy morning star advance,

* Young’s Night Thoughts.
Pleasure with her siren air
May delude the thoughtless pair;
Let prudence bless enjoyment’s cup,
Then raptur’d slip, and sip it up.

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

As the shades of ev’ning close,
Beck’ning thee to long repose;
As life itself becomes disease,
Seek the chimney-neuk of ease.
There ruminate with sober thought,
On all thou’st seen, and heard, and wrought;
And teach the sportive young’r round,
Saws of experience, sage and sound.
Say, man’s true, genuine estimate,
The grand criterion of his fate,
Is not, Art thou so high or low?
Did thy fortune ebb or flow?
Did many talents gild thy span?
Or frugal nature grudge thee one?
Tell them, and press it on their mind,
As thou thyself must shortly find.
The smile or frown of awful Heav’n
To virtue or to vice is giv’n.
Say, to be just, and kind, and wise,
There solid self-enjoyment lies;
That foolish, selfish, faithless ways,
Lead to the wretched, vile, and base.

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

Stranger, go! Heav’n be thy guide!
Quoth the beadleman of N’th-side.

O DEATH! thou tyrant fell and bloody!
The meekle devil wi’ a woodie
Haurl thee hame to his black smiddle,
O’er hurcheon hides,
And like stock-fish come o’er his studdie
Wi’ thy auld sides?

He’s gone, he’s gaen! he’s frae us torn,
The ae best fellow e’er was born!
Thee, Mathew, nature’ssel shall mourn
By wood and wild,
Where, haply, pity strays forlorn,
Fraise man exil’d

STROPHE.

View the wither’d baldam’s face—
Can thy keen inspection trace
Aught of humanity’s sweet melting grace!
Note that eye, ’tis rheum o’erflows,
Fity’s flood there never rose.
See those hands, ne’er stretch’d to save,
Hands that took—but never gave.
Keeper of Mammon’s iron chest
Lo, there she goes, unschilded and unblest,
She goes, but not to realms of everlasting rest!

ANTISTROPHE.

Plunderer of armies, lift thine eyes,
(A while forebair, ye tort’ring fiends,) Seest thou whose step unwilling hither bends.)
No fallen angel, hurl’d from upper skies;
’Tis thy trusty guandom mate,
Dogm’d to share thy fiery fate,
She, tardy, hell-ward plies.

EPODE.

And are they of no more avail,
Ten thousand glittering pounds a year?
In other words can Mammon fail,
Omnipotent as he is here?
O, bitter mock’ry of the pompous bier,
While down the wretched vital part is driv’n!
The cave-lodg’d beggar, with a conscience clear,
Expires in rage, unknown, and goes to Heav’n.

ELEGY

ON

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

But now his radiant course is run,
For Mathew’s course was bright;
His soul was like the glorious sun,
A matchless, Heav’nly Light!

O DEATH! thou tyrant fell and bloody!
The meekle devil wi’ a woodie
Haurl thee hame to his black smiddle,
O’er hurcheon hides,
And like stock-fish come o’er his studdie
Wi’ thy auld sides?

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

ODE,

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
MRS.——OF——.

DWELLER in yon dungeon dark,
Hangman of creation! mark
Who in widow-weeds appears,
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Haurl thee hame to his black smiddle,
O’er hurcheon hides,
And like stock-fish come o’er his studdie
Wi’ thy auld sides?
Thy gay, green flow'ry tresses shear,  
For him that's dead!

Thou, autumn, wi' thy yellow hair,  
In grief thy swallow mantie tear!
Thou, winter, hurling thro' the air  
The roaring blast,
Wide o'er the naked world would declare  
The worth we've lost!

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

O Henderson; the man! the brother!  
And art thou gone, and gone for ever!  
And hast thou crossed that unknown river,  
Life's dreary bound?

Like thee where shall I find another,  
The world around?

Go to your sculptur'd tombs, ye great,  
In a' the tinsel trash of state!  
But by the honest turf I'll wait,  
Thou man of worth!

And weep the ae best fellow's fate  
E'er lay in earth.

THE EPITAPH.

STO!, passenger! my story's brief;  
And truth I shall relate, man;  
I tell nae common tale o' grief,  
For Matthew was a great man.

If thou uncommon merit hast,  
Yet spurn'd at fortune's door, man;  
A look of pity luther cast,  
For Matthew was a poor man.

If thou a noble sodger art,  
That passeth by this grave, man;  
There moulders here a gallant heart;  
For Matthew was a brave man.

If thou on men, their works and ways,  
Cannot throw uncommon light, man;  
Here lies who weel had won thy praise,  
For Matthew was a bright man.

If thou at friendship's sacred cae!  
Would life itself resign, man;  
Thy sympathetic tear man fa',  
For Matthew was a kind man!

If thou art staunch without a stain,  
Like the unchanging blue, man;  
This was a kinsman o' thy sin,  
For Matthew was a true man.

If thou hast wit, and fun, and fire  
And ne'er guld wine did fear, man;
This was thy billie, dam, and sire,  
For Matthew was a queer man.

If o'ny whimshill whim's'n not,  
To blame poor Matthew dare, man;  
May dool and sorrow be his lot,  
For Matthew was a rare man.

LAMENT

OF

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS,

ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING.

Now nature hangs her mantyle green  
On every blooming tree,  
And spreads her sheets o' daisies white  
Out o' the grassy lea:  
Now Phoebus cheers the crystal streams,  
And glads the azure skies;  
But nought can glad the weary wight  
That fast in durance lies.

Now lav'rocks wake the merry morn,  
Aloft on dewy wing;  
The merle, in his noontide bow'r  
Makes woodland echoes ring;  
The navis mild, wi' many a note,  
Sings drowsy day to rest:  
In love and freedom they rejoice,  
Wi' care nor thrall oppress.

Now blooms the lily by the bank,  
The primrose down the brae;  
The hawthorn's budding in the glen,  
And milk-white is the sloe:  
The meanest kind in fair Scotland  
May rove their sweets among;  
But I, the Queen of a' Scotland,  
Maun lie in prison strang.

I was the Queen o' bonnie France,  
Where happy I had been;  
Fu' lightly raise I in the morn,  
As blythe the lay down at e'en:  
And I'm the sovereign of Scotland,  
And many a traitor there;  
Yet here I lie in foreign bands,  
And never ending care.

But as for thee, thou false woman,  
My sister and my fae,  
Grim vengeance, yet shall whet a sword  
That thou' thy soni shall gae:  
The weeping blood in woman's breast  
Was never known to thee;  
Nor th' balm that drapes on wounds of wo  
Frae woman's pitying e'e.

My son! my son! may kinder stars  
Upon thy fortune shine.

And may those pleasures gild thy reign,  
That ne'er wad blink on mine!  
God keep thee free thy mother's foes,  
Or turn their hearts to thee:  
And where thou meet'st thy mother's friend,  
Remember him for me!

O! soon, to me, may summer-suns  
Nae whir light up the morn!  
Nae mair, to me, the autumn winds  
Wawe o'er the yellow corn!  
And in the narrow house o' death  
Let winter round me rave;  
And the next flow'rs that deck the spring,  
Bloom on my peaceful grave!

TO ROBERT GRAHAM, Esq.,

OF FINTRA.

LATE cripp'd of an arm, and now a leg,  
About to beg a pass for leave to beg;  
Dull, listless, tear'd, dejected, and deprist,  
(Nature is adverse to a cripple's rest;)  
Will generous Graham list to his Poet's wail?  
(If sooths poor misery, heark'n ing to her tale,)  
And hear him curse the light he first survey'd,  
And doubly curse the luckless ryiming trade?

Of thy caprice maternal I complain.  
The lion and the bull thy care have found,  
One shakes the forests, and one spurns the ground;  
Thou giv'st the ass his hide, the snail his shell,  
Th' envenom'd wasp, victorious guards his cell,—  
Thy minions, kings, defend, control, devour,  
In all th' omnipotence of rule and power.—  
Foxes and statesmen, subtle wiles ensure;  
The cit and pollecat stink, and are secured.  
Toads with their poison, doctors with their drug,  
The priest and hag in their robes are snug;  
Ev'n silly woman has her warlike arts,  
Her tongue and eyes, her drenched spear and darts.

But Oh! thou bitter step-mother and hard,  
To thy poor, fenceless, naked child—the Bard!  
A thing unhatchable in world's skill,  
And half a idiot too, more helpless still.  
No heels to bear him from the op'ning dun;  
No claws to dig, his hated sight to shun;  
No horns, but those by luckless Hymen worn,  
And those, alas! not Amathla's horn;  
No nerves oaf'st'rey, Mammon's trusty cur  
Clad in rich dulness' comfortable fur,  
In naked feeling, and in aching pride,  
He bears th' unbroken blast from ev'ry side:  
Vampyre booksellers drain him to the heart,  
And scorpion critics careless venom dart.

Critic—appall'd I venture on the name,  
Those cut-throat bandits in the paths of fame:  
Bloody dissectors, worse than ten Monroes;  
He hacks to teach, they mangle to expose.

His heart by causeless, wanton malice wrung,  
By blockheads' daring into madness stung;
BURNS’ POEMS

His well-won bays, than life itself more dear,
By miscreants torn, who ne’er one sprig must wear:
Foil’d, bleeding, torture’d, in the unequal strife
The hapless poet founders on th’ life.
ill-days each hope that once his bosom felt,
And fled each muse that glorious once inspir’d,
Low sunk in squalid, unprotected age,
Dead, even resentment, for his injur’d page,
He heeds or feels no more the ruthless critic’s rage!

So, by some hedge, the generous steed deceas’d,
Or half-starr’d snugling cars a dainty feast:
By toll and famine wore to skin and bone,
Lies senseless of each tugging bitch’s son.

O dulness! portion of the truly blest!
Calm shelter’d of eternal rest!
Thy sons ne’er madden in the fierce extremes
Of fortune’s polar frost, or torrid beams.
If mantling high she fills the golden cup,
With sober selfish ease they sip it up.

Conscious the bounteous mead they well deserve,
They only wonder ‘tis some folks’ do not sterve.
The grave, sage heron thus easy picks his frog,
And thinks the mallard a sad, worthless dog.
When disappointment snaps the hope of hope,
And thro’ disastrous night they darkling grope,
With deaf endurance sluggishlie they bear,
And just conclude that ‘tis fools are fortune’s care.’

So, heavy, passive to the tempest’s shocks,
Strong on the sign-post stands the stupid ox.

Not so the idle muses’ mad-cap train,
Not such the workings of their moon-struck brain:
In equanimity they never dwell,
By turns in soaring heav’n, or vaulted hell.

I dread thee, fate, relentless and severe,
With all a poet’s, husband’s, father’s fear!
Already one strong hold of hope is lost,
Glencairn, the truly noble, lies in dust;
(Fled, like the sun eclips’d as noon appears,
And left us darkling in a world of tears:)
O I hear my ardent, grateful, selfish pray’r
Finstre, my other stay, long bless and spare!
Thro’ a long life his hopes and wishes crown;
And bright in cloudless skies his sun go down!
May bliss domestic smooth his private path;
Give energy to life; and soothe his latest breath,
With many a filial tear circling the bed of death!

In loud lament bewail’d his lord,
Whom death had all unwittingly ta’en.
He lean’d him to an ancient aik,
Whose trunk was mould’ring down with years;
His locks were bleached white w.’ time!
His hoary cheek was wet w’ tears!
And as he touch’d his trembling harp,
And as he tun’d his duteous sang,
The winds, lamenting thro’ their caves,
To echo bore the notes alang.

Ye scatter’d birds that faintly sing,
The reliques of the vernal quire!
Ye woods that shed on a’ the winds
The honors of the aged year!
A few short months, and glad and gay,
Again ye’ll charm the ear and e’e;
But notchi in all revolving time
Can gladness bring again to me.

I am a bending aged tree
That long has stood the wind and rain;
But now has come a cruel blast,
And my last hald of earth is gane;
Nae leaf o’ mine shall greet the spring,
Nae simmer sun exalt my bloom;
But I mourn lie before the storm,
And lathers plant them in my room.

I’ve seen sae mony changefu’ years,
On earth I am a stranger grawn;
I wander in the ways of men,
Alike unknowing and unknown:
Unheard, un pity’d, unreli’ed,
I hear alane joy lade o’ care,
For silent, low, on beds of dust,
Lie a’ that would my sorrows share.

And last (the sum of a’ my griefs)
My noble master lies in clay;
The flow’r amang our barons bold,
His country’s pride, his country’s stay:
In weary being now I pine,
For a’ the life of life is dead,
And hope has left my aged ken,
On forward wing for ever fled.

Awake thy last sad voice, my harp!
The voice of wo and wild despair;
Awake, resound thy latest lay,
Then sleep in silence evermair!
And thou, my last, best, only friend
That fillest an untimely tomb,
Accept this tribute from the bard
Thou brought from fortune’s mirk’est gloom.

In poverty’s low, barren vale,
Thick mists, obscure, involv’d me round;
Though oft I turn’d the wistful eye,
Nae ray of fame was to be found:
Thou found’st me, like the morning sun
That melts the fogs in liquid air,
The friendless bard and rustic song,
Became alike thy fostering care.
"O! why has worth so short a date?
While villains ripen gray with time!
Must thou, the noble, gen'rous, great,
Fall in bold manhood's handy prime?
Why did I live to see that day?
A day to me so full of wo!
O! had I met the mortal shaft
Which laid my benefactor low!

The bridegroom may forget the bride
Was made his wedded wife yestreen;
The morn may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been;
The mother may forget the child
That smiles so sweetly on her knee;
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a' that thou hast done for me!

LINES SENT
TO SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD,
OF WHITEFOORD, BART.,
WITH THE FOREGOING POEM.
THOU, who thy honour as thy God rever'st,
Who, save thy mind's reproach, fought earthly fear'st.
To thee this votive offering I impart,
The tearful tribute of a broken heart.
The friend thou valuedst, I the patron lov'd;
His worth, his honour, all the world approv'd.
We'll mourn till we too go as he has gone,
And tread the dreary path to that dark world unknown.

TAM O' SHANTER.
A TALE.

Of Brownyis and of Bogilis is this Duke.
GAWIN DOUGLAS.

When Chapman billies leave the street,
And droothy neebors, neebors meet,
As market-days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to take the gate;
While we sit hawking at the nappy,
An' gettin' fou and unco happy,
We think on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and stiles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Where sits our sulky sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth I tell honest Tam o' Shanter,
As he frae Ayr, as night did cantor,
(Auld Ayr whom ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonny lasses)

O Tam! had 'st thou but been as wise,
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice;
She tauld thee weel thou was a skellem,
A blethering, blustering, drunk bell.
That frae November till October,
As market-day thou was nae sober,
That ilk a melder, wi' the miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on,
The smith and thee get roaring fou on,
That at the L—'d house, ev'n on Sunday.
Thou drank wi' Kirtin Jean till Monday.
She prophesied'd, that late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drown'd in Doon;
Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me gret,
To think how mony counsell sweet
How mony lengthen'd sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despies!

But to our tale: As market night
Tam had got planted unco right;
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finly
Wil' reaming swats, that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, souter Johnny,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy croony;
Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither,
The night/drave ou wil' sangs an' clatter;
And ay the ale was growing better;
The lanldlady and Tam grew gracious;
Wil' favours, secret, sweet, and precions;
The souter tauld his queerest stories;
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus;
The storm without might rair and rusty,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man me happy,
E'en drown'd himself among the nappy;
As bees flee hame wil' ladies o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wil' pleasure:
Kings may be blust, but Tam was glorious;
O'er t' ill o' life victorious.

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flow'rs, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow-falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ev'r;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm,—
Na' man can tether time or tide.
The hour approaches Tam maun ride;
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane.
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in;
And sic a night he takes the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

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

Weel mounted on his gray mare, Meg,  
A better never lifted leg,  
Tam skilpit on thro' dub and mire,  
Despising wind, and rain and fire;  
Whiles holding fast his guld blue bonnet;  
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;  
Whiles glower'ing round wi' prudent cares,  
Lest bogles catch him unaware;  
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,  
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry—

By this time he was cross the ford,  
Where in the snow the chapman smoor'd;  
And past the birks and meilke stane,  
Where drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;  
And thro' the whins, and by the cairn,  
Whare hunters fand the murder'd bairn;  
And near the thorn, aboon the well,  
Where Mungo's mither mang'd hersel.—

Before him Doon pours all his floods;  
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods!  
The lightning flash from pole to pole;  
Near and more near the thunders roll;  
When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,  
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze;  
Thro'lik a boro the beaus were glancing;  
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.—

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn!  
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!  
Wi' tippenny, we fear na evil;  
Wi' uqquabas we'll face the devil!—  
The swats see ream'd in Tamnie's noodle;  
Fair play, he car'd na deils a boddle.  
But Maggie stood right sair astonish'd;  
Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,  
She ventur'd forward on the light;  
And, vow! Tam saw an unce sight!  
Warlocks and witches in a dance;  
Nac colfion brent new fre France;  
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,  
Put life an mettle in their heels.  
A winnock-bunker in the east,  
There sat and Nick, in shape o' beast;  
A tostlie tyke, black, grim, and large;  
To gie them music was his charge;  
He screwd the pipes and gart them skirl,  
Till roof and rafters a'did dirl.—  
Coffins stood round like open presses,  
That shaw'd the dead in their last dresses;  
And by some devilish cairntrae slight,  
Each in its cauld hand held a light,—  
By which heroic Tam was able  
To note upon the haly table,  
A murderer's oanes in gibbet airis;  
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristen'd ba'irns;  
A thief, new cutted frae a rape,  
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape;  
Five tomahawks, wi' bluid red-rasted;  
Five scimitars, wi' murder trusted;  
A garter, which a babe had strang'd;  
A knife, a father's throat had mangled,  
Whom his ain son o' life bereft,  
The gray hairs yet stick to the heft;  
Wi' mair o'horrrible and awful;  
Which ev'n to name wad be unlawful.  

As Tamnie glow'd, amas'd, and curious,  
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious,  
The pierer loud and louder blew;  
The dancers quick and quicker flew;  
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,  
Till lika carlin swat and reekit,  
And coos her hurr to the warf,  
And linkit at in her sark!  

Now Tam O Tam! had they been quens  
A' plump and strapping, in their teons;  
Their sarks instead o' croesifie flannen;  
Been saw-white seventeen hunder linen!  
These breeks o' mine, my only pair,  
That ance were plugh, o' guid blue hair,  
I wad hae gl'em them aff my hurdies,  
For ae blink o' the bonnie burdies!  

But wither'd beldams, andl and droll,  
Rigwoodie bags wad spean a foal,  
Lowning an' fingling on a crummock,  
I wonder dinn turn thy stomach.  

But Tam kenn'd what was what fu' brawtie,  
There was ae winsome wench and walle,  
That night inlisted in the core,  
(Lang after kenn'd on Carlick shore!  
For mony a beast to dead she shot,  
And perish'd mony a bonnie boat,  
And shockk baith meikle corn and bear,  
And kept the country-side in fear,)  
Her cuilie sark, o' Paisley harn,  
That while a basie she had worn,  
In longitude tho' sorely scanty,  
It was her best, and she was vauntie.—  
Ah! little kenn'd thy reverend granrie.  
That sark she coft for her wee Nannie,  
Wi' twa pund Scots (twaas a' her riches,)  
Wad ever graz'd a dance of witches!  

But here by mine her wing maun cour;  
Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r;  
To sing how Nannie lap and flang,  
(A soupie jade she was and strang)  
And how Tam stood, like ane tewitch'd,  
And thought his very c'en enrich'd:  
Even Satan glow'd, and fish'd fu' sail,  
And botch'd and blew wi' might and main:  
Till first as caper, syne another,  
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,  
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"  
And in an instant all was dark:  
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied  
When out the hellish legion sallied.  

As been bizz out wi' angry fyke,  
When plundering herds assail their byke.  
As open pussie's mortal foes,  
When, pop! she starts before their nose;  
As eager runs the market-crowd,  
When, "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
ON SEEING A WOUNDED HARE.

LIMP BY ME,

WHICH A FELLOW HAD JUST SIOT AT.

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

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

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

Oft as by winding Nith, I, musing, wait
The sober eve, or half the cheerful dawn,
I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
And curse the ruffian's aim, and mourn thy hapless fate.

* It is a well-known fact, that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream.—It may be proper likewise to mention to the enlightened traveller, that when he falls in with bogles, whatever danger may be in his going forward, there is much more hazard in turning back.

ADDRESS

TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON.

ON CROWNING HIS BUST AT EDNAM, ROXBURGHSHIRE, WITH BAYS.

WHILE virgin Spring, by Eden's flood,
Unfolds her tender mantle green,
Or pranks the sod in frolic mood
Or tunes Eolian strains between:

While Summer with a matron grace
Retreats to Dayburgh's cooling shade,
Yet oft, delighted, stops to trace
The progress of the spiky blade:

While Autumn, benefactor kind,
By Tweed erects his aged head,
And sees, with self-approving mind,
Each creature on his bounty fed:

While maniac Winter rages o'er
The hills whence classic Yarrow flows,
Rousing the turbid torrent's roar,
Or sweeping, wild, a waste of snows;

So long, sweet Poet of the year,
Shall bloom that wreath thou well has won;
While Scotia, with exulting tear
Proclaims that Thomson was her son,

EPI TAPHS,

&c.

ON A CELEBRATED RULING ELDER.

HERE souter **** in death does sleep;
To h-ll, if he's gane thither,
Satan, gie him thy gear to keep,
He'll haud it weel theegether.

ON A NOISY POLEMIC.

Below thir stanes lie Jamie's banes:
O death, it's my opinion,
Thou ne'er took such a bleth'rin b-tch,
Into thy dark dominion!

ON WEE JOHNIE.

Hic jacet wee Johnie.

WHO'E'ER thou art, O reader, know,
That death has murder'd Johnie!
An' here his body lies fu' low—
For soul he ne'er had ony.

FOR THE AUTHOR'S FATHER.
O YE, whose cheek the tear of pity stains,
Draw near with pious reverence and attend!
Here lie the loving husband's dear remains,
The tender father, and the generous friend,
The pitying heart that felt for human woe;
The dauntless heart that feared no human pride:
The friend of man, to vice alone a foe;
"For ev'n his failings lean'd to virtue's side,"

FOR R. A. ESQ.
Know thou, O stranger to the name
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.

FOR G. H. ESQ.

| E poor man weeps—here G—n sleeps,  |
| Whom canting wretches blam'd;      |
| with such as he, when'er he be,    |
| May I be sav'd or damn'd!           |

A BARD'S EPITAPH,
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 drap a tear.

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

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

This 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 stein'd his name!

* Goldsmith.

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

ON THE LATE
CAPT. GROSE'S PEREGRINATIONS
THROUGH SCOTLAND

COLLECTING THE ANTIQUITIES OF THAT KINGDOM.

HEAR, Land o' Cakes, and birtiber Scots,
Frae Maidenvirtkirk to Johnie Groost's;
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede you tent it:
A shield's amang you taking notes,
And, faith, he'll prent it.

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

By some auld, houlet-haunted biggin,*
Or kirk deserted by its riggin,
It's ten to ane ye'll find him snug in
Some eldrich part,
Wi' delis, they say, L—d save's l colleguan
At some black art.—

Ilk ghaist that haunts auld ha' or chamher,
Ye gipsy-gang that deal in glamor,
And you deep read in hell's black grammar,
Wariocks and witches;
Ye'll quake at his conjuring hammer,
Ye midnight b——es.

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

He has a fouth o' auld nick-nackets:
Rusty airn caps and jinglin jackets;†
Wad hand the Lothians three in tackets,
A towmont gold;
And parritch-pats, and auld saut-backets,
Before the Flood.

Of Eve's first fire he has a cinder;
Auld Tubal Cain's fire-shool and fender;

* Vide his Antiquities of Scotland.
† Vide his Treatises on Ancient Armour and Wpons.
That which distinguished the gender
O' Balaam's ass;
A broom-stick o' the witch of Endor,
Weel shed wi' brass.

Forbye, he'll shape you aff, fu' gleg,
The cut of Adam's philibeg;
The knife that nickes Abel's craig
He'll prove you fully,
It was a fooling jocoteeg,
Or lang-kail gullie.—

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

Now, by the pow'rs o' verse and prose!
Thou art a dainty chieft, O Grose!—
Whate'er o' thee shall ill suppose,
They sair misca' thee;
I'd take the rascal by the nose,
Wad say, Shamosa' thee.

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

BEAUTEOUS rose-bud, young and gay,
Blooming on thy early May,
Never may'st thou, lovely flow'r,
Chilly shrink in slyety show'r!—
Never Boreas' hoary path,
Never Echo's pois'nous breath,
Never baleful steller 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 rings,
And ev'ry bird the requiem sings;
Thou amid the dirgeful sound,
Shed thy dying honours round,
And resign to parent earth
The loveliest form she e'er gave birth.

SONG.

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 he forgiv'n;
For sure 'twere impious to despair,
So much in sight of Heav'n.

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

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

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

Fair on Isabella's morn
The sun propitious smil'd;
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 point— the brimful grief-worn eyes
To scenes beyond the grave.

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

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

MY Lord, I know, your noble ear
Woe ne'er assails in vain;

*Bruar Falls in Athole are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful; but their effect is much impaired by the want of trees and shrubs.
Embalden'd thus, I beg you'll hear
Your humble Slave complain,
How saucy Phobus' scorching beams,
In flaming summer-pride,
Dry-weathering, waste my soamy streams,
And drink my crystal tide.
The lightly-jumping glowin' trouts,
That thro' my waters play,
If, in their random, wanton spouts
They near the margin stray;
If, hapless chance! they linger lang,
I'm scorching up to shallow,
They've left the whitening stanes amang,
In gasping death to wallow.

Last day I grat wi' spite and teen,
As Poet B**** came by;
That to a Bard I should be seen
Wit' half my channel dry:
A panegyrick rhyme, I ween,
Even as I was he shor'd me;
But had I in my glory been,
He, kneeling, wad ador'd me.

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

Would then my noble master please
To grant my highest wishes,
He'll shade my banks wi' tow'ring trees,
And bonnie spreading bushes;
Delighted doubly then, my Lord,
You'll wander on my banks,
And listen mony a grateful bird
Return you tuneful thanks.

The sober laverock, warbling wild,
Shall to the skies aspire;
The gowdsplink, music's gayest child,
Shall sweetly join the choir;
The blackbird strong, the linitwhite clear,
The mavis mild and mellow;
The robin pensive autumn cheer,
In all her looks of yellow:

This too, a covert shall ensure,
To shield them from the storm;
And coward maunkin sleep secure,
Low in her grassy form:
Here shall the shepherd make his seat,
To weare his crown of flow'r's;
Or find a sheltering saic retreat,
From prone descending show'r's.

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

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

Let lofty firs, and ashes cool,
My lowly banks o'erspread,
And view, deep-pending in the pool,
Their shadows' wat'ry bed!
Let fragrant birks in woodliness dr
My craggy cldis ador;
And, for the little songster's nest,
The close embow'ring thorn.

So may, old Scotia's darling hope,
Your little angel band,
Spring, like their fathers, up to prop
Their honour'd native laud!
So may thro' Alblou's fastest ken,
The social flowing glasses,
To grace be—"Athole's honest men,
And Athole's bonnie lassan!"

---

ON SCARING SOME WATER FOWL IN LOCH-TURIT.

A WILD SCENE AMONG THE HILLS OF OUGHTERTYRE.

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

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

The eagle, from the 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,
Graces in his heart humane—  
And creatures for his pleasure slain.

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

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

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

ADMIRING Nature in her wildest grace,  
These northern scenes with wary feet I trace;  
O’er a winding dale and painful steep,  
Th’ shades of covey’d grouse and timid sheep,  
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, cloth their ample sides;  
Th’ outstretching lake, embosom’d ‘mong the hills,  
The eye with wonder and amazement fills;  
The Tay meand’ring sweet in infant pride,  
The palace rising on its verdant side;  
The lawns wood-fring’d in Nature’s native taste;  
The hillocks dropt in Nature’s careless haste;  
The arches striding o’er the new-born stream;  
The village, glittering in the moon tide beam—

* * * *

Poetic ardoors in my bosom swell,  
Lone wand’ring by the hermit’s mossy cell;  
The sweeping theatre of hanging woods;  
Th’ incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods—

* * * *

Here poets might wake her heay’n-taught lyre,  
And look through nature with creative fire;  
Here, to the wrongs of fate half reconcil’d,  
Misfortune’s lighten’d steps might wander wild;  
And Disappointment, in these lonely bounds,  
Find balm to soothe her bitter ranking wounds,  
Here heart-struck Grief might heay’n-ward stretch her scan,  
And injur’d Worth forget and pardon man.

* * * *

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

AMONG the heathy hills and ragged woods  
The roaring Fyres pours his mossy floods;  
Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds,  
Where, through a shapeless breach, his stream resounds.  
As high in air the bursting torrents flow,  
As deep recolling surges foam below,  
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,  
And viewless echo’s ear, astonish’d, rends,  
Dim seen, through rising mist and ceaseless show’rs,  
The hoary cavern, wide-surrounding low’rs.  
Still thro’ the gap the struggling river tolls,  
And still below the horrid caldron boils—

* * * *

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

SWEET Flow’ret, pledge o’ meide love,  
And ward o’ many a pray’r,  
What heart o’ stane wad thou na move,  
Sae helpless, sweet, and fair!

November hirple o’er the lea,  
Chill, on thy lovely form;  
And gane, alas! the shell’ring tree,  
Should shield thee frae the storm.

May He who gives the rain to pour,  
And wings the blast to blow,  
Protect thee frae the driving show’rs,  
The bitter frost and snaw!

May He, the friend of wo and want,  
Who heal’s his various stounds,  
Protect and guard the mother plant,  
And heal her cruel wounds!

But late she flourishest, rooted fast,  
Fair on the summer morn;  
Now feebly bends she in the blast,  
Unshelter’d and forlorn.

Blest be thy bloom, thou lovely gem,  
Unscath’d by ruffian hand!  
And from thee many a parent aye  
Arise to deck our land!
THE WHISTLE,
A BALLAD.

As the authentic prose history of the Whistle is curious, I shall here give it.—In the train of Anne of Denmark, when she came to Scotland, with our James the 7thth, there came over also a Danish gentleman of gigantic stature and great prowess, and a matchless champion of Bacchus. He had a little ebony Whistle, which at the commencement of the orgies he laid on the table, and whoever was last able to blow it, every body else being disabled by the potency of the bottle, was to carry off the Whistle as a trophy of victory. The Dane produced credentials of his victories, without a single defeat, at the courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, Moscow, Warsaw, and several of the petty courts in Germany; and challenged the Scotts Bacchanalians to the alternative of trying his prowess, or else of acknowledging their inferiority.—After many overthrows on the part of the Scots, the Dane was encountered by Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxwellton, ancestor of the present worthy baronet of that name; who, after three days' and three nights' hard contest, left the Scandinavian under the table,

And blew on the Whistle his requiem shrill.

Sir Walter, son to Sir Robert before mentioned, afterwards lost the Whistle to Walter Riddle of Glenriddel, who had married a sister of Sir Walter's.—On Friday the 16th of October, 1759, at Friars-Carse, the Whistle was once more contested for, as related in the ballad, by the present Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxwellton; Robert Riddel Esq. of Glenriddel, lineal descendant and representative of Walter Riddle, who won the Whistle, and in whose family it had continued; and Alexander Fergusson, Esq. of Craigdarroch, likewise descended of the great Sir Robert; which last gentleman carried off the hard-won honours of the field.

I SING of a Whistle, a Whistle of worth, I sing of a Whistle, the pride of the North. With brought to the courts of our good Scottish king, And long with this Whistle all Scotland shall ring. Old Loda,* still reeling the arm of Flugal, The god of the bottle sends down from his hall— "This Whistle's your challenge to Scotland get o'er, And drink them to hell, Sir I ne'er see me more!"

Old poets have sung, and old chronicles tell, What champions venerate, what champions fell? The son of great Loda was conqueror still, And blew on the whiste his requiem shrill.

Till Robert, the lord of the Cairn and the Scuar, Unmatch'd at the bottle, unconquer'd in war, He drank his poor godship as deep as the sea, No tide of the Baltic e'er dauntless than he. Thus Robert, victorious, the trophy has gain'd; Which now in his house has for ages remain'd; 'Till three noble chieftains and all of his blood, The jovial contest again have renew'd.

Three joyous good fellows with hearts clear of flaw; Craigdarroch, so famous for wit, worth and law; And trusty Glenriddel, so skill'd in old coose; And gallant Sir Robert, deep read in old wines.

Craigdarroch began, with a tongue smooth as oil, Desiring Glenriddel to yield up the spoll; Or else he would muster the heads of the clan, And once more, in clarat, try which was the man.

" By the gods of the ancients!" Glenriddel replies, Before I surrender so glorious a prize, I'll conjure the ghost of the great Rory More,* And bumber his horn with him twenty times o'er."

Sir Robert, a soldier, no speech would pretend; but he ne'er turn'd his back on his foe—or his friend, Said, tosa down the Whistle, the prize of the field, And kneet deep in clarat, he'd die or he'd yield.

To the board of Glenriddel our heroes repair, So noted for drowning of sorrow and care; But for wine and for welcome not more known to fame, Than the sense, wit, and taste, of a sweet lovely dame.

A bard was selected to witness the fray, And tell future ages the feats of the day; A bard who detected all sadness and spleen, And wish'd that Parnassus a vineyard had been.

The dinner being over, the clarat they ply, And every new cork is a new spring of joy; In the bands of old friendship and kindred so set, And the bands grew the tighter the more they were wet.

Gay pleasure ran riot as bumper ran o'er; Bright Pheebus ne'er witness'd so joyous a core, And vow'd that to leave them he was quite forlorn; Till Cynthia hinted he'd see them next morn.

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

Then worthy Glen: id'dal, so cautious and sage, No longer the warfar'd, ungod'dly, would wasg' A high ruling Edder to wallow in wine! He left the foul business to folks less divine.

The gallant Sir Robert fought hard to the end; But who can with fate and quart bampers contend? Though fate said—a hero should perish in light; So uprose bright Pheebus—and down fell the knight.

Next uprose our bard, like a prophet in drink:— "Craigdarroch, thou'lt soar when creation shall sink! But if thou would flourish immortal in rhyme, Come—one bottle more—and have at the sublime!"

"The line, that have struggled for Freedom with Bruce, Shall heroes and patriots ever produce; So thine be the laurel, and mine be the bay; The field thou hast won, by von bright god of day!"*
SECOND EPISTLE TO DAVIE,

A BROTHER POET.*

AULD NEEBOR
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 sair.

Hale be your heart, hale be your fiddle;
Lang may your elbuck jink an' diddle;
To cheer you through the weary widdle
Of war'ly cares,
Till bairns' bairns kindly cuddle
Your auld, gray hairs.

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

For me, I'm on Parnassus' drink,
Rivin the words to gar them clink;
Whyles daisn't wi' love, whyles daisn't wi' drink,
W. jads or masons;
An', whyles, but ay owre late, I think
Braw sober lessons.

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

Nae thought, nae view, nae scheme o' livin',
Nae cares to gie us joy or grievin':
* This is prefixed to the poems of David Sillar, published at Kilmarnock, 1789.

But just the pouche 'put the nieve in,
An' while ought's there,
Then, hiltie, skiltie, we gae scrievin',
An' fase nae mair.

Leeze me on rhyme! it's aye a treasure,
My chief, amast my only Pleasure,
At hame, a' flither, at warl or leisure,
The Muse, poor hizzie!

Tho' rough an' raploch 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' e'er nae puir,
Na', even tho' limpin' wi' the spavie
Frase door to door.

THE LASS O' BALLOCHMYLE

'Twas even—the dewy fields were green,
On ev'ry blade the pearls hang;
The Zephyr wantoned round the bean,
And bore its fragrant sweets alang:
In every glen the mavis sang,
All nature listening seemed the while,
Except where green-wood echoes ring,
Among the braes o' Ballochmyle.

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

Fair is the morn in flowery May,
And sweet is night in Autumn mild.
When roving thro' the garden gay,  
Or wandering in the lonely wild;  
But woman, nature's darling child!  
There all her charms she does compile;  
Even there her other works are foil'd  
By the bonny lass o' Ballochmyle!  

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

Then pride might climb the slippery steep,  
Where fame and honour 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 bonny lass o' Ballochmyle.

TO MARY IN HEAVEN.

THOU lingering star, with less'ning ray,  
That lov'est to greet the early morn,  
Again thou usher'st in the day  
My Mary from my soul was torn,  
O Mary! dear departed shade!  
Where is thy place of blissful rest?  
Seest thou thy lover lonely laid?  
Hearst thou the groans that rend his breast!  
That sacred hour can I forget,  
Can I forget the hallowed grove,  
Where by the winding Ayr we met,  
To live one day of parting love!  
Eternity will not efface,  
Those records dear of transports past;  
Thy image at our last embrace;  
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!  
Ayr gurgling kissed his pebbled shore,  
O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning green;  
The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar,  
Twin'd amorous round the raptured scene.  
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,  
The birds sang love on every spray,  
Till too, too soon, the glowing west,  
Proclaimed the speed of winged day.  
Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,  
And fondly broods with miser care!  
Time but the impression deeper makes,  
As streams their channels deeper wear.  
My Mary, dear departed shade!  
Where is thy blissful place of rest?  
Seest thou thy lover lonely laid?  
Hearst thou the groans that rend his breast?

LINES ON
AN INTERVIEW WITH LORD DAER.

THIS wot ye all whom it concerns,  
I Rhymen Robin, alias Burns,  
October twenty-third,  
A ne'er to be forgotten day,  
Sae far I sprackled up the brae,  
I dinner'd wi' a Lord.

I've been at drunken writer's feasts,  
Nae, been bitch-fou 'mang godly priests,  
Wi' rev'rence be it spoken;  
I've even join'd the honour'd jurymen,  
When mighty Squireships of the quorum,  
Their hydra drouth did sicken.

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 two,  
Our Peerage he o'er looks them a',  
As I look o'er my sonnet.

But oh for Hogarth's magic pow'r:  
To show Sir Bardy's willyart glowr,  
And how he star'd and stammer'd  
When goavan, as if led wi' branks,  
An' stamp'an on his ploughman shanks,  
He in the parlour nanmer'd.

* * * * * * * * * *

I sidling shelter'd in a nook,  
An' at his Lordship steal'n a look  
Like some portentousomen;  
Except good-sense and a scotch glee,  
An' (what surprised me) modesty,  
I marked nought uncommon.

I watch'd the syn poms o' the great,  
The gentle pride, the lordly state,  
The arrogant assuming;  
The feint a pride, nae pride had he,  
Nor sauce, nor state that I could see,  
Mair than an honest ploughman.

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

ON A YOUNG LADY.

Residing on the banks of the small river Devon,  
In Clackmannanshire, but whose infant years were spent in Ayrshire.

How pleasant the banks of the clear-winding Devon,  
With green-spraying bushes, and flowers blooming fair;  
But the bonniest flower on the banks of the Devon,  
Was once a sweet bud on the brace of the Ayr.

Mild be the sun on this sweet blushing flower,  
In the gay rosy morn as it lashes 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 tempests blow,
With chill hoary wing as ye usher the dawn!
And far be thou distant, thou reptile that seizes
The verdure and pride of the garden and lawn!

Let Bourbon exult in his gay gilded lilies,
And England triumphant display her proud rose;
A fairer than either adorns the green valleys
Where Devon, sweet Devon, meandering flows.

CASTLE GORDON.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

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.*

NAE-BODY.

I HAE a wife o’ my ain,
I’ll partake wi’ nae-body;
I’ll tak cuckold frae nane,
I’ll gie cuckold to nae-body.

I hae a penny to spend,
There—thanks to nae-body;
I hae naething to lend,
I’ll borrow frae nae-body.

* These verses our Poet composed to be sung to Mo-rag, a highland air, of which he was extremely fond.

I am nae-body’s lord,
I’ll be slave to nae-body;
I hae a guid braid sword,
I’ll tak dunts frae nae-body.

I’ll be merry and free,
I’ll be sad for nae-body;
If nae-body care for me,
I’ll care for nae-body.

ON THE DEATH OF A LAP-DOG,

NAMED ECHO.

In wood and wild, ye warbling throng,
Your heavy loss deplore;
Now half-extinct your powers of song,
Sweet Echo is no more.

Ye jarring screeching things around,
Scream your discordant joys;
Now half your din of tuneless sound
With Echo silent lies.

SONG.*

TUNE—"I am a man unmarried"

O, ONCE I lov’d a bonnie lass,
Ay, and I love her still,
And whilst that virtue warms my breast
I’ll love my handsome Nell.

Tal lal de rol, &c

As bonnie lasses I hae seen,
And many full as braw,
But for a modest graceful mien
The like I never saw.

A bonnie lass, I will confess,
Is pleasant to the eye,
But without some better qualities
She’s no a lass for me.

But Nelly’s looks are blithe and sweet,
And what is best of all,
Her reputation is complete,
And fair without a flaw.

She dresses ay nae clean and neat,
Both decent and genteel;
And then there’s something in her gait
Gars ony dress look weel.

A gaudy dress and gentle air
May slightly touch the heart
But it’s innocence and modesty
That polishes the dart.

* This was our Poet’s first attempt.
Tis this in Nelly pleaseth me,
Tis this enchanteth my soul;
For absolutely in my breast
She reigns without control.

Tallal de ral, &c.

INSCRIPTION

TO THE MEMORY OF FURGUSSON.

HERE LIES ROBERT FURGUSSON, POET,

Born September 5th, 1751—Died, 18th October 1771.

No sculptur'd marble here, nor pompous lay
"No storied urn nor animated bust,"
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way
To pour her sorrow's o'er her poet's dust.

THE CHEVALIER'S LAMENT.

The small birds rejoice in the green leaves returning,
The murmuring streamslet winds clear thro' the vale;
The hawthorn trees blow in the dews of the morning,
And wild scatter'd cowslips belвед the green dale:

But what can give pleasure, or what can seem fair,
While the lingering numbers are number'd by care?
No flowers gaily springing, nor birds sweetly singing
Cau sooth 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 wild beast find shelter, but I can find none.

But 'tis not my sufferings thus wretched, forlorn,
My brave gallant friends, 'tis your ruin I mourn:
Your deeds prov'd so loyal in hot bloody trial,
Alas! I can make you no sweeter return!

EPISTLE TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ.

WHEN Nature her great master-piece design'd,
And fram'd her last best work the human mind,
Her eye intent on all the many plan,
She form'd of various parts the various man.

Then first she calls the useful many forth;
Plain plodding industry and sober worth:
Thence peasants, farmers, native sons of earth,
And merchandise, whole genus take their birth:
Each prudent cit a warm existence finds,
And all mechanics' many apron'd kinds.
Some other rarer sorts are wanted yet,
The lead and buoy are needful to the net;
The caput mortuum of gross desires
Makes a material for mere knights and squires;

The maria. prosoporum is taught to flow
She kneads the lumpish philosophic dough,
Then makes th' unyielding mass with grave designs;
Law, physics, politics, and deep divines;
Last, she sublimes th' Aurora of the poles,
The flaming elements of female souls.

The order'd system fair before her stood,
Nature, well-please'd, pronounced it very good;
But e'er she gave creating labour o'er,
Half just, she try'd one curious labour more.
Some apuany, fricy, 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 Hogar-thart perhaps she meant to show (t)
She forms the thing and christens it—a poet.
 Creature, too! oft the prey of care and sorrow,
When blast to-day unmindful of to-morrow.
A being form'd to animate his graver friend,
Admir'd and praised—and here the homage ends:
A mortal quite unfit for Fortune's strife,
Yet o'th the sport of all the ills of life;
I'll not to enjoy each pleasure riches give,
Yet haply waiting where withal to live:
Longing to wipe each tear, to heal each groan,
Yet frequent all unheeded in his own.

But honest nature is not quite a Turk,
She laugh'd at first, then felt for her poor work.
I t'ying the profligate climber of mankind,
She cast about a standard tree to find;
And, to support his helpless woodland 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 hopeless train,
Weak, timid landmen on life's stormy main!
Their hearts on selfish stern absorbent stuff,
That never gives—tho' hungrily takes enough;
The little fate allows, they share as soon,
Unlike sage, proverb'd Wisdom's hand-wrung boon.
The world were best did bliss on them depend,
Ah, that 'tis the ugly e'er should want a friend!!
Let prudence number o'er each sturdy son,
Who life and wisdom at one race begun,
Who feel by reason, and who give by rule,
(Instinct's a brute, and sentiment a fool !)
Who make poor will do wait upon I should—
We own they're prudent but who feels they're good;
Ye wise ones, hence! ye hurt the social eye!
God's image rudely etch'd on base alloy!
But come ye who the godlike pleasure know,
Heaven's attribute distinguish'd—to bestow!
Whose arms of love would grasp the human race:
Come thou who giv'st with all a courtier's grace;
Friend of my life, true patron of my rhymes!
Prop of my dearer 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 it; giving hand,
I crave thy friendship at thy kind command;
But there are such who court the tuneful nine—
Heaven's should the branded character be mine;
Whose verse in mankind's pride sublimely flows,
Yet viles reptiles in their begging prose.
For, spite of his fine theoretic positions,  
Mankind is a science defies definitions.  
Some sort all our qualities each to its tribe,  
And think human nature they truly describe;  
Have you found this, or 't other? there's more in the  
wind,  
As by one drunken fellow his comrades you'll ana.  
But such is the flaw, or the depth of the plan,  
In the make of that wonderful creature, call'd Man,  
No two virtues, whatever relation they claim,  
Nor even two different shades of the same,  
Though like as was ever twin brother to brother,  
Possessing the one shall imply you've the other.  

TO DR. BLACKLOCK.  

Ellisland, 21st Oct. 1789.  

Wow, put your letter made me vauntie!  
And are ye hale, and weel, and cantie?  
I kenn'd it still your wee bit jauntie  
Wad bring ye to:  
Lord send you ay as weel's I want ye,  
And then ye'll do.  

The ill-thief blaw the Heron south!  
And never drink be near his drouth!  
He told myself by word o' mouth,  
He'd tak my letter;  
I lippen'd to the chiel in troutc!  
And bade nae better.  

But aiblins honest Master Heron  
Had at the time some dainty fair one,  
To war's his theologic care on,  
And holy study;  
And tir'd o' sauls to waste his learn on,  
E'en tried the body.  

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

Ye glaikit, glesome, dainty dainties,  
Wha by Castalia's wimpin streamles,  
Lowp, sing, and lave your pretty limbles,  
Ye ken, ye ken,  
That strang necessity supreme is  
'Mang sons o' men.  
I hae a wife and twa wes laddies,  
They maun hae brose and brats o' daddies;  
Ye ken yoursel's my heart right proud is,  
I need na vaunt.  
But I'll send beacons—thow saugh wooldies,  
Before they want.  

Lord help me thro' this world o' care!  
I'm weary sick o' late and air!  

* Mr. Heron, author of the History of Scotland  
of various other works.
Not but I have a richer share
Than many others;
But why should a men better fare,
And a' men brethren?

Come, Firm Resolve, take thou the van,
Thou stalk o' carl-hemp in man!
And let us mind, faint heart ne'er wan
A lady fair;
Wha does the utmost that he can,
Will whyles do mair.

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

My compliments to sister Beckie;
And exe the same to honest Lucky,
As e'er trend clay!
And gratefully, my gudl and cockle,
I'm yours for ay.

ROBERT BURNS.

PROLOGUE,
SPOKEN AT THE THEATRE ELLISLAND, ON NEW-YEAR-DAY EVENING.

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

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

Last, tho' not least,in love, ye youthful fair,
Angelic forms, high Heaven's pecvils are!
To your old Bald-pate smooths his wintr'd brow,
And humbly begs you'll mind the important—now I

To crown your happiness he asks your leave,
And offers, bliss to give and to receive.
For our sincere, tho' haply weak endeavours
With grateful pride we own your many favours;
And how we'er our tongues may ill reveal it,
Believe our glowing bosoms truly feel it.

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ELEGY

ON THE LATE MISS BURNET
OF MONBODDO.

LIFE ne'er exulted in so rich a price,
As Burnet lovely from her native skies;
Nor envious death so triumph'd in a blow,
As that which laid the accomplish'd Burnet low.

Thy form and mind, sweet maid, can I forget?
In richest ore the brightest jewel set!
In thee, high Heaven above was truest known
As by his noble work the Godhead best is known.

In vain ye flaunt in summer's pride, ye groves;
'Thou crystal streamlet with thy flowery shore,
Ye woodland choir that chant your idle loves,
Ye cease to charm—Eliza is no more!

Ye heathy wastes, immix'd with reedy sens:
Ye mossy streams, with sedge and rushes stor'd,
Ye rugged cliffs, o'erhangig dreary glens,
To you I fly, ye with my soul accord.

Princes, whose com'rous pride was all their worth
Shall venal lays their pompous exit hail?
And thou, sweet excellence! forsake our earth,
And not a muse in honest grief bewail?

We saw thee shine in youth and beauty's pride,
And virtue's light, that beams beyond the spheres
But like the sun eclips'd at morning tide,
Thou left'at us darkling in a world of tears.

The parent's heart that nestled fond in thee,
That heart how sunk, a prey to grief and care!
So deckt the woodland sweet you aged tree,
So from it ravish'd, leaves it break and bare.

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IMITATION

OF AN OLD JACOBITE SONG.

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

The church is in ruins, the state is in jars,
Delusions, oppressions, and murderous wars;
We dare nae weel say 't, but we ken what's to blame—
There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.
My seven braw sons for Jamie drew sword,  
And now I greet round their green beds in the yerd;  
It brake the sweet heart o' my faithful' auld dame—  
There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.  

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

---

**SONG OF DEATH.**

Scene—a field of battle; time of the day—evening;  
The wounded and dying of the victorious army are  
supposed to join in the following Song.

FAREWELL, thou fair day, thou green earth,  
and ye skies,  
Now gay with the bright setting sun!  
Farewell, loves and friendships, ye dear tender ties,  
Our race of existence is run!  

Thou grim king of terrors, thou life's gloomy foe,  
Go, frighten the coward and slave!  
Go, teach them to tremble, fell tyrant! but know,  
No terrors hast thou to the brave!  

Thou strik'st the dulcissant—he sinks in the dark,  
Nor sav'ls e'en the wreck of a name:  
Thou strik'st the young hero—a glorious mark!  
He falls in the blaze of his fame!  

In the field of proud honour—our swords in our hands,  
Our King and our country to save—  
While victory shines on life's last ebbing sands,  
O who would not rest with the brave!

---

**THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN.**

An Occasional Address spoken by Miss Fontenelle on  
her Benefit-Night.

WHILE Europe's eye is fix'd on mighty things,  
The fate of empires and the fall of kings;  
While quacks of state must each produce his plan,  
And even children lisp the Rights of Man;  
Amid this mighty fuss, just let me mention,  
The Rights of Woman merit some attention.  

First, in the sexes' intermix'd connection,  
One sacred Right of Woman is protection.—  
The tender flower that lifts its head, elate,  
Helpless, must fall before the blast of fate,  
Sunk on the earth, defac'd its lovely form,  
Unless your shelter ward th' impending storm.—  

Our second Right—but needless here is caution,  
To keep that right inviolate's the fashion,  
Each man of sense has it so full before him,  
He'd die before he'd wrong it—'tis decorum.  
There was, indeed, in far less polished days,  
A time, when rough rude man had naught' er ways;  
Would swagger, swear, get drunk, kick up a riot  
Nay, even thus invade a lady's quiet—  
Now, thank our stars! these Gothic times are faded;  
Now, well-bred men—and you are all well-bred  
Most justly think (and we are much the gainers)  
Such conduct neither spirit, wit, nor manners.  

For Right the third, our last, our best, our dearest,  
That right to fluttering female hearts the nearest,  
Which even the Rights of Kings in low prostration  
Most humbly own—'tis dear, dear admiration!  
In that bless sphere alone we live and move;  
There taste that life of life—immortal love—  
Smiles, glances, sighs, tears, fits, flirtations, airs,  
'Gainst such an host what flinty savage dares—  
When awful Beauty joins with all her charms,  
Who is so rash as rise in rebel arms?  

But truce with kings, and truce with constitutions,  
With bloody armaments and revolutions;  
Let majesty our first attention summon,  
Ah! ca ira! the Majesty of Woman!  

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**ADDRESS,**  
Spoken by Miss Fontenelle, on her benefit-night,  
December 4, 1795, at the Theatre, Dumfries.  

STILL anxious to secure your partial favour,  
And not less anxious, sure, this night, than ever,  
A Prologue, Epilogue, or some such matter,  
'Twould vamp my bill, said I, if nothing better;  
So, sought a poet, rosted near the skies;  
Told him I came to feast my curious eyes;  
Said, nothing like his works was ever printed;  
And last, my Prologue-business sily hinted.  
"Ma'am, let me tell you," quoth my man of rhymes,  
"I know your bent—these are no laughing times;  
Can you—but Miss, I own I have my fears,  
Dissolve in pause—and sentimental tears—  
With laden sighs, and solemn-rouded sentence,  
Rouse from his sluggish slumbers, fell Repentance;  
Pain Vengeance as he takes his herid stand,  
Waving on high the desolating brand,  
Calling the storms to bear him o'er a guilty land?"  

I could no more—askance the creature eying,  
D'ye think, said I, this face was made for crying?  
I'll laugh, that's poor—say more, the world shall know  
It;  
And so, your servant! gloomy Master Poet.  

Firm as my creed, Sirs, 'tis my fix'd belief,  
That Misery's another word for Grief:  
I also think—so may I be a bride!  
That so much laughter, so much life enjoy'd.  

Thou man of crazy care and ceaseless sigh,  
Still under bleak Misfortune's blustering eye;  
Doom'd to that soresst task of man alive—  
To make three guineas do the work of five:  
Laugh in Misfortune's face—the baldam witch  
Say, you'll be merry, though you can't be rich.  

Thou other man of care, the wretch in love,  
Who long with jilish arts and airs hast strov
Who, as the boughs all temptingly project,
Measur'd in downy thought—a rope—thy neck—
Or, where the beetling cliff o'er hangs the deep,
Poorest to meditate the healing leap;
Wouldst thou be cur'd, thou silly, mopling elf,
Laugh at her follies—laugh e'en at thyself:
Learn to despise those frowns now so terrific,
And love a hinds—'tis your grand specific

To sum up all, be merry, I advise;
And as we're merry, may we still be wise.

SONGS.

THE LEA-RIG.

WHEN o'er the hill the eastern star,
Tells buchtin-time is near, my jo;
And owsen true the furrow'd field,
Return sae dowf and weany, O;
Down by the burn, where scented birks,
W' th dew are hanging clear, my jo,
I'll meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O.

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

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

TO MARY.

TUNE—"Ewe-boughts, Marion.

WILL ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
And leave auld Scotia's shore?
Will ye go to the Indies my Mary,
Across th' Atlantic's roar?
O sweet 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 awer by the Heavens to be true;
And sae may the Heavens forget me,
When I forget my vow!

O plight me your faith, my Mary,
And plight me your lily-white hand;
O plight me your faith, my Mary,
Before I leave Scotia's strand.

We 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!

MY WIFE'S A WINSOME WEE THING.

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

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

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

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

BONNIE LESLEY.

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

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever;
For Nature made her what she is,
And ne'er made sic anither!

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

The Deil he could na scathe thee,
Or aught that was belting thee;
He'd look into the bonnie face,
And say, "I canna wrang thee."

* This Song Mr. Thompson has not adopted in his collection. It deserves, however, to be preserved. E.
The Powers ahoon will tent thee;
Misfortune she'll no steer thee;
Thou'rt like themselves sae lovely
That ill they'll ne'er let near thee.

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

HIGHLAND MARY.

TUNE—"Catharine Ogie."

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

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

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

O pale, pale now, those ray lips,
I aft ha' kiss'd sae fondly!
And closed for ay, the sparkling glance,
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
A mouldering now in silent dust,
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core,
Shall live my Highland Mary.

AULD ROB MORRIS.

THERE'S auld Rob Morris that wins in yon glen
He's the king o' guird fellows and wale of auld men;
He has gowd in his coffers, he has owen and kine,
And as bonnie lassie, his darling and mins.

She's fresh as the morning, the fairest in May;
She's sweet as the evening among the new hay;
As blithe and as artless as the lambs on the lea,
And dear to my heart as the light to my e'e.

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

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

O, had she been but of lower degree,
I then might hae lap'd she wad smil'd upon me!
O, how past describing had then been my bliss,
As now my distraction no words can express!

DUNCAN GRAY.

DUNCAN GRAY came here to woo,
Ha, ha, the wooing o'!
On by the yule night when we were fou,
Ha, ha, the wooing o'!
Maggie coost her head fu' high,
Look'd asilent and unco skeigh,
Gart poor Duncan stand a'beh'sh;
Ha, ha, the wooing o'!

Duncan fleec'd, and Duncan pray'd;
Ha, ha, &c.
Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig,
Ha, ha, &c.
Duncan sigh'd bainth out and in,
Grat his een bainth ble'rt and blin',
Spak o' lowpin ower a lin';
Ha, ha, &c.

Time and chance are but a tide,
Ha, ha, &c.
Slighted love is sair to bide,
Ha, ha, &c.
Shall I, like a fool, quoth he,
For a haughty hielde die?
She may gae to—France for me!
Ha, ha, &c.

How it comes let doctors tell,
Ha, ha, &c.
Meg grew sick—as he grew heal,
Ha, ha, &c.
Something in her bosom wrings,
For relief a sigh she brings;
And O, her een, they spak sic thing
Ha, ha, &c.

Duncan was a' bad o' grace,
Ha, ha, &c.
Maggie's was a piti' case,
Ha, ha, &c.
Duncan could na be her death,
Swelling pity smoor'd his wrath;
Now they're crouse a' rando balind.
Ha, ha &c.
SONG.

**TUNE—"I had a horse."**

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

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

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

**O why, &c.**

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

**O why, &c.**

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

**O why, &c.**

How blest the humble cotter's fate!
He woos his simple dearie;
The sillie bogle's, wealth and state,
Can never make them eerie.

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

**GALLA WATER.**

**THERE'S** braw, braw lads on Yarrow braes,
That wander thro' the blooming heather;
But Yarrow braes nor Ettric shaws,
Can match the lads o' Galla water.

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

Abo' his daddie was nae laird,
And tho' I hae nae meikle tocher;
Yet rich in kindest, trust love,
We'll tent our socks by Galla water.

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

**LORD GREGORY.**

**TUNE—"Muir, mirk is this midnight hour."**

**O MIRK,** mirk is this midnight hour,
And loud the tempest roar;
A waefu' wanderer seeks thy tow'r,
Lord Gregory, ope thy door.

An exile fare her father's ha',
And a' for loving thee;
At least some pity on me shaw,
If love it may na be.

Lord Gregory, mind'st thou not the groves,
By bonnie Irwine side,
Where first I own'd that virgin-love
I lang, lang had denied.

How aften didst thou pledge and vow,
Thou wad for ey be mine!
And my fond heart, itsel sae true,
It ne'er mistrusted thine.

Hard is thy heart, Lord Gregory,
And flinty is thy breast:
Thou dart of heaven that flashes by,
O wilt thou give me rest!

Ye mustering thunders from above,
Your willing victim see!
But spare, and pardon my false love,
His wrangs to heaven and me!

**MARY MORISON.**

**TUNE—"Bide ye yet."**

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

Yestreen when to the trembling string,
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard or saw:
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
And you the toast of a' the town,
I sigh'd, and said amang them a',
"Ye are us Mary Morison."

**O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,**
Wist for thy sake was glad or die?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whose only fault is loving thee?
If love for love thou wilt na gie,
At least be pity to me shown!
A thought ungentle canna be
The thoughts o' Mary Morison.
WANDERING WILLIE.

HERE awa, there awa, wandering Willie,
Now tired with wandering, hau'd awa hame;
Come to my bosom my ain only dearsie,
And tell me thou bring'ist me Willie the same.

Loud blew the cauld winter winds at our parting;
It was na the blast brought the tear to my e'e:
Now welcome the simmer, and welcome my Willie,
The simmer to nature, my Willie to me.

Ye hurricanes, rest in the cave o' your slumbers,
O how your wild horrors a lover alarms!
Awake ye breezes, row gently ye billows,
And waft my dear laddie ane mair to my arms.

But if he's forgotten his faithfulest Nannie,
O still flow between us, thou wide-roaring main;
May I never see it, may I never trow it,
But dying believe that my Willie's my ain!

THE SAME,

As altered by Mr Erskine and Mr. Thomson.

HERE awa, there awa, wandering Willie,
Here awa, there awa, hau'd awa hame;
Come to my bosom my ain only dearsie,
Tell me thou bring'ist me Willie the same.

Winter-winds blew loud and caud at our parting,
Fears for my Willie brought tears in my e'e.
Welcome now simmer, and welcome my Willie,
As simmer to nature, so Willie to me.

Rest, ye wild storms, in the cave o' your slumbers,
How your dread howling a lover alarms!
Blow soft ye breezes! roll gently ye billows,
And waft my dear laddie ane mair to my arms.

But oh! if he's faithless, and minds na his Nannie,
Flow still between us thou wide-roaring main;
May I never see it, may I never trow it,
But dying, believe that my Willie's my ain.

OPEN THE DOOR TO ME, OH

WITH ALTERATIONS.

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

Cauld is the blast upon my pale cheek,
But colder thy love for me, Oh!
The frost that freezes the life at my heart,
Is naught to my pains frae thee, Oh!

The wan moon is setting behind the white wave,
And time is setting with me, Oh!
False friends, false love, farewell! I for mair
I'll ne'er trouble them, nor thee, Oh!

She has open'd the door, she has open'd it wide;
She sees his pale corse on the plain, Oh!
My true love, she cried, and sank down by his side;
Never to rise again, Oh!—

JESSIE.

TUNE—"Bonny Dundee."

TRUE hearted was he, the sad swain o' the Yarrow
And fair are the maidens on the banks o' the Ayr,
But by the sweet side o' the Nith's whispering river,
Are lovers as faithful, and maidens as fair:
To equal young Jessie seek Scotland all over;
To equal young Jessie seek it in vain;
Grace, beauty, and elegance feter her lover,
And maidenly modesty fites the chain.

O, fresh is the rose in the gay, dewy morning,
And sweet is the lily at evening close;
But in the fair presence o' lovely young Jessie,
Unseen is the lily, unheeded the rose.
Love sits in her smile, a wizard ensnaring;
Enthron'd in her e'en he delivers his law;
And still to her charms she alone is a stranger
Her modest demeanour the jewel of a'.

WHEN WILD WAR'S DEADLY BLAST WAS BLAWN.

AIR—"The Mill Mill O."

WHEN wild war's deadly blast was blawn
And gentle peace returning,
Wi' mony a sweet babe fatherless,
And mony a widow mourning,
I left the lines and tented field,
Where lang I'd been a lodger;
My humble knapsack a' my wealth,
A poor and honest sodger.

A leaf, light heart was in my breast,
My hand unstart'd: 'tis plunder;
And for fair Scotia's name again,
I cheery on did wander.

I thought upon the banks o' Coil,
I thought upon my Nancy,
I thought upon the witching smile
That caught my youthful fancy.

At length I reach'd the bonnie Glen,
Where early life I sported;
I pass'd the mill, and trysting thorn,
Where Nancy aft I courted:

Wha spied I but my ain dear maid,
Down by her mother's dwelling!
And turn'd me round to hide the flood
That in my een was swelling.

Wi' alteration voice, quoth I, sweet lass,
'Sweet as you Hawthorn's blossom,
O! happy, happy may be,
That's dearest to thy bosom:

My purse is light, I've far to gang,
And fae wad be thy lodger;
I've serv'd my king and country lang,
Take pity on a sodger.

Sae wistfully she gaz'd on me,
And lovelier than ever:
Quo' she, a sodger an' I lo'ed,
Forget him shall I never:

Our humble cot, and hamely fare,
Ye freely shall partake it,
That gallant badge, the dear cockade,
Ye're welcome for the sake o' it.

She gaz'd—she redden'd like a rose—
Syne pale like any lily;
She sunk within my arms, and cried,
Art thou my ain dear Willie?

By him who made ye sun and sky—
By whom true love's regarded,
I am the man; and thus may still
True lovers be rewarded.

The wars are o'er, and I'm come hame,
And find thee still true-hearted;
Tho' poor in gear, we're rich in love,
And mair we're ne'er be parted.

Quo' she, my grandsire left me gowd,
A mailen plenish'd fairly;
And come, my faithful sodger lad,
Thou'rt welcome to it dearly!

For gold the merchant ploughs the main,
The farmer ploughs the manor;
But glory is the sodger's prize;
The sodger's wealth is honour;
The brave poor sodger ne'er despise,
Nor count him as a stranger,
Remember he's his country's stay
In day and hour of danger.

MEG O' THE MILL.

AIR—"O bonny laes, will you lie in a Barrack?"
O KEN ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten,
An' ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten?
She has gotten a coof wi' a claut o' siller,
And broken the heart o' the barley Miller.

The Miller was strappin', the Miller was ruddy;
A heart like a lord, and a hue like a lady:
The Laird was a widdiefu', bleerit knurl:
—She's left the guild fellow and ta'en the churl.

The miller he chicth her a heart leal and loving;
The Laird did address her wi' matter mair moving.
A fine pacing horse wi' a clear chained bridle,
A whip by her side, and a bonnie side-saddle.

O wae on the siller, it is see prevailing;
And wae on the love that is fix'd on a mailli
A tocher's nae word in a true lover's parle,
But, gie me my love, and a fig for the war!—

---

SONG.

TUNE—"Liggeram Coosh."

BLITHE hae I been on yon hill,
As the lambs before me;
Careless ilk thought and free,
As the breeze flew o'er me:

Now ne'er longer sport and play,
Mirth or sang can please me;
Lesley is sae fair and coy,
Care and anguslie seize me.

Heavy, heavy, in the task,
Hopeless love deca'ing;
Trembling, I drow nocht but glow're,
Sighing, dumb, despairing!

If she winna ease the thraws,
In my bosom swelling;
Underneath the grass green-sod,
Soon maun be my dwelling.

---

SONG.

TUNE—"Logan Water."

O LOGAN, sweetly didst thou glide,
That day I was my Willie's bride;
And years sinceye has o'er us run,
Like Logan to the simmer sun.

But now thy flow'ry banks appear
Like drumlie winter, dark and drear,
While my dear lad maun face his fees
Far, far frae me and Logan bras.

Again the merry month o' May,
That made our hills and valleys gay.
**BURNS' POEMS.**

---

**BONNIE JEAN.**

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

And ay she wrought her mammie's wark;
And ay she sang sae merrilie:
The blitheest bird upon the bush
Had ne'er a lighter heart than sic.

But hawks will rob the tender joys
That bless the little linnwhite's nest;
And frost will rattle the fairest flow'rs
And love will break the soundest rest.

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

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

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

And now she works her mammie's war
And ay she sighs wi' care and pain;
Ye wist na what her ail might be,
Or what wad mak her weel again.

But did na Jeanie's heart loup light,
And did na joy blink in her e'e,
As Robbie tauld her a tale o' love,
Ae e'enin on the lilly lea?

The sun was shinking in the west,
The birds sang sweet in ilk grove;
His cheek to hers he fondly prest,
And whispered thus his tale o' love:

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

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

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

---

**PHILLIS THE FAIR.**

**TUNE**—" Robin Adair.

**WHILE** lukes with little wing,
Fann'd the pure air,
Tasting the breathing spring,  
Forth I did fare;  
Gay the sun’s golden eye,  
Peep’d o’er the mountains high;  
Such thy morn did I cry,  
Phillis the fair.

In each bird’s careless song,  
Glad did I share;  
While you wild flowers amound,  
Chance led me there;  
Sweet to the opening day,  
Rosebuds bent the dewy spray;  
Such thy bloom did I say,  
Phillis the fair.

Down in a shady walk,  
Doves cooing were,  
I mark’d the cruel hawk  
Caught in a snare;  
So kind may fortune be,  
Such make his destiny,  
He who would injure thee,  
Phillis the fair.

Her head upon my throbbing breast,  
She, sinking, said, “I’m thine forever!”  
While many a kiss the seal impart,  
The sacred vow, we ne’er should ever.

The haunt o’ spring’s the primrose brae,  
The simmer joys the flocks to follow;  
How cheery thro’ her shortening day,  
Is autumn, in her weeds o’ yellow;  
But can they melt the glowing heart,  
Or chain the soul in speechless pleasure,  
Or thru’ each nerve the rapture dart,  
Like meeting her, our bosom’s treasure;

WHISTLE, AND I’LL COME TO YOU A LAD.

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

But warily tent, when ye come to court me,  
And come na unless the back-yett be a-je;  
Syne up the back style, and let nae body see  
And come as ye were na comin to me,  
And come, &c.

O whistle, &c.

At kirk, or at market, whence’er ye meet me,  
Gang by me as tho’ that ye care’d na a flie;  
But steal me a blink o’ your bonnie black e’e,  
Yet look as ye were na looking at me  
Yet look, &c.

O whistle, &c.

Ay vow and protest that ye care na for me,  
And whyleas ye may lightely my beauty a woe;  
But court na anither, tho’ jokin ye be,  
For fear that she wyle your fancy frue me.  
For fear, &c.

O whistle, &c.

SONG.

TUNE—“‘Allan Water.’”

BY Allan stream I chanc’d to rove,  
While Hebus sank beyond Benleddi;  
The winds were whispering thro’ the grove,  
The yellow corn was waving ready:  
I listen’d to a lover’s sang,  
And thought on youthful pleasures mony;  
And ay the wild-wood echoes rang—  
O, dearer do I love thee, Annie!

O, happy he the woodbine bower,  
Nae nightly bogle makes it eerie;  
Nor ever sorrow stain the hour,  
The place and time I met my dearie!

* A mountain west of Strath Allan, 3,000 feet high.

Awa wi’ your belles and your beauties  
They never will her can compare:  
Whatever has met wi’ my Phillips,  
Has met wi’ the queen o’ the fair.

The daisy amus’d my fond fancy,  
So artless, so simple, so wild;
NITHSDALE.

CAMPBELL

Printed & Sold by D. CUNNINGHAM.
The crystal waters round us sa',
The merry birds are lovers sa',
The scented breezes round us blow,
A wandering wi' my Davie.
Meet me, &c.

When purple morning starts the bare
To steal upon her early fare,
Then thro' the dews I will repair,
To meet my faithful Davie.
Meet me, &c.

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

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

SONG.

TUNE—"Oran Gaol."

Behold the hour, the boat arrive;
Thou goest, thou darling of my heart! Sever'd from thee can I strive?
But fate has will'd and we must part.
I'll often greet its surging swell,
You distant isle will often hail:
"E'en her I took the last farewell;
There latest mark'd her vanish'd sail."

Along the solitary shore,
While fitting sea-fowl round me cry,
Across the rolling, dashing roar
I'll westward turn my wistful eye:
Happy, thou Indian grove, I'll say,
Where now my Nancy's path may be!
While thro' thy sweets she loves to stray,
O tell me, does she muse on me!

SONG.

TUNE—"Fee him Father."

Thou hast! is't me ever, Jamie, Thou hast me ever.
Thou hast left me ever, Jamie, Thou hast me ever.
Aften hast thou vow'd that death, Only should we sever.
Now thou'st left thy lass for ay—I maun see thee never, Jamie,
I'll see thee never.

Thou hast me forsaken, Jamie, Thou hast me forsaken.
Thou hast me forsaken, Jamie, Thou hast me forsaken.

Dainty Davie.

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

CHORUS.

Meet me on the warlock knoue,
Dainty Davie, dainty Davie;
There I'll spend the day wi' you,
My ain dear dainty Davie.
Thou canst love another jo, While my heart is breaking.
Soon my weary een I'll close—Never mair to waken,
       Jamie,
Ne'er mair to waken.

AULD LANG SYNE.

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

CHORUS.

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

       We twa hae ran about the brass,
And pu'd the gowans fine;
       But we've wander'd mony a weary foot,
Sin auld lang syne.
       For auld, &c.

       We twa hae paidit it' the burn,
Fae mornin sun it' dine:
       But seas between us braid hae roar'd;
Sin auld lang syne.
       For auld, &c.

       And here's a hand, my trusty fer,
And gle's a hand o' thine;
       And we'll tak a right guid willie waucht
For auld lang syne.
       For auld, &c.

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

BANNOCK-BURN.

ROBERT BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY.

SCOTS, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wha hae him aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to glorious victory.

Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lower;
See approach proud Edward's power
Edward! chains and slavery!

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

What for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Free-man stand, or free-man fa',
Caledonian I on wi' me!

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

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

FAIR JENNY.

TUNE—" Saw ye my father?"

WHERE are the joys I have met in the morning,
That danc'd, to the lark's early song?
Where is the the peace that awaited my wand'ring,
At evening the wild woods among?

No more a-winding the course of you river,
And marking sweet flow'rets so fair:
No more I trace the light footsteps of pleasure,
But sorrow and sad sighing care.

Is it that summer's forsaken our valleys,
And grim, surly winter is near?
No, no, the bees humming round the gay roses,
Proclaim it the pride of the year.

Fain would I hide what I fear to discover,
Yet long, too well have I known:
All that has caused this wreck in my bosom,
Is Jenny, fair Jenny alone.

Time cannot aid me, my griefs are immortal,
Nor hope dare a comfort bestow;
Come then, enamour'd and fond of my anguish,
Enjoyment I'll seek in my wo.

SONG.

TUNE—" The Collier's Dochter."

DELUDED swain, the pleasure
The fickle Fair can give thee,
Is but a fairy treasure,
Thy hopes will soon deceive thee.

The billows on the ocean,
The breezes idly roaming,
The clouds' uncertain motion,
They are but types of woman.

O art thou not ashamed,
To doat upon a feature?
If man thou wouldst be named,
Describe the silly creature.
Go, find an honest fellow; Good claret set before thee; Hold on till thou art mellow, And then to bed in glory.

---

**SONG.**

**TUNE—"The Quaker's wife."**

**PHINE am I, my faithful fair,**
Thine, my lovely Nancy;
Ev'ry pulse along my veins,
Ev'ry roving fancy.

To thy bosom lay my heart,
There to throb and languish;
Thou'rt despair had wrung its core,
That would heal its anguish.

Take away those rosy lips,
Rich with balmy treasure;
Turn away thine eyes of love,
Lest I die with pleasure.

What is life when wanting love?
Night without a morning:
Love's the cloudless summer sun,
Nature gay adorning.

---

**SONG.**

**TUNE—"Jo Janet."**

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

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

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

"Sad will I be, so bereft,
Nancy, Nancy;
Yet I'll try to make a shift,
My spouse, Nancy."

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

"I will hope and trust in Heaven,
Nancy, Nancy;
Strength to bear it will be given,
My spouse, Nancy."

Well, Sir, from the silent dead
Still I'll try to daunt you

---

**EVER ROUND YOUR MIDNIGHT BED.**

**Horrid sprites shall haunt you.**

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

---

**SONG.**

**AIR—"The Sutor's Dochter."**

**WILT thou be my deari?**
When sorrow wrings thy gentle heart.
Wilt thou let me cheer thee?
By the treasure of my soul,
That's the love I bear thee!
I swear and vow that only thou
Shall ever be my deari.
Only thou, I swear and vow,
Shall ever be my deari.

Lassie, say thou lo'es me!
Or if thou wilt na be my ain,
Say na thou'll refuse me:
Ifit winna, canna be,
Thou, for thine may choose me,
Let me, lassie, quickly die,
Trust that thou lo'es me.
Lassie let me quickly die,
Trust that thou lo'es me.

---

**BANKS OF CREE.**

Here is the glen, and here the bower,
All underneath the birchin shade,
The village-bell has tell'd the hour,
'What can stay my lovely maid?

'Tis not Maria's whispering call:
'Tis but the balmy-breathing gale;
Mixt with some warbler's dying fall
The dewy star of eve to hail.

It is Maria's voice I hear!
So calls the woodlark in the grove,
His little faithful mate to cheer,
At once 'tis music—and 'tis love.

And art thou come! and art thou true!
O welcome dear to love and me!
And let us all our vows renew,
Along the flowery banks of Cree.

---

**VERSES TO A YOUNG LADY.**

**WITH A PRESENT OF SONGS.**

**HERE, where the Scottish muse immortal lives,**
In sacred strains and tuneful numbers join'd,
ON THE SEAS AND FAR AWAY.

**TUNE—“O’er the Hills,” &c.**

How can my poor heart be glad,
When absent from my sailor lad?

How can I the thought forego,
He’s on the seas to meet the foe?

Let me wander, let me rove;
Still my heart is with my love;

Nightly dreams and thoughts by day
Are with him that’s far away.

**CHORUS.**

On the seas and far away,
On stormy seas and far away;
Nightly dreams and thoughts by day
Are ay with him that’s far away.

When in summer’s noon I faint,
As weary flocks around me pant,
Haply in this scorching sun
My sailor’s thund’ring at his gun:

Bulletts, spare my only joy!
Bulletts, spare my dear boy!
Fate do with me what you may
Spare but him that’s far away!

On the seas, &c.

At the starless midnight hour,
When winter rules with boundless pow’r;
As the storms the forests tear
And thunders rent the howling air,

Listening to the doubling roar,
Surging on the rocky shore,
All I can—I weep and pray,
For his weal that’s far away.

On the seas, &c.

Peace, thy olive wand extend,
And bid wild war his ravage end,

Man with brother man to meet,
And as a brother kindly greet:

Then may heaven with prop’rous gales,
Fill my sailor’s welcome sail,
To my arms their charge convey,
My dear lad that’s far away.

On the seas, &c.

**SONG.**

**TUNE—“Ca’ the Yowes to the Knowes.”**

**CHORUS.**

*Ca’ the yowes to the knowes,*
*Ca’ them where the heather grows,*
*Ca’ them where the burnie roses,*
*Manny dearie.*

HARK, the mavis’ evening sang,
Sounding Clouden’s woods among;
Then a-faulding let us gang,
My bonnie dearie.

*Ca’ the, &c.*

We’ll gae down by Clouden side,
Thro’ the hazels spreading wide,
O’er the waves, that sweetly glide
To the moon sae clearly.

*Ca’ the, &c.*

Yonder Clouden’s silent towers,
Where at moonshine midnight hour,
O’er the dews bending flowers,
Fairies dance sae cheerily.

*Ca’ the, &c.*

Glaist nor bogle shalt thou fear;
Thou’rt to love and he’nn sae dear,
Nacht of ill may come thee near,
My bonnie dearie.

*Ca’ the, &c.*

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

*Ca’ the, &c.*

**SHE SAYS SHE LO’BS ME BEST OF A’**

**TUNE—“Onagh’s Water-fall.”**

Sae flaxen were her ringlets,
Her eyebrows of a darker hue,
Bewitchingly o’er-arching
Twa laughing een o’ bonnie blue.

Her smiling sae wyling,
Wad make a wretch forget his wo;
What pleasure, what treasure,
Unto these rosy lips to grow!

Such was my Chloris’ bonnie face,
When first her bonnie face I saw;
And ay my Chloris’ dearest charm,
She says she lo’es me best of a’.

Like harmony her motion;
Her pretty ankle is a spy
Betraying fair proportion,
Wad mak a saint forget the sky.

Sae warming, sae charming,
Her faultless form, and graceful air;
BURNS' POEMS.

Ilk feature—auld nature
Declar'd that she could do nae mair;
Hers are the willing chains o' love,
By conquering beauty's sovereign law;
And ay my Chloris' dearest charm,
She says she lo'es me best of a'.

Let others love the city,
And gaudy show at sunny noon;
Gie me the lonely valley,
The dewy eve, and rising moon;
Fair beamimg, and streaming,
Her silver light the boughs amang;
While falling, recalling,
The amorous thrush concludes her sang;
There, dearest Chloris, witt thou rove
By wimping burn and leefy shaw,
And hear my vows o' truth and love,
And say thou lo'es me best of a'!

SAW YE MY PHEL.Y.
(Quasi dicat rhillis.)

TUNE—" When she cam ben she bobbit.

O SAW ye my dear, my Phely?
O saw ye my dear, my Phely?
She's down 't the grove, sae's wi' a new love,
She wins sae home to her Willy.

What says she, my dearest, my Phely?
What says she, my dearest, my Phely?
She lets thee to wit that she has thee forgot
And for ever disowns thee her Willy.

O had I ne'er seen thee, my Phely!
O had I ne'er seen thee, my Phely!
As light as the air, and fause as thou's fair,
Thou's broken the heart o' thy Willy.

SONG.

TUNE—"Cauld Kail in Aberdeen."

How long and dreary is the night,
When I am farc my dearie;
I restless lie farc e'en to morn,
Tho' I were ne'er sae weary.

CHORUS.

For oh, her lonely nights are lang
And oh, her dreams sae eerie;
And oh, her widow's heart is sair,
That's absent frae her dearie.

When I think on the lathsome days
I spent wit' thee my dearie;
And now what seas between us roar,
How can I be but eerie?
For oh, &c.

How slow ye move, ye heavy bours:
The joyless day how dreary!
It was na sae ye glinted by,
When I was wi' my dearie.
For oh, &c.

SONG.

TUNE—"Duncan Gray."

LET not woman e'er complain,
Of inconstancy in love;
LET not woman e'er complain,
Fickle man is apt to rove:

Look abroad through Nature's range,
Nature's mighty law is change;
Ladies, would it not be strange,
Man should then a monster prove?

Mark the winds, and mark the skies;
Ocean's ebb, and ocean's flow;
Sun and moon but set to rise,
Round and round the seasons go.

Why then ask of silly man,
To oppose great Nature's plan?
We'll be constant while we can—
You can be no more, you know.

THE LOVER'S MORNING SALUTE TO HIS MISTRESS.

TUNE—"Dell tak the Wars."

SLEEPST thou, or wak'at thou, fairest creature,
Rosy morn now lifts his eye,
Numbering ilk a bud which Nature
Waters wi' the tears o' joy:
Now thro' the leefy woods,
And by the reeking floods,
Wild Nature's tenants, freely, gladly stray;
The lint-white in his bower
Chanta o'er the breathing flower;
The la'v'rock to the sky
Ascends wi' saongs o' joy,
While the sun and thou arise to bless the day.

Phoebus gilding the brow o' morning,
Banishes ilk darksome shade,
Nature gladdening and adorning;
Such to me my lovely maid,
When absent frae my fair,
The murky shades o' care
With starless gloom o'ercast my sulene sky;
But when, in beauty's light,
She meets my ravish'd sight,
When through my very heart
Her beaming glories dart;
'Tis then I wake to life, to light, and joy.
THE AULD MAN.

BUT lately seen in gladsome green
The woods rejoic'd the day,
Thro' gentile showers the laughing flowers
In double pride were gay:
But now our joys are fled,
On winter blasts a wa!
Yet maiden May, in rich array,
Again shall bring them a'.

But my white pow, nce kindly thowre
Shall melt the snaws of age:
My trunk of eild, but bus or bield,
Sink in time's wintry rage.
Oh, age has weary days,
And nights o' sleepless pain!
The golden time o' youthful prime,
Why com' st thou not again?

SONG

TUNE—" My Lodgog is on the cold ground."

MY Chloris, mark how green the groves,
The primrose baulks how fair:
The balmy gales awake the flowers,
And wave thy flaxen hair.
The lav'rock shuns the palace gay,
And o'er the cottage sings:
For nature smiles as sweet I ween,
To shepherds as to kings.

Let minstrels sweep the skilfu' string
In lordly lighted ha':
The shepherd stops his simple reed,
Blithe, in the birken shaw.
The princely revel may survey
Our rustick dance wi' scorn;
But are their hearts as light as ours
Beneath the milk-white thorn?
The shepherd, in the flowery gLEN,
In shepherd's phrase will woo;
'I ne courtier tells a finer tale.
But 's his heart as true?

These wild wood flowers I've pu'd, to deck
That spotless breast o' thine;
The courtiers' gems may witness love—
But 'tis na love like mine.

SONG.

Altered from an old English one.

It was the charming mouth of May,
When all the flow'rs were fresh and gay,
One morning, by the break of day,
The youthful, charming Chloe;

From peaceful slumber she arose,
Girt on her mantle and her hose,
And o'er the flowery mead she goes,
The youthful, charming Chloe.

CHORUS.

Lovely was she by the dawn,
Young'ful Chloe, artless lassie;
Tripping o'er the peary lawn,
The youthful, charming Chloe.

The feather'd people you might see
Perch'd all around on every tree,
In notes of sweetest melody,
They hail the charming Chloe;

Till, painting gay the eastern skies
The glorious sun began to rise,
Out-rival'd by the radiant eyes
Of youthful, charming Chloe.

LASSIE W' THE LINT-WHITE LOCKS.

TUNE—" Rothemurchie's Rant."

CHORUS.

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

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

Lassie wi', & c.

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

Lassie wi', & c.

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

Lassie wi', & c.

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

Lassie wi' the lint-white locks,
Bonnie lassie, artless lassie,
O wilt thou wi' me tent the flocks,
Wilt thou be my dearie, O在外的花，當它們的鮮紅和嫩黃交織時，早晨，由開花的時刻，
The youthful, charming Chloe;
**SONG.**

**TUNE—**"Nancy's to the Greenwood," &c.

FAREWELL thou stream that winding flows
Arvon Eliza's dwelling!
O mem'ry I spare the cruel threes
Within my bosom swelling:
Condemned to drag a hopeless chain,
And yet in secret languish,
To feel a fire in every vain,
Nor dare disclose my anguish.

Love's veriest wretch, unseen, unknown,
I fain my griefs would cover:
The bursting sighs, the unwept groan,
Betray the hapless lover.
I know thou dostn't me to despair,
Nor wilt, nor canst relieve me;
But oh, Eliza, hear one prayer,
For pity's sake forgive me.

The music of thy voice I heard,
Nor wist while it enslav'd me;
I saw thine eyes, yet nothing fear'd,
Till fears no more had evad me;
Th' unwary sailor thus aghast,
The wheeling torrent viewing;
'Mid circling horrors sunk at last
In overwhelming ruin.

---

**DUET.**

**TUNE—**"The Sow's Tail."**

HE—O PHILLY, happy be that day
When roving through the gather'd hay
My youth'ful heart was strown away,
And by thy charms, my Willy.

SHE—O Willy, ay I bless the grove
Where first I own'd my maiden love,
Whilst thou did pledge the flow'rs above
To be my sin dear Willy.

HE—As songsters of the early year
Are Iska day mair sweet to hear,
So Iska day to me mair dear
And charming is my Willy.

SHE—As on the brier the budding rose
Still richer breathes, and fairer blows
So in my tender bosom grows
The love I bear my Willy.

HE—The milder sun and bluer sky,
That crown my harvest cares wi' joy
Were ne'er sae welcome to my eye
As is a sight o' I hilly.

SHE—The little swallow's wonton wing,
Tho' waiting o'er the flowery spring,
Did ne'er to me sic tidings bring,
As meeting o' my Willy.

---

**HE—** The bee that thro' the sunny hour
Sips nectar in the opening flower,
Compar'd wi' my delight is poor,
Upon the lips o' Philly.

SHE—The woodland in the dewy meet
When evening shades in silence meet,
Is nocht sae fragrant or sae sweet
As is a kiss o' Willy.

HE—Let fortune's wheel at random run,
And feels may tine, and knaves may win
My thoughts are a ' bound up in ane,
And that's my sin dear Philly.

SHE—What's a' the joys that gowd can gie!
I care nae wealth a single fle;
The lad I love the lad for me,
And that's my ain dear Willy.

---

**CANST THOU LEAVE ME THUS, MY KATY?**

---

**CHORUS.**

Canst thou leave me thus, my Katy?
Canst thou leave me thus, my Katy?
Well thou knowest my aching heart,
And canst thou leave me thus for pity?

---

**Farewell! and ne'er such sorrows bear
That sickle heart of thine, my Katy!**
BURNS' POEMS.

Thou may'st find those will love thee dear—
But not a love like mine, my Katy.

_Canst thou, &c._

---

**MY NANNIES AWA.**

*TUNE—"There'll never be peace."* &c.

Now in her green mantle blithe nature array'd,
And listen the lamkins that beat o'er the braes,
While birds warble welcome in ilk a green shaw;
But to me it's delightful—my Nannie's awa.

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

Thou lay rock that springs frae the dews of the lawn,
The shepherd to warn o' the gray-breaking dawn,
And thou mellow mavis that hail's the night-fa'
Give over for pity—my Nannie's awa.

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

---

**FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT.**

Is there, for honest poverty,
That hangs his head, and a' that;
The coward slave, we pass him by;
We dare be poor for a' that;

For a' that, and a' that,
Our toll's obscura, and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What tho' on harmless fare we dine,
Weed hoddin gray, and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine.
A man's a man for a' that;

For a' that, and a' that,
Our toil's obscura, and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

Ye see you birkie, ca'da lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that:

For a' that, and a' that,
His riband, star, and a' that,
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

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

For a' that, and a' that,
Their dignities, and a' that

The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
Are higher ranks than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree, and a' that.

For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet, for a' that,
That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

---

**SONG.**

*TUNE—"Craigie-burn-wood."*

SWEET fa's the eve on Craigie-burn,
And blithe awakes the morrow,
But a' the pride o'respring's return
Can yield me nocht but sorrow.

I see the flowers and spreading trees,
I hear the wild birds singing;
But what a weary wight can please,
And care his bosom wringing?

Pain, fain would I my griefs impart,
Yet dare na for your anger;
But secret love will break my heart,
If I conceal it longer.

If thou refuse to pity me,
If thou shalt love anither,
When you green leaves fade frae the tree
Around my grave they'll wither.

---

**SONG.**

*TUNE—"Let me in this ae night."*

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

**CHORUS.**

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

Thou heers't the winter wind and west,
Nae star blinks thro' the driving sleet;
Tak pity on my weary feet,
And shield me frae the rain, Jo.

_O let me in, &c._

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

_O let me in, &c._
HER ANSWER.

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

CHORUS.

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

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

The bird that charm'd his summer-day,
Is now the cruel fowler's prey;
Let witless, trusting woman say
How a' her late's the same, jo,
I tell you now, &c.

ADDRESS TO THE WOOD-LARK.

TUNE—"Where'll bonnie Ann lie." Or, "Loch-Eroch Side."

O STAY, sweet warbling wood-lark stay,
Nor quit for me the trembling spray,
' Papless lover counts thy lay,
Thy soothing, fond complaining:
Again, again that tender part,
That I may catch thy melting art;
For surely that wad touch her heart,
Wha kills me wi' disdain:
Say, was thy little mate unkind,
And heard thee as the careless wind?
Oh, nocht but love and sorrow join'd
Sic notes o' woe could waken.

Thou tells o' never-ending care;
O' speechless grief, and dark despair;
For pity's sake, sweet bird, nae mair
Or my poor heart is broken!

ON CHLORIS BEING ILL.

TUNE—"Ay wakin O."

CHORUS.

Long, long the night,
Heavy comes the morrow

While my soul's delight,
Is on her bed of sorrow.

CAN I cease to care?
Can I cease to languish,
While my darling fair
Is on the couch of anguish?

Long, &c.

Every hope is fled,
Every fear is terror
Slumber even I dread,
Every dream is horror.

Long, &c.

Hear me, Power's divine!
Oh, in pity hear me!
Take aught else of mine,
But my Chloris spare me!

Long, &c.

——

SONG.

TUNE—"Humours of Glen."

THEIR groves o' sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
Where bright-beaming summers exalt the perfumes,
Far dearer to me you lone gien o' green braekan,
Wi' the burn sleeping under the lang yellow bream.

Far dearer to me are you humble bream bowers,
Where the blue-bell and gowan lurk lowly unseen:
For there, lightly tripping among the wild flowers,
A-listening the linnest, a' waulding my Jean.

Tho' rich is the breeze in their gay sunny valleys,
And cauld Caledonia's blast on the wave;
Their sweet-scented woodlands that skirt the proud palace,
What are they? The haunt of the tyrant and slave.

The slave's spicy forests, and gold bubbling fountains,
The brave Caledonian views wi' disdain;
He wanders as free as the winds of his mountains,
Save love's willing fetters, the chains o' his Jean.

——

SONG.

TUNE—"Laddie, lie near me."

'T WAS na her bonnie blue e'e was my ruin;
Fair tho' she be, that was ne'er my undoing:
'T was the dear smile when naebody did mind us,
'T was the bewitching, sweet, strown glance o' kindness.

Sair do I fear that to hope is denied me,
Sair do I fear that despair maun abide me;
But tho' fell fortune should fate us to sever,
Queen shall she be in my bosom for ever.

Mary, I'm thine w' a passion sincere,
And thou hast plighted me love o' the dearest,
BURNS' POEMS.

And thou'rt the angel that never can alter,
Sooner the sun in his motion would falter.

ALTERED FROM AN OLD ENGLISH SONG.

TUNE—"John Anderson my jo."

How cruel are the parents
Who riches only prize,
And to the wealthy booby,
Poor woman sacrifice.
Meanwhile the hapless daughter
Has but a choice of strife;
To shun a tyrant father's hate,
Become a wretched wife.
The ravening hawk pursuing,
The trembling dove thus flies,
To shun impelling rain
Awhile her pinions sways,
Till of escape despairing,
No shelter or retreat,
She trusts the ruthless falconer,
And drops beneath his feet.

SONG.

TUNE—"Dill tak the Wars."

MARK yonder pomp of costly passion,
Round the wealthy, titled pride:
But when compar'd with real passion,
Poor is a.at that princely pride.
What are the showy treasures?
What are the noisy pleasures?
The gay, gaudy glare of vanity and art:
The polish'd jewel's blaze
May draw the wond'ring gaze,
And courteously grandeur bright;
The fancy may delight,
But never, never can come near the heart.

But did you see my dearest Chloris,
In simplicity's array?
Lovely as yonder sweet opening flower is,
Shrinking from the gaze of day.
O, then, the heart alarming,
And all resistless charming,
In Love's delightful fetters she chains the willing soul!
Ambition would disown
The world's imperial crown
Even Avarice would deny
His worship'd deity,
And feel thro' every vein Love's raptures roll.

SONG.

TUNE—This is no my ain House.

CHORUS.

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

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

O this is no, &c.

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

O this is no, &c.

A thief sae pawkie is my Jean,
Tu' steal a blink, by a' unseen;
But gieg as light are lovers' een,
When kind love is in the e'e,

O this is no, &c.

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

O this is no &c.

TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.

SCOTTISH SONG.

Now spring has clad the groves in green,
And strewd the lawn with flowers;
The furrow'd, waving corn is seen
Rejoice in fostering showers;
While ilka thing in nature join
Their sorrows to forego,
O why thus all alone am mine
The weary steps of wo!

The trout within you wimplain burn
Glidea swift, a silver dart,
And safe beneath the shady thorn
Defies the angler's art:
My life was ance that careless stream,
That wanton trout was I;
But love, wi' unrelenting beam,
Has scorched my fountains dry.

The little flow'ret's peacefull lot,
In yonder cliff that grows,
Which, save the linnet's flight, I wot
Nae ruder visit knowns,
Was mine; till love has o'er me past,
And blighted a' my bloom,
And now beneath the withering blast
My youth and joys consume.

The waken'd la'verock warbs, & springs,
And climbs the early sky,
Winnowing blithe her dewy wings
In morning's rose eye;
As little reckt I sorrow's power,
Until the flowery snare
O' witching love, in luckless hour,
Made me the thrall of care.

O had my fate been Greenland snows
Or Afric's burning tone,
W' man and nature league'd my foes,
So Peggy ne'er I'd know?
The wretch whose doom is, "hope nae mair,"
What tongue his woes can tell!
Within whose bosom, save despair,
Nae kinder spirits dwell.

**SCOTTISH_SONG.**

O BONNIE was yon rosy brier,
That blooms so far frae haunt o' man;
And bonnie she, and ah, how dear!
It shaded fra the e'elin sun.
The rosebuds in the morning dew,
How pure amang the leaves sae green;
But purer was the lover's vow
They witness'd in their shade yeastreen.

A In its rude and prickly power,
That crimson rose, how sweet and fair!
But love is far a sweeter flower
Amid life's thorny path o' care.
The pathless wild, and wimp'ring burn,
Wi' Chloris in my arms, be mine;
And I, the world, nor wish, nor scorn,
Its joys and griefs alike resign.

**WRITTEN** on a blank leaf of a copy of his Poems
presented to a Lady, whom he had often celebrated
under the name of Chloris.

'Tis Friendship's pledge, my young, fair Friend,
Nor thou the gift refuse,
Nor with unwilling ear attend
The moralizing muse.

Since, thou, in all thy youth and charms,
Must bid une world adieu,
(A world 'gainst peace in constant arms)
To join the friendly few.

Since the gay morn of life o'ercast,
Chill came the tempest's lower:
(And ne'er misfortune's eastern blast
Did nip a fairer flower.)

Since thy gay scenes must charm no more,
Still much is left behind;
Still nobler wealth has thou in store,
The comforts of the mind!

Thine is the self-approving glow,
On conscious honour's part;
And, dearest gift of heaven below
Thine friendship's truest heart.

The joys refin'd of sense and taste.
With every muse to rove;
And doubly were the poet blest
These joys could he improve.

**ENGLISH_SONG.**

TUNE—"Let me in this so night."

FORLORN, my love, no comfort near,
Far, far from thee, I wand're here
Far, far from thee, the fate severe
At which I most repine, love.

CHORUS.

O wert thou, love, but near me,
But near, near, near me;
How kindly thou wouldst cheer me,
And mingle sighs with mine, love.

Around me scowls a wintry sky.
The blast each bud of hope and joy;
And shelter, shade, nor home have I,
Save in those arms of thine, love.

O wert, &c.

Cold, alter'd friendship's cruel part,
To poison fortune's ruthless dart—
Let me not break thy faithful heart,
And say that fate is mine, love.

O wert, &c.

But dreary tho' the moments fleet,
O let me think we yet shall meet!
That only ray of solace sweet
Can on thy Chloris shine, love.

O wert, &c.

**SCOTTISH BALLAD.**

TUNE—"The Lothian Lassie."

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

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

A weel-stocked maileen, himself for the Laird,
And marriage aff-hand, were his provers;
I never loot on that I kenn'd it, or car'd,
But thought I might hae waur offers, waur offers,
But thought I might hae waur offers.

But what wad ye think? in a fortnight or less
The deil tak his taste to gae near her!
FRAGMENT.

TUNE—"The Caledonian Hunt's Delight."

WHY, why tell thy lover,
Eliah he never must enjoy!
Why why undeceive him,
And give all his hopes the lie?

O why, while fancy, raptur'd, slumbers;
Chloris, Chloris all the theme;
Why, why wouldst thou cruel,
Wakes thy lover from his dream?

Hey for a Lass wi' a Tocher.

TUNE—"Balanimona ora."

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

CHORUS.

Then hey, for a lass wi' a tocher, then hey for a lass wi' a tocher,
Then hey, for a lass wi' a tocher; the nice yellow guineas for me.

Your beauty's a flower, in the morning that blows,
And withers the faster, the faster it grows;

But the rapturous charm o' the bonnie green knower,
I'll spring they're new deckit wi' bonnie white yowes.
Then hey, &c.

And o'en when this beauty your bosom has blest,
The brightest o' beauty may cloy, when possess;
But the sweet yellow darlings wi' Geordie Imprest,
The langer ye has them—the mair they're careest.
Then hey, &c.

SONG.

TUNE—"Here's a health to them that's awa, hiney."

CHORUS.

Here's a health to one I' loe dear,
Here's a health to one I' loe dear
Thou art sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet,
And soft as their parting tear—Jessy!

ALTIO thou maun never be mine,
Altho' even hope is deuced;
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing,
Than aught in the world beside—Jessy!
Here's a health, &c.

I mourn thro' the gay, gaudy day,
As, hopeless, I muse on thy charms;
But welcome the dream o' sweet slumber,
For then I am lockt in thy arms—Jessy!
Here's a health, &c.

I guess by the dear angel's smile,
I guess by the love-rolling e'e;
But why urge the tender confession
'Gainst fortune's fell cruel decree—Jessy!
Here's a health, &c.

SONG.

TUNE—"Rothermurchies's Rant."

CHORUS.

Fairiest maid on Devon banke,
Crystal Devon, winding Devon,
Wilt thou lay that frown aside,
And smile as thou were wont to do?

FULL well thou know'st I love thee dear,
Couldst thou to malice lend an ear!
O, did not love exclaim, "Forbear,
' Nor use a faithful lover so?"
Fairiest maid, &c.

Then come, thou fairest of the fair,
Those wond'ring smiles, O, let me share;
And by thy beauteous self I swear,
No love but thine my heart shall know.
Fairiest maid, &c.
THE BIRKS OF ABERFELDY.

**Bonnie lassie, will ye go, will ye go, will ye go,**

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

**Bonnie lassie, &c.**

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

**Bonnie lassie, &c.**

The braes ascend like lofty wa's,
The foaming stream deep-roaring sa'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 linus the burnie pours,
And riasg, 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.**

STAY, MY CHARMER, CAN YOU LEAVE ME?

**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 panes of lovers slighted;
Do not, do not leave me so!
Do not, do not leave me so!

**STRATHALLAN'S LAMENT.**

TUCE—**"Drummond dubh.**

THICKEST night o'er-hang my dwelling!
Howling tempest o'er me rave!
Turbid torrents, wintry swelling,
Still surround my lonely cave!
Crystal streamlet's, gently flowing
Busk haunts of base mankind,
Western breezes, softly blowing,
Suit not my distracted mind.

In the cause of right engaged,
Wrong injurious to redress,
Honour's war we strongly waged,
But the heavens deny'd 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!

THE YOUNG HIGHLAND ROVER

TUNE—"Morag."

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

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

RAVING WINDS AROUND HER BLOWING.

TUNE—"Mc'Grigor of Ruaro's Lament."

RAVING winds around her blowing,
Yellow leaves the woodlands strowning,
By a river hoarsely 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.

"O'er the past too fondly wandering,
On the hopeless future pondering;
Chilly grief my life-blood freezes,
Fell despair my fancy zeises,
Life, thou soul of every blessing,
Load to misery most distressing,
O how gladly I'd resign thee,
And to dark oblivion join thee!

MUSING ON THE ROARING

TUNE—"Druimmond dubh

MUSING on the roaring ocean,
Which divides my love and me ;
BURNS’ POEMS.

Wearying Heaven in warm devotion,  
For his weal 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 awa.

Ye whom sorrow never wounded,  
Ye who never shed a tear,
Care-untroubled, joy-surrounded,  
Gaudy day to you is dear.

Gentle night, do thou befriend me;  
Downy sleep, the curtain draw;
Spirits kind, again attend me,  
Talk of him that’s far awa!

---

BLITIE WAS SHE.

Blithe, blithe and merry was she,  
Blithe was she but and ben;
Blithe by the banks of Ern,  
And blithe in Glenturrit glen.

BY Oughtertyre grows the aik,  
On Yarrow banks, the birken shaw;
But Phemie was a bonnier lass  
Than braes o’ Yarrow ever saw.

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

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

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

---

A ROSE-BUD BY MY EARLY WALK.

AROSE-BUD by my early walk,  
Adown a corn-enclosed bawk,
Sae gently bent its thorny stalk  
All on a dewy morning.

Ere twice the shades o’ dawn are fled,  
In a’ its crimson glory spread,
And drooping rich the dewy head,  
It scents the early morning.

Within the bush, her covert nest  
A little linnet fondly prest,
The dew sat chilly on her breast  
Sae early in the morning.

She soon shall see her tender brood,  
The pride, the pleasure o’ the wood,
Amang the fresh green leaves bedew’d,  
Awake the early morning.

So thou, dear bird, young Jenny fair,  
On trembling string or vocal air,
Shall sweetly pay the tender care  
That tends thy early morning.

So thou, sweet rose-bud, young and gay,  
Shalt beauteous blaze upon the day,
And bless the parent’s evening ray  
That watch’d thy early morning.

---

WHERE BRAVING ANGRY WINTER STORMS.

TUNE—’N. Gow’s Lamentation for Abercairny."

WHERE braving angry winter’s storms,  
The lofty Ochila rise,
Far in their shade my Peggy’s charms  
First blest my wondering eyes.
As one who by some savage stream,  
A lonely gem surveys,
Astonish’d, doubly marks its beam,  
With art’s most polish’d blaze.

Blest be the wild, sequester’d shade,  
And blest the day and hour,
Where Peggy’s charms I first survey’d,  
When first I felt that pow’r I
The tyrant death with grim control  
May seize my fleeting breath;
But tearing Peggy from my soul  
Must be a stronger death.

---

TIBBIE, HAE SEEN THE DAY.

TUNE—"Invercauld’s Reel."

CHORUS.

O Tibbie, I hae seen the day,  
Ye would nae been sae shy;
For tak’ o’ gear ye tighthy me,  
But, truth, I care na by.

YESTREEN I met you on the moor,  
Ye spak na, but gaed by like store:  
Ye geck at me because I’m poor,  
But frint a hair care I.

O Tibbie, I hae, &c.

I doubt na, lass, but ye may think,  
Because ye hae the name o' clink,
That ye can please me at a wink,  
When'yer ye like to try.  
O Tibbie, I hae, &c.

But sorrow tak him that's sae mean,  
Altho' his pouche o' coine were clean,  
Wha follows ony saucy queen  
That looks sae proud and high.  
O Tibbie, I hae, &c.

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

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

There lives a lass in yonder park,  
I would na gie her in her eark,  
For the new sae' a thy thousand mark  
Ye need na look sae high.  
O Tibbie, I hae, &c.

---

CLARINDA.

CLARINDA, mistress of my soul,  
The measur'd time is run!  
The wretch beneath the dreamy pole,  
So marks his latest sun,

To what dark cave of frozen night  
Shall poor Sylvander lie;  
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?

---

THE DAY RETURNS, MY BOSSOM BURNS.

TUNE—"Seventh of November."

The day returns, my bosom burns,  
The blissful day we twa did meet,

---

O, WERE I ON PARNASSUS' HILL!

TUNE—"My love is lost to me."

O, WERE I on Parnassus' hill!  
Or had of Helicon my fill;  
That I might catch poetic skill,  
To sing how dear I love thee.

But Nith maun be my muse's well,  
My muse maun be thy bonnie sel;  
On Corsincon I'll glower and spell,  
And write how dear I love thee.

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

I see thee dancing o'er the green,  
Thy waist sae jimp, thy limbs sae clean,  
Thy tempting lips, thy rgyguish een—  
By heaven and earth I love thee!

By night, by day, a-field, at lane,  
The thoughts o' thee my breast inflame;  
And ay I muse and sing thy name,  
I only live to love thee;
The! 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.

I LOVE MY JEAN.

TUNE—" Miss Admiral Gordon's Strathpey.

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

I see her in the dewy flowers
I see her sweet and fair:
I hear her in the 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.

THE BRAES O' BALLOCHMYLE.

The Catrine woods were yellow seen,
The flowers decay'd on Catrine lee,
Nae lav'rock sang on hillock green,
But nature sicken'd on the e'e.
Thro' faded grove Maria sang,
Hersel in beauty's bloom the while,
And ay the wild-wood echoes rang,
Farewell the braes o' Ballochmyle.

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

WILLIE BREW'D A PECK O' MAUT.

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

We are na fou, we're na that fou,
But just a droopin' in our e'e;
The cock may crow, the day may dawn
And ay we'll taste the barley brea,

Here are we met, three merry boys,
Three merry boys I trow are we;

And mony a night we've merry been,
And mony mae we hope to be!
We are nae fou, &c.

It is the moon, I ken her horn,
That's blinkin' in the lift sae hie;
She shines sae bright to wyle us hame
But, by my sooth, she'll wait a weel.
We are nae fou, &c.

Wha first shall rise to gang awa,
A cuckold, coward loon is he!
Wha last beside his chair shall fa',
He is the king amang us three
We are nae fou, &c.

THE BLUE-EYED LASSIE.

I GAED a wasfu' gate yestreen,
A gate, I fear'll, dearly rue;
I gat my death frae twa sweet een,
Twa lovely een o' bonnie vine.
'Twas not her golden ringlets bright;
Her lips like roses wat wi' dew,
Her heaving bosom, lily-white—
It was her een sae bonnie blue.

She talk'd she smill'd, my heart she wip'd,
She charm'd my soul I wist na how;
And ay the stound the deadly wound,
Cam frae her een sae bonnie blue.
But spare to speak, and spare to speed;
She'll aiblins listen to my vow:
Should she refuse, I'll lay my dead
To her twa een sae bonnie blue.

THE BANKS OF NITH.

TUNE—" Robie Dona Gorach."

The Thames flows proudly to the sea,
Where royal cities stately stand;
But sweeter flows the Nith to me,
Where Commars ance had high command;
When shall I see that honour'd land,
That winding stream I love so dear!
Must wayward fortune's adverse hand
For ever, ever keep me here?

Now lovely, Nith, thy fruitful vales,
Where spreading hawthorns gaily bloom;
How sweetly wind thy singing dales,
Where lambkins wanton thro' the brea!
Tho' wandering now, must be my doom,
Far from thy bonnie banks and braes,
May there my latest hours consume,
Amang the friends of early days!

JOHN ANDERSON MY JO.

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

John Anderson my joy, John,
We clamb the hill thegither;
And mony a cany day, John,
We've had wi' ane another:
Now we maun totter down, John
But hand and hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my joy.

_TAM GLEN._

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

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

There's Lowrie the laird o' Drummeller,  
"Guild day to you, brute," he com's ben;
He brags and he blaws o' his siller,
But when will he daunce like Tam Glen?

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

My daddie says, gin I'll foresake him,
He'il gie me guid hunder marks ten:
But, if it's o'rdain'd I maun tak him,
O wha will I get but Tam Glen?

Yestreen at the Valentine's dealin',
My heart to my nou gied a sten;
For thirce I drew ane without failing,
And thrice it was written, Tam Glen.

The last Halloween I was waunlin
My droukit sark-sleeve, as ye ken
His likeness cam up the house staukin
And the very gray brecks o' Tam Glen!

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

**MY TOCHER'S THE JEWEL.**

O MEIKLE thinks my luve o' my beauty,
And meikle triumphs my luve o' my kin;

But little thinks my luve I ken brawlie,
My Tocher's the jewel has charms for him.
It's a' for the apple he'll nourish the tree;
It's a' for the honey he'll cherish the bee;
My laddie's sae meikle in luve wi' the siller,
He cannae have luve to spare for me.

Your proper o' luve's an airt-penny,
My Tocher's the bargain ye wad buy;
But an ye be crafty, I am cunnin,
Sae ye wi' anither your fortune may try.
Ye're like to the trimmer o' your rotten wood,
Ye'll like to the bark o' your rotten tree,
Ye'll slip frae me like a knotless thread,
And ye'll crack your credit wi' me nor me.

**THEN GUIDWIFE COUNT THE LAWIN**

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

_Then guidwife count the lawin, the lawin, the laun_,
_Then guidwife count the lawin, and bring a coggie mair._

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

_Then guidwife count, &c._

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

_Then guidwife count, &c._

**WHAT CAN A YOUNG LASSIE DO WIT AN AULD MAN?**

_WHAT can a young lassie, what shall a young lassie,_
_WHat can a young lassie do wit an auld man?_

Bad luck on the pennie that tempted my missie
To sell her poor Jenny for siller an' lan'!

_Bad luck on the pennie, &c._

He's always compleenin frae mornin to e'enin,
He hosts and he hirple the weary day lang;
He's doyil and he's doon's, his bluid it is frozen,
O'dreary's the night wit' a crazy auld man!

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

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

BONNIE wee thing, cannie wee thing,
Lovely wee thing, wast thou mine,
I wad wear thee in my bosom,
Lest my jewel I should lose.

Wishfully I look and languish
In that bonnie face o' thine;
And my heart it stounds wi' anguish,
Lest my wee thing be na mine.

Wit, and grace, and love, and beauty,
In ae constellation shine;
To adore thee is my duty,
Goddess o' this soul o' mine.

Bonnie wee, &c.

O, FOR ANE AND TWENTY, TAM!

TUNE—"The Moudiewort."

An O, for ane and twenty, Tam!
An hey, sweet ane and twenty, Tam!
I'll learn my kin relating song,
An I saw ane and twenty, Tam.

THEY soon me sair, and hand me down,
And gar me look like blunty, Tam!
But three short years will soon wheel roun',
And then comes ane and twenty, Tam!

An O, for ane, &c.

A gleib o' lan', a claut o' gear,
Was left me by my auntie, Tam;
At kith or kin I needsna spire,
And I saw ane and twenty, Tam!

An O, for ane, &c.

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

An O, for ane, &c.

BESS AND HER SPINNING WHEEL.

O, LEEZE me on my spinning wheel,
O, leave me on my rock and reel;
Prac tap to tae that cleeds my bieen,
And hape me fael and warm at t'e'en!
I'll set me down and sing and spae,
While leagh descends the simmer sun,
Blest wi' content, and milk and meal—
O, leave me on my spinning wheel.

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

On lefty sits the couches wall,
And echo cons the doolin' tales,
The lintwhites in the hazel breasts,
Delighted, rivel'ther's lays:
The craik amang the claver hay,
The patrick whirrin' o'er the ley,
The swallow jinkin' round my shield
Amuse me at my spinning wheel.

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

COUNTRY LASSIE.

In summer when the hay was mawn,
And corn wav'd green in ilka field,
While claver blooms white o'er the les,
And roses blaw in ilka field;
Blithe Bessie in the milking shiel,
Says, 'I'll be wed, come o' what will:
Out spak a dame in wrinkled eld,
"O guid advancement comes nae ill."

"It's ye hae woers mony aye,
And lassie, ye're but young ye ken:
Then wait a wee, and cannie wale,
And rounthie but, a rounthie ben;
There's Johnie o' the Buskie-glen,
Fu' is his barn, fu' is his byre;
Tak this frae me, my bonnie ben,
It's plenty beets the lover's fire."

For Johnie o' the Buskie-glen,
I dimna care a single flie;
He lo'es sae well his craps and kye,
He has nae love to spare for me;
But blithe's the blink o' Robbie's e'e,
And weel I wit he lo'es me dear:
As blink o' him I wad na gie
For Buskie-glen and at' his gear.

"O thoughtless lassie, life's a taught;
The canniest gate, the strife is sair;
But ay fu' ban't is fechtin best,
A hungry care's an unco care:
But some will spend, and some will spare,
An' wilfu' folk maun hae their will;
Syne as ye brew, my maiden fair,
Keep mind that ye maun drink the y'll;'

O, gear will buy me rigs o' land,
And gear will buy me sheep and kye;
But the tender heart o' lesome luve,
The gowd and siller canna buy:
We may be poor—Robbie and I,
Light is the burden luve lays on;
Content and luve brings peace and low.
What mair has queens upon a throne?
THE BEULAH FELL

On the Banks of Don Averlu

Cambridge. Mansion, August 1833
FAIR ELIZA.

A GAEIC AIR.

'TURN again, thou fair Eliza,
As kind blink before we part,
Raw on thy despairing lover!
Canst thou break his faithful heart?
Turn again, thou fair Eliza;
If to love thy heart denies,
For pity hide the cruel sentence
Under friendship's kind disguise.

Thee, dear maid, hast I offended?
The offence is loving thee:
Canst thou wreck his peace for ever,
Wha for thing wad gladly die?
While the life heats in my bosom,
Thou shalt mix in like three:
Turn again, thou lovely maiden,
As sweet smile on me bestow.

Not the bee upon the blossom,
In the pride o' sinny noon;
Not the little sporting fairy,
All beneath the simmer moon;
Not the poet in the moment
Fancy lightens on his e'e,
Kens the pleasure, feels the rapture
That thy presence gics to me.

THE POSIE.

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

The primrose I will pu', t' erstaling o' the year,
And I will pu' the pink, the emblem o' my dear,
For she's the pink o' womankind, and blooms without a peer;
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

I'll pu' the budding rose when Phoebus peeps in view,
For it's like a bawmy kiss o' her sweet bonnie mou';
The hyacinth's for constancy wil' its unchanging blue,
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

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

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

The woodbine I will pu' when the e'en'ing star is near,
And the diamond-drops o' dew shall be her een sae clear:

The violet's for modesty which weel she's to wear,
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

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

THE BANKS O' DOON.

YE banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care!
Thou'll break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons thro' the flowering thorn:
Thou mints me o' departed joys,
Departed never to return.

Oft ha' I ro'd by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its love,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
'Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree:
But my fause lover stole my rose,
But ah! he left the thorn wil' me.

SONG.

TUNE—"Catharina Ogilvye."

YE flowery banks o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair,
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie l:
That sings upon the bough;
Thou mints me o' the happy days
When my fause love was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie l:
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft ha' I ro'd by bonnie Doon,
To see the wood-bine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love,
And sae did I o' mine.
'Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Frae its thorny tree,
And my fause lover staw the rose,
But left the thorn wil' me.

SIC A WIFE AS WILLIE HAD.

WILLIE Waste dwal't on Tweed,
The spot they ca'd it Linkundoddle.
Willie was a vagabond gud
Cou'd stown a clae wi' ooy bodie;
He hadd a wife was douer and din,
O Tinkerd Madgine was her mither;

*Sic a wife as Willie had,
I wad na gie a button for her.

She has an e'e, she has but ane,
The cat has twa the very colour;
Five rusty teeth, forby a stump,
A clapper tongue wad deawe a miller;
A whisken heard about her mou,
Her nose and chin they threaten ither;

*Sic a wife, &c.

She's bow-hough'd, she's hein-shinn'd,
As limpin leg a hand-breed shorter;
She's twisted right, she's twisted left,
To balance fair in like quarter;
She has a hump upon her breast,
The twin o' that upon her shouter;

*Sic a wife, &c.

Auld bandraus by the ingle sits,
An' wi' her loof her face a-washin;
But Willie's wife is nae sae trig,
She dights her grunzie wi' a hushion;
Her wattie nieves like middeea-creefs,
Her face wad fyle the Logan-Water:

*Sic a wife as Willie had,
I wad nae gie a button for her.

GLAMOROUS DECEMBER.

ANCE mair I hale thee, thou glamor December!
Ace mair I hale thee, wi' sorrow and care;
Sad was the parting thou makes me remember,
Parting wi' Nancy, Oh! ne'er to meet mair.

Fond lovers' parting is sweet painful pleasure;
Hope beaming mild on the soft parting hour;
But the dire feeling, O farewell for ever,
Is anguish unmingled and agony pure.

Wild as the winter now tearing the forest,
Till the last leaf o' the summer is flown,
Such is the tempest has shaken my bosom,
Since my last hope and last comfort is gone;
Still as I hale thee, thou gloomy December,
Still shall I hale thee wi' sorrow and care;
For sad was the parting thou makes me remember,
Parting wi' Nancy, Oh, ne'er to meet mair.

WILT THOU BE MY DEARIE?

WILT thou be my dearie?
When sorrow wrings thy gentle heart,
O wilt thou let me cheer thee?
By the treasure of my soul,
And that 'tis the love I bear thee!
I swear and vow, that only thou

Shall ever be my dearie.
Only thou, I swear and vow,
Shall ever be my dearie.

Lassie, say thou loves me;
Or if thou wilt be my sin,
Say na thou'lt refuse me;
If it winna, ca'na be,
Thus for thine may choose me;
Let me, Lassie, quickly die,
Trust that thou lov's me.
Lassie, let me quickly die,
Trust that thou lovest me.

SHE'S FAIR AND FAUSe.

SHE'S fair and fause that causes my smart,
I lo'ed her meikle and lang;
She's broken her vow, she's broken my heart
And I may e'en gae hang.
A coof cam in wi' rowth o' gear,
And I hais taint mearest dear,
But woman is but warkil's gear,
Sae let the bonnie lass gang.

Whae'er ye be that woman love,
To this be never blind,
Nae felth 'tis theo' fickle she prove,
A woman has't by kind:
O woman lovely, woman fair!
An angel's form's a faun to thy share,
'Twad been o'er meikle to gien thee mair,
I mean an angel mind.

AFTON WATER.

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

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

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

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

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

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green brace,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays;
Burns' Poems.

My Mary's asleep by the murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Bonnie Bell.

The smiling spring comes in rejoicing,
And early winter grimly flies:
Now crystal clear are the falling waters,
And bonnie blue are the sunny skies,
Fresh o'er the mountains break forth the morning,
The evening glides the ocean's swell;
All creatures joy in the sun's returning,
And I rejoice in my bonnie Bell.

The flowery spring leads sunny summer
And yellow autumn presses near;
Then in his turn comes gloomy winter,
Till smiling spring again appear.
Thus seasons dancing, life advancing,
Old Time and nature their changes tell,
But never ranging, still unchanging
I adore my bonnie Bell.

The gallant weaver.

Where Cart rins rowin to the sea,
By mony a flow'r, and spreading tree
There lives a lad, the lad for me,
He is a gallant weaver.
Oh I had wooers aught or nine,
They gied me rings and ribbons fine;
And I was fear'd my heart would tine,
And I gied it to the weaver.
My daddie sign'd my tocher-band
To gie the lad that has the land;
But to my heart I'll add my hand,
And gie it to the weaver.
While birds rejoice in leafy bowers;
While bees rejoice in opening flowers;
While corn grows green in summer showers,
I'll love my gallant weaver.

Louis, what reck I by thee?

Louis, what reck I by thee,
Or Geordie on his ocean?
Dyvor, beggar louns to me,
I reign in Jeanie's bosom.
Let me crown my love her law,
And in her breast enthron me:
Kings and nations, with awa!
Reif randies, I disown ye!

For the sake of somebody.

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

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

The lovely lass of Inverness.

The lovely lass o' Inverness,
Nae joy nor pleasure can she see;
For e'en and more she cries, alas!
And ay the aust tear blises her e'e:
Drumossie moor, Drumossie day,
A waefu' day it was to me;
For there I lost my father dear,
My father dear, and brethren threes.

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

Mothers Lament for the Death of her Son.

Tune—"Finlayston House.''

Fate gave the word, the arrow sped,
And pierc'd 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.

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.
O MAY, THY MORN.

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

And dear, &c.

And here's to them that, like oursel,
can push about the jorum;
And here's to them that wish na weel,
May a' that's guid watch o'er them:
And here's to them, we dare na tell,
The dearest o' the quorum.
And here's to, &c.

O, WAT YE WHA'S IN YON TOWN?

O, Wat ye wha's in you town,
Ye see the e'enin sun upon?
The fairest dame's in you town,
That e'enin sun is shining on.

Now haply down you gay green shaw,
She wanders by you spreading tree:
How blest ye flower's that round her blaw.
Ye catch the glances o' her e'e.

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

The sun blinks blithe on you town,
And on you bonnie braes o' Ay'r;
But my delight in you town,
And dearest bliss, is Lucy fair.

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

My care wad be a lover's bower,
The' rraging winter rent the air;
And she a lovely little flower,
That I wad tenl and shelter there.

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

If angry fate is sworn my foe,
And suffering I am doom'd to bear;
I careless qu'ought else below,
But spare me, spare me Lucy dear.

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

| A RED, RED ROSE. |

O, MY luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June;
O, my luve's like the melody
That's sweetly play'd in tunec.

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

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel a while!
And I will come again, my luve,
'Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

A VISION.

As I stood by you roofless tower,
Where the wa' flower scents the dewy air.
Where the howlet morns in her ivy bower,
And the midnight moon her care.

The winds were laid, the air was still,
The stars they shot alang the sky;
The fox was howling on the hill,
And the distant-echoing glesp reply.

The stream, adown its hazel path,
Was rushing by the ruin'd wa's,
Hasting to join the sweeping Nith,
Whose distant roaring awells and fa's.

The cauld-blue north was streaming forth
Her lights, wi' hissing, eerie din;
A stern and stalwart ghast arise,
Attir'd as minstrels wou't be.

Had I a statue been o' stane,
His clarin look had daunted me:
And on his bonnet grav'd was plain,
The sacred posy—libertie!

And frae his harp sic strains did flow,
Might rous'd the slumbering dead to hear.
But oh, it was a tale of wo,
As ever met a Briton's ear!

He sang wi' joy his former day,
He weeping wall'd his latter times;
But what he said it was nse play,
I winna ventur't in my rhymes.
COPY

OF A POETICAL ADDRESS.

TO MR. WILLIAM TYTLER,

With the present of the Bard’s Picture.

RESERVED defender of benificent 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.

The something like moisture conglobes in my eyes,
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 degenerated son,
That name should be scoffingly slight it.

Still in prayers for K—G—I most heartily join,
The Q—, and the rest of the gentry,
Be they wise, be they foolish, is nothing of mine;
Their title’s awow’d by my country.

But why of this epocha make such a fuss,

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

I send you a trifl, a head of a bard,
A trifl 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.

——

CALEDONIA.

TUNE—"Caledonian Hunt’s Delight."

THERE was once a day, but old Time then was young,
That brave Caledonia, the chief of her line,
From some of your northern deities sprung,
(Who knows not that brave Caledonia’s divine?)
From Tweed to the Orcades was her domain,
To hunt, or to pasture, or do what she would:
Her heavenly relations there fixed her reign,
And pledg’d her their godheads to warrant it good.

A lambkin in peace, but a lion in war,
The pride of her kindred the heroine grew:

Her grand sire, old Odin, triumphant ly swore,
"Whoe'er shall provoke thee, th’ encounter shall rue!"

With tillage or pasture at times she would sport,
To feed her fair flocks by her green rustling corn?
But chiefly the woods were her favorite resort,
Her darling amusement, the hounds and the horn.

Long quiet she reign’d; till thitherward steer’d
A flight of bold eagles from Adria’s stand:
Repeated, successive, for many long years,
They darken’d the air, and they plunder’d the lands;
Their pounces were murder, and terror their cry,
They’d conquer’d and ruin’d a world besides;
She took to her hills, and her arrows let fly,
The daring invaders they fled or they died.

The fell Harpy raven took wing from the north,
The scourge of the seas, and the dread of the shore;
The wild Scandina was bearin’d forth,
To warrant in carnage and wallow in gore;
’Oer countries and kingdoms the fury prevail’d.
No arts could appease them, no arms could repeat;,
But brave Caledonia in vain they assail’d,
As Largs well can witness, and Loucald tell.

The Chameleon-savage disturb’d her repose,
With tumult, disquiet, rebellion and strife,
Provok’d beyond bearing, at last she arose,
And robb’d him at once of his hopes and his life:
The Anglian lion, the terror of France,
Oft provoking, ensanguin’d the Tweed’s silver flood;
But, taught by the bright Caledonian lance,
He learned to fear in his own native wood.

Thus bold, independent, unconquer’d, and free,
Her bright course of glory for ever shall run;
For brave Caledonia immortal must be;
I’ll prove it from Euclid as clear as the sun;
Rectangle and triangle, the figure we’ll choose,
The upright is Chance, and old Time is the base;
But brave Caledonia’s the hypotenuse;
Then ergo, she’ll match them, and match them always.

THE following Poem was written to a Gentleman,
who had sent him a Newspaper, and offered to continue it free of Expense.

KIND Sir, I’ve read your paper through,
And faith, to me, ’twas really new!
How guessed ye, Sir, what maist I wanted
This mony a day I’ve grain’d and gaunted,
To ken what French mischief was brewin;
Or what the drumlin Dutch were doun;
That vile dupe-skelper, Emperor Joseph,
If Venus yet had got his nose offf;
Or how collieshange works.
Atween the Russians and the Turks;
Or if the Swede, before he hal’t,
Would play aither Charles the twalt;
If Denmark, say body spake o’it;
Or Poland, who had now the tack o’it;
How cut-throat Prussian blads were hingin;
How libbet Italy was singin;
POEM ON PASTORAL POETRY.

HAIL, Poeties! thou Nymph reserv'd!
In chase o' thee, what crowds has aver'd
Fare common senses, or sunk enter'd
'Mang heaps o' clavers;
And och! o'er ait thy joes has starv'd,
Mid a' thy favours!

Say, Lassie, why thy train amang,
While loud the trump's heroic clang,
And suck or buskin skelp alang
To death or marriage?
Scarce ane has tried the shepherd-sang
But wi' miscarriage?

In Homer's craft Jock Milton thrives
Eachyjus' pen Will Shakespeare drives;
Woe Pope, the knurlin, till him rives
Horatian fame;
In thy sweet sang, Barbauld, survives
Even Sappho's flame.

But thee, Theocritus, wha matches?
They're no herd's ballats, Ma-ro's catches;
Squire Pope but buks his skinkin patches
O' henthen tatters;
I pass by hunders, nameless wretches,
That ape their betters.

In this braw age o' wit and leer
Will name the Shepherd's whistle mair
Blaw sweetly, in its native air
A rural grace;
And wi' the far-fam'd Grecian, share
A rival place?

Yes! there's ane—a Scottish callant!
There's ane; come forrit, honest Allan!
Thou needna jok at the hallan,
A chiel sae clever;

POEMS.

The teeth o' Time may gnaw Tartallan,
But thos'for ever.

Thou paints mild nature to the nines,
In thy sweet Caledonian lines;
Nae gowdon stream thro' myrrites twine,
Where I hlonel,
While nightly breezes sweep the vines,
Her griefs will tell!

In gowany glens thy burrule strays,
Where bonnie lasses bleach their clas';
Or trots by hazelly sways and braes,
Wi' lawthorns gray,
Where blackbirds join the shepherd's lays
At close o' day.

Thy rural loves are nature's sel;
Nae bombast spates o' nonsense swell;
Nae snap conceits, but that sweet spell
O' witchin love,
That charm that can the strongest quell;
The sternest move.

ON THE

BATTLE OF SHERIFF-MUIR,

Between the Duke of Argyle and the Earl of M' IV,

"O CAM ye here the fight to shun,
Or herd the sheep wi' me, man?
Or were ye at the sherra-muir,
And did the battle said, man?"

I saw the battle, sair and tough,
And reckin red ran mony a shuogh,
My heart, for fear, gae rough enough for,
To hear the thuds, and see the cluds,
O' clams fure woods, in tartan butts,
Wha glaup'd at kingdoms three, man.

The red-coat fads wi' black cockades
To meet them were na slaw, man;
They rush'd and push'd, and blude outgun'd,
And mony a bonk did fa', man:
The great Argyle led on his files,
I wat they glanced twenty miles:
They hack'd and hash'd, while broad swords clash'd,
And thro' they dash'd, and hew'd and smash'd,
Till few men died awa, man.

But had ye seen the phillings,
And skrin tartan trews, man,
When in the teeth they dar'd our whis,
And covenant true blues, man;
In lines extended lang and large,
When bayonets oppress'd the targe,
And thousands hasten'd to the charge,
Wi' Highland wrath, thay fro' the sheath
Drew blades o' death, till, oat o' breath
They fled like frigted does, man.

"O how del Parn, can that be true?"
The chase gaed frae the north, man.
SKETCH.—NEW-YEAR'S DAY

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

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

The absent lover, minor hair,
In vain assail him with their prayer,
Deaf as my friend, he sees them press,
Nor makes the hour one moment less.
Will you (the Major's with the hounds
The happy tenants share his rounds;
Colla's fair Rachel's care to-day,
And blooming Keith's engaged with Gray)
From housewife cares a minute borrow—
—That grandchild's cap will do to-morrow—
And join with me a moralizing,
This day's propitious to be wise in.
First, what did yesternight deliver?
"Another year is gone for ever."
And what is this day's strong suggestion?
"The passing moment's all we rest on!"
Rest on—for what? what do we here?
Or why regard the passing year?
Will Time, amust'd with proverb'd lore,
Add to our date one minute more?

A few days may—a few years must—
Repose us in the silent dust.
Then is it wise to damp our bliss?
Yes—all such reasonings are amiss!
The voice of nature loudly cries,
And many a message from the skies,
That something in us never dies;
That on this frail, uncertain state,
Hang matters of eternal weight;
That future life in worlds unknown
Must take its hue from this alone;
Whether as heavenly glory bright,
Or dark as misery's woful night.—
Since then, my honour'd, first of friends,
On this poor being all depends;
Let us th' important now employ,
And live as those that never die.
Tho' you, with day and honours crown'd,
Witness that filial circle round,
(A sight life's sorrow to repulse,
A sight pale envy to covet;) Others now claim your chief regard:
Yourself, you wait your bright reward.

EXTEMPORIE, on the late Mr. William Smeltie,
Author of the Philosophy of Natural History, and
Member of the Antiquarian and Royal societies of
Edinburgh.

To Crochallan came
The old cock'd hat, the grey surtout, the same;
His bristling beard just rialing in its might,
'Twas four long nights and days to shaving-night,
His uncombed grizzly locks wild staring 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.

POLITICAL INSCRIPTION for an ALTAR to INDEPENDENCE, at Kerrogthly, the Seat of Mr. Heron; written in summer, 1795.

THOU of an independant mind,
With soul resolv'd, with soul resign'd;
Prepar'd power's proudest frown to brave.
Who will not be, nor have a slave;
Virtue alone who dost revere,
Thy own reproach alone dost fear,
Approach this shrine, and worship here.

SONNET,

ON THE

DEATH OF ROBERT RIDDEL, ESQ.

OF GLEN RIDDEL, APRIL, 1794.

No more, ye warblers of the wood, no more,
Nor pour your descent, grating on my soul;
Thou young-eyed Spring, gay in thy verdant stole,
More welcome were to me grim Winter's wildest roar.
How can ye charm, ye flow'res with all your dyes?
Ye blow upon the sod that wraps my friend;
How can I to the tuneful strain attend?
That strain flows round th' untimely tomb where
Riddle lies.

Yes, pour, ye warblers, pour the notes of wo,
And sooth the Virtues weeping on this bier;
The Man of Worth, and has not left his peer,
Is in his "narrow house" for ever darkly low.

These, Spring, again with joy shall others greet;
Me, mem'ry of my loss will only meet.

MONODY

ON A

LADY FAMED FOR HER CAPRICE.

How cold is that bosom which folly once fir'd,
How pale is that cheek where the rouge lately lis-
ten'd!
How silent that tongue which the echoes oft tir'd,
How dull is that ear which to tattler so listen'd!

If sorrow and anguish their exit await,
From friendship and dearest affection remov'd;
How doubly severer, Eliza, thy fate,
Thou diest unwert as thou livest unludv'd.

Loves, Graces, and Virtues, I call not on you;
So sly, grave, and distant, ye shed not a tear;
But come, all ye offspring of folly so true,
And flowers let us call for Eliza's cold bier.

We'll search thro' the garden for each silly flower,
We'll roam thro' the forest for each idle weed;
But chiefy the nettle, so typical, shower,
For none e'er approach'd her but ru'd the rash deed.

We'll sculpture the marble, we'll measure the lay;
Here Vanity strums on her kilot lyre;
There keen indignation shall dart on her prey,
Which spurning Contempt shall redeem from his ire.

THE EPITAPH.

HERE lies, now a prey to insulting neglect
What once was a butterfly gay in life's beam,
Want only of wisdom denied her respect,
Want only of goodness denied her esteem.

ANSWER to a Mandate sent by the Surveyor of the
Windows, Carriages &c. to each Farmer, ordering
him to send a signed List of his Horses, Ser-
voants, Wheel-Carriages, &c., and whether he was a
married Man or a Bachelor, and what children
they had.

SIR, as your mandate did request,
I send you here a faithful' list,
My horses, servants, carts, and graiith,
To which I'm free to tak my aith.

Imprimis, then, for carriage cattle,
I have four brutes o' gallant mettle,
As ever drew before a pettle,
My hand a fore, a guild auld has been,
And wight and wilfu' a' his days seen;
My hand a hini, a guild brown lifly,
Wha aft hae born me safe frae Killie,
And your old borough mony a time,
In days when riding was nae crime;
My far a hin, a guild gray beast,
As e'er in tug or tow was trac'd;
The fourth, a Highland Donald hasty,
A d-mun'd red wud, Kilburnius blastis.
For by a court, of cows the wale,
As ever ran before a tail;
An' he be spar'd to be a beast,
He'll draw me fifteen pund at least.

Wheel carriages I hae but few,
Three carts, and twa are feckly new:
An auld wheel-barrow, maif for token,
As leg and baith the trams are broken;
I made a poker o' the spindle,
And my auld mither brunt the trundle.
For men, I've three mischievous boys,
Run-delis for rantin and for noise;
A godsman a, a thrasher t'other,
Wee Davoc hauds the nowte in father
I rule them, as I ought, discreetly,
And often labour them completely,
And ay on Sundays duly nightly,
I on the questions tairge them tightly.
Till faith wee Davoc's grown sae gleg
(Tho' scarcely longer than my leg)
He'll screech you off affectual calling,
As fast as oon in the dwelling.

I've nanie in female servant station,
Lord keep me ay frae a temptation;
I hae nae wife and that my bliss is,
And ye hae hid nae tax on misses;
For weas I'm mair than well contented,
Heaven sent me one mair than I wanted;
My sousie, snirking, dear-bought Bess,
She staries the dahidie in her face,
Enough of ought ye like but grace.
But her, my bonnie, sweet, wee lady
I've said enough for her already,
And if ye tax her or her mither,
By the L—D ye se get them a' thegither!

And now, remember, Mr. Aiken,
Nae kind of license out I'm taking,
Thro' dirt and dub for life I'll paibe,
Ere I sae dear pay for a sadlle;
I've studly stumps, the Lord be thanked!
And a' my gates on foot I'll shank it.
This list wi' my ain hand I've wrote it,
The day and date is under noted;
Then know all ye whom it concerns,
Subscripsi huic

ROBERT BURNS.

Mossgiel, 22d, Feb. 1796.
SONG.

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 ruddy, O,
I set me down wi' right good will;
To sing my highland lassie, O.

Oh, were you hills and valleys mine,
You palace and you gardens fine!
The world then the love should know
I bear my highland lassie, O,
Within the glen, &c.

But fields fortune frowns on me,
And I maun cross the raging sea;
But while my crimson currents flow
I 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 billow's roar,
For her I'll trace a distant shore,
That Indian wealth may justre throw
Around my highland lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

She baa my heart, she baa my hand,
By sacred truth 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 ruddy, O!
To other lands I now must go,
To sing my highland lassie, O!

IMPROMPTU,

ON MRS. ———'S BIRTH-DAY,

NOVEMBER 4, 1793.

OLD Winter with his frosty beard,
Thus once to Jove his prayer preferr'd;
What have I done of all the year,
To bear this hated doom severe?
My cheerless suns no pleasure know;
Night's horrid car drags, dreary, slow;
My dismal mouths no joys are crowning,
But spleeney English, hangiing, drowning.

Now, Jove, for once be mighty civil,
To counterbalance all this evil;

Give me, and I've no more to say,
Give me Maria's natal day!
That brilliant gift will so enrich me,
Spring, summer, autumn, cannot match me,
'Tis done! says Jove; so ends my story,
And Winter once rejoice'd in glory.

ADDRESS TO A LADY

Oh, wert thou in the cold blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea;
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee:
Or did misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a' to sharej't a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there.
Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wit' thee to reign, wit' thee to reign;
The brightest jewel in my crown,
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

TO A YOUNG LADY,

MISS JESSY — DUMFRIES;

With Books which the Bard presented her.

THINE be the volumes, Jessy fair,
And with them take the poet's prayer;
That fate may in her fairest page,
With every kindliest, best presage
Of future bliss, enrol thy name;
With native worth and spotless fame,
And wakeful caution still aware
Of ill—but chief, man's felon snare;
All blameless joys on earth we find,
And all the treasures of the mind—
These be thy guardian and reward;
So prays thy faithful friend, the Bard.

SUNNET, written on the 25th of January 1793, the Birth-day of the Author, on hearing a Thrush sing in a morning Walk.

SING on, sweet thrush, upon the leafless bough,
Sing on, sweet bird, I listen to thy strain;
See aged Winter, 'mid his surly reign,
At thy blythe carol clears his furrow'd brow.

So in lone Poverty's dominion drear,
Sits meek Content with light manxions heart,
Welcomes the rapid moments, bids them part,
Nor asks if they bring aught to hope or fear.
I thank thee, Author of this opening day:
Thou whose bright sun now gilds thy orient skies!
Riches decreed, thy boon was purer joys,
What wealth could never give nor take away!

Yet come, thou child of poverty and care;
The mite high Heaven bestowed, that mite with thee
I'll share.

EXTEMPORE, to Mr. S**E, on refusing to dine with him, after having been promised the first of Company, and the first of Cookery; 17th December, 1795.

No more of your guests, be they titled or not,
And cook'ry the first in the nation;
Who is proof to thy personal converse and wit,
Is proof to all other temptation.

To Mr. S**E, with a Present of a Dozen of Porter.

O, Had the malt thy strength of mind,
Or hopes the flavour of thy wit.
'Twere drunk for first of human kind,
A gift that e'en for S**E were fit.

Jerusalem Tavern, Dumfries.

THE DUMFRIES VOLUNTEERS.

TUNE—"Push about the Jorum."—April, 1795.

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

Fall de raff, &c.

O let us not like snarling tykes
In wrangling be divided;
Till slip come in an unco loom
And wi' a runge decide it.
Be Britain still to Brittain true,
Amang ourseels united;
For never but by British hands
Maun British wranges be righted,

Fall de raff, &c.

The kettle o' the kirk and state,
Perhaps a claut may fail in't;
But dell a foreign tinkler loun
Shall ever ca' a mull in't.
Our fathers' bluid the kettle bought,
And wha wad dare to spoil it;

by heaven the sacrilegious dog
Shall fuel be to boil it.

Fall de raff, &c.

The wretch that wad a tyrant own,
And the wretch his true-born brother,
Who would set the mob aboon the throne,
May they be daint'd together!
Who will not sing, "God save the King,
Shall hang as high's the steeple;
But while we sing, "God save the King,
We'll ne'er forget the People.

POEM,

ADDRESS TO MR. MITCHELL, COLLECT OR OF EXCISE, DUMFRIES, 1796.

FRIEND of the Poet, tried and seal,
Wha wanting thee, might beg or steal;
Alas! eke, the stinking dell
Wi' a' his witches are at it, skelpin, jig and reel,
In my poor pouches!

I modestly fu' fain wid hint it,
That one pound one, I saithly want it:
If wi' the hissie down ye sent it,
It would be kind;
And while my heart wi' life-bloxd dinsted,
I'd beart in mind.

So may the auld year gang out meaning
To see the new come laden, grawning,
Wi' double plenty o'er the lounin
To thee and thine;
Domestic peace and comforts crowning
The hale design.

POSTSCRIPT.

Ye've heard this while how I've been licket,
And by fell death was nearly nicket;
Grim loun! he gat me by the fecket,
And sair me sheuk;
But by guid luck I lap a wicket,
And turn'd a neuk.

But by that health I've got a share o' t,
And by that life, I'm promis'd mair o' t,
My hale and weel I'll take a care o'!
A tender way;
Then farewell folly, hide and hair o' t.
For anco and aye.

Sent to a Gentleman whom he had offended

THE friend whom wild from wisdom's way
The fames of wine infuriate send;
(Not moony madness more astray)
Who but deplores that hapless friend?
Mine was th' inanesate frenzied part,
Ah why should I such scenes outlive!
Scenes so abhorrent to my heart!
'Tis thine to pity and forgive.

POEM ON LIFE.

ADDRESS TO COLONEL DE PEYSTER.

DUMFRIES, 1796.

MY honour'd colonel, deep I feel
Your interest in the Poet's weal;
Ah! now am' heart hae I to speel
The steep Parnassus,
Surrounded thus by bosh pail,
And potion glasses.

O what a canty world were it,
Would pain and care, and sickness spare it;
And fortune favour worth and merit,
As they deserve:
(And aye a rowth, roast beef and claret;
Syne wha wad starve?)

Dame Life, tho' fiction out may trick her,
And in paste gems and frippery deck her;
Oh! flickering, feeble, and unsicker
I've found her still,
Ay waverling like the willow wicker,
'Tween good and ill.

Then that cursed carnagorne, auld Satan,
Sinneth, like baudrana by a rattan,
Our sinfu' saul to get a claut on
Wi' felon ire;
Syne, whip! his tail ye'll ne'er cast saut on,
Fic's off like fire

Ah Nick! ah Nick! it is na fait,
First showing us the tempting ware,
Bright wines and bonnie lasses rare,
To put us daft;
Syne weave, unseen, thy spider snare
O' hell's damn'd waft.

Poor man, the filie, a' bizzes by,
And a' as chance he comes thee nigh,
Thy auld damn'd elbow yeuds wi' joy,
And hellish pleasure;
Already in thy fancy's eye,
Thy sicker treasure.

Soon, heels o'er gowdies! in he gang,
And like a sheep-head on a tangs,
They girming laugh enjoys his pangs
And murdering wrestle,
As dangling in the wind, he hangs
A gibbet's tassel.

But lest you think I am uncivil,
To plague you with this draunting drivell,
Abjuring a' intentions evil,
I squat my pen:

The Lord preserve us fra the devil!
Amen! amen!

ADDRESS TO THE TOOTH-ACH.

MY curse upon thy venom'd stang,
That shoots my torture'd gums alang;
And thro' my lugs gies mony a twang,
Wi' gnawing vengeance;

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

When fevers burn, or aque freezes,
Rheumatics guaw, or cholic squeezes;
Our neighbour's sympathy may ease us,
Wi' pillying morn;

But thee—thou hell o' a diseases,
Ay mocks our groan.

Adown my beard the slavers trickle!
I throw the wee stools o'er the mickle,
As round the fire the giglets keckle,
To see me loup;

While raving mad, I wish a heckle
Were in their doup.

O' a' the num'rous human dools,
Ill harstes, daft bargains, cutty-stools,
Or worthy friends rak'd i' the mools,
Sad sight to see!

The tricks o' knaves, or fash o' fools,
Thou bear'st the gree.

Where'er that place be priests ca' hell,
Whence a' the tones o' mis'ry yell,
And ranked plagues their numbers tell,
In dreadfu' raw,

Thou, Tooth-ach, surely bear'st the hell
Among them a'!

O thou grim, mischief-making chiel,
That gars the notes of discord squeal,
Toft daft mankind aff dance a reel
In gorg a shoe-thick;

Gie a' the faes o' Scotland's seal
A towningd's Tooth-ach.

SONG.

TUNE—"Morag."

O WHA is a she that lo'es me,
And has my heart a-keeping?
O sweet is she that lo'es me,
As dews o' simmer weeping,
In tears the rose-buds steeping.

CHORUS.

O that's the lassie o' my heart,
My lassie ever dearer;
O that's the queen o' wagnkind,
And ne'er a ane to peer her.
If thou shalt meet a lassie,
In grace and beauty charming,
That e'en thy chosen lassie,
Ere while thy breast aas warming,
Had ne'er eric powers alarming.
O that's, &c.

If thou hast heard her talking,
And thy attentions lighted
That lika body talking,
But her by thee is slighted
And thou art all delighted.
O that's, &c.

If thou hast met this fair one;
When frae her thou hast parted,
If every other fair one,
But her thou hast deserted,
And thou art broken-hearted.—
O that's, &c.

SONG.

JOCKEY’S ta’en the parting kiss,
O'er the mountains he is gone;
And with him is a' my bliss,
Nought but griefs with me remain.

Spare my luve, ye winds that blow,
Plashy sheets and beating rain!
Spare my luve, thou featherly snow,
Drifting o'er the frozen plain.

When the shades of evening creep
O'er the day's fair, gladsome e'e,
Sound and safely may he sleep,
Sweetly blithe his wakening be!

He will think on her he loves,
Fondly he'll repeat her name;
For where'er he distant roves,
Jockey's heart is still at hame.

SONG.

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 l'eggy's heart.

The lily's hue, the rose's dye,
The kindling lustre of an eye;
Who but owes thair magic away,
Who but knows they all decay?
The tender thrill, the pitying tear,
The generous purpose, nobly dear,
The gentle look, that rage disarms,
These are all immortal charms.

WRITTEN in a Wrapper enclosing a Letter to Capt. Grose, to be left with Mr. Cardonnel, Antiquarian.

TUNE—"Sir John Malcolm.

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

Is he South or is he North?
Igo, & ago,
Or drowned in the river Forth?
Iram, coram, dago.

Is he slain by Highland bodies?
Igo, & ago,
And eaten like a weather-haggis
Iram, coram, dago.

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

Where'er he be, the Lord be near him!
Igo, & ago,
As for the dell, be daur na steer him.
Iram, coram, dago.

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

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

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

TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ.,
OF FINTRY,
ON RECEIVING A FAVOUR

I CALL no goddess to inspire my strains,
A fabled Muse may suit a bard that feigns;
Friend of my life! my ardent spirit burns,
And all the tribute of my heart returns,
For boons accorded, goodness ever new,
The gift still dearer, as the giver you.

Thou orb of day! thou other paler light!
And all ye many sparkling stars of night;
If aught that giver from my mind efface;
If I that giver's bounty e'er disgrace;
Then roll to me along your wandering spheres,
Only to number out a villain's years!
A VERSE 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 entreated.

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.

FAREWELL TO AYRSHIRE.

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

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

Bowers, adieu, whare Love, decoying,  
First enthrall'd this heart o' mine,  
There the safest sweets enjoying,—  
Sweets that Mem'ry ne'er shall lye.

Friends, so near my bosom ever,  
Ye hae render'd moments dear:  
But alas! when forc'd to severe,  
Then the stroke, O, how severe!  

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

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

To my dear and much honoured Friend,  
Mrs. Dunlop, of Dunlop.

ON SENSIBILITY.

SENSIBILITY, how charming,  
Thou, my friend, canst truly tell;  
Ut distress with horrors arming,  
Thou hast also known too well!

Fairest flower, behold the lily,  
Blooming in the sunny ray:  
Let the blast sweep o'er the valley  
See it prostrate on the clay.

Hear the wood-lark charm the forest,  
Telling o'er his little joys;  
Hapless bird! a prey the sun's last  
To each pirate of the skies.

Dearly bought the hidden treasure,  
Finer feelings can bestow;

Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure  
Thrill the deepest notes of wo.

BURNS' POEMS. 121
VERSES WRITTEN AT SELKIRK.

AULD chuckie Reekie's sair distrest,
Down droops her anco weel burnishit crest,
Nae joy her bonnie basket nest
Can yield ava,
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 ay he keptit tight,
And trig an' braw:
But now they'll buk her like a fright,
Willie's awa

The stiffest o' them a' he bow'd,
The bauldest o' them a' he cow'd;
They durst nae mair than he allow'd,
That was a law:
We've lost a birkie weel worth gowd,
Willie's awa

Now gawkies, tawpies, gowks and fools,
Fra' 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.

* Edinburgh.

* The Chamber of Commerce of Edinburgh, of which Mr. C. was Secretary.

The brethren o' the Commerce-Chaumert
May mourn their loss wi' doolfu' clamour;
He was a dictionar and grammar
Amang them a'
I fear they'll now mak mony a stammer,
Willie's awa

Nae mair we see his levee door
Philosophers and Poets pour,
And toothy critics by the score,
In bloody raw
The adjutant o' the core,
Willie's awa

Now worthy G****'s latin face,
T****'s and G*******'s modest grace;
Mr K****, S****, such a brace
As Rome ne'er saw:
They a' maun meet someither place,
Willie's awa

Poor Burns—e en Scotch drink canna quicken,
He cheeps like some bewilder'd chicken,
Scar'd frae its minnie and the cleckin
By hoody-craw;
Grief's glen his heart an unco kickin,
Willie's awa

Now ev'ry sour-mou'd grinnin' blellum,
And Calvin's fock are fit to fell him;

* Many literary gentleman were accustomed to meet at Mr C—'s house at breakfast.
And self-conceited critic skellum
His guill may draw;
He wha could brawlie ward their bellum,
Willie's awa!

X
Up wimpiling 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!

XI.
May I be slander's common speech:
A text for infancy to preach;
And lastly, streaked out to bleach
In winter snow;
When I forget thee! Willie C Creech,
Tho' far awa!

LIBERTY.
A FRAGMENT.

THREE, Caledonia, thy wild beaths among,
Thou, famed for martial deed and sacred song,
To thee! I turn with swimming eyes;
Where is that soul of freedom fled?
Immingled with the mighty dead!
Beneath that hallowed turf where Wallace lies!
Hear it not, Wallace, in thy bed of death!
Ye babbling winds in silence sweep;
Disturb not ye the hero's sleep,
Nor give the coward secret breath—
Is this the power in freedom's war
That wont to bid the battle rage?
Behold that eye which shot immortal hate,
Crushing the despot's proudest bearing,
That arm which, nerved with thundering fate,
Braved usurpation's boldest daring!
One quench'd in darkness like the sinking star,
And one the palsied arm of tottering, powerless age.

ELEGY
ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT RUISEAUEx.

Now Robin lies in his last lair,
He'll gabble rhyme, nor sing nae mair,
Ruisseaus—a play on his own name.

Could poverty, wi' hungry stare,
Nae mair shall fear him;
Nor anxious fear, nor cankert care
E'er mair come near him.

To tell the truth, they seldom fasth him;
Except the moment that they crusht him;
For sure as chance or fate had hueht 'em
Tho' e'er sae short,
Then wi' a rhyme or sang he laith 'em,
And thought it sport.—

Tho' he was bred to Kintra wark,
And counted was bath 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!

COMIN THRO' THE RYE.

Comin thro' the rye, poor body,
Comin thro' the rye,
She draigst a' her petticoacie
Comin thro' the rye.
Oh Jenny's a' weet, poor body,
Jenny's seldom dry:
She draigst a' her petticoacie
Comin thro' the rye.

GIN a body meet a body
Comin thro' the rye,
GIN a body kiss a body,
Need a body cry
Oh Jenny's a' weet, &c.

GIN a body meet a body
Comin thro' the glen;
GIN a body kiss a body,
Need the world ken,
Oh Jenny's a' weet, &c.

THE LOYAL NATIVES' VERSES.*

YE sons of sedition, give ear to my song,
Let Syne, Burns, and Maxwell, pervade every throng,
With Craken, the attorney, and Mundell the quack,
Send Willie the monger to hell with a smack.

BURNS—Extempore.

YE true "Loyal Natives," attend to my song,
In uproar and riot rejoice the night long;

* At this period of our Poet's life when political animosity was made the ground of private quarrel, the above foolish verses were sent as an attack on Burns, and his friends for their political opinions. They were written by some member of a club styling themselves the Loyal Natives of Dumfries, or rather by the united genius of that club, which was more distinguished for drunken loyalty, than either for respectability or poetical talent. The verses were handed over the table to Burns at a convivial meeting, and he instantly endorsed the subjoined reply.

Reiques, p. 168.
Then I maun rin amang the rest  
An' quat my chanter,  
Sae I subscribe mysel in haste,  
Yours, Rab the Ranter.

TO THE REV. JOHN M'MATH.

ENCLOSING A COPY OF HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER, WHICH HE HAD REQUESTED.

Sept. 17th, 1785.

WHILE at the stock the shearers cow'r  
To shun the bitter blaudin show'r,  
Or in gutravage rinnin sco'ry  
To pass the time,  
To you I dedicate the hour  
In idle rhyme.

My muse, tir'd wi' mony a sonnet  
On gown, an' ban', an' douse 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 barde,  
Should meddle wi' a pack sae sturdy,  
Wha, if they ken me,  
Can easy, wi' a single wordie,  
Lowse h'il upon me.

But I gae mad at their grimaces,  
Their sighan, cantan grace-prood faces,  
Their three mile prayers, an' haut-mile graces,  
Their raxan conscience,  
Whase greed, revenge, an' pride disgraces,  
Wear nor their nonsense.

There's Gaun, * inka't war' than a beast,  
Wha has mair honour in his breast,  
Than mony scores as guid's the priest  
Wha sae abus't him;  
An' may a bard no crack his jest  
[him.  
What way they've use't

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 blellums?

O Pope, had I thy satire's darts  
To gie the rascals their deserts,  
I'd rip their rotten, hollow hearts,  
An' tell aloud

* Gavin Hamilton, Esq.
† The poet has introduced the two first lines of the stanza into the dedication of his works to Mr Hamilton.
Their juggling hocus-pocus arts

To cheat the crowd.

God knows, I'm no the thing I should be,
Nor am I even the thing I could be,
But twenty times, I rather would be,
An' athlete clean,
Than under gospel colours hid be,
Just for a screen.

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

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

All hall, Religion! mild divine!
Pardon a muse sae mean as mine,
Who in her rough imperfect line
Thus daurs to name thee?
To stigmatize false friends of thine
Can ne'er deserve thee.

Tho' blotch 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 of 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 presbyterian bound
A candid lib'ral band is found
Of public teachers,
As men, as christians too renown'd,
An' manly preachers.

Sir, in that circle you are nam'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.

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

TO GAVIN HAMILTON, Esq.

MAUCHLINE.

(RECOMMENDING A BOY.)

Mossgavie, May, 3 rd.

I hold t' Sir, my bounden duty
To warn you how that Master Tootie,
A'as, Laird Ma'gaun,*

Was here to hire you lad away
Bout whom ye spake the tither day,
An' wod hae don't aff han':

But lest he learn the callan tricks,
As faith I muzzle him dout, bin,
Like scrarin out auld crumminick's sticks,
An' tellin lies about them;
As lieve then I'd have them,
Your clerkship he should sair,
If sae be, ye may be
Not fittet ootherwhere.

Altho' I sayt, he's gieg enough,
An' bout a house that's rude an' rough,
The boy might learn to swear;
But then wi' you, he'll be sae taught,
An' get sic fair example straightforward,
I hae na ony fear.

Ye'll catechize him every quirk,
An' shair him well wi' hell;
An' gare him follow to the Kirk—

—Ay when ye gaz yoursel.

If ye then, maun be then
Faae hame this comin Friday,
Then please, Sir, to lee'c, Sir,
The orders wi' your ady.

My word of honour I hae gien,
In Paisley John's that night a't'en,
To meet the World's worm;

To try to get the twa to gree,
An' name the airies au' the fee,
In legal mode an' form;

I ken he weel a Snick can draw,
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 you, Laurent scorns:
The prayer still, you shair still,
Of grateful Minstrel Burns.

* Master Tootie then lived in Mauchline; a dealer in Cows. It was his common practice to cut the nicks or markings from the horns of cattle, to disguise their age.—He was an awful trick contriving character; hence he is called a Snick-drawer. In the Poet's 'Address to the Devil,' he styles that august personage an auld, snick-drawing dog.

Reliques, p. 397.
TO MR. M'ADAM
OF GRAIGEN-GILLAN.

In answer to an obliging Letter he sent in the commencement of his Poetic Career.

SIR, o'er a gill I got your cara,
I trow it made me proud;
See wha takes notice o' the bard!
I lap and cry'd fa' loud.

Now dell-re-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 yourself,
To great your high protection;
A great man's smile ye ken fu' well,
Is ay a blest infection.

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

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

Heaven spare you lang to kiss the breath
O' mony flow'r-sy'mmers;
And bless your bonnie lasses haith,
I'm taid the're loosek kimmers!

And God bless young Dunaskin's laird,
The blossom of our gentry!
And may he wear an auld man's beard
A credit to his country.

TO CAPTAIN RIDDEL,
GLENRIDDLE.

(Extempor Lines on returning a Newspaper.)

Ellisland, Monday Evening.

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

Our friends the reviewers, those chippers and howers,
Are judges of mortar and stone, Sir,
But of merit, or unmeet, in a fabrick complete,
I'll boldly pronounce they are none, Sir.

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

TO TERRAUGHTY,*
ON HIS BIRTH-DAY.

HEALTH to the Maxwells' vot'ran Chief!
Health, ay unsour'd by care or grief:
Inspir'd, I turn'd Fate's silyn leaf,
This natal morn,
I see thy life is stuff o' prief,
Scathe quite half worn—

This day thou metes threecrose eleven,
And I can tell that bounteous Heaven
(The second sight, ye ken, is given
To ilk Poet)
On thee a tack o' seven times seven
Will yet bestow it.

If envious buckies view wi' sorrow,
Thy lengthen'd days on this blest mornore,
May desolation's lang-teeth'd harrow,
Nine miles an hour,
Rake them, like Sodom and Gomorrah,
In brunstane stour-

But for thy friends, and they are mony,
Bith honest men and lasses bonnie,
May couthie fortune, kind and cannie,
In social glee,
Wi' mornings blithe and e'enings tunny
Bless them and thee!

Fareweel, auld birkie! Lord be near ye,
And then the Deil he daur na steer ye:
Your friends ay love, your foes ay fear ye,
For me, shame fa' me;
If neist my heart I dinna wear ye,
While Burns they ca' me.

TO A LADY,
With a Present of a Pair of Drinking-Glasses

FAIR Em'press 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;
Let us love those who love not us!
A third—"to thee and me, love!"

*Mr. Maxwell, of Terraughty, near Dumfries.
THE VOWELS.
A TALE.
'Twas where the birch and sounding thong are plied,
The noisy domicile of pedant pride;
Where ignorance her darkening vapour throws,
And cruelly directs the thickening blows.
Upon a time, Sir Abece the great,
In all his pedagogic powers elate,
His awful chair of state resolves to mount,
And call the trembling vowels to account.

First enter'd A a grave, broad, solemn wight,
But, ah! deform'd, dishonest to the sight!
His twisted head look'd backward on his way,
And flagrant from the scourge, he grunted, ai!

Reluctant E, stalk'd in: with piteous grace
The justling tears ran down his honest face!
That name, that well-worn name, and all his own,
Pale he surrender'd at the tyrant's throne!
The pedant stilesst keen the Roman sound
Not all his моongrel diphthongs can compound;
And next the title following close behind,
He to the nameless, ghastly wretch assign'd.

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

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

As trembling U stood aghast all aghast,
The pedant in his left hand clutch'd him fast,
In helpless infant's tears he dipp'd his right,
Baptiz'd him eu, and kick'd him from his sight.

SKETCH.*
A LITTLE, upright, pert, tart, tripping wight,
And still his precious self his dear delight;
Who loves his own smart shadow in the streets,
Better than e'er the fairest she he meets;
A man of fashion too, he made his tour,
Learn'd à la bagatelle, et vive l'amour!
So travell'd monkeys their grimace improve,
Polish their grin, nay, sigh for ladies' love.
Much specious lore, but little understood;
Venering oft outshines the solid wood.

* This sketch seems to be one of a Series, intended for a projected work, under the title "The Poet's Progress." This character was sent as a specimen, accompanied by a letter to Professor Dugald Stewart, in which it is thus noticed. "The fragment beginning A little, upright, pert, tart, &c. I have not shown to any man living, till I now send it to you. It forms the postulata, the axioms, the definition of a character, which, if it appear at all, shall be placed in a variety of lights. This particular part I send you merely as a sample of my hand at portrait sketching."
**EXTEMPORANEOUS EFFUSION**

**ON BEING**

**APPOINTED TO THE EXCISE.**

SEARCHING auld wives' barrels
Oh, ho! the day!
That clarly barm should stain my laurels
But—what 'll ye say!
These movin' things ca'd wives and weens
Wad muve the very heart's o' stanes!

---

On seeing the beautiful Seat of Lord G.

WHAT dost thou in that mansion fair!
Flit, G——, and find
Some narrow, dirty, dungeon cave,
The picture of thy mind!

---

On the Same.

No Stewart art thou G——,
The Stewarts all were brave;
Besides, the Stewarts were but fools,
Not one of them a knave.

---

On the Same.

BRIGHT ran thy line, O G——,
Thro' many a far-fam'd sire!
So ran the far-fam'd Roman way,
So ended in a mire.

---

To the Same, on the Author being threatened with his Resentment.

SPARE me thy vengeance, G——,
In quiet let me live;
I ask no kindness at thy hand,
For thou hast none to give.

---

**THE DEAN OF FACULTY.**

**A NEW BALLAD.**

TUNE——"The Dragon of Wantley."

DIRE was the hate at old Harlaw,
That Scot to Scot did carry;
And dire the discord Langside saw,
For beauteous, hapless Mary:
But Scot with Scot ne'er met so hot,
Or were more in fury seun, Sir,
Than 'twixt Hal and Bob for the famous job—
Who should be Faculty's Dean, Sir.—

This Hal for genius, wit, and braw,
Among the first was number'd;
But pious Bob, 'mid learning's store,
Commandment tenth rememember'd.

Yet simple Bob the victory got,
And won his heart's desire;
Which shows that heaven can boil the pot,
Though the devil p——s in the fire.—

Squire Hal, besides, had in this case,
Pretensions rather brassy,
For talents to deserve a place
Are qualifications saucy;
So their worships of the Faculty,
Quite sick of merit's rudeness,
Chose or, who should owe it all, d'ye see
To their gratis grace and goodness.

As once on Pisgah purg'd was the sight
Of a son of Circumcision,
So may be, on this Pisgah height,
Bob's purblind, mental vision:
Nay, Bobby's month may be open'd yet,
Till for eloquence you hail him,
And swear he has the Angel met
That met the Ass of Balaam.—

* * *

**EXTEMPORE IN THE COURT OF SESSION.**

TUNE——"Gillcrankie."

LORD A——TE.

ILL clench'd his pamphlets in his fist,
He quoted and he hinted,
Till in a declamation-mist,
His argument he tint it:
He gaping for 't, he grasped for 't,
He fand it was awa, man;
But what in common sense came short,
He eked out wi' law, man.

---

MR. ER.—NE.

Collected Harry stood a'wee,
Then open'd out his arm, man;
His lordship sat wi' rueful' e'e,
And ey'd the gathering storm, man;
Like wind-driv'n hail it did assail,
Or torrents owre a lin, man;
The Bench saw wise lift up their eyes
Half-wauken'd wi' the din, man.

---

VERSES TO J. RANKEN.

[The Person to whom his Poem on shooting the Paddy is addressed, while Ranken occupied the Farm of Adamhill, in Ayrshire.]

AE day, as death, that gruesome cari,
Was driving to the tither war;
A mixtie-maztie motley squad,
And mony a guilt bespotted lad;
Black gowdis of each denomination,  
And thieves of every rank and station,  
From him that wears the star and garter,  
To him that wintles in a balter:  
Assam'd himself to see the wretches,  
He mutters, glow'rin at the bitches,  
"By G-d I'll not be seen behind them,  
Nor 'mang the spirit'ral core present them,  
Without, at least as honest man,  
To grace this d—— infernal clan,"  
By Adambill a glance he threw,  
"L—D G-d!" quoth he, "I have it now  
There's just the man I want, in faith,"  
And quickly stoppit Ranken's breath.

On hearing that there was Falsehood in the Rev.  
Dr. B——'s very Looks.

THAT there is falsehood in his looks  
I must and will deny;  
They say their master is a knave—  
And sure they do not lie.

On a Schoolmaster in Cleish Parish, Fifeshire.

HERE lie Willie M—he's banes,  
O Satan, when ye tak him,  
Gie him the schuilin of your weans;  
For clever Deis he'll mak out!

ADDRESS TO GENERAL DUMOURIER.

(A Parody on Robin Adair.)

YOU'RE welcome to Despots, Dumourier;  
You're welcome to Despots, Dumourier.—  
How does Dampiere do!  
Ay, and Bournonville too?  
Why did they not come along with you, Dumourier?  
I will fight France with you, Dumourier.—  
I will fight France with you, Dumourier:—  
I will fight France with you,  
I will take my chance with you;  
By my soul I'll dance a dance with you, Dumourier,  
Then let us fight about, Dumourier;  
Then let us fight about, Dumourier;  
Then let us fight about,  
Till freedom's spark is out,  
Then we'll be d-mned no doubt—Dumourier.

ELEGY ON THE YEAR 1788.

A SKETCH.

FOR Lords or Kings I dinna mourn,  
E'en let them die—for that they're born:

But oh! prodigious to reflect!  
A Towmont, Sire, is gone to wreck!  
O Eighty-eight, in thy ema' space  
What dire events have taken place!  
Of what enjoyments thou hast reft us!  
In what a pickle thou hast left us!

The Spanish empire's tinh a head,  
An' my auld toothless Bawtie's dead;  
The tolzie's tough 'tween Fitt an' Fox;  
And 'tween our Maggie's twa wee cocks; 
The tane is game, a bluidie devil,  
But to the hen-birds unco civil;  
The tither's something dour o' treadin'—  
But better stuff ne'er claw'd a midden—

Ye ministers, come mount the poupet,  
An' cry till ye be haerse an' poupet,  
For Eighty-eight, he wish'd you weel,  
An' gied you a' baith gear an' meal;  
E'en mony a plack, and mony a' peck,  
Ye ken yoursels, for little fack!

Ye bonnie lasses, dight your een,  
For some o' you hae tint a frien';  
In Eighty-eight, ye ken, was ta'en  
What ye'll ne'er hae to gle again.

Observe the very nowt an' sheep,  
How dowf and dowfie now they creep;  
Nay, even the yirth itself does cry,  
For E'nbrugh wells are grutten dry.

O Eighty-nine, thou's but a bairn,  
An' no o'er auld, I hope to learn!  
Thou heartless boy, I pray take care,  
Thou now has get thy Daddy's chair.

Nae hand-cuff'd, mizzl'd, hap-shackl'd Regent,  
But, like himsel a full free agent.  
Be sure ye follow out the plan,  
Nae waur than he did, honest man;  
As much better as you can.

January 1, 1789.

VERSES

Written under the Portrait of Ferguson, the Poet,  
in a copy of that author's works presented to a  
young Lady in Edinburgh, 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 unhappy fate!  
Why is the bard unpitied by the world,  
Yet has so keen a relish of its pleasures?
SONGS.

UP IN THE MORNING EARLY.*

_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._

COLD blows the wind fine east to west,
The drift is driving sairly;  
Sae loud and shrill I hear the blast,
I'm sure it's winter fairly.

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

**_Up in the morning, &c._**

SONG

I DREAM'D I LAY WHERE FLOWERS WERE SPRINGING.†

_I DREAM'D I lay where flowers were springing,_
_Gaily in the sunny beam;_  
_List'ning to the wild birds singing,_  
_By a falling, crystal stream;_  
_Straight the sky grew black and daring;_  
_Thro' the woods the whirlwinds rave;_  
_Trees with aged arms were warring_  
_O'er the swelling, drumlie wave._

Such was my life's deceitful morning,
Such the pleasures I enjoy'd;  
But lang or noon, loud tempests storming
A' my flow'ry bliss destroy'd.

The' fickle fortune has deceived me,
She promises fair, and perform'd but ill;  
Of mony a joy and hope bereav'd me,
I hear a heart still support me still.

SONG.

BEWARE O' BONNIE ANN.

_Ye gallants bright I red you right,_
_Beware o' bonnie Ann;_  

* The chorus is old.

† These two stanzas I composed when I was seventeen, and are among the oldest of my printed pieces. _Burns' Reliques_, p. 212.

I composed this song out of compliment to Miss Ann Masterton, the daughter of my friend Allan Masterton, the author of the air of Strathallan's Lament, and two or three others in this work. _Burns' Reliques_, p. 365.

Her comely face sae fu' o' grace,
Your heart she will trepan.
Her een sae bright, like stars by night,
Her skin is like the shan.
Sae jimpaly lac'd her gently waist
That sweetly ye might span.

Youth, grace, and love, attendant move,
And pleasure leads the van;
In a' their charms, and conquering arms,
They wait on bonnie Ann.
The captive bands may chain the bands,
But love enslaves the man;
Ye gallants braw, I red ye a'
Beware o' bonnie Ann.

SONG.

MY BONNIE MARY.*

_Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,_
_An' fill it in a silver tassie;_  
_That I may drink before I go,_
_A service to my bonnie lassie;_  
_The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith;_  
_Fu' loud the wind blows frae the shore;_  
_The ship rides by the Berwick-law,_
_And I maun lea's my bonnie Mary._

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are ranked ready;
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
The battle closes thick and bloody;
But it's not the roar o' sea or shore
Wad make me langer wish to tarry;
Nor shouts o' war that's heard afar,
It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary.

SONG.

THERE'S A YOUTH IN THIS CITY.

THERE'S a youth in this city, it were a great pity
That he from our lasses should wander awa;
For he's bonnie and braw, weel-favour'd with a;
And his hair has a natural buckle and a.
His coat is the hue of his bonnet sae blue;
His face is white as the new-driven snow;
His hose they are -blue, and his shoon like the -ae,
And his clear siller buckles they dazzle us a;
His cont is the hue, &c.

For beauty and fortune the laddie's been courtin
Weel-featur'd, weel-tocher'd, weel-mounted and braw;

* This air is Oswold; the first half stanza of song is old.

† This air is claimed by Niel Gow, who calls it his lament for his brother. The first half-stanza of the song is old.
But chiefly the siller, that gars him gang till her,
The pennie's the jewel that beautifies 'a'.—
There's Meg wi' the mailen, that fair wad a haun
him,
And Susy whose daddy was Laird o' the ha';
There's lang-tocher'd Nancy maist fatters his fancy,
—But the laddie's dear sel he lo'es dearest of a'

SONG.

MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS.*

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

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

Farewell to the mountains high covered with snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud pouring floods.
My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,
My heart's in the Highlands a chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go.

SONG.

THE RANTING DOG THE DADDIE O'T.

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

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

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

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

SONG.

I DO CONFESSION THOU ART SAE FAIR.

DO confess thou art sae fair,
I wad been o'er the lugs in love;

* The first half stanza is old.

I had I un the slightest prayer
That lips could speak, thy heart could move.

I do confess thee sweet, but find
Thou art sae thriftless o' thy sweets,
Thy favours are the silly wind
That kiss a like thing it meets.

See yonder rose-bud, rich in dew,
Amang its native triers sae coy
How aune it tines its accent and hue,
When pu'd and worn a common toy!

Sic fate ere lang shall thee betide,
Tho' thou may gayly bloom a while;
Yet sure thou shalt be thrown aside,
Like any common weed and vile.

SONG.*

TUNE—'Cragie-burn Wood.'†

Beyond thee, dearie, beyond thee, dearie,
And O to be lying beyond thee,
O sweetly, soundly, sweet may he sleep,
That's laid in the bed beyond thee.

SWEET closes the evening on Cragie-burn-wood,
And blithly awakens the morrow;
But the pride of the spring in the Cragie-burn-wood
Can yield to me nothing but sorrow.

* It is remarkable of this place that it is the confine
of that country where the greatest part of our Lowland
music (so far from the title, works, &c. we can local-
ise it) has been composed. From Cragie-burn, near
Moffat, until one reaches the West Highlands, we have
scarcely one slow air of any antiquity.

The song was composed on a passion which a Mr.
Gillespie, a particular friend of mine, had for a Miss
Lorimer, afterwards a Mrs. Whelpdale. The young
lady was born at Cragie-burn-wood.—The chorus is
part of an old foolish ballad.

† The chorus is old.—Another copy of this will be
found ante, p. 101.
BURNS' POEMS.

Here this night if ye remain,
I'll remain, quo' Findlay;
I dread ye'll learn the gate again;
Indeed will I, quo' Findlay;
What may pass within this bower,
Let it pass, quo' Findlay;
Ye maun conceal till your last hour;
Indeed will I, quo' Findlay!

<!— SONG. * TUNE — "The Weaver and his Shuttle," O. —”

MY Father was a Farmer upon the Carrick border, O
And carefully he bred me in decency and order, O
He bade me act a manly part, though I had ne'er a farthing, O
For without an honest manly heart, no man was worth regarding, O

Then out into the world my course I did determine. O
Tho' to be rich was not my wish, yet to be great was charming, O
My talents they were not the worst; nor yet my education; O
Resolv'd was I, at least to try, to mend my situation, O

In many a way, and vain essay, I courted fortune's favour; O
Some cause unseen, still stopt between, to frustrate each endeavour; O
Sometimes by foes I was o'arpower'd; sometimes by friends forsaken; O
And when my hope was at the top, I still was worst mistaken, O

Then sore harass'd, and thir'd at last, with fortune's vain delusion; O
I dropped my schemes, like idle dreams, and came to this conclusion; O
The past was bad, and the future hid; its good or ill untried; O
But the present hour was in my pow'r, and so I would enjoy it, O

No help, nor hope, nor view had I; nor person to befriend me; O
So I must toil, and sweat and broil, and labour to sustain me, O
To plough and sow, to reap and mow, my father bade me early; O
For one, he said, to labour bred, was a match for fortune fairly, O

Thus all obscure, unknown, and poor, thro' life I'm doomed to wander, O
Till down my weary bones I lay in everlasting slumber: O
No view nor care, but shun what'er might breed me pain or sorrow; O
I live to-day, as well's I may, regardless of to-morrow, O.

* This song is wild rhapsodically, miserably deficient in versification, but as the sentiments are the genuine feelings of my heart, for that reason I have a particular pleasure in conning it over. Burns' Reliques, p. 329.
SONG.

When sometimes by my labour I earn a little money, O
Some unforeseen misfortune comes generally upon me; O
Mischance, mistake, or by neglect, or my good-natur'd folly; O
But come what will, I've sworn it still, I'll ne'er be melancholy, O.

You who follow wealth and power with unremitting ardour, O
The more in this you look for bliss, you lose your view
The farther; O
Had you the wealth Potosi boasts, or nations to adore you, O
A cheerful hearted honest clown I will prefer before you, O.

SONG.

THO' cruel fate should bid us part,
As far's 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.

SONG.

AE fond kiss, and then we sever;
AE farewell, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

SONG.

NOW BANK AN' BRAE ARE CLAITH'D
IN GREEN.

Now bank an' brae are claith'd in green
An' scatter'd cowslips sweetly spring,
By Girvan's fairy haunted stream
The birldies fit on wanton wing.
To Cassillia's banks when evening fa's,
There wi' my Mary let me flee,
There catch her ilk glance of love,
The bonnie blink o' Mary's e'e.

The child who boasts o' world's wealth,
Is aften lairl o' meikle care;
But Mary she is a' my sin,
Ah, fortune canna gie me mair!
Then let me range my Cassillia's banks,
Wi' her the lassie dear to me,
And catch her ilk glance o' love,
The bonnie blink o' Mary's e'e.

SONG.

THE BONNIE LAD THAT'S FAR AWA

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

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

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

A pair o' gloves he 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 cleed the birken-shaw,
And my sweet babie will be born,
And he'll come hame that 's far awa.
SONG.

OUT over the Forth I look to the north,
But what is the north and its highlands to me?
The south nor the east gie ease to my breast,
The far foreign land, or the wild rolling sea.

But I look to the west, when I gae to rest,
That happy my dreams and my slumbers may be;
For far in the west lives he I lo' best,
The lad that is dear to my babie and me.

SONG.

I'LL AY CA' IN BY YON TOWN.

I'll ay ca' in by yon town,
And by yon garden green, again;
I'll ay ca' in by yon town,
And see my bonnie Jannie again.

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

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

SONG.

WHISTLE O'ER THE LAVE O'T

FIRST when Maggy was my care,
Heav'n, I thought, was in the air;
Now we're married—spier nee mair—
Whistle o'er the lave can't.

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

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

What I wish were maggot's meat,
Disht up in her winding sheet,
I could write—but Meg maun see't;
Whistle o'er the lave o't.

SONG.

YOUNG JOCKEY.

YOUNG Jockey was the blithest lad
In a' our town or here awa;

* Trystin-time—The time of appointment

Put' blithe he whistled at the gaud,
Fu' lightly danc'd he in the ha.
He roos'd my e'en sae bonnie blue,
He roos'd my waist sae gently sae.
An' ay my heart came to my mou,
When ne'er a body heard or saw.

My Jockey tolls upon the plain,
Thro' wind and weet, thro' frost and snow
And o'er the lee I leck fu' fain
When Jockey's own homeward ca',
An' ay the night comes round again,
When in his arms he takes me a';
And ay he vows he'll be my ain
As lang's he has a breath to draw.

SONG.

M'PHerson's FAREWELL.

TUNE—"M'Pherson's Lament."

FAREWELL ye dungeons dark and strong
The wretches destinie!
M'Pherson's time will not be long,
On yonder gallows tree.

Sae rantingly, sae wootonily,
Sae dauntingly gud he;
He play'd a spring and danc'd it round,
Below the gallows tree.

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

Sae rantingly, &c.

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 sturt and strife;
I die by treachery;
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.

HERE'S a bottle and an honest friend!
What wad ye wish for mair, man?
Wha kens, before his life may end,
What his share may be o' care, man?
Then catch the moments as they fly,
And use them as ye ought, man;—
Believe me, happiness is shy,
And comes not ay when sought, man.

SONG.

TUNE—"Braes o' Balquhidder."

I'll kiss thee yet, yet,
And I'll kiss thee o'er again,
An' I'll kiss thee yet, yet,
My bonnie Peggy Alison!

ILK care and fear, when thou art near,
I even mair defy them, O;
Young kings upon their harnessed throne
Are not so blest as I am, O!
I'll kiss thee, &c.

When in my arms, wi' a th'ly charms,
I clasp my countless treasure, O;
I seek nae mair o' Heaven to share,
Than sic a moment's pleasure, O;
I'll kiss thee, &c.

And by thy e'en, see bonnie blue,
I swear I'm thine for ever, O;—
And on thy lips I seal my vow,
And break it shall I never, O!
I'll kiss thee &c.

SONG.

TUNE—"If he be a Butcher neat and trim."

ON Cessnock banks there lives alass,
Could I describe her shape and mien;
The graces of her wheel'd face,
And the glancin' of her sparklin' e'en.

She's fresher than the morning dawn
When rising Phoebus first is seen,
When dew-drops twinkle o'er the lawn;
An' she's twa glancin' sparkling e'en.

She's stately like yon youthful ash,
That grows the cowslip brace between,
And shoots its head above each bush;
An' she's twa glancin' sparkling e'en.

She's spotless as the flow'ring thorn
With flow'rs so white and leaves so green,
When purest in the dewy morn;
An' she's twa glancin' sparkling e'en.

Her looks are like the sportive lamb,
When flow'ry May adorns the scene,
That wants no round its bleating dam;
An' she's twa glancin' sparkling e'en.

Her hair is like the curling mist
That shades the mountain-side at e'en,
When flow'r-reviving rains are past;
An' she's twa glancin' sparkling e'en.

Her forehead's like the bow'ry bow,
When shining sunbeams intervene
And gilt the distant mountain's brow;
An' she's twa glancin' sparkling e'en.

Her voice is like the ev'ning thrush
That sings in Cessnock banks unseen,
While his mate sits nestling in the bush;
An' she's twa glancin' sparkling e'en.

Her lips are like the cherries ripe,
That sunny walls from Boreas screen,
They tempt the taste and charm the sight;
An' she's twa glancin' sparkling e'en.

Her teeth are like a flock of sheep,
With fleeces newly washen clean,
That slowly mount the rising steep;
An' she's twa glancin' sparkling e'en.

Her breath is like the fragrant breeze
That gently stirs the blossom'd bean,
When Phoebus sinks behind the seas;
An' she twa glancin' sparkling e'en.

But it's not her air, her form, her face,
Tho' matching beauty's fabled queen,
But the mind that shines in ev'ry grace,
An' chiefly in her sparkling e'en.

WAE IS MY HEART.

WAE is my heart, and the tear's in my e'e;
Lang, lang joy's been a stranger to me;
Forsaken and friendless my burden I bear,
And the sweet voice o' pity no'ersounds in my ear.

Love, thou hast pleasure; and deep hae I loved;
Love, thou hast sorrows; and sair hae I proved;
But this bruised heart that now bleeds in my breast,
Ican feel by its throbblings will soon be at rest.

O if I were, where happy I have been;
Down by yon stream and yon bonnie castle green;
For there he is wand'ring and musing on me,
Wha wad soon dry the tear frae Phillis's e'e.

SONG.

TUNE—"Banks of Banna."

YESTREEN I had a pint o' wine,
A place where body saw na';
Yestreen Iay on this breast o' mine
The gowden locks of Anna.
The hungry Jew in wilderness
Rejoicing o'er his manna,
Was naething to my hiney blis
Upon the lips of Anna.
Ye monarchs, tak' the east and west,
Fae Indus to Savanna
Gie me within my straining grasp
The melting form of Anna.
There I'll despise imperial charms,
An Empress or Sultana,
While dying raptures in her arms
I give and take with Anna!

Awa thou flouting god o' day!
Awa thou pale Diana!
Ilk star gae hidh thy twinkling ray
When I'm to meet my Anna.
Come, in thy raven plumage, night,
Sun, moon, and stars withdrawn a';
And bring an angel pen to write
My transports wi' my Anna;

SONG.*

THE Dell cam fiddling thro' the town,
And danc'd awa wi' the exciseman;
And ilk a wife cry'd, 'Auld Mahou!
We wish you luck o' the prize man.'

"We'll mak our maud, and brae our drink,
We'll dance and sing and rejoice man;
And mony thanks to the muckle black Dell,
That danc'd awa wi' the Exciseman.

"There's threesome reels, and foursome reels,
There's hornpipes and strathspeys, man;
But the ae best dance e'er cam to our lan',
Was—the Dell's awa wi' the Exciseman.
We'll mak our maud, &c.

SONG.

POWERS celestial, whose protection
Ever guards the virtuous fair,
While in distant climes I wander
Let my Mary be your care:
Let her form sae fair and faultless,
Hair and faultless as your own;
Let my Mary's kindred spirit,
Draw your choice influence down.

Make the gales you waft around her,
Soft and peaceful as her breast:
Breathing in the breeze that flass her
Sooth her bosom into rest;
Guardian angels, O protect her,
When in distant lands I roam;
To realms unknown while fate exiles me.
Make her bosom still my home.

* At a meeting of his brother Excisemen in Dumfries, Burns, being called upon for a Song handed these verses extempore to the President written on the back of a letter.
† Probably written on Highland Mary, on the eve of the Poet's departure to the West Indies.

HUNTING SONG.

I RED YOU BEWARE AT THE HUNTING.

The heather was blooming, the meadows mawn,
Our lads gaed a-hunting, ae day at the dawn,
O'er moors and o'er masses and muay a glen,
At length they discover'd a bonnie moor-her.

I red you beware at the hunting, young men;
I red you beware at the hunting, young men:
Tak some on the wing, and some as they spring,
But canny steal on the bonnie moor-her.

Sweet brushing the dew from the brown heather bells
Her colours betray'd her on you mossy fells;
Her plumage outlusted the pride o' the spring,
And O! as she wanston gay on the wing.
I red, &c.

Auld Fhebus hineul, as he peep'd o'er the hill;
In spite at her plumage he tried his skill;
He leve'lld his rays where she bask'd on the breas—
His rays were outshone, and but marked where she lay.
I red, &c.

They hunt the valley, they hunted the hill;
The best of our lads wi' the beat o' their skill;
But still as the fairest she sat in their sight,
Then, whirr! she was over, a mile at a flight!—
I red, &c.

YOUNG PEGGY.

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.

Her lips more than the cherries bright,
A richer die has grac'd them,
They charm th' admiring gazer's sight,
And sweetly tempt to taste them:
Her smile is as the ev'ning mild,
When feather'd pairs are courting,
And little lambskins wanton wild,
In playful bands disporting.

Were Fortune lovely Peggy's foe,
Such sweetness would relent her,
As blooming Spring unbends the brow
Of early, savage Winter.

Detraction's eyes no aim can gain
Her winning powers to lessen:
And fretful envy grins in vain,
The poison'd tooth to fasten.

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

SONG.
UNE—"The King of France, he rade a Race."
AMANG the trees when humming bees
At buds and flowers were hanging, O
Auld Caledon drew o'er her drone,
And to her pipe was singing; O
'Twas pibroch, sang, strathspey, or reels,
She didn't them aff, fu' clearly, O
When there cam a yell o' foreign squeals,
That dand the tapsalteerie, O—

Their capon craws and queer ha'ha's,
They made our lugs grow eerie, O
The hungry bike did scrape an pike
'Till we were wea and weary; O
But a royal ghaist wha ances was ca'sd
A prisoner aughteen year awa,
He fir'd a siddler in the North
That dand them tapsalteerie, O—

* * * *

SONG.
TUNE—"John Anderson my Jo."
ONE night as I did wander,
When corn begins to shoot,
I sat me down to ponder,
Upon an auld tree root:
Auld Ayre ran by before me,
And bicker'd to the seas;
A cushion crowded o'er me
That echoed thro' the braes.

* * * *

SONG.
TUNE—"Dalnish Davie."
THERE was a lad born at Kyle,†
But what na day o' what na style
I doubt it's hardly worth the while
'To be seen nice wi' Robin.

Robin was a rovin' Boy,
Rantin' rovin'; rantin' rovin',

* This was one of the Poet's earliest compositions.
It is copied from a MS. book, which he had before his first publication.

† Kyle—a district of Ayrshire.

Robin was a rovin' Boy,
Rantin' rovin' Robin.

Our monarch's bindmost year but ane
Was five and twenty days begun,
'Twas then a blast o' Janwar Win'
Blew haseel on Robin.

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

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

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

Guid faith quo echo I doubt you, Sir,
Ye gar the lasses * * * *
But twenty fauts ye may hae waur
So blessin's on thee, Robin.

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

* * * *

SONG.
TUNE—"I had as Horse and I had nae mai'."
WHEN first I came to Stewart Kyle,
My mind it was nae steady,
Where'er I gaed, where'er I rade
A mistress still I had I say:
But when I came roun' by Mauchline
Not dreadin' any body,
My heart was caught before I thought,
And by a Mauchline lady.

* * * *

SONG.
TUNE—"Galla Water."
ALTHO' my bed were in yon muir,
Amang the heather, in my plaidie,
Yet happy, happy would I be
Had I my dear Montgomerie's Peggy—

When o'er the hill beat sary storms,
And winter nights were dark and rainy;
I'll seek some dell, and in my arms
I'd shelter dear Montgomerie's Peggy.

Were I a Baron proud and high,
And horse and servant waiting ready,
Then a 'twad gie o' joy to me,  
The sharin' with Montgomerie's Peggy.

* * *

**SONG.**

O RAGING fortune's withering blast  
Has laid my leaf full low! O
O raging fortune's withering blast  
Has laid my leaf full low! O
My stem was fair, my bud was green  
My blossom sweet did blow; O
The dew fell fresh, the sun rose mild,  
And made my branches grow; O
But luckless fortune's northern storms  
Laid a' my blossom's low, O
But luckless fortune's northern storms  
Laid a' my blossom's low, O.

* * *

**SONG.**

Patriotic—unfinished.

Here's a health to them that's awa,  
Here's a health to them that's awa;
And wha winna wish guid luck to our cause,  
May never guid luck be their sa'.
Its guid to be merry and wise,  
Its guid to be honest and true,
Its guid to support Caledonia's cause,  
And bide the buff and the blue.

Here's a health to them that's awa,  
Here's a health to them that's awa;
Here's a health to Charlie,* the chief o' the clan,  
Altho' that his hand be but sma'.
May liberty meet wi' success!  
May prudence protect her frae evil!
May tyrants and tyranny time in the mist,  
And wander their way to the devil!

Here's a health to them that's awa,  
Here's a health to them that's awa;
Here's a health to Tammie,* the Norland laddie,  
That lives at the lug o' the law!
Here's freedom to him that wad read,  
Here's freedom to him that wad write!
There's none ever fear'd that the truth should be heard,  
But they wham the truth wad indue.

Here's a health to them that's awa,  
Here's a health to them that's awa;
Here's Chiefstan M*Leod, a Chiefstan worth gowd  
Tho' bred amang mountains o' awaw!

* * *

**SONG.**

The Ploughman.

As I was a wand ring of morning in spring,  
I heard a young Ploughman sae sweetly to sing,  
*C Fox.  
†Lord Erskine.

And as he was singin' thir words he did say,  
There's nae life like the Ploughman in the month of sweet May—
The lav'rock in the morning she'll rise frae her nest,  
And mount to the air wi' the dew on her breast,  
And wi' the merry Ploughman she'll whistle and sing,  
And at night she'll return to her nest back again.

* * *

**SONG.**

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 rose that wi' dew,  
O, what a feast, her bonnie mou'!
Her cheeks a blossom wat' wi' dew,  
A crimson still diviner.

* * *

**BALLAD**

To thee, love'd Nith, thy gladsome plains,  
Where late wi' careless thought I rang'd,
Though prest wi' care and sunk in wo,  
To thee I bring a heart unchang'd.
I love thee, Nith, thy banks and braes,  
Tho' mem'ry there my bosom tear;
For there he rov'd that brake my heart,  
Yet to that heart, ah, still how dear!

* * *

**SONG.**

The winter it is past, and the summer comes at lae  
And the small birds sing on every tree;
Now every thing is glad, while I am very sad,  
Since my true love is parted from me.
The rose upon the brier by the waters running clear,  
May have charms for the linnet or the bee;
Their little loves are blest, and their little hearts at rest,  
But my true love is parted from me.

* * *

**THE GUIDWIFE OF WAUCHOPE HOUSE.**

To ROBERT BURNS.

Februrary, 1787.

MY canty, witty, rhyming ploughman,  
I baftins doubt, it is na true man,
That ye between the stills were bred,
Wi' ploughmen souschool'd, wi' ploughmen fed.
I doubt it sair, ye've drawn your knowledge
Either frae grammar-school, or college.
Guld troth, your sauil and body bairn
War' better fed, I'd p'is my aith,
Than theirs, who wi' sour milk and parritch,
An' bunnim throu' the single caritch,
Wha' ever heard the ploughman speak,
Could tell giff Hume' was a Greek?
He'd flee as soon upon a cudgel,
As get a single line of Virgil.
An' then aae slee ye crack your jokes
O' Willie 1— and Charlie P—x.
Our great men a' sae weil describe
An' how to gar the nation thrive,
Ane maist wad swear ye dwait amang them,
An' as ye saw them, sae ye sang them.
But be ye ploughman, be ye peer,
Ye are a funny blade, I swear;—
An' though the cauld I ill can bide,
Yet twenty milis, an' mair, I'd ride,
O'er muss, an' mair, an' never grumble,
Tho' my auld yad should gie a stumble,
To crack a winter night wi' thee,
And hear thy songs and sonnets slee.
A guid saut herring, an' a cake,
Wi' sic a chiel, a feast wad make,
I'd rather scour your reaming yill,
Or eat o' cheese and bread my fill,
Than wi' dull lairds on turtle dine,
An' ferlie at their wit and wine.
O' giff I kenn'd but where ye baide,
I'd send to you a marled pleid;
'Twad haud your shoulders warm and braw,
An' douse at kirk, or market shaw.
For south, as weel as north, my lad,
A' honest Scotsmen bo' the maud,
Right wae that we're sae far fraeither;
Yet proud I am to ca' ye brither.

— Your most obedient.

E. S.

THE ANSWER.

Guidwife.

I MIND it weil, in earl date,
When I was beardless young, and blate,
An' first could threash the barn,
Or haul a yokin at the plough,
An' tho' for foughten sair enough,
Yet unco proud to learn;
When first among the yellow corn
A man I reckoned was,
And wi' the lave ilk merry morn
Could rank my rig and lae,
Still Sirius, and clearing
Theither stocked raw,
Wi' clavers, an' haivers,
Wearing the day awa—

E'en then a wish, (I mind its power.)
A wish that to my latest hour
Shall strongly neave my breast;
That I for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some useful plan, or book could make,
Or sing a song at least.
The rough bur thistle, spreading wide
Among the bearded bear,
I turn'd my weeding heuk aside,
An' spair'd the symbol dear;—
No nation, no station,
My envy e'er could raise,
A Scot still, but blit still,
I knew was happier praise.

But still the elements o' sang
In formless jumble, right an' wrang,
Wild floated in my brain;
Till on that har'st I said before,
My partner in the merry core,
She rous'd the forming strain.
I see her yet, the sonnie queen,
That lighted up her jingle,
Her witching smile, her pauly a'en
That gar'd my heart-strings tingle,
I fired, inspired,
At e'er' kindling keek,
But bashing, and dashing,
I feared ay to speak.

Hale to the set, each guid chiel says,
Wi' merry dance in winter-days,
An' we to share in common:
The gust o' joy, the balm o' wo,
The saul o' life, the heavn below,
Is rapture-giving woman.
Ye surly sumps, who hate the name
Be mindfu' o' your mither;
She, honest woman, may think shame
That ye're connected with her.
Ye're wae ... ye're nae men,
That slight the lovely dears;
The shame ye, disclaim ye,
Ik honest birkie swears.

For you, na bред to barn and byre,
Wha sweetly tune the Scottish lyre,
Thanks to you for your line.
The marled plaid ye kindly spare,
By me should gratefully be wear;
'Twad please me to the Nieu.
I'd be mair vaustie o' my hap,
Douse hingin o'er my curple,
Than oay ermine ever lap,
Or proud imperial purple.
Farewell thee, lang hale then,
An' plenty be your fa;
My losses and crosses
Ne'er at your hallan ca'.

MARCH, 1787.

—

ROBERT BURNS.

SONG.

TUNE—"'The tither morn, as I. ax torn.'

YON wand'ring rill, that marks the hill
And glances o'er the brae, Sir—
Slides by a bower where mony a flower,
Shades fragrance on the day, Sir.

There Damon lay, with Sylvia gay:
To love they thought nae crime, Sir;
The wild birds sang, the echoes rang,
While Damon's heart beat time, Sir.

**SONG.**

**AS I cam in by our gate-end,**
As day was wachsen weary;
O wha cam tripping down the street,
But bonnie Peg, my dearie.

Her air sae sweet, and shape complete,
Wi' nae proportion wanting;
The queen of love, did never move,
Wi' motion mair enchanting.

Wi' linked hands, we took the sands,
Adown you wending river,
And, Oh! that hour, an' broomy bower,
Can I forget it ever?

**POLLY STEWART.**

**TUNE—"Ye're welcome Charlie Stewart."**

O LOVELY Polly Stewart,
O charming Polly Stewart,
There's ne'er a flower that blooms in May,
That's half so fair as thou art.

The flower it blows, it fades, it fae's,
And art can ne'er renew it;
But worth and truth eternal youth,
Will gie to Polly Stewart.

May he, whose arms shall fauld thy charms,
Possess a leaf and true heart;
To him be given to ken the heaven
He grasps in Polly Stewart!

O lovely, &c.

**THERE WAS A BONNIE LASS.**

**THERE was a bonnie lass, and a bonnie, bonnie lass,**
And she lo'ed her bonnie laddie dear;
Till war's loud alarms tore her laddie frae her arms,
Wi' mony a sigh and a tear.

Over sea, over shore, where the cannons loudly roar,
He still was a stranger to fear;
And nocht could him quell, or his bosom assai,
But the bonnie lass he lo'ed sae dear.

**TIBBIE DUNBAR.**

**TUNE—"Johnny McGill."**

O WILT thou go wi' me, sweet Tibbie Dunbar;
O wilt thou go wi' me, sweet Tibbie Dunbar;

Wilt thou ride on a horse, or be drawn in a car
Or walk by my side, O sweet Tibbie Dunbar?
I carena thy daddle, his lands and his money,
I carena thy kin, sae high and sae lordly:
But say thou wilt ha' me for better for war,
And come in thy coatie, sweet Tibbie Dunbar.

**ROBIN SHURE IN HAIRST.**

ROBIN shure in hairst,
I shure wi' him,
Fient a heuk had I,
Yet I stack by him.

I gaed up to Dunse,
To warp a wab o' plaiden,
At his daddie's yet,
Wha met me but Robin.

Was na Robin baud,
Tho' I was a coettar,
Play'd me sic a trick
And me the eller's dochter? Robin shure, &c.

Robin promised me
A' my winter little;
Fient haet he had but three
Goose feathers and a whistle.

Robin shure, &c.

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

MY lady's gown there's gairs upon't,
And gowden flowers sae rare upon't;
But Jenny's jimp and jirknet,
My lord thinks muckle 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 home.

**My lady's gown, &c.**

Out o'er you moor, out o'er you moss,
Where greocks thro' the heather pass,
There was auld Colin's bonnie lass,
A lily in a wilderness.

**My lady's gown, &c.**

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

**My lady's gown, &c.**
BURNS' POEMS.

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

My lady's gown, &c.

WEE WILLIE GRAY.

WEE Willie Gray, and his leather wallet;
Peel a willow-wand to be him boots and jacket;
The rose upon the brier will be him troutse and doublet,
The rose upon the brier will be him troutse and doublet.

Woo Willie Gray, and his leather wallet;
Twice a lily flower will be in himark and cravat;
Feathers of a fle wad feather up his bonnet,
Feathers of a fle wad feather up his bonnet.

THE NORTHERN LASS.

THO' cruel fate should bid us part,
Far as the pole and line;
Her dear idea round my heart
Should tenderly entwine.
THO' mountains rise, and desert howl,
And oceans roar between;
Yet dearer than my deathless soul,
I still would love my Jean.

COULD AUGHT OF SONG.

COULD '. aught of song declare my pains,
COULD artful numbers move thee,
The muse should tell, in labour'd strains,
O Mary, how I love thee.
They who but feign a wounded heart,
May teach the lyre to languish;
But what a'voids the pride of art,
When wastes the soul with anguish?

Then let the sudden bursting sigh
The heart-felt pang discover;
And in the keen, yet tender eye,
O read th' imploring lover.
For well I know thy gentle mind
Disdain a'rt's gay disguising;
Beyond what fancy e'er refin'd
The voice of nature prizing.

O GUID ALE COMES.

O GUID ale comes, and guid ale goes,
Guid ale gars me sell my hose,
Sell my hose, and pawn my shoon,
Guid ale keeps my heart aboon.
I had sax o'wen in a plough,
They drew a' weel enough,
I sell'd them a' just ane by ane;
Guid ale keeps my heart aboon.

GUID ale hands me bare and busy,
Gars me moop wi' the servant hizzie,
Stand' the stool when I bae done,
Guid ale keeps my heart aboon.
O guid ale comes, and guid ale goes,
Guid ale gars me sell my hose,
Sell my hose, and pawn my shoon;
Guid ale keeps my heart aboon.

O LEAVE NOVELS.

O LEAVE novels, ye Mauchline belles,
Ye're safer at your spinning-wheel;
Such witching books, are baited hooks
For rakish rooks, like Rob Mossgiel.
Your fine Tom Jones and Grandisons,
They make your youthful fancies reel,
They heat your brains, and fire your veins,
And then you're prey for Rob Mossgiel.

Beware a tongue that's smoothly hung:
A heart that warmly seems to feel;
That feeling heart but acts a part,
'Tis rakish art in Rob Mossgiel.
The frank address, the soft caress,
Are worse than poisoned darts of steel,
The frank address, and politesse,
Are all finesse in Rob Mossgiel.

O AY Ma' \till \till lang \till.

O AY my wife she dang me,
An' aft my wife she bang'd me;
If ye gie a woman a' her will,
Good faith she'll soon o'ergang ye.

On peace and rest my mind was bent,
And fool I was I marry'd;
But never honest man's intent
As cursedly miscarry'd.

Some sairie comfort still at last,
When a' their days are done, man,
My pains o' hell on earth is past,
I'm sure o' bliss aboon, man.
O ay my wife, &c.

THE DEUKS DANG O'ER MY DADDIE.

THE bairns gat out wil' an unco shout,
The deuks dang o' er my daddie, O!
The first ma care, quu' the faerie auld wife,
He was but a paddie body, 
He paddies out, and he paddies in,
An' he paddies late and earlie, O;
This seven lang years I hae laiv by his 'ide,
An' he is but a fusicless earlie, O.

O had your tongue, my faerie auld wife
O had your tongue now, Nansie, O!
I've seen the day, and sae nae ye,
Ye wadna been sae dounie, O;
I've seen the day ye butter'd my brose,
And could'd me late and earlie, O;
But downa do's come o'er me now,
And, Oh, I find it sairly, O!

---

**DELLA.**

**AN ODE.**

PAIR the face of orient day,
Pair the thnts of op'ning rose;
But fairer still my Della dawns,
More lovely far her beauty blows.

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

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

But, Della, on thy balmy lips
Let me, no vagrant insect, rove!
O let me steal one liquid kiss,
For Oh! my soul is parch'd with love!

---

**ON A BANK OF FLOWERS.**

ON a bank of flowers one summer's day,
For summer lightly dress'd,
The youthful, blooming Nelly lay,
With love and sleep appare'd.

When Willy, wand'ring thro' the wood,
Who for her favour oft had su'd,
He gaz'd, he wish'd, he fear'd, he blush'd,
And trembled where he stood.

Her closed eyes, like weapons sheath'd,
Were seal'd in soft repose,
Her lips still as they fragrant breath'd
It richer dy'd the rose.

The springing lilies sweetly press'd,
Wild wanton kiss'd her rival breast;
He gaz'd, he wish'd, he fear'd, he blush'd,
His bosom ill at rest.

Her robes, light waving in the breeze,
Her tender limbs embrace,
Her lovely form, her native ease,
All harmony and grace.

Tumultuous tides his pulses roll,
A flattering ardent kiss he stole:
He gaz'd, he wish'd, he fear'd, he blush'd,
And sigh'd his very soul.

As flies the partridge from the brake,
On fear inspired wings;

So Nelly startling, half awake,
Away alighted springs
But Willy follow'd as he should,
He overtook her in the wood,
He vow'd, he pray'd, he found the maid
Forgiving all and good.

---

**Evan Banks.**

SLOW spreads the gloom my soul desires,
The sun from India's shore retires;
To Evan banks with temperate ray
Home of my youth, it leads the day.
Oh! banks to me for ever dear!
Oh! stream whose murmurs still I hear!
All, all my hopes of bliss reside,
Where Evan mingles with the Clyde.

And she, in simple beauty drest,
Whose image lives within my breast,
Who trembling heard my parting sigh,
And long pursued me with her eye!
Does she with heart unchang'd as mine,
Oft in thy vocal bowers recline?
Or where thou groat o'er hangs the tide,
Muse while the Evan seeks the Clyde.

Ye lofty banks that Evan bound!
Ye lavish woods that wave around,
And o'er the stream your shadows throw
Which sweetly winds so far below;
What secret charm to memor'y brings,
All that on Evan's border springs?
Sweet banks! ye bloom by Mary's side:
Best stream! she views thee haste to Clyde.

Can all the wealth of India's coast
Atone for years in absence lost?
Return, ye moments of delight,
With richer treasure bless my sight!
Swift from this desert let me part,
And fly to meet a kindred heart!
Nor more may aught my steps divide
From that dear stream which flows to Clyde.

---

**The Five Carlins.**

**AN ELECTION BALLAD.**

TUNE—"Chevy Chace."

THERE were five Carlins in the south,
They fell upon a scheme,
To send a lad to Lou' on town
To bring us tidings hame.

Not only bring us tidings hame,
But do our errands there,
And招标 gowd and honour bair
Might be that laddie's share,
For far off fowls hae feathers fair,
An' fowls' o' change are fain;
But I hae tried the border Knight,
I'll try him yet again.

Says auld black Joan frae Creighton peel,
A Carlin stout and grim,
The auld guidman or young guidman:
For me may sink or swim!

For fools may prate o' right and wrang,
While knaves laugh them to scorn;
But the Sodger's friends have blown the best
Sac he shall bear the horn.

Then whisky Jean spak o'er her drink,
Ye weel ken kimmers a',
The auld guidman o' Lon'on court,
His back's been at the wa'.

And monie a friend that kis'd his caup,
Is now a framin' dight;
But it's ne'er sae wi' whisky Jean,
We'll send the border Knight.

Then slow rose Majorie o' the Lochs,
And wrinkled was her brow;
Her ancient weed was russet gray,
Her auld Scots heart was true.

There's some great folks set light by me,
I set as light by them;
But I will send to Lon'on town
Wha I lo'e best at hame.

So how this weighty plea will end,
Nae mortal wight can tell;
G-d grant the King and lka man
May look weel to himself.

---

THE LASS THAT MADE THE BED TO ME.

WHEN January winds were blowing cauld,
As to the north I bent my way,
The mirksome night did me enfauld,
I kenn'd na whare to lodge till day;
By my guid luck I met,
Just in the middle of my care,
And kindly she did me invite,
To walk into a chamber fair.

I bow'd fu' low unto this maid,
And thank'd her for her courtesie;
I bow'd fu' low unto this maid,
And bade her make a bed for me:
She made the bed both large and wide,
Wi' twa white bandes she spread it down;
She put the cop to her rosy lips,
And drank, "Young man, now sleep ye sound."

She snatch'd the candle in her hand,
And frae my chamber went wi' speed;
But I call'd her quickly back again,
To lay some mair below my head:
A cod she laid below my head,
And served me with due respect;
And to salute her with a kiss,
I put my arms about her neck.

"Hand aff your hands, young man," says she,
And dinna see uncivil be;
Gif ye hae any love for me,
O wrang na my virginity!"

Her hair was like the links o' gowd,
Her teeth were like the ivory,
Her cheeks like lilies dipt in wine,
The lass that made the bed for me.

Her bosom was the driven snaw,
Twa drifted heaps sae fair to see;
Her limbs the polish'd marble stone,
The lass that made the bed to me.

I kiss'd her owre and owre again,
And ay she wistna what to say;
I laid her 'tween me and the wa';
The lassie thought na lang till day

Upon the morrow, when we raise,
I thank'd her for her courtesie;
But ay she blush'd, and ay she sigh'd,
And said, "Aha! ye've ruin'd me;"
I clasped her waist, and kiss'd her syne,
While the tear stood twinkling in her e'e,
I said, "My lassie, dinna cry,
For ye ay shall mak the bed to me."

She took her mother's Holland sheets,
And made them a' in sarks to me;
Blithe and merry may she be,
The lass that made the bed to me.
The bonnie lass made the bed to me,
The brow lass made the bed to me;
I'll ne'er forget, till the day that I die,
The lass that made the bed to me.

THE KIRK'S ALARM.*

ORTHODOX, Orthodox, who believe in John Knox,
Let me sound an alarm to your conscience;
There's a heretic blast, has been blown in the wast,
That what is no sense must be nonsense.

Dr. Mac,† Dr. Mac, you should stretch on a rack,
To strike evil doers wi' terror;
To join faith and sense upon any pretense,
Is heretic, damnable error.

Town of Ayr, town of Ayr, it was mad I declare,
To meddle wi' mischief a-brewing;
Provost John is still deaf to the church's relief,
And orator Bobt' it's ruin.

D'rymple mild,§ D'rymple mild, tho' your heart's like a child,
And your life like the new driven snaw,
* This Poem was written a short time after the publication of Dr. M' Gill's Essay.
† Dr. M'Gill. † R.— A— k.— n. § Mr. D.— m.— le

Ye that winna save ye, auld Satan must hae ye,
For preaching that three's ane and twa.

Rumble John,* Rumble John, mount the stairs with a groan,
Cry the book is wi' heresy crann'd;*
Then log out your ladie, deal hirnstone like addle,
And roar every note of the damn'd.

Simper James,† Simper James, leave the fair Killie dames,
There's a holier place in your view;
I'll lay on your head, that the pack ye'll soon lead
For puppies like you there's but few

Singlet Sawney,‡ Singlet Sawney, are ye herding the penny,
Unconscious what evils await?
Wi' a jumpy, yiel, and howl, alarm every soul,
For the foul thief is just at your gate.

Daddy Auld,§ Daddy Auld, there's a toil in the fauld,
A toil meikle warner than the Clerk;
The' ye can do little skaithe, ye'll be in at the death,
And gif ye canna bite, ye may bark.

Davie Bluster,‡ Davie Bluster, if for a saint ye do o' muther,
The corps in no nice of recruits:
Yet to worth let's be just, royal blood ye might boast,
If the ase was the king of the brutes.

Jamie Groose,** Jamie Groose, ye hae made but toom roose,
In hunting the wicked Lieutenant
But the Doctor's your mark, for the L—d's haly ark,
He has cooper'd and caw'd a wrang pin in't.

Poet Willie,† Poet Willie, gie the Doctor a volley,
Wi' your liberty's claim and your wit;
O'er Pegasus' side ye ne'er laid a stride
Ye but smelt, man, the place where lie s—t.

Andro Gouk,‡‡ Andro Gouk, ye may slander the book,
And the book nane the warur let me tell ye;
Ye are rich, and look big, but lay by hat and wig,
And ye'll have a call's head o' sma' value

Barr Steenie,§§ Barr Steenie, what mean ye? what mean ye?
If ye'll meddle nae mair wi' the matter,
Ye may hae some pretence to havin and sense,
Wi' the people wha ken ye nae better.

Irvine Side,‖ Irvine Side, wi' your turkey-cock pride,
Of manhood but sma' is your share;
Ye've the figure, 'tis true, even your faces will allow,
And your friends they dare grant you nae mair.

* Mr. R.—s — l. † Mr. M'K— y. † Mr. M.— y. § Mr. A— d. ¶ Mr. G.— t of O— e. ‡ Mr. Y— g of C— n— k.
§ Mr. M.— s— n— Y— s— n— g of C— r. †† Mr. P.— b— s of A— r. †‡ Dr. A. M— h. †§ Mr. S.— n— Y— s— g of C— r. †¶ Mr. S.— h of G— n.
Muirland Jock,* Muirland Jock, when the L—d made
a rock
To crush common sense for her sins,
If ill manners were wit, there's no mortal so fit
To confound the poor Doctor at once.

Holy Will,† Holy Will, there was wit in your skull,
When ye pilfer'd the alms o' the poor;
The tummer is scant, when ye're ta'en for a saint,
Wha should swing in a rope for an hour.

Calvin's sons, Calvin's sons, seize your sp'riual guns,
Ammonition you never could need;
Your hearts are the stuff, will be powther enough,
And your skulls are storehouses o' lead.

Poet Burns, Poet Burns, wi' your priest-skelping tums,
Why desert ye your auld native shire?
Your muse is a gipsie, e'en tho' she were tipsie,
She could ca' us nae waur than we are.

THE TW'A HERDS.

O a' ye plous godly folks,
Well fed on pastures orthodox,
Wha now will keep you frae the fox,
Or worrying tykes,
Or wha will tent the wails and crooks,
About the dykes!

The twa best herds in a' the wast,
That o'er gasp horn a blast,
These live and twenty summers past,
O'd dool to tell,
Hae had a bitter black out-cast,
Atween themsel.

O, M—y, man, and wordy R—ll,
How could you raise so vile a bustle,
Ye'll see how new-light herds will whistle
And think it fine!
The Lord's cause ne'er get sic a twistle,
Sin' I hae min*.

O, Sirs! wha e'er wad hae expeckt,
Your duty ye wad sae negleetit,
Ye wha were ne'er by lairds respecktit,
To wear the plaid,
But by the brutes themselves eleckt,
To be their guide.

What flock w' M—y's flock could rank,
Sae hale and heartly every shank,
Nae poison'd sour Arminian stank,
He let them taste,
Frac Calvin, a' well, ay clear they drank,
O sic a feast!

The thummutt wil'-eat, brock and tod,
Weel kunn'd his voice thro' a' the wood,
He smell'd their lika hole and road,
Baith out and in,
And weel be lik'd to shed their blood,
And sell their skin.

‡ Mr. S. — d. † An Elder in M—— o

What herd like R—ll toll'd his tale?
His voice was heard thro' muir and daile,
Ilke kunn'd the Lord's sheep like a tail,
O'er a' the height,
And saw gin they were sick or hale,
At the first sight.

He fine a mangy sheep could scrub,
Or nobly fling the gospel club,
And new-light herds could nicely drub,
Or pay their skin,
Could shake them o'er the burning bud;
Or heave them in.

Sic twa—O! do I live to see—
Sic famous twa should disagree,
An' names, like villain hypocrite,
Ilk ither g'ien,
While new-light herds wi' laughin' spite,
Say neither's hen'!

A' ye wha tent the gospel fauld,
There's D———y, deep, and F——s, shaul,
But chiefly thou, apostle A—D,
We trust in thee,
That thou wilt work them, hot and cauld,
Till they agree.

Consider, Sirs, how we're beset,
There's scarce a new herd that we get,
But comes frae 'mang that cursed set,
I winna name,
I hope frae heav'n to see them yet
In fiery flame.

D—— has been lang our fae,
M—— has wrought us meikle wae,
And that curs'd rascal ca'd M————,
And bathe the S——
That aft hae made us black and blue,
Will 'vengefu' paws.

Auld W—— lang has hatch'd mischief,
We thought ay death wad bring relief,
Put he has gotten, to our grief,
Ane to succeed him,
A chiel wha'll soundly buff our beef;
I meikle dread him.

And many a' that I could tell,
Wha fain would openly rebel,
Forby turn-costs amang oursel,
There S——h for aye,
I doubt he's but a gray nick quill,
And that ye'll fin'.

O ta' ye flocks, o'er a' the hills,
By mosses, meadows, moors and fells,
Come join your counsel and your skills,
To cove the lairds,
And get the brutes the power themselves,
To choose their herds.

Then Orthodoxy yet may prance,
And Learning in a woody dance,
And that fell cur ca'd 'Common Sense,
That bites sae sair.
Burns’ Poems.

But what’s this comes wi’ sic a kneel,
Amast as loud as oun bell?
While it does mak my conscience tell
Me what is true,
I’m but a ragget cowt mysel,
Owre sib to you

We’re owre like those who think it fit,
To stuff their noodies fu’ o’ wit,
An’ yet content in darkness sit,
· Wha shun the light,
To let them see down to the pit,
That lang, dark night.

But farewell, Rab, I mann awa’,
May he that made us keep us a’,
For that would be a dreadfu’ fa’
And hurt us sair,
Lad, ye wad never mend awa’,
Sae, Rab, tak care.

The Answer.

What ails ye now, ye lossy b—h,
To threish my back at sic a pick?
Losh man! hae mercy wi’ your natch,
Your boudin’s bauld,
I did na suffer ha’f sae much
Fun Daddie Auld.

What tho’ at times when I grow crouse
I gie their wames a random pouse,
Is that enough for you to souse
Your servant sae!
Gae mind your seam, ye prick the house,
An’ jag the fae.

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 synne saunts.

And may be, Tam, for a’ my cants,
My wicked rhymes, an’ drunken rants,
I’ll gie auld cloven Clouty’s haunts,
An unco slip yet,
An’ snugly sit amang the saunts
At Davie’s hip yet.

But fegs, the Session says I maun
Gae fa’ up’ another plan,
Than garran lassies cowp the cran
Clean heels owre body
And saliry thole their mither’s ban,
Afore the howdy.

This leads me on, to tell for sport,
How I did with the Session so’—
Auld Clinkum at the inner port
Cry’d three times, “Robi’,
Come hither, lad, an’ answer for’t,
Ye’re blam’d for Jobbin,”
Wi' pinch I put a Sunday's face on,
An' snov'd awa' before the Session—
I made an open, fair confession,
I scorn'd to lie:
An' syne Mess John, beyond expression,
Fell fool o' me.

A fornicator Iown he call'd me,
An' said my faunt frace bias expell'd me;
I own'd the tale was true, an' tell'd me,
"But what the matter?"
Quo' I, "I fear unless ye geld me,
I'll ne'er be better."

"Geld you," quo' he, "what for no!
If that your right hand, leg or toe,
Should ever prove your spiritual foe,
You shou'd remember
To cut it aft, an' what for no
Your dearest member?"

"Na, na," quo' I, "I'm no for that,
Gelding's nae better than 'tis can't,
I'd rather suffer for my faunt',
A hearty flea,
As sair owre hip as ye can draw t's
Tho' I should rue it.

Or gin ye like to end the bother,
To please us a', I've just aeither,
When next wi' you lass I forgather
Whate'er beside it,
I'll frankly gie her't a' thegither,
An' let her guide it."

But, Sir, this pleas'd them warst a'va,
An' therefore, Tam, when that I saw,
I said, "Guld night," and cam a'va;
And left the Session;
I saw they were resolved a'
On my oppression.

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LETTER TO JOHN GOUDIE,
KILMARNOCK,
ON THE PUBLICATION OF HIS ESSAYS.

O GOUDIE! terror o' the Whigs,
Dread o' black coats an' rev'ent wigs,
Sooz Bigotry, on her last legs,
Grimin looks back,
Wishin the ten Egyptian plagued
Wad seize you quick.

Poor gaff, glowrin Superstition,
Was me! she's in a sad condition;
Fy, bring Black Jock, her state physician,
To see her w—ter;
Alas! there's ground o' great snapelen
She'll ne'er get better.

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

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

'Tis you and Taylor are the chief,
Wha are to blame for this mischief;
But gin the 1—d's ain folks get leave,
A toom tar barrel
And twa red peats wad send relief,
An' end the quarrel.

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LETTER TO J.—T. S.—T GL.—NC.—R.

AULD comrade dear and brither sinner,
How's a' the folk about Gl.—nc.—r.?
How do you this blea eastlin wind,
That's like to blow a body blind:
For me my faculties are frozen,
My dearest member nearly done a;
I've sent you here by John Simpson,
Twa sage Philosophers to glimpse on;
Smith, wi' his sympathetic feeling,
An' Reid, to common sense appealing,
Philosophers have fought and wrangled,
An' meikle Greek an' Latin mangled,
Till wi' their logic jargon tired,
An' in the depthes of science mir'd,
To common sense they now appeal,
What wives an' wabsters see an' feel;
But, hark ye, friend, I charge you strictly
Peruse them an' return them quickly;
For now I'm grown sic cursed douse,
I pray an' ponder butt the house,
My shins, my lane, I there sit roasting,
Perusing Bunyan, Brown, and Boston;
Till by an' by, if I hand on,
I'll grant a real Gospel groan:
Already I begin to try it,
To cast my een up like a pret,
When by a gun she trembles o'er,
Fluttering an' gasping in her gore;
See shortly you shall see me bright,
A burning an' a shining light.

My heart-warm love to yuld auld Glen,
The ace an' wale of honest men;
When bending down with auld gray hairis,
Beneath the loud of years and cares,
May he who made him still support him,
An' views beyond the grave comfort him.
His worthy family far and near,
God bless them a' wi' grace and gear.

*Dr. Taylor of Norwich.
ON THE DEATH OF

SIR JAMES HUNTER BLAIR.

The lamp of day with ill-presaging glare,
Dim, cloudy, sunk beneath the western wave,
To‘inconstant blast how’d thro’ 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;—
Or mus’d where limpid streams, once hallow’d well,
Or mould’ring ruins mark the sacred fane.†

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 startling eye.

The paly moon rose in the livid east,
And ’mong the cliffs disclosed a stately form,
In weeds of wo 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 wo,
The lightning of her eye in tears imbued.

* The King’s Park, at Holyrood-house.
† St. Anthony’s Well. ‡ St. Anthony’s Chapel.

Revers’d that spear, redoubtable in war;
Reclin’d that banner, eret 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 tears,
The helpless poor mix with the orphan’s cry;
The drooping arts surround their patron’s bier,
And grateful science heaves the heartfelt sigh.—

"I saw my sons resume their ancient fire;
I saw fair Freedom’s blossoms richly blow;
But ah! how hope is born but to expire!
Relentless fate has laid 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 virtue last,
That distant years may boast of other Blairs"—
She said, and vanish’d with the sweeping blast.
I lastly was with Curtis, among the floating sat't'ries, And there I left for witness an arm and a limb; Yet let my country need me, with Elliot to head me, I'd clatter on my stumps at the sound of the drum. *Lai de dautle, &c.*

And now, tho' I must beg, with a wooden arm and leg, And many a tatter'd rag hanging over my bun, I'm as happy with my wallet, my bottle, and my callet As when I used in scarlet to follow the drum. *Lai de dautle, &c.*

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

**RECITATIVO.**

He ended; and the kebars sheuk Aboon the chorus roar; While frightened rattens backward look, And seek the bennmost borg:

A fairy fiddler frae the neuk, He skirt'd out encore! But up arose the martial's 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, *Lai de lai, &c.*

The first of my lovers 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, *Lai de lai, &c.*

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

Sing, *Lai de lai, &c.*
Full soon I grew sick of the sanctified set,
The regiment at large for a husband I got;
From the gilded spoonoon to the fish I was ready,
I asked no more but a sodger laddie.

**Sing, Lal de la, &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 rejoiced at my sodger laddie,

**Sing, Lal de la, &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,
there's to thee, my hero, my sodger laddie.

**Sing, Lal de la, &c.**

**RECIATIVO.**

**Poor Merry Andrew, in the neuk,**
Sat guzzling wi' a tinker hizzle;
They mind't na what the chorus took,
Between themselves they were sae bizzzy
At length, wi' drink and courting dizzy,
He stol'ter'd up and made a face;
Then turn'd and laid a smack on Grizzy,
Syue 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;
He's there but a 'prentice I trow,
But I am a fool by profession.

My grannie she bought me a beuk,
And I held a'wa to the schoul;
I fear I may fall misteuk;
But what will ye hae of a fool?

For drink I would venture my neck;
A hizzle's the half o' my craft;
But what could ye other expect
Of one that's a wovledly daft?

I ance was ty'd up like a stirk,
For civilly swearing and quaffing;
I ance was abus'd i' the kirk,
For towzing a laus i' my daffin.

Poor Andrew that tumbles for sport,
Let naebody name wi' a jeer;
There's ev'n I'm tauld i' the court,
A tumber ca'd the Premier.

Observe ye,yon reverend lad
Makes faces to tickle the mob;
He railes at our mountebank squad
It's rivalry just i' the job.

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

**RECIATIVO.**

Then niest outspak a raucle carlin,
Wha ken fa' weel to clesk the sterlin
For monie a pursie she had hooked,
And had in monie a well been ducket;
Her dove had been a Highland laddie,
But weary fa' the waeful woodie!
Wi' sighs and sobs, she thus began
To wail her braw John Highlandman.

**AIR.**

**TUNE—"O an' ye were dead guidman."**

A 17th LAND lad my love was born,
The law an' laws he held in scorn;
But no still was faithfu' to his clan,
My gaunt, braw John Highlandman.

**CHORUS.**

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

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

**Sing, hey, &c.**

We ranged a' from Tweed to Spey,
And liv'd like lords and ladies gay;
For a Lallan face he feared none,
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 tears ran,
Embracing my John Highlandman.

**Sing, hey, &c.**

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

**Sing, hey, &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.**

**RECIATIVO.**

A pigmy Scraper wi' his fiddle,
Wha us'd at trysts and fairs to driddle,
Her strappin limb and gaudy middle,
(How reach'd nae higher,)
Had hol't his heartie like a riddle,
And blawn't on fire.

Wi' hand on haunch, and upward e',
He croon'd his gamut aye, twa, three
BURNS’ POEMS.

Then, is an Arioso key,  
The wee Apollo
Set aff, wi’ Allegretto glees,  
His giga solo.

AIR.

TUNE—"Whistle o’er the lave o’ t
LET me ryke up to fight that tear,
And go wi’ me and be my dear,
And then your every care and fear
May whistle o’er the lave o’t.

CHORUS.

I am a fiddler to my trade,
And a’ the tunes that e’er I play’d,
The sweetest still to wife or maid,
Was whistle o’er the lave o’t.

At kims and weddings we’re se be there
And Oh! I see nicyly’s we will fare;
We’ll bouse about, till Daddie Care
Sings whistle o’er the lave o’t.

I am, &c.

Sae merrily’s the banes we’ll pyke,
And sun ourse’s about the dyke,
And at our leisure when we like.
We’ll whistle o’er the lave o’t.

I am, &c.

But bless me wi’ your hear’n o’ charms,
And while I kittle hair on thairms,
Hungar, caudl, and a’ sic harms,
May whistle o’er the lave o’t.

I am, &c.

RECITATIVO

Her charms had struck a sturdy Caird
As well as poor Gut-scraper;
He takes the fiddler by the beard,
And draws a roosy rapier—
He swoor, by a’ was swearing worth,
To spit him like a pilver,
Unless he wad from that time forth
Relinquish her for ever.

Wi’ ghastly e’e, poor tweedle dee
Upon his hunkers bended,
And pray’d for grace, wi’ ruefu’ face,
And sae the quarrel ended.
But tho’ his little heart did grieve
When round the tinkler prest her,
He feign’d to skirmle in his sleeve,
When thus the Caird address’d her:

AIR.

TUNE—"Clout the Cauldron.”

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

I’ve taen the gold, I’ve been enroll’d
In many a noble squadron;
But vain they search’d, when off I march’d
To go and clout the cauldron.

I’ve taen the gold, &c.

Despise that shrimp, that wither’d imp,
Wi’ a’ his noise and carpin,
And tak a share wi’ those that bear
The he budget and the array;
And by that stoup, my faith and hou
And by that dear Kilbadgie,∗
If e’er ye want, or meet wi’ scant,
May I ne’er wat my craigie.

And by that stoup, &c.

RECITATIVO.

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

But burchin Cupid shot a shaft,
That play’d a dame a shavie,
The fiddler rak’d her fore and aft,
Behint the chicken cavie.
Her lord, a wight o’ Homer’s craft,
Tho’ limping wi’ the spavie,
He hirpl’d up, and lap like daft,
And shoro’d them Dainty Davie.

O boot that night.

He was a care-defying blade
As ever Bacchus listed,
Tho’ 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.

AIR.

TUNE—"For a’ that, and a’ that."

I AM a bard of no regard,
Wi’ gentlefolks, and a’ that:
But Homer-like, the glowran pyke,
Fras town to town I draw that

CHORUS.

For a’ that, and a’ that,
And twice a meikle’s a’ that;
I’ve had but ane; I’ve two behin’,
I’ve wife enough, for a’ that.

∗ A peculiar sort of Whiskey, so called; a great fa-

vourite with lussie Nanasie’s clubs.
I never drank the Muses' tank,
Castalia's burn, and a' that;
But there it streams, and richly reams,
My Helicon can't that.

For a' that, &c.

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

For a' that, &c.

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

For a' that, &c.

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

For a' that, and a' that,
And twice as meike's a' that;
My dearest blind, to do them guid,
They're welcome til't, for a' that.

RECIrATIVO.

So sung the bard—and Nannie's waa's
Shook with a thunder of applause,
Re-echo'd from each mouth;
They toom'd their packs, and pawn'd their dude,
They scarcely left to co'er their fuds,
To quench their lown drouch.

Then owre again, the jovial thrang,
The poet did request,
To lower his pack, and wale a sang,
A ballad o' the best;
He, rising, rejoicing,
Between his twa Deborahs,
Looks round him, and found them
Impatient for the chorus.

AIR.

TUNE—"Jolly Mortals, fill your Glasses!"

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

CHORUS.

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

What is title? What is treasure?
What is reputation's care?
If we lead a life of pleasure,
'T: 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 rove?
Does the sober bed of marriage
Witness brighter scenes of love?

A fig, &c.

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

A fig, &c.

Here's to budgets, bags, and wallets!
Here's to all the wandering train!
Here's our raged brats and callets!
One and all cry out, Amen!

A fig, &e

EXTEMPORE.

April, 1792.

O WHY the deuce should I repine,
And be an ill foreboder?
I'm twenty-three, and five feet nine—
I'll go and be a sodger.

I got some gear wi' meikle care,
I held it weel thegither;
But now it's gane and something mair,
I'll go and be a sodger.

THE END.
GLOSSARY.

THE ch and gh have always the guttural sound. The sound of the English diphthong oo, is commonly spelled ou. The French u, a sound which often occurs in the Scottish language, is marked ou, ui. The a in genuine Scottish words, except when forming a diphthong, is preceded by an e mute after a single consonant, sounds generally like the Broad English e in wall. The Scottish diphthong ou, always, and on, very often, sound like the French e masculine. The Scottish diphthong ey, sounds like the Latin ei.

A.

A*, All.
Aback, away, aloof.
Abeigh, at a shy distance.
Abe'en, above, up.
Abread, abroad, in sight.
Abread, in breadth.
Addie, putrid water, &c.
Ae. on.
Aff, off, Aft, loof, unpreameditated.
Afore, before.
Aft, off.
Aften, often.
Agley, off the right line; wrong.
Ablins, perhaps.
Ain, own.
Airle-permy Airlies, earnest-money.
Airm, iron.
Ait, an yath.
Aisle, oats.
Ainer, an old horse.
Aisle, a hot, chinder.
Aisla, aisles.
Ailane, alone.
Akeart, awkward.
Amaist, almost.
Among, among.
Ain't, and; if.
Ance, once.
Anie, one; and.
Anent, over against.
Another, another.
Are, arks.
Ascient, asquent; aslant.
Asteer, abroad; stirring.
Athair, athwart.
Aught, possession; as, in a' my aught, in all my possession.
Auld lang syne, olden time, days of other years.
Auld, old.
Auldforren, or auld farrant, sagacious, cunning prudent.
Awe, awe.
Awea, a-ful.
Awr, the beard of barley, oats, &c.
Awnie, bearded.
Ayant, beyond.

B.

BA', Ball.
Backets, an boards.
Backline, coming; coming back, returning.
Back, returning.
Bad, did bid.
Baise, endured, did stay.
Baggie, the belly.
Bainie, having large bones, stout.
Bairn, a child.
Bairn-isme, a family of children, a brood.
Bairnly, bushy.
B'm, to swear.
Bane, bone.
Bang, to beat; to strike.

Barde, diminutive of bard.
Barefoot, barefooted.
Bainie, of, or like barn.
Bake, a crew, a gang.
Batte, batte.
Baudrons, a cat.
Bauld, bold.
Bawk, bank.
Baws'nt, having a white stripe down the face.
Be, to let be; to give over; to cease.
Bear, barly.
Beautic, diminutive of beast.
Beet, to add fuel to fire.
Beld, baid.
Belay, by and by.
Bent, into the splice or parlour; a splice.
Benlomond, a noted mountain in Dumfriestone.
Bethankit, grace after meat.
Bheach, a book.
Bicker, a kind of wooden dish; a short race.
Bie, or biet, shelter.
Bien, wealthy, plentiful.
Big, to build.
Biggin, building; a house.
Biggit, built.
Bull, a bull.
Bittle, a brother; a young fellow.
Bing, a heap of grain, potatoes, &c.
Birk, birch.
Birkenshaw, Birken wood-shaw, a small wood.
Birkie, a cliver fellow.
Birring, the noise of patridges, &c. when they spring.
Bit, crisis, nick of time.
Bice, a bustling, to buzz.
Plastie, a slim-culled dwarf; a term of contempt.
Blastie, blasted.
Blate, bashful, sheepish.
Blater, a blater.
Blood, a flat piece of any thing; to slap.
Blone, to blow, to boast.
Blertie, cleared bare with rheum.
Blerties, bleared and blind.
Bleezing, blazing.
Blhelum, an idle talking fellow.
Blhatt's, talking silly.
Blint, a little while; a smiling look; to look kindly; to shine by fits.
Blinker, a term of contempt.
Blinkin, smirking.
Boortree, the shrub elder; planted much of old lo
hedges of barn yards, &c.
Boost, behoved, most needs.
GLOSSARY.

Bore, a hole in the wall.
Boite, an angry humour.
Boating, drinking.
Brogue, a parrot.
Brow, beaked, crooked.
Bracken, fern.
Brave, a declivity; a precipice; the slope of a hill.
Breed, breed.
Bredig’t, rooted forward.
Broak, a kind of harrow.
Brain’dge, to run rashly forward.
Broak, broke, made insolent.
Brooks, a kind of wooden curb for horses.
Breach, a sudden illness.
Breit, coarse clothes; rage, &c.
Brattle, a short race; hurry; fury.
Brow, fine, handsome.
Braw, fairly, very well; finely; heartily.
Breckie, a morbid sheep.
Breastie, diminutive of breast.
Breastit, did spring up or forward.
Breckan, fern.
Bred, an invulnerable or irresistible spell.
Breese, breeches.
Breet, smooth.
Brewis, brewing.
Brie, juice, liquid.
Brig, a bridge.
Brinestone, brimstone.
Bricket, the breech, the bosom.
Britch, a brother.
Brack, a badger.
Brogue, a hum; a trick.
Brock, broth; liquid; water.
Broose, broth; a race at country weddings, who shall first reach the bridegroom’s house on returning from church.
Broast-avers, ale-house wives.
Brugh, a burgh.
Brustle, a broil, a combustion.
Bruit, did burn, burn’t.
Brust, to burst; burst.
Buckan-billters, the boiling of the sea among the rocks on the coast of Fothian.
Buckie, an inhabitant of Virginia.
Bught, a pen.
Bought-time, the time of collecting the sheep in the pens to be milked.
Buirdly, stout-made; broad-made.
Bum-clock, a humming beetle that flies in the summer evenings.
Bumming, humming as bees.
Bummle, to blunder.
Bumller, a blunderer.
Bunker, a window-seat.
Burid, diminutive of birds.
Bure, did bear.
Burn, water; a rivulet.
Burnewin, i.e. burn the wind, a blacksmith.
Burnie, diminutive of burn.
Bussie, husky.
Buskit, dressed.
Buske, dressed.
Buske, a bustle; to bustle.
Bus, shelter.
But, bot, with; without.
But on’ ben, the country kitchen and parlour.
By himset, lunatic, distracted.
Byke, a bec-hive.
Byre, a cow-stable; a sheep-pen.

C.

CA', To call, to name; to drive.
Ca’it, or ca’id, called, driven; calved.
Cadger, a carrier.
Caddie, or caddie, a person; a young fellow.
Caff, chief.
Caird, a tinker.
Candle, a loose heap of stones.
Caffward, a small enclosure for calves.
Callan, a boy.
Caller, fresh; sound; refreshing.
Canie, or cannte, gentle, mild; dexterous.
DADDIE, a father.
Daffy, merriment; foolishness.
Dainty, pleasant, good-humoured, &c.
Daies, days; stupidly.
Daisies,球员; valleys.
Darkling, darkening.
Dead, to thrust, to abuse.
Dear, dear.
Dearly, dear.
Daurk, or dawk, a day's labour.
Dawn, David.
Dawn, a large piece.
Daerit, or dawset, fondled, caressed.
Dearth, diminutive of dear.
Daeritful, dear.
Deave, un deafer.
Deil-ma-care! no matter if for all that!
Deleerit, delirious.
Describe, to describe.
Dight, to wipe; to clean corn from chaff.
Dight, cleaned from chaff.
Ding, to wear, to push.
Dink, neat, tidy, drink.
Dines, no sex.
Dirty, a slight tremulous stoke or pain.
Dixon, or dizz'ry, a dozen.
Dolted, stupefied, bewildered.
Dole, stubbed, crazed.
Dowse, unlucky.
Dool, sorrow; to sing dool, to lament, to mourn.
Dooz, a dozen.

DORity, saucy, nice.
Douce, or douse, sober, wise, prudent.
Doucely, soberly, prudently.
Dough, was, or were able.
Doup, backside.
Doup-skepker, one that strikes the tail.
Dour and din, ailen and shawd.
Dour, stout, durable; ailen, stubborn.
Dow, am or are able, can.
Dowff, pitiless, wanting force.
Dowser, worn with grief, fatigue, &c. half asleep.
Dowen, am or are not able, cannot.
Doughty, stitl'd.
Dow's, stupefied, impotent.
Drop, a drop; to drop.
Draige, to sool by trailing, to droaggle among wet, &c.
Draping, dropping.
Draughting, drawing; of a slow enunciation.
Dreep, to ease, to drop.
Drench, tedious, long about it.
Dribble, drizzling; slaver.
Dried, old age.
Droodum, the breech.
Drose, part of a bagpipe.
Droop-rump't, that drops at the crupper.
Droud, wet, weeping.
Drounting, dawling.
Drouth, thirst, drought.
Drunk, drunken. Drunkly, muddy.
Drumnock, meal a' water mixed in a raw state.
Drum, yet, sour humour.
Drunken, beasten, boxed.
Dwé, to push a ram, &c.
Duett, pushed by a ram, ox, &c.

E.
E', E, the eye.
E'en, the eyes.
E'enin, evening.
Eerie, frightened, dreadling spirits.
Eild, old age.
Elbuck, the elbow.
Edritch, ghastly, frightful.
Eller, an elder, or chowser officer.
En', end.
Ennork, Edinburgh.
Enough, enough.
Especial, especially.
Ette, to try, to attempt.
Eydent, diligent.

F.
F'a, fall; lot; to fall.
Fà's, does fall; water-falls.
Fàddom't, fathomed.
Fae, a foe.
Fass, foam.
Fàk, unknown.
Fairin, a fairing; a present.
Fatime, fellow.
Fend, did find.
Fari, a cake of oatern bread, &c.
Flash, trouble, care; to trouble to care for.
Flats, troubled.
Fateren o' en, Fasten's Even.
Fauld, a fold; to fold.
Faulding, folding.
Fauté, fault.
Faut, want, lack.
Fausont, decent, seemly.
Fent, a field; smooth.
Fisht, frightened.
F'ritn, frightful.
Fret, neat, spruce.
Fret, to fight.
Frickin, fighting.
GLOSSARY.

Gang, to go, to walk.
Gar, to make, to force to.
Garten, a garner.
Gash, wise, sagacious; talkative; to converse.
Grahin, conversing.
Gaudy, jolly, large.
Gaud, a plough.
Hair, riches; goods of any kind.
Geech, to toss the head in wantonness or scorn.
Ged, a joke.
Gentles, great folks, gentry.
Gentry, elegantly formed, neat.
Genere, a gentleman.
Get, a child, a young one.
Ghast, a ghost.
Gie, to give; gien, gien, given.
Giftie, diminutive of gift.
Giglets, pixy girls.
Gillie, diminutive of gill.
Glipcy, a half grown, half informed boy or girl, romping lad, a boiden.
Gimmer, a ewe from one to two years old.
Gin, if; against.
Gipsy, a young girl.
Girn, to grin, to twist the features in rage, agowy, &c.
Giring, grinning.
Gizz, awright.
Glaikit, inattentive, foolish.
Glaive, a sword.
Groyky, half-witted, foolish, rumping.
Glantinie, glittering; smooth like glass.
Ghum, to snatch greedily.
Gum''d, aimed, snapped.
Gzech, sharp, savagely.
Gleg, sharp, ready.
Glib, glebe.
Glen, a dale, a deep valley.
Glub, to squint; to squirt; a gley, off at a side, wrong.
Glib-gobbet, smooth and ready in speech.
Glint, to peep.
Glinch, to peep.
Glintin, peeping.
Glimmin, the twilight.
Glorry, to stare, to look; a stare, a look.
Glower'd, looked, stared.
Gloosh, a bawn, a sour look.
Gowan, looking round with a strange, inquiring gaze; storms stupidly.
Gowen, the flower of the wild daisy, hawk-weed, &c.
Gowanny, daisied, abounding with daisies.
Grown, gold.
Gowf'd, struck.
Gowk, a cock, &c.; also a pitch-fork.
Graffted, joined.
Grate, to bowl.
Grane, or grain, a groan; to groan.
Grain'd and grunted, groaned and grunted.
Graining, grumbling.
Grasp, a pronged instrument for cleaning stables.
Grath, accoutrements, furniture, dress, gear.
Grannie, grandmother.
Grasp, to grasp.
Graspit, grasped.
Grat, wept, shed tears.
Grate, intimate, familiar.
Gree, to agree; to bear the gree, to be decidedly victor.
Greet's, agreed.
Great, to shed tears; to weep.
Gretia, crying, weeping.
Gripped, caught, seized.
Grunt, to get the whistle of one's groat, to play a losing game.
Gronsome, boathomely, grim.
Grozet, a gooseberry.
Grumph, a grunt; to grunt.
Crumpithe, a sow.
Grun', ground.
Grumstone, a grindstone.
Gruntle, the phiz; a grunting noise.
Gruszie, mouth.
Gruelie, thick; of thriving growth.

Peck, many, plenty.
Pecket, an under waistcoat with sleeves.
Peckful, large, brawny, stout.
Peckless, puny, weak, silly.
Peckly, weakly.
Peeg, a flag.
Peide, feud, enmity.
Peiririe, stout, vigorous, healthy.
Pell, keen, biting; the flesh immediately under the skin; a field pretty level, on the side or top of a hill.
Pen, successful struggle; fight.
Penn, to live comfortably.
Perrie, or Furseil, to wonder; a wonder; a term of contempt.
Petch, to pull by fits.
Petch't, pulled intermittently.
Pidge, to diget.
Piel, soft, smooth.
Pient, fine; a petty oath.
Pier, sound, healthy; a brother; a friend.
Pisse, to make a rustling noise; to fidget; a bustle.
Pit, a foot.
Pititie-lon', the nearer horse of the hindmost pair in the plough.
Pizz, to make a hissing noise like fermentation.
Plainen, flannel.
Pleach, to suplicate in a flattering manner.
Pleach'd, suplicated.
Pleachin, suplicating.
Pleash, a fleece.
Pleather, to necoy by fair words.
Pleatherin', flatterin.
Pley, to scare, to frighten.
Pleather, to flutter, as young nestlings when their day approaches.
Plinders, shreds, broken pieces, splinters.
Plunging-tree, a piece of timber hung by way of parting between two horses in a stable; a full.
Plisk, to fret at the yoke. Plittit, fretted.
Patter, to vibrate like the wings of small birds.
Pluttering, fluttering, vibrating.
Pleckie, a servant in liverj.
Podgel, squat and plump.
Poord, a ford.
Porches, forefathers.
Porbye, besides.
Portfair, distressed; worn out, jaded.
Porfforri, fatigued.
Porver, to meet; to encounter with.
Porvie, to forgive.
Porjesk, jaded with fatigue.
Pouer, fodder.
Pon, full; drunk.
Posefort, troubled, harassed.
Pouth, plenty, enough, or more than enough.
Pauk, a cock, &c.; also a pitch-fork.
Fraz, from; off.
Frammity, strange, estranged from, at enmity with.
Brooth, froth.
Frien, friend.
Fruit, full.
Fud, the scut, or tail of the hare, cony, &c.
Fur, to blow intermittently.
Furr'd, did blow.
Funnie, full of inerriment.
Fur, a frowar.
Furns, a forming bench.
Fylke, trudging cares; to piddle, to be in a fuss about trifles.
Fylke, to soil, to dirty.
Fyfit, soiled, dirtied.

G.

GAB, the month: to speak boldly, or percy.'
Gaber-lunzie, an old man.
Gadsman, a ploughboy, the boy that drives the horses in the plough.
Gae, to go; gane, went; gien, or gane, gone; gaun, going.
Gaeit, or gate, way, manner; road.
Gaur, triangular pieces of cloth sewed on the bottom of a gown, &c.
Glossary.

H.

Hail, hall.
Hallow the great battle that lies in the hall.
Halo, to have.
Hem, had, the participle.
Hast, bent, bent, a petty oath of negation; nothing.
Hesit, the temple, the site of the head.
Helfine, nearly half, partly.
Hag, a scar, or gulf, or gulf in messes, and moors.
Haggis, a kind of pudding boiled in the stomach of a cow or sheep.
Hair, to spare, to save.
Hair'd, spared.
Hairies, harvest.
Halt, a petty oath.
Hain, nonsense, speaking without thought.
Han', or hant, an abiding place.
Hand, whole, tight, healthy.
Hand, holy.
Hame, home.
Haltan, a particular partition wall, in a cottage, or more properly a seat of turf at the outside.
Hallowmas, Hallow-eve, the 31st of October.
Hamenly, homely, affable.
Han', or hant', hand.
Hap, an outer garment, mantle, plaid, &c. to wrap, to cover; to hop.
Happer, a hopper.
Happing, hopping.
Hap step an' loup, hop skip and leap.
Harkit, hearkened.
Horn, very coarse, linen.
Hush, a fellow that neither knows how to dress nor act with propriety.
Hastit, hastened.
Hoff, to hold.
Hought, low lying, rich lands; valleys.
Hourl, to drag; to peel.
Hartin, peeling.
Hawser, a half-witted person; half-witted.
Having, good manners, decorum, good sense.
Hawkie, a cow, properly one with a white face.
Hepit, heaped.
Heslome, healthful, wholesome.
Horse, hoarse.
Hurt, to hear it.
Hather, heath.
Heckl! oh! strange.
Hecht, promised; to foretell something that is to be got or given; foretold; the thing foretold; offered.
Heckle, a board, in which are fixed a number of sharp pins, used in dressing hemp, flax, &c.
Hecce, to elevate, to raise.
Helm, the rudder or helm.
Hed, to tend flokes; one who tends flocks.
Hewrin, a herring.
Herry, to plunder; most properly to plunder birds' nests.
Herryment, plundering, devastation.
Horse's, herself; also a herd of cattle, of any sort.
Hot, hot.
Housh, a crag, a coalpit.
Hitch, a hobbie; to bait.
Hitchin, halting.
Himself, himself.
Honey, honey.
Hing, to hang.
Hirpie, to walk crazily, to creep.
Hix, so many cattle as one person can attend.
Histie, dry; chopped, barren.
Hitch, a loop, a knot.

Hizzie, a husky, a young gir.
Hoddin the motion of a saxe countryman riding on a cart-horse; humble.
Hog-score, a kind of distance line, in curling, drawn across the rink.
Hog-shouter, a kind of horse play, by jousting with the shoulder; to joust.
Hoon, outer skin or case, a nut-shell; a pea-cod.
Hootie, slowly, leisurely.
Hootie! take leisure, stop.
Hoord, a board; to hoard.
Hoorbit, horded.
Horn, a spoon made of horn.
Horne, one of the many names of the devil.
Hoot, or hoost, to cough; a cough.
Hostin, coughing.
Hosts, coughs.
Hooch'd, turned topsyturvey; blended, mixed.
Houghmangadit, fornication.
Houlie, an owl.
House, diminutive of house.
House, to heave, to swell.
Horn'd, heaved, swelled.
Houdie, a midwife.
House, hollow; a hollow or cell.
Houk, sunk in the back, spoken of a horse, &c.
Houn, a tipping house; a house of resort.
Hoek, to dig.
Hooke, dug.
Howkin, digging.
Houlit, an owl.
Hoy, to urge.
Hoonite, hoarse.
House, to pull upwards.
Hoyte, to amble crazily.
Hughie, diminutive of Hugh.
Huckle, a hedgehog.
Hurdles, the loins.
Hushion, a cushion.

I.

I., in.
Icker, an ear of corn.
Ite-oae, a great-grandchild.
Ith, or Itha, each, every.
Ill-Willie, ill-fated, malicious, niggardly.
Ingenue, genius, ingenuity.
Ingle, fire; fire-place.
Ire, I shall or will.
Iker, other; one another.

J.

JAD, jade; also a familiar term among country folks for a giddy young girl.
Joker, to dally, to trifle.
Jokkin, trifling, dallying.
Jump, a jerk of water; to jerk as agitated water.
Jaw, a coarse rillerry; to pour out; to shut; to jerk as water.
Jerkinet, a jerkin, or short gown.
Jillet, a jilt, a giddy girl.
Jimp, to jump; slender in the waist; handsome.
Jimpes, easy stays.
Jink, to dodge, to turn a corner; a sudden turning; a dance.
Jinker, that turns quickly; a gay, sprightly girl; a wag.
Jinkin, dodging.
Jirt, a jerk.
Jactate, a kind of knife.
Jouk, to stoop, to bow the head.
Jouz, to jove, a verb which includes both the swinging motion and pealing sound of a large bell.
Judie, to joust.

K.

KAEd, a daw.
Kail, coleshew; a kind of oroth.
Kat-nent, the stem of coleshew.
Kain, fowis, &c. paid as rent by a farmer.
GLOSSARY.

Kebuck, a cheese.
Kecle, to giggle; to litter.
Keek, a peep, to peep.
Kelpies, a sort of mischievous spirits, said to haunt fords and ferryes at night, especially in storms.
Kem, to know; kend or kendi'd know.
Kensin, a small matter.
Kenspeckle, well known, easily known.
Ken, matted, hairy; a fleece of wool.
Kil, to truss up the clothes.
Kimmer, a young girl, a gossip.
Kin, kindred; kin', kind, adj.
King-hood, a certain part of the entrails of an ox, &c.
Kintra, country.
Kintra Coover, country stallion.
Kirn, the harvest supper; a chum.
Kirsen, to christen, or baptize.
Kist, a chest; a shop counter.
Kitchen, any thing that eats with bread; to serve for soup, gravy, &c.
Kith, kindred.
Kittle, to tickle; ticklish; lively, apt.
Kittlin, a young cat.
Kitttle, to cuddle.
Kittlkin, cuddling.
Knaggie, like knogs, or points of rocks.
Knep, to strike sharply, a smart blow.
Knoppin-hammer, a hammer for breaking stones.
Knowe, a small round hillock.
Knurl, a dwarf.
Kye, cows.
Kyle, a district in Ayrshire.
Kyte, the hilly.
Kytche, to discover; to show one's self.

L.

LADDIE, diminutive of lad.
Laggen, the angle between the side and bottom of a wooden dish.
Leigh, low.
Lairing, wading, and sinking in snow, mud, &c.
Laith, loath.
Laihfu', bashful, sheepish.
Lallans, the Scottish dialect of the English language.
Lambis, diminutive of lamb.
Lampt, a kind of shell fish, a limpit.
Lan', land; estate.
Lane, lone; my lane, thy lane, &c. myself alone, &c.
Lanely, lonely.
Lang; to think long, to long, to weary.
Lap, did leap.
Lane, the rest, the remainder, the others.
Lawrock, the rock.
Lawin, shot, reckoning, bill.
Lawland, lowland.
Lea'd, to leave.
Lend, loyal, true, faithful.
Lea-rig, grassy ridge.
Lear, (pronounce lare,) learning.
Lee-lang, live-long.
Leesome, pleasant.
Leese-me, a phrase of congratulatory endearment; I am happy in thee, or proud of thee.
Leister, a three pronged dart for striking fish.
Leugh, did laugh.
Leur, a look; to look.
Liebit, gelled.
Lift, the sky.
Lightly, sneeringly; to sneer at.
Lilt, a ballad; a tune; to sing.
Limmer, a kept mistress, a strumpet.
Limp's, limped, hobbled.
Link, to trip along.
Linkkin, tripping.
Loan, a water-fall; a precipice.
Lint, flax; lint 't the bell, flax in flower.
Lintwhite, a linnet.
Linn, a brook, the place of milking.
Loof, the palm of the hand.
Loop, did let.
Loose, plural of loof.

Lown, a fellow, a ragamuffin; a woman of easy virtue.
Loup, jump, leap.
Lowe, a flame.
Lovat, flaming.
Loue, a residence of Lawrence.
Loue, to lose.
Love'd, loosed.
Lot, the ear; a handle.
Loget, having a handle.
Luggie, a small wooden dish with a handle.
Lun, the chimney.
Lunen, a large piece of cheese, flesh, &c.
Lunt, a column of smoke; to smoke.
Luntin, smoking.
Lyart, or a mixed colour, gray.

M.

MAE, more.
Mair, more.
Mast, most, almost.
Mastery, mostly.
Mek, to make.
Melknin, making.
Milt, a milt.
Mullie, Molly.
Mung, among.
Mun, the parsonage house, where the minister lives.
Montee, a mantle.
Mark, marks, (This and several other nouns which in English require an s, to form the plural, are in Scotch, like the words sheep, deer, the same in both numbers.)
Morted, varigated; spotted.
Muir's, the year 1715.
Murstium, melasin, mixed corn.
Musk, to mash, as malt, &c.
M Sukin-pot, a tea-pot.
Mud, moid, a plaid worn by shepherds, &c.
Mokin, a hare.
Mun, must.
Munia, the thistle.
Mue, to mow.
Munin, mowing.
Mee, a mare.
Mickle, meikli', much.
Minchlauchie, mournful.
Milker, corn, or grain of any kind, sent to the mill to be ground.
Melt, to melt.
Also a mallet for pounding barley in a stone trough.
M'fis, to soil with meal.
M'm, to mend.
Mens, good manners, decorum.
Menless, ill bred, rude, impudent.
Messein, a small dog.
Midden, a dunghill.
Midden-hole, a gutter at the bottom of a dunghill.
Men, prim, affectedly meek.
Mee', mind; resemblance.
Mindit, mind it; resolved, intending.
Minnie, mother, dain.
Mirk, mirk-st, dark, darkest.
Misca', to abuse, to call names.
Miss'd, abused.
Mislor'd, mischievous, unmanly.
Misteb, mistook.
Mithet, a mother.
Mizstie-maztie, confessedly mixed.
Mostly, to moisten.
Mory, or monty, many.
Moola, dust, earth, the earth of the grave. Tor skie the moolie; to lay in the dust.
Mop, to nibble as a sheep.
Moorian', or be longing to moors.
Morn, the next day, to-morrow.
Mors, the mouth.
Mouseart, a mole.
Mouse, diminutive of mouse.
Muckle, or mickle, great, big, much.
Mudle, diminutive of mouse.
Muilin-kail, broth, composed simply of water, shelled-barley, and greens. Muilkin, an English pint. Myself, myself.

N.


O.

O' of. Ochela, name of mountains. O'haith, O faith! an oath. Ony, or onie, any. Or, or often used for ere, before. One, a supernumerary, that can be spared. O't, of it. Ourie, shivering; drooping. Oursel, ourself, ourselves. Ouries, cattle not housed. Overse, over; too. Overse-hip, a way of fetching a blow with the hammer over the arm.

P.


Q.

QUAT, to quit. Quack, to quack. Quey, a cow from one to two years old.

R.

RAGWEED, the herb ragwort. Rabble, to rattle nonsense. Raize, to roam. Raise, to madden to inflame. Ram-freasted, fatigued; overspread. Ram-stom, thoughtless, forward. Rapple, (properly) a coarse cloth; but used as an adverb for coarse. Rarely, excellently, very well. Rash, a rash; rush-bush, a bush of rushes. Rattle, a rat. Rausible, rash; stout; fearless. Rought, reached.


Rigwood, rigwood; the rope or chain that crosses the saddle of a horse to support the spokes of a cart; spare, withered, sapless. Rin, to run, to melt; rivin, running. Rink, the course of the stones; a term in curling on ice. Rip, a handful of unh_threshed corn. Ribit, made a noise like the tearing of roots. Rivial, spinning on the rock or cliff, Rood stands likewise for the plural roods. Roof a shred, a border or seavage. Roose, to praise, to commend. Rootless, rusty. Round, round, in the circle of neighbourhood. Roupet, hoarse, as with a cold. Routie, plentiful. Row, to roll, to wrap. Rout', rolled, wrapped. Routie, to low, to belowe. Rout, or rout, plenty. Rowvin, lowing.
Glossary.

Skelpin, stepping, walking.
Skiegh, or skiegh, proud, nice, high-mettled.
Skinklin, a small portion.
Skirt, to shrick, to cry shrilly.
Skirt ng, shriaking, crying.
Skirt's, shrieked.
Skrent, slant; to run, slant, to deviate from truth.
Sketred, ran, or lit, in an oblique direction.
Skouth, freedom to converse without restraint; range, scope.
Skirgh, a scream; to scream.
Skyrin, shining; making a great show.
Skyne, force, very forcible motion.
Slay, a soul.
Slade, did slide.
Slap, a gate; a breach in a fence.
Slaver, saliva; to emit saliva.
Slow, slow.
Slee, sly; sleek; sly.
Sidderly, slippery.
Sly, to fall over, as a wet furrow from the plough.
Slypt, fell.
Sna, small.
Smdaddm, dust; powder; mettle, renee.
Smddy, a smithy.
Smoor, to smoother.
Smoo'd, smothered.
Smought, smutty, obscure, ugly.
Smuryte, a numerous collection of small individuals.
Smapper, to stumble, to stumble.
Smash, abuse, Billingsgate.
Snow, snow; to snow.
Snow-broo, melted snow.
Snowe, snowy.
Snow'd, stuck, the latch of a door.
Shed, to lay, to cut off.
Shed'd, small.
Snedd, a snuff-box.
Sneill, bitter, biting.
Sneick'drawing, trick-constraining, crafty.
Sneizy, to laugh resolutely.
Snoed, a ribbon for binding the hair.
Snool, one whose spirit is broken with oppressive slavery; to submit tamely, to sneak.
Snook, to scent or smell, as a dog, &c.
Snoow't, scented, scented.
Sowtt, having sweet engaging looks; lucky, jolly.
Sowtt, to swim.
Sooth, truth, a petty oath.
Sough, a heavy sigh, a sound dying on the ear.
Sould, to engage; to take.
Sould, a shoemaker.
Sowens, a dish made of oatmeal; the seed of oatmeal source, &c. finamery.
Sowen, small, a small quantity of any thing liquid.
Sowth, to try over a tune with a low whistle.
Sowther, sober; to solid, to cement.
Spire, to prophesy, to divine.
Spread, a limb.
Springe, to dash, to soil, as with mire.
Sprent, having the spavin.
Sprung, sprung, to wrench.
Spratte, a sperate, a sweeping torrent, after rain or thaw.
Speckled, spotted, speckled.
Sprent, to shrick, to shrill.
Spring, a quick air in music; a Scottish reel.
Spurt, a tough rooted plant, something like rushes.
Sprut, full of spirit.
Spunk, fire, mettle; wit.
Spurned, mettlesome, fiery; will-o' -wisp, or ignis fatuus.
Spurtle, a stick used in making oatmeal pudding or porridge.
Squad, a crew, a party.
Squatter, to flutter in water, as a wild duck, &c.
Squattle, to sprawl.
Squelch, a scream, a screech; to scream.
Stagger, a rick of corn, hay, &c.
Stag, the diminutive of stag.
Stalwart, strong, stout.
Stan't, to stand; st'an't, did stand.
Stane, a stone.
Stang, an acute pain; a twinge; to sting.
Stank, did stink; a pool of standing water.
Stat, stop.
Stark, st.uit.
Startle, to run as cattle stung by the gad-fly.
Staunch, a blockhead; half-witted.
Stale, did steal; to surfelt.
Stech, to cram the belly.
Steckin, crammimg.
Stare, to shut; a stitch.
Steer, to molest; to stir.
Steeve, firm, compacted.
Stiff, a stiff.
Sten, to rear as a horse.
Sten't, reared.
Stents, tribute; does of any kind.
Steed, steep; steeved.
Stibble, stubble; striible rig, the reaper in harvest who takes the lead.
Stick an' stow, totally, altogether.
Stiff, a crusty; to halt, to limp.
Stimpair, the eighth part of a Winchester bushel.
Stirè, a cow or bullock a year old.
Stoke'd, a plant or root of colewort, cabbage, &c.
Stockin, a stocking; throwing the stocking, when the bride and bridegroom are put into bed, and the candle out, the former throws a stocking at random, among the company, and the person whom it strikes is the next that will be married.
Stoiler, to stagger, to stammer.
Stooked, made up in shocks as corn.
Stoover, sounding hollow, strong, and hoarse.
Stot, an ox.
Stoup, or stourp, a kind of jug or dish with a handle.
Stoure, dust, more particularly dust in motion.
Stowines, by stealth.
Storm, stolen.
Stowe, to stumble.
Strack, did strike.
Strac, straw; to die a fair strang death, to die in bed.
Strack, did strike.
Strakkit, stroked.
Strappan, tall and handsome.
Straight, straight, to straighten.
Streek, stretched; tight; to stretch.
Striddle, to straddle.
Stroom, to spout, to piss.
Studdled, an unwise.
Stumpie, diminutive of stump.
Stunt, spirituous liquor of any kind; to walk stupidly; half, sullenness.
Stiff, corn or pulse of any kind.
Sturt, trouble; to molest.
Sturtin, frighten'd.
Suck, sugar.
Sud, should.
Sugh, the continued rushing noise of wind or water.
Suthron, southern; an old name for the English nation.
Sward, sward.
Swall'd, swallowed.
Swank; statef, jolly, swankel, or sneeter, a tight straggling young fellow or girl.
Swap, an exchange; to barter.
Swarf, to swoon; a swoon.
Swa't, did sweat.
Swatch, a sample.
Swats, drink; good ale.
Sweater, sweating.
Sweer, lary, averse; dead-sweer, extremely averse.
Swoor, swore, did swear.
Swinge, to beat; to whip.

Swoot, a curve; an eddying blast, or pool; a knot in wood.
Swirlie, knaggie, full of knots.
Swoth, get away.
Swooper, to hesitate in choice; an irresolute waver-
ing in choice.
Syne, since, ago; then.

T.

TACKETS, a kind of nails for driving into the heels of shoes.
Tee, a toe; three-taed, having three prongs.
Tairge, a target.
Tak, to take; takin, taking.
Tantalian, the name of a mountain.
Tangle, a sea-weed.
Top, the top.
Topless, heedless, foolish.
Turrow, to murmur at one's allowance.
Turrow't, murmured.
Turry-breeks, a sailor.
Tauld, or tauld, told.
Taupie, a foolish, thoughtless young person.
Tauted, or tautie, matched together; spoken of hair or wool.
Tawie, that allows itself peaceably to be handled; spoken of a horse, cow, &c.
Taut, a small quantity.
Taw, to provoke by provocation.
Tadding, spreading after the mower.
Ten-hour's bite, a slight feed for the horses while in the yoke, in the forenoon.
Tent, a field pulpit; heed, caution; to take heed; to tend or herd cattle.
Tentie, heecful, caution.
Tawless, heedless.
Tawg, tough.
Thack, thich; thack an' rape, clothing necessary.
Thais, these.
Thairme, small guts; fiddle-strings.
Thankit, thanked.
Thatchit, thatched.
Thacker, together.
Themad themselves.
Thick, inticate, familiar.
Thicke, cold, dry, spilt; spoken of a person's demeanour.
Thir, these.
Thirli, to thrill.
Thirld, thrilled, vibrated.
Thole, to suffer, to endure.
Those, a thau; to thaw,
Thouiss, slack, lazy.
Thrang, throng; a crowd.
Thrapple, throat, windpipe.
Thraice, twenty-four sheaves or two shocks of corn; a considerable number.
Throse, to sprain, to twist; to contradict.
Thrawein, twisting, &c.
Thraun, sprained, twisted, contradicted.
Thropp, to maintain by dint of assertion.
Threahin, thrashing.
Threiten, thirteenth.
Thistle, thistle.
Through, to go on with; to make out.
Throunder, pell-mell, confusedly.
Thud, to make a loud intermittent noise.
Thumpit, thumped.
Thysel, thyself.
Tullit, to it.
Timmer, timber.
Tune, to lose; tins, lost.
Tineier, a tinker.
Tint the gate, lost the way.
Tip, a ram.
Tinnance, twopenye.
Tiri, to make a slight noise; to uncover.
Tyril, uncovering.
Tiber, the other.
Tittle, to whisper.
Tittlin, whispering.
Tuchor, marriage portion.
Glossary.

Ted, a fox.
Teddie, to totter, like the walk of a child.
Teddie-stones, tottering.
Teddy, empty, to empty.
Toop, a ram.
Toae, a hamlet; a farm-house.
Tout, the blast of a horn or trumpet, to blow a horn, etc.
Tooe, a rope.
Toomond, a twelve-month.
Toomnie, rough, shaggy.
Toye, a very old-fashioned female head-dress.
Toye, to totter like old age.
Transfigrify'd, transmigrated, metamorphized.
Trash, trash.
Trees, trowsers.
Trickie, full of tricks.
Trig, spruce, heat.
Trimbly, excellently.
Trow, to believe.
Trowel, truth, a petty oath.
Tryte, an appointment; a fair.
Trysted, appointed; to tryste; to make an appointment.
Try't, tried.
Tug, raw hide, of which in old times pleach-traces were frequently made.
Tulzie, a quarrel; to quarrel, to fight.
Twa, two.
Twa-three, a few.
Tweed, it would.
Twa'd, twelve; twaal-pennie worth, a small quantity, a penny-worth.
N. B. One penny English is 12d Scotch.
Twee, to part.
Tyke, a dog.

UNCO, strange, uncouth; very, very great, prodigious.
Uncos, news.
Unkenn'd, unknown.
Unpicker, unsure, unsteady.
Unsaluteth'd, undamaged, un hurt.
Unmeeting, unwittingly, unknowingly.
Upo', upon.
Urchin, a hedge-hog.

V

VAP'RIN, vapouring.
Vera, very.
Virt, a ring round a column, &c.
Vitell, corn of all kinds, food.

W

WA', wall; sea's, walls.
Wabster, a weaver.
Wad, would; to bet; a bet, a pledge.
Wadna, would not.
Wae, wo; sorrowful.
Wae'sfu', woful, sorrowful, walling.
Wasucks't or was-es-mel-slaw! O the pity.
Wafi, the cross thread that goes from the shuttle through the web; wool.
Wair, to lay out, to expend.
Wale, choice; to choose.
Wal'd, chose, chosen.
Walle, ample, large, jolly; also an interjection of distress.
Wame, the belly.
Wam'e, a belly-full.
Wanchanie, unlucky.
Wanrestfu', restless.
Wan't, work.
Wark, a tool to work with.
Warl, or war'd, world.
Warrick, a wizard.
Warry, worldly, eager on amassing wealth.
Warr'en, a warrant; to warrant.
Wart, worst.

Wart'd', or war't', wrestled.
Was't, prodigality.
Wat, wet; I weat, I wet, I know.
Water-brose, These made of men and water simply, without the addition of milk, butter, &c.
Wattle, a twig, a wand.
Wadable, to swing, to reel.
Wrought, a draught.
Waukit, thickened as fullers do cloth.
Waurife, not apt to sleep.
Waur, worse; to worst.
Waur't, worsted.
Wav, or wauze, a child.
Warti, or war'y; many a weary body, many a different person.
Wassen, weasand.
Weaving the stocking. See, Stocking, p. 177.
Web, little; we things, little ones; wabbl, a small matter.
Weel, well; weelfare, welfare.
Wet, rain, wetness.
Wid, fate.
Wee'us, we shall.
Wha, who.
Whistle, to whistle.
Wishley, a wish.
Whing, a leather string; a piece of cheese, bread, &c. to give the strappado.
Where, where; whare'er, wherever.
Wheep, to fly mildly, to jerk; penny-sheep, small beer.
Whanas, whose.
Wrack, nevertheless.
Whid, the motion of a hare, running but not frightened; a lie.
Whidden, running as a hare or cony.
Wigmeteries, whines, fancies, crochets.
Whingin, crying, complaining, fretting.
Whirr'ling, useless ornaments, trifling apparitions.
Whistle, a whistle; to whistle.
Whisk, silence; to hold one's whist, to be silent.
Whisk, to sweep, to lash.
Whiskis, lashed.
Whitter, a hearty draught of liquor.
Whin-stane, a whin stone.
Whys, whiles, som'times.
With, with.
Wich, weight, powerful, strong; inventive; of a superior genius.
Wich, to strike a stone in an oblique direction; a term in curling.
Wicker, willy (the smaller sort.)
Wiel, a small whirlpool.
Wife, a diminutive or endearing term for wife.
Wylbert, bashful and reserved; avoiding society or appearing awkward in it; wild, strange, timid.
Wimp, to meander.
Wimp't, meandered.
Wimplin, waving, meandering.
Win, to win, to winnow.
Win't, winced, as a bottom of yarn.
Win', wind; win's, winds.
Wina, will not.
Wimlock, a window.
Winosome, hearty, vaunted, gay.
Windle, a staggering motion; to stagger, to reel.
Wintze, an oath.
Wit, to wish.
Withouten, without.
Wisen'd, hide bound, dried, shrunk.
Wonder, a wonder; a contempuous appellation.
Wows, dwells.
Woo', wool.
Woo, to court, to make love to.
Woodie, a rope, more properly one made of withes or willows.
Wooer-bab, the garter knotted below the knee with a couple of loops.
Words, worthy.
Worst, worsted.
Wow, an exclamation of pleasure or wonder.
Wrack, to tease, to vex.
Wreath, a spirit, or ghost; an apparition exactly like a living person, whose appearance is said to forbode the person's approaching death.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wrong</td>
<td>wrong; to wrong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wreath</td>
<td>a drifted heap of snow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed-mad</td>
<td>distracted</td>
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<td>Whimzie</td>
<td>a wimble</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyle</td>
<td>to beguile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wylecoat</td>
<td>a flannel vest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyliecoat</td>
<td>a flannel vest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyliecoat</td>
<td>a flannel vest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wylie</td>
<td>blame; to blame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YAD</td>
<td>an old mare; a worn out horse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ye; this</td>
<td>pronoun is frequently used for thou</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yearns</td>
<td>longs much</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yearlings</td>
<td>born the same year co-evals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year is used</td>
<td>both for singular and plural years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yearn</td>
<td>earn, an eagle, an ospray</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yeol</td>
<td>barren, that gives no milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yerk</td>
<td>to lash, to jerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yerked</td>
<td>lashed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yeatroom</td>
<td>yesternight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yeet</td>
<td>a gate such as is usually at the entrance into a farm-yard or field</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yell</td>
<td>barren, that gives no milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yell, barren</td>
<td>that gives no milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yolk, yoking</td>
<td>a bout</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yont</td>
<td>beyond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yoursel</td>
<td>yourself</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yowe</td>
<td>a ewe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yowie</td>
<td>diminutive, of yow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yule, Ch. F.</td>
<td>yoke, yoking, a gate such as is usually at the entrance into a farm-yard or field</td>
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There were five carlins in the South,
Thickest night o'erhang my dwelling!
Thine am I, my faithful fair,
Tho' cruel fate should bid us part,
Thou hast left me ever, Jamie,
Thou lingering star, with less'ning ray-
To thee, lov'd Nith, thy gladsome plains,
True heatred was lie, the sad swain of Yarrow.

Up in the morning's no for me,
Wae is my heart and the tear's in my e'e,
Wee Willie Gray, and his leathen wallet;
Wha is this at my bower door?

Y.
The birthplace of Jane

Hammond, Mansan & Grant.
THE LIFE
OF
ROBERT BURNS,
WITH
HIS GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE;
ALSO
CRITICISM ON HIS WRITINGS
AND
OBSERVATIONS ON THE SCOTTISH PEASANTRY.

BY DR. CURRIE.
WHEN you were stationed on our coast about twelve years ago, you first recommended to my particular notice the poems of the Ayrshire ploughman, whose works, published for the benefit of his widow and children, I now present to you. In a distant region, promoted with the utmost zeal a subscription for the support of the widow and children, to which their relief from immediate distress is to be ascribed; and in conjuncti on with other friends of this virtuous and destitute family projected the publications of these volumes for their benefit, by which the return of want might be prevented or prolonged.

To this last undertaking an editor and biographer was wanting, and Mr. Syme's modesty opposed a barrier to his assuming an office, for which he was in other respects peculiarly qualified. On this subject he consulted me and with the hope of surmounting his objections, I offered him my assistance, but in vain. Endeavours were used to procure an editor in other quarters but without effect. The task was one of considerable difficulties, and men of established reputation naturally declined an undertaking to the performance of which, it was scarcely to be hoped that general approbation could be obtained by an exequation of judgment or temper.

To such an office, my place of residence, my accustom ed studies, and my occupations, were certainly little suited; but the partiality of Mr. Syme taught me in other respects not unqualified; and his solicitations, joined to those of our excellent friend and relation, Mrs. Dunlop, and of other friends of the family of the poet, I have not been able to resist. To remove difficulties which would otherwise have been insurmountable, Mr. Syme and Mr. Gilbert Burns made a journey to Liverpool, where they explained and ranged the manuscripts, and selected such as seemed worthy of the press. From this visit I derived a degree of pleasure which has compensated much of my labour.

The publication of these volumes has been delayed by obstacles which these gentlemen could neither remove nor foresee, and it would be tedious to enumerate. At length the task is finished. If the part which I have taken shall serve the interest of the family, and receive the approbation of good men, I shall have my recompense. The errors into which I have fallen are not, I hope, very important, and they will be easily accounted for by those who know the circumstances under which this undertaking has been performed. Generous minds will receive the pithomous works of Burns with candour, and even partiality, as the remains of an unfortunate man of genius, published for the benefit of his family—as the stay of the widow and the hope of the fatherless.

The works of Burns will be received favourably by one who stands in the foremost rank of this noble service, and who deserves his station. On the land or on the sea, I know no man more capable of judging of the character or of the writings of this original genius, and of forming an acquaintance with a man, closely allied to Burns in talents as well as in blood, in whose future fortunes the friends of virtue will not, I trust, be uninterested.

To secure the suffrages of such minds, all topics are omitted in the writings, and avoided in the life of Burns, that have a tendency to awaken the animosity of party. In pursuing the following volumes no offence will be received, except by those to whom even the natural erect aspect of genius is offensive; characters that will scarcely be found among those who are educated to the profession of arms. Such men do not court situations of danger, or tread in the paths of glory. They will not be found in your service, which, in our own days, emulates on another element the superior fame of the Macedonian phalanx, or of the Roman legion, and which has, lately made the shores of Europe and Africa resound with the shouts of victory, from Texel to the Tagus, and from the Tagus to the Nile.

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THOUGH the dialect in which many of the happiest effusions of Robert Burns are composed be peculiar to Scotland, yet his reputation has extended itself beyond the limits of that country, and his poetry has been admired as the offspring of original genius, by persons of taste in every part of the sister islands. The interest excited by his early predestination in every branch of his infant family, have been felt in a remarkable manner wherever his writings have been known: and these posthumous volumes, which give to the world his works complete, and which, it is hoped, may raise the widow and children from penury, are printed and published in England. It seems proper, therefore, to write the memoirs of his life, not with the view of their being read by Scotchmen only, but also by natives of England, and of other countries where the English language is spoken or understood.

Robert Burns was, in reality, what he has been represented to be, a Scottish peasant. To render the incidents of his humble story generally intelligible, it seems therefore, advisable to prefix some observations on the character and situation of the order to which he belonged—a class of men distinguished by many peculiarities: by this means we shall form a more correct notion of the advantages with which he started, and of the obstacles which he surmounted. A few observations on the Scottish peasantry will not, perhaps, be found unworthy of attention in other respects; and the subject is, in a great measure, new. Scotland has produced persons of high distinction in every branch of philosophy and literature; and her history, while a separate and independent nation, has been successfully explored. But the present character of the people was not then formed; the nation then presented features similar to those which the feudal system of the Catholic religion had diffused over Europe, modified, indeed, by the peculiar nature of her territory and climate. The Reformation, by which such important changes were produced on the national character, was speedily followed by the accession of the Scottish monarchs to the English throne; and the period which elapsed from that accession to the Union, has been rendered memorable, chiefly, by those bloody convulsions in which both divisions of the island were involved, and which, in a considerable degree, conceived from the eye of the historian the domestic history of the people, and the gradual variations in their condition and manners. Since the Union, Scotland, though the seat of two unsuccessful attempts to restore the house of Stuart to the throne, has enjoyed a comparative tranquility; and it is since this period that the present character of her peasantry has been in a great measure formed, though the political abuses affecting it are to be traced to the previous acts of her separate legislature.

A slight acquaintance with the peasantry of Scotland will serve to convince an unbiased observer, that they possess a degree of intelligence not generally found among the same class of men in the other countries of Europe. In the very humblest condition of the Scottish peasants, every one can read, and most persons are more or less skilled in writing and arithmetic; and, under the disguise of their unassuming appearance, and of their peculiarities, they are capable of understanding all that may be expected from them. It will discover that they possess a curiosity, and have obtained a degree of information, corresponding to these acquirements.

These advantages they owe to the legal provision made by the parliament of Scotland in 1646, for the establishment of a school in every parish throughout the kingdom, for the express purpose of educating the poor: a law which may challenge comparison with any act of legislation to be found in the records of history, whether we consider the wisdom of the ends in view, the simplicity of the means employed, or the provisions made to render these means effectual to their purpose. This excellent statute was repealed on the accession of Charles II. in 1660, together with all the other laws passed during the commonwealth, as not being sanctioned by the royal assent. It slept during the reigns of Charles and James, but was re-enacted, precisely in the same terms, by the Scottish parliament after the revolution, in 1661, and is the last provision on the subject. Its effects on the national character may be considered to have commenced about the period of the Union; and doubtless it co-operated with the peace and security arising from that happy event, in producing the extraordinary change in fashion of industry and good morals, which the character of the common people of Scotland has since undergone.*

The church establishment of Scotland happily coincides with the institutions just mentioned, which may be called its school establishment. The clergyman being everywhere resident in his particular parish, becomes the natural patron and superintendent of the parish school, and is enabled in various ways to promote the comfort of the teacher, and the proficency of the scholars. The teacher himself is often a candidate for holy orders, who, during the long course of study and probation required in the Scottish church, renders the time which can be spared from his professional studies, useful to others as well as to himself, by assuming the respectable character of a schoolmaster. It is common for the established schools, even in the country parishes of Scotland, to enjoy the means of classical instruction; and many of the farmers, and some even of the cottagers, submit to much privation, that they may obtain for one of their sons at least, the precarious advantage of a learned education. The difficulty to be surmounted arises, indeed, not from the expense of instructing their children, but from the charge of supporting them. In the country parish schools, the English language, writing, and accounts, are generally taught at the rate of six shillings per annum. In the towns the prices are somewhat higher.

It would be improper in this place to inquire minutely into the degree of instruction received in these semi-

* See Appendix, No. I. Note A.
**Prefatory Remarks.**

varies, or to attempt any precise estimate of its effects, either on the individuals who are the subjects of this instruction, or on the community to which they belong. That it is on the whole favourable to industry and moral improvement, though not uniformly so; and that conspicuous exceptions, seems to be proved by the most striking and decisive appearance; and it is equally clear, that it is the cause of that spirit of emigration and of adventure so prevalent among Scotchmen. Knowledge has, by Lord Verulam, been denominated power; by others it has with less propriety been denominated virtue or happiness: we may with confidence consider it as motion. A motion within proportion as the sphere of its action is enlarged, as well as the means of gratifying those wishes. It may be considered as taking within the sphere of his vision a large portion of the globe on which we tread, and discovering advantage at a greater distance on its surface. His desires or ambitions, once excited, are stimulated by his imagination; and distant and uncertain objects, giving free scope to the operation of this faculty, often acquire, in the mind of the youthful adventurer, an attraction from their very distance and uncertainty. If, therefore, a greater degree of instruction be given to the peasantry of a country comparatively poor, in the neighbourhood of other countries rich in natural and acquired advantages; and if the barriers be removed that kept them separate, the province of instruction may be transferred from place to a certain extent, by laws nearly as uniform as those by which heat diffuses itself among surrounding bodies, or water finds its level when left to its natural course. The Union of England and Scotland was broken down which divided the two British nations, and knowledge and poverty poured the adventuring natives of the north over the fertile plains of England: and here, over the colonies which she has settled in the east and west. The stream of population continues to flow from the north to the south; for the causes that originally impelled it continue to operate; and the inhabitants are as incapable as the Christian subjects of an informed and hardy race of men, educated in poverty, and prepared for hardship and danger; patient of labour, and providal of life.

The preachers of the Reformation in Scotland were disciples of Calvin, and brought with them the temper as well as the tenets of that celebrated heresarch. The presbyterian form of worship and of church government was endeared to the people, from being established by themselves. It was endeared to them, also, by the struggle it had to maintain with the Catholic ascendancy of the episcopal church. The establishment of both of which, after a hundred years of fierce and sometimes bloody contention, it finally triumphed, receiving the countenance of government, and the sanction of law. During the same period of contention, the pride of the temper of the people became more and more obstinate and bigoted: and the nation received that deep tinge of fanaticism which coloured their public transactions, as well as their persecution of others. When the public schools were established, the instruction communicated in them partook of the religious character of the people. The Catechism of the Westminster Divines was the universal school-book, and was put into the hands of the young peasant as soon as he had acquired a knowledge of his alphabet: and his first exercise in the art of reading introduced him into the spirit of instruction, and into the mysteries of Christian faith. This practice is continued in our own times. Alas! the Assembly's Catechism, the *Proverbs of Solomon,* and the New and Old Testament, follow in regular succession. And the children are instructed in the knowledge of the sacred writings, and receiving their doctrines according to the interpretation of the Westminster Confession of Faith. Thus, with the instruction they are endowed, the schools of Scotland blended the dogmas of the national church; and hence the first and most constant exercise of ingenuity among the peasantry displayed itself in defending and promoting that persuasion. With a strong attachment to the national creed, is conjoined a bigoted preference to certain forms of worship; of which the source would be often altogether obscure, if we did not recollect that the cere-

*See Appendix, No. 1, Note B.*

monies of the Scotch Church were framed in direct opposition, in every point, to those of the church of Rome.

The eccentricities of conduct, and singularities of opinion and manners, which characterized the English sectaries in the last century, afforded a subject for the comic muse of Butler, whose pictures lose their interest, since their archetypes are lost. Some of the peculiarities common among the more rigid disciples of Calvinism in Scotland, in the present times, have given scope to the ridicule of Burns, whose humour is equally severe and just, and whose manners are singularly expressive and exact. Fortunately the correctness of his taste did not always correspond with the strength of his genius; and hence some of his best productions are rendered unfit for the light.*

The information and the Religious education of the peasantry of Scotland, promote sedentism of conduct, and habits of thought and reflection. These good qualities are not counteracted, by the establishment of poor laws, which while they reflect credit on the re-nown, detract from the wisdom of the English legislature. To make a legal provision for the inevitable distresses of the poor, who by age or disease are fitted for no kind of exertions, is a charitable act of compassion, and for the most part is as necessary as dispensable duty of society; and if, in the execution of a plan for this purpose, a distinction could be introduced, so as to exclude from its benefits those whose situation is not truly indigent, it would be a matter of little consequence, to make the administration of such an institution perhaps be as rational as humane. But to lay a general tax on property for the support of poverty, from whatever cause proceeding, is a measure full of danger. It must operate in a considerable degree as an incitement to idleness, and a discouragement to industry. It takes away from vice and indolence the prospect of their most dreaded consequences, and in some instances may lead to crimes in which the criminal is not even aware of his own vice. In such cases it is expedient to render the rise in the price of labour, not a blessing but a curse to the la-

* * *

When the Reformation was established in Scotland, instrumental music was banished from the churches, as it was considered to be too much of "profane minstrelly." Instead of being regulated by an instrument, the voices of the congregation are led and directed by a person known as the "preceptor," and it is required that all persons who are expected to join in the singing of the psalm which is to be sung. Church-music is therefore a part of the education of the peasantry of Scotland, in which they are usually instructed in the long winter nights by the parish scho master, who is generally the preceptor, or by itinerant teachers more or less celebrated for their powers of voice. This branch of the education of the Scottish child is carefully guarded and directed, but was revived about thirty or forty years ago, when the music itself was reformed and improved. The Scottish system of psalmody is, however, radical.

* Holy Willie's Prayer; Rob the Rhymer's Welcome to his Bastard Child; Epistle to J. Gowdie; The Holy Polly &c.
That dancing should also be very generally a part of the education of the Scottish peasantry, will surprise those who have only seen the descriptions of music and dance and still more those who reflect on the rigid spirit of Calvinism with which the nation is so deeply affected, and to which this recreation is so strongly abhorrent. It is true, the strain of Scottish nature is dancing, and indeed almost all the other instruction. They are taught to dance by persons generally of their own number, many of whom work at daily labour during the summer months. The school is usually a barn, and the arena for the performer is generally a clay floor. The dome is lighted by candles stuck in one end of a cloven stick, the other end of which is thrust into the wall. Reels, strathspeys, country-dances, and hornpipes, are here practiced. The jig so much in favour among the English peasantry, has no place among them. The attachment of the people of Scotland of every rank, and particularly of the peasantry, to this amusement, is very great. After the labours of the day are over, young men and women, of both sexes, appear upon the field, or, in the winter, to these country dancing-schools; and the instinct that the violin sounds a Scottish air, fatigue seems to vanish, the toil-bent rustic becomes erect, his features soften with sympathy; every nerve seems to thrill with sensation, and every artery to vibrate with life. These rustic performers are indeed less to be admired for grace, than for agility and animation, and their movements, whether in the art of modern dancing, as well as their tunes, are common to every rank in Scotland, and are now generally known. In our own day they have penetrated into England, and receive the raves of some of our most elegant critics. In another generation they will be naturalized in every part of the island.

The prevalence of this taste, or rather passion for dancing, among a people so deeply touchtured with the spirit and doctrines of Calvin, is one of those contradictions which the philosophic observer so often finds in national character and manners. It is probably to be ascribed to the Scottish music, which throughout all its varieties, is so full of sensibility; and which, in all its milder strains, awakens those vivid emotions that find in dancing their natural solace and relief.

This triumph of the music of Scotland over the spirit and doctrines of Calvin, is one of those contradictions which the philosophic observer so often finds in national character and manners. It is probably to be ascribed to the Scottish music, which throughout all its varieties, is so full of sensibility; and which, in all its milder strains, awakens those vivid emotions that find in dancing their natural solace and relief.

The Reformation, which proved fatal to the rise of the other fine arts in Scotland, probably impeded, but perhaps only modified, this passion. It has been a common occurrence, that the present, as it used to be, to obtain without long continued and obstinate struggle. The numerous secessaries who dissent from the establishment on account of the relaxation which they think it is necessary to make in some of her original doctrines and discipline, universally condemn the practice of dancing, and the schools where it is taught; and the more elderly and serious part of the people, of every persuasion, tolerate rather than approve these meetings of the young of both sexes, where dancing is practised to their spirit-stirring music, where care is dispelled, toll is forgotten, and prudence itself is sometimes lulled to sleep.

In appreciating the happiness and virtue of a community, there is perhaps no single criterion on which so much depends. In such a case as this, the degree of the intercourse between the sexes. Where this displays the least degree of attachment, accompanied by purity of conduct, the character and the influence of woman rise in society, our imperfect nature mounds in the sense of moral excellence; and, from the source of this single affection, a stream of felicity descends, which branches into a thousand rivulets that enrich and adorn the field of human life. This stream, as it sinks into an heritage, the heritage of our species is comparatively poor, and man approaches the condition of the brute that perisheth.
that Ossian sang,"* Scotland, judging from this crite-
rión, might be considered as ranking high among
civil and ecclesiastical ages. To appreciate her
situation by the same criterion, would be a delicate and
difficult undertaking. After considering the proba-
bility, however, of her popular songs and her national
music, and examining how far the effects to be ex-
pected from these are supported by facts, the inquirer
would also have to examine the influence of other causes,
their civil and ecclesiastical institutions, by which the character, and even the man-
ners of a people, though silently and slowly, are often
powerfully controlled. In the point of view in which we are considering the subject, the ecclesiastical estab-
lishments of Scotland may be supposed peculiarly fa-
vourable to purity of conduct. The dissoluteness of
manners among the Catholic clergy, which proceeded,
and in some measure produced the Reformation, led
in an extraordinary strictness on the part of the re-
formers, and especially in that particular in which the
lententiousness of the clergy had been carried to
its highest height—the intercourse between the sexes.
On this point, as on all others connected with austerity
of manners, the disciples of Calvin assumed a greater
severity than those of the coexistent episcopal church.
The punishment of illicit connexion between the sexes,
was throughout all Europe, a province which the clergy
assumed to themselves; and the church of Scotland,
which at the Reformation was possessed of so many pow-
ners and privileges, at that period took this crime under
her more especial jurisdiction.† When pregnancy takes
place without marriage, the condition of the female
causes, the distress to her, is a great injury. In this
first instance, that the clergy and elders of the church
exercise their zeal. After examination before the trk-
session, touching the circumstances of her guilt, she
must endure a public penance, and sustains a public
rebuke from the pulpit, for three Sabbaths successively,
in the face of the congregation to which she belongs,
and thus have her weakness exposed, and her
name blazoned, in the same degree as to respect to
the male; but how much lighter the punishment! It
is well known that this dreadful law, worthy the irre-
monstrance of Calvin and of Knox, has a sort of
consequences, at the very moment of which human nature
recalls.

While the punishment of intercourse prohibited by
the institutions of Scotland is severe, the culprits have
an obvious method of avoiding it afforded them by the
law respecting marriage, the validity of which requires
neither the ceremonies of the church, nor any other
conventional form. The law assumes the presence of each other as husband and wife, made by the parties
before witnesses, or in any other way that gives legal
evidence of such an acknowledgment having taken
place. Thus, when the ceremony, or the solemn
date of their marriage, an opportunity is thus given to avoid
the punishment, and repair the consequences of illi-
cit gratification. Such a degree of laxity respecting
so serious a contract might produce much confusion in
the descent of property, without a still farther indul-
gence; but the law of Scotland, legitimating all children
born before wedlock, on the subsequent mar-
rriage of their parents, renders the actual date of the
marriage itself of little consequence.‡ Marriages
contracted in Scotland without the ceremonies of the
church, are not, as is usually supposed, under the
authorized to submit to a rebuke for their conduct, in
the face of their respective congregations, which is not
however necessary to render the marriage valid.
Breach, whose marriage, it will appear, was irreconcilable, does not seem to have undergone this part of the dis-
cipline of the church.

The influence which the institutions of Scotland are in
many particulars favourable to a contrast among the
peasantry founded on foresight and reflection, on the
subject of marriage the reverse of this is true. Irregu-
lar marriages, it may be naturally supposed, are often
in Scotland, most of whatever sort they may occur.
The children of such marriages, poorly en-
dowed by their parents, find a certain degree of instruc-
tion of easy acquisition; but the comforts of life, and
art of adventure, for which the people are so re-
markable.

The manners and appearance of the Scottish peasant
people are, however, better adapted to a stranger the degree of their cultivation. In our own country, their indus-
try is inferior to that of the same description of men in
the southern division of the island. Industry and
their own happy institutions, might be considered
this disadvantage. Even the union of the British na-
tions was not, from obvious causes, immediately fol-
lowed by all the benefits which it was ultimately des-
lved to produce. At length, however, these benefits
are distinctly felt, and generally acknowledged. I pro-
erty is secure; manufactures and commerce increas-
ing; and agriculture is rapidly improving in Scotland.
As yet, indeed, we have not, in general, enabled
men to make improvements out of their own capitals, as
is England; but the landholders, who have seen and
felt the advantages resulting from them, contribute
to them not less than to those of the south. England,
well as population, is accumulating rapidly on the
Scottish soil; and the nation, enjoying a great part of
the blessings of Englishmen and retaining several of
the more painful instincts, might be considered with
confidence could be placed in human foresight, to be as
yet only in an early stage of their progress. Yet there
are obstacles in their way. To the cultivation of the
soil are opposed the extent and the strictness of the
tenant; to the improvement of the people, the rapidly
increasing use of spirítuous liquors, a detestable prac-
tice, use of spirits, and wine.
position of the Scottish peasantry exposes them to this practice. This disposition, which is fostered by their national songs and music, is perhaps characteristic of most people. Through the medium of these pleasures, it counteracts by its consequences the effects of their patience, industry, and frugality, both at home and abroad, of which those especially who have not the advantage of free schools, of public libraries, and of newspapers, have had much reason to complain. Many of the best counsels of the clergy, and many public institutions, are neglected and despised.

Since the Union, the manners and language of the people of Scotland have no longer a standard among themselves, but are tried by the standards of the nation to which they are united. Though their habits are not uniform, they are not free from the general ideas and principles of the community, and this is especially true of the common people, and of the peasantry, who are undergoing a rapid change. Even the farmers of the present day appear to have less of the peculiarities of their country in their speech, than the men of letters of the last generation. Burns, who never left the island, nor penetrated farther into England than Carlisle on the one hand, or Newcastle on the other, had less of the Scottish dialect than Hume, who lived for many years in the best society of England and France; or perhaps than Robertson, who wrote the English language in a style of such purity; and if he had been in other respects fitted to take a position in our literature, his prosaic tradition would neither have fettered his eloquence, nor deprived it of its due effect.

A striking particular in the character of the Scottish peasantry, is one which it is hoped will not be lost—the strength of their domestic attachments. The primary sentiment of humble beings; the attachment to their families, and particularly to obtain for them instruction, which they consider as the chief good, has already been noticed. If their children live and prosper, they have their certain reward, not merely in witnessing, but as sharing of their prosperity. Even in the humblest ranks of the peasantry, the earnings of the children may generally be considered as at the service of the parents. The Scottish family is not a large portion of the wages of labour applied to the support and comfort of those whose days of labour are past. A similar strength of attachment extends through all the domestic relations.

Our next partake largely of the amiable characteristic of his humble compatriots; he was also strongly tinted with another striking feature which belongs to them, a partiality for his native country, of which many proofs may be found in his writings. This, it may be observed, is the natural attachment among the natives of Scotland, differing, however, in its character, according to the character of the tenant, and the tenant's estate, in which it was a selfish prejudice, in others, a generous affection.

An attachment to the land of their birth is, indeed, common to all men. It is found among the inhabitants of every region of the earth, from the arctic to the antarctic circle, in all the vast variety of climate, of surface and of civilization. To analyze this general sentiment, to trace it through the mazes of association up to the primary affection in which it has its source, would neither be a difficult nor an unpleasing labour. On the first consideration of the subject, we should perhaps expect to find this attachment strong in proportion to the physical advantages of the soil; but inquiry will make us aware that this supposition seems rather to lead to an opposite conclusion. In the fertile regions where beneficent nature yields almost spontaneously whatever is necessary to human wants, patriotism, as well as every other generous sentiment, seems weak and languid. In countries less richly endowed, where the comforts, and even necessities of life must be purchased by patient toil, the affections of the heart receive a reinforcement as the facilities for improving under exertion, and patriotism flourishes amidst its kindred virtues. Where it is necessary to combine for mutual defence, as well as for the support of their country, mutual difficulties and labours, the social affections unfold themselves, and extend from the men with whom we live, to the soil on which we tread. It will perhaps be found indeed, that our affections cannot be originally called forth, but by objects capable, or supposed capable, of feeling our sentiments; and of returning them; but when once excited they are strengthened and perpetuated by the powers of imagination, and seizes more especially on those inani mate parts of creation, which form the theatre on which we have first felt the alternations of joy, and grief, and which are invested with all sorts of symbolical and poetical regard. If this reasoning be just, the love of our country, although modified, and even extinguished in individuals by the views and changes of life, may be preserved, in our general reasonings, to be strong among a people in proportion to their social, and more especially to their domestic affections. In small states it is generally more active than in large ones, for the same reason, and also because the independence of a small community being maintained with difficulty, and frequently endangered, sentiments of patriotism are more frequently excited. In mountainous countries it is generally found more active than in plains, because there the necessities of life often require a close union of the community, especially, because in such countries, though less populous than plains, the inhabitants, instead of being scattered equally over the whole are usually divided into smaller communities or districts, either by the hills, or by the valleys, and on the banks of their respective streams; situations well calculated to call forth and to concentrate the social affections, amongst Scenery that acts by suggestion, by the sign of nature on the memory. It may also be remarked, that mountainous countries are often peculiarly calculated to nourish sentiments of national pride and independence, from the influence of history on the affections of the mind. In such countries from their natural strength, inferior nations have maintained their independence against their more powerful neighbours, by a successful effort against oppression. Such countries present the fields of battle, where the tide of invasion was rolled back, and where the ashes of those rest, who have died in defence of their nation.

The operation of the various causes we have mentioned is doubtless more general and more prominent, where the scenery of a country, the peculiar manners of its inhabitants, and the martial achievements of their ancestors are embodied in national songs, and united to national days; on the anniversary of these dates, the attachments to the land of birth of the Scotchmen are multiplied and strengthened: and the images of infancy, strongly associating with the general affections, resist the influence of time. It is true, the new impressions are not so vivid in countries far distant, and amidst far different scenes, to the latest periods of life, to soothe the heart with the pleasures of memory, when those of hope lie away.

If this reasoning be just, it will explain to us why the natives of Scotland, even of cultivated minds, love their country: and why they have a partial attachment to the land of their birth, and why this is so strongly discoverable in the writings of Burns, who joined, in the higher powers of the understanding the most ardent affections. Let no man of reflection think his superior labour to trace the rise and progress of a character like his. Burn in the condition of a peasant, he rose by the force of his mind into distinction and influence, and in his works has exhibited what are so rarely found, the charms of original genius. With a deep insight into the human heart, his poetry exhibits high powers of speculation; it infuses the spirit of the golden palm, the peculiar manners of his country; and it may be considered as a monument, not to his own name only, but to the expiring genius of an ancient and once illustrious country. Had he been enabled to foretell the incidents of his life, caudron will prevent us from dwelling indulgently on those failings which justice forbids us to conceal; we will read lightly over his yet warm ashes, and respect the laurels that shelter his unlimily grave.
THE LIFE OF

ROBERT BURNS,

BY DR. CURRIE.

ROBERT BURNS was, as is well known, the son of a farmer in Ayrshire, and afterwards himself a farmer there; but, having been unsuccessful, he was about to emigrate to Jamaica. He had previously, however, attracted some notice by his poetical talents in the vicinity where he lived; and having published a small volume of his poems at Kilmarnobock, this drew upon him more general attention. In consequence of the encouragement he received, he repaired to Edinburgh, and there published by subscription, an improved and enlarged edition of his poems, which met with extraordinary success. By the profits arising from the sale of this edition, he was enabled to enter on a farm in Dumfriesshire; and having married a person to whom he had long been attached, he retired to devote the remainder of his life to agriculture. It was again, however, unsuccessful; and, abandoning his farm, he removed into the town of Dumfries, where he filled an inferior office in the excise, and where he terminated his life, in July 1796, in his thirty-eighth year.

The strength and originality of his genius procured him the notice of many persons distinguished in the republic of letters, and among others, that of Mr. Moore, well known for his Views of Society and Manners on the Continent of Europe, Zuluc, and various other works. To this gentleman our poet addressed a letter, after his first visit to Edinburgh, giving a history of his life, up to the period of his writing. In a composition never intended to see the light, elegance, or perfect correctness of composition will not be expected. These, however, will be compensated by the opportunity of seeing our poet, as he gives the incidents of his life, unfold the peculiarities of his character with all the careless vigour and open sincerity of his mind.

Muckline, 2d August, 1787.

Sir,

For some months past I have been rambling over the country; but I am now confined with some lingering complaints, originating, as I take it, in the stomach. To divert my spirits a little in this miserable bag of canvas, I have taken a whim to give you a history of my life. My name has made some little noise in this country; you have done me the honour to interest yourself very warmly in my behalf; and I think a faithful account of what character of a man I am, and how I came by that character, may perhaps amuse you in an idle moment. I will give you an honest narrative; though I know it will be often at my own expense; for I assure you, Sir, I have, like Solomon, whose character, excepting in the trifling affair of wisdom, I sometimes think I resemble—I have, I say, like him, turned my eyes to beholding men and falconry, and, like him, too frequently shaken hands with their intoxicating friendship.*

* After you have perused these pages, should you think them trifling and imperfect, I only beg leave to tell you, that the poor author wrote them under some twitching qualms of conscience, arising from suspicion that he was doing what he ought not to do; a predicament he has more than once been in before.

"I have not the most distant pretensions to assume that character which the pro-coated guardians of eschutcheons call a Gentleman. When at Edinburgh last winter; I got acquainted in the Herald's Office and, looking through that gramarye of honour, I there found almost every name in the kingdom: but for me,

"My ancient but ignoble blood
Has crept thro' soundrels ever since the flood."* Gules, Purpure, Argent, &c. quite disowned me.

* My father was of the north of Scotland, the son of a farmer, and was thrown by early misfortunes on the world at large; where, after many wanderings and sojournings, he picked up a pretty large quantity of observation and experience, to which I am indebted for most of my little pretensions to wisdom. I have met with few who understood m·n, their manners, and their ways, equal to him; but stubborn, ungainly in-}
be more sceptical than I am in such matters, yet it often takes an effort of philosophy to shake off these idle terrors. The earliest composition that I recollect took the form of The Vision of Mirza, and a hymn of Anderson's, in beginning with the words, Creeping from the desert, O Lord! I particularly remember one half-stanza, which was music to my boyish ear—

"For though on dreadful whirs we hung
High on the broken wave—"

I met with these pieces in Munson's English Collection, one of my school books. These two first books I ever read, and the beauty of which, I have no doubt, and any two books I ever read since, were The Life of Handel and The History of Sir William Wallace. Hannibal gave my young ideas such a turn, that I used them and their rugged playfolds. It takes a fest

ing drum and bag-pipe, and wish myself tall enough to be a soldier; while the story of Wallace poured a Scottish prejudice into my veins, which will boil along till the flood-gates of life shut in eternal rest.

Polonial divinity about this time was putting the country half mad; and, I, ambitious of shining in conversation parties on Sundays, between sermons, at funerals, &c. used, a few years afterwards, to puzzle my young masters with much in such fashion as I raised a line and cry of heresy against me, which has not ceased to this hour.

My vicinity to Ayr was of some advantage to me. My social disposition, when not checked by some modifications of spirited pride, was, like our catechism definition of infidelity, without bawn or limits. I found the presbyterian clergy possessed superior advantages, the youngng actors, who were busy in the rehearsal of parts in which they planned to appear, and the same as, alas! I was destined to dread when the scene was not so commonly at this green age that our young gen-
tary have a just sense of the immense distance between them and in raptures up and down. It takes a fest

dashes into the world, to give the young great man that proper, decent, unnoticed disregard for the poor, insignificant, stupid devils, the mechanics and peasant-

ry around him, who were perhaps born in the same village. My young superiors never insulted the clout-

erly appearance of my ploughboy carcass, the two extremes of which were often exposed to all the inclem-

cencies of all the seasons. They would give me strange volumes of books; among them, even then, I could pick up some observations; and one, whose heart I could not read. I was often in the midst of scenes which have tainted, helped me to a little French. I am writing what these my young friends and benefactors as they occasion-

ally went off for the East or West Indies, was naturally in the main afflicted, though their parts were no more serious evils. My father's generous master died; the farm proved a ruinous bargain; and, to clench the misfortune, we fell into the hands of a factor, who sat for the picture ! have drawn of one of my Tale of Two Dogs. My father was advanced in life when he married; I was the eldest of seven children; and I was not by hardships, was unfit to be sternly to appear on the stage of life, and not easily broken. There was a freedom in his lease in two years more; and, to weather those two years, we retrenched our expenses. We lived very poorly; I was a dexterous ploughman, for my age; and the next eldest to me was a brother (Gilbert) who could plough the plough very well, and help me to thresh the corn. Nor might I have viewed these scenes with some satisfaction; but so did not I; my indignation yet boils at the recollection of the stick-actor's insolent threatening letters, which used to set me in tears.

This kind of life—the cheerless gloom of a hermit, with the unceasing moil of a galley-slave, brought me to the conclusion that I must made a fortune, and study a profession which should give me leisure to be the first committed of the Rhyme. You know our country custom of coupling a man and woman to-}

gether as partners in the labours of harvest. In my}

fifteenth autumn my partner was a bewitching cre-
ture, a year younger than myself. My scarcity of English denies me the power of doing her justice in that language; but you know the Scottish idiom—she was a bonny lass, counsell lady. In short, she altogether unwittingly to herself, initiated me in that delicious passion, which in spite of acid disappointment, gin-

horse and hooch, combined book and pipe, shall make me the first of human joys, our dearest bliss! How can I live! How she caught the contagion I cannot tell: you medical people talk much of infection from breathing the same air; I am convinced, but you are not thus far said I loved her. Indeed I did not know why myself I liked so much to loiter behind her, when returning in the evening from our labours; why the tones of her voice made my heart strings thrill like a Zilliac harp; and particularly why my pulse beat such a furious ra-
tan when I looked and fingered over her little hand to pluck the cruel nettle stings and thistles. Among her other love consummation, which, after two years; and it was her favorite reel, to which I attempted giv-
ing an embodied vehicle in rhyme. I was not so pre-

sumuous as to imagine that I could make verses like printed ones, composed by men who had Greek and Latin; but my girl sang a song, which was said to be composed by a small country lad's son, on one of his master's horses. He was a very good boy, the son why I might not rhyme as well as he; for, except-

ing that he could smear sheep, and cast peats, his fa-
ther living in the moorlands, he had no more scholar-
craft than myself.

Thus with me began love and poetry: which at times, in my family, and during the winter months, have been my highest enjoyment. My father struggled on till he reached the freedom in his lease, when he entered on a larger farm, about ten miles farther inland. Thus the nature of the bargain he made was such as to throw a little ready money into his hands at the commencement of his lease, otherwise the affair would have been impracticable. For four years was the time agreed on for the term commencing between him and his landlord as to terms, after three years tossing and whirling in the vortex of litigation, my father was just saved from the horrors of jail by voluntary consummation, in which, after two years' promise, kindly stepped in and carried him away, to where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

It is during the time that we lived on this farm, that my little story is most eventful. I was, at the beginning of my second period published. I was a very awkward boy in the parish—no solitary was how-

nailed with the ways of the world. What I knew of ancient story was gathered from Solomon's and

Guthrie's Grammar. I have heard of manners, of literature and criticism, I got from the Spectator. These with Pope's Works, and some plays of Shakespeare, Tull and Dick-


tion of English Songs, and Hervey's Meditations, had formed the whole of my reading. The collection of Songs was my main medium. I threw over every part of this practice much of my eristic craft, such as it is.

In my seventeenth year, to give my manners a brush, I went to a country dancing school. My father had an unaccountable antipathy against these meet-
ings; and my going was, what to this moment I repent, in opposition to his wishes. My father, as I said be-

fore, was an ardent lover of the stage. In the in-

stance of disobedience in me he took a sort of dislike to me, which I believe was one cause of the dissipation which attended our being in that society. I am convinced, comparatively with the tinniness and solemnity

* See Appendix, No. II. Note A.
and regularity of presbyterian country life; for though the Wilt''ist nature of thoughtlessness which were almost the sole lights to my path, yet early ingrained plente and virtue kept me for several years afterwards well. The first time it was my life was to aim at. I had felt early some stirrings of ambition, but they were the blind gropings of Homer's Cyclop round the walls of his cave. saw my chance, and only at the cost of a very long, toil labour. The only two openings by which I could enter the tem- ple of Fortune, was the gate ofiggardly economy, or the path of grander singling myself to the truth. The first is so contracted an aperture, I never could squeeze myself into it; — the fast I always hated — there was contamination in the very entrance! Thus abandon- ed to the last, of my heart's desire, I possessed not sociality, as well from native hilarity as from a prise of observation and remark; a constitutional melancholy or hypochondriasis that made me fly from soititude; add to these iniquities to social life, my reputa- tion for bookish knowledge, a certain wild logical talent, and a strength of thought, something like the rudiments of good sense; and it will not seem surpris- ing that I have never since been able to acquire a more cheered heart, and to more often partake of the "Amour humain." My heart was completely tinner, and was eternally lighted up by some goddess or other; and as in every other way I was out of the world, my fortune was various, some- times I was received with favour, and sometimes I was mortified with a repulse. At the plough, scythe, or reaping hook, I feared no competitor, and thus I set absolute want at defiance; and as I never cared fur- ther for my labours while I was in actual exercise, I spent the evenings in the way after my own country. A heart lad seldom carries on a love-adven- ture without an ascen-ting confidential; I possessed such curiosity, zeal, and intrepid dexterity, that recom- mended me as a proper second on these occasions; and I dare say, I felt as much pleasure in being in the secr- et of half the love of the parish of Tarbolton, as ever did statesman in knowing the iniquities of half the courts of Europe. The very goose feather in my hand seems to know instinctively the well worn path of my imagination, the favourite theme of my song: and with difficulty restrained from giving you a couple of paragraphs on the love adventures of my compeers, the humble incident of an arm-bounded, and cottage, but the same; the sons of science, ambition, or avarece, bap- tize these things by the name of Felilies. To the sons and daughters of labour and poverty, they are mat- ters of the most vexation and disgust. A de- sult act, the stolen interview, the tender farewell, are the greatest and most delicious parts of their en- joyment.

"Another circumstance in my life which made some alterations in my mind and manners, was that I spent my nineteenth summer on a smuggling coast, a good distance from home at a noted school, to learn manu- scription, surveying, dialling, &c. in which I made a pretty good progress. But I made a greater progress in the knowledge of mankind. The contraband trade was a trial to me ofeternal, but it was the most legitimate way I had to me to fall in with those who carried it on. Scenes of swaggering, riot and roaring dissipation were the daily fare, and every day a new acquaintance was and I learned a little of the social life. Here, though I learnt to fill my glass, and to mix without fear in a drunken squabble, yet I went on with a high hand with my geometry, till the sun enter- ed the year. I was then a boy of ten, and always a book boy, when a charming Elette who lived next door to the school, versed my trigonometry, and set me off as a tangent from the sphere of my studies. I however soon fixed at the game, and commenced a day's work a day more; but stepping into the garden one charming noon to take the sun's altitude, there I met my angel, "Like Froseringe gathering flowers, "Herself a fairer flower.""

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

"I returned home very considerably improved. My reading was enlarged with the very important addi- tion of Homer's Iliad; a book which has seen human nature in a new phase; and I engaged several of my school fellows to keep up a literary cor- respondence with me. This improved me in com- position. I had met with a collection of letters by the wits of Queen Anne's reign, and I pored over them most devotly; I kept copies of any of my own letters that pleased me, and from a comparison between them and the composition of most of my correspondeants, flatter- ed my vanity. I carried this whim so far, that though I had not three farthings of worth of business in the world, yet I gave every evill I could imagine if I had been a broad plodding son of day-break and ledger.

"My life flowed on much in the same course till my twenty-third year. First l'amour, et vive la bagatelle were my sole principles of action. The addition of more authors to my library gave me great pleas- sure; I found them at last. The Man of Feeling—were my bosom favourites. Foe's was still a dar- ling walk for my mind; but it is now very insalubir in a simple mode of the hour. I had usually half a dozen or more pieces on hand; took up one or other, as it suited the momentary tone of the mind, and dismissed the work as it bordered on fatigue. My passions, when once lighted up, raged like so many devils, till they got vent in rhyme; and then the coming over my verses like a spell, soaked all into quiet! None of the rhymes of those days are now preserved. Then Winter, a Diapason, the selection of my printed pieces; The Death of Poor Mat, John Barleycorn, and songs first, second, and third. Song second was the abolition of that passion which ended the above mentioned school business.

"My twenty-third year was to me an important era. Partly through whim, and partly that I wished to set to about doing something in life, I joined a full- dresser in a neighbouring town (Irvine) to learn his trade. This was an unlucky affair. My***; and to finish excursions in Winter, a Diapason, the selection of my printed pieces; The Death of Poor Mat, John Barleycorn, and songs first, second, and third. Song second was the abolition of that passion which ended the aforementioned school business.

"I was obliged to give up this scheme; the clouds of misfortune were gathering thick round ray father's head; and what was worst of all he was visibly growing for his fit was, to create for me a belle aille which I adored, and who had pledged her soul to meet me in the field of matrimony, jilted me, with peculiar circumstances of mortification. The finis- hing touch of my life, the shop took fire, and burnt to ashes; and I was left like a true poet, not worth a six- pence.

"From this adventure I learned something of a town life; but the principal thing which gave my mind a turn, was a friendship I formed with a young fellow a very noble character, but a hapless son of misfor- tune. He was the son of a simple mechanic; but the great man in the neighbourhood taking him under his patronage, gave him a genteel education, with a view of bettering his situation in life. The patron dying soon after, the young fellow became occasioned to a belle aille whom I adored, and who had pledged her soul to meet me in the field of matrimony, jilted me, with peculiar circumstances of mortification. The finis- hing touch of my life, the shop took fire, and burnt to ashes; and I was left like a true poet, not worth a six- pence.

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I attended school. I had pride before, but he taught it to flow in proper channels. I was once a man, and I was determined to be mine, and I was all attention to learn. He was the only man I ever saw who was a greater fool than myself, where women were the presiding star; but he and I met the devil with a hitherto I had regarded with horror. Here his friendship did me mischief; and the consequence was that I resumed the thumb. I wrote the Poetry. My reading only increased while in this town, by two starry volumes of Pamela, and one of Ferdinand Count Fathom, which gave me some idea of novels. Saw the eight, some religious pieces that are in print, I had given up; but meeting with Ferguson's Scottish Poems, I strung anew my wildly sounding lyre with emulating vigour. When my father died, his all went among the hell honks that prowled in the keep of justice; but we made a shift to collect a little money in the family amongst us, with which, to keep us together, my brother, and I took a new game. As my brother wanted my hair braided, as well as my social and amorous madness, but, in good sense, and every sober qualification he was far superior to me.

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

I now began to be known in the neighborhood as a maker of rhymes. The first of my poetic outpourings that saw the light, were religious pieces that are in print, and related between two reverend Calvinists, both of them dramatic persons in my Holy Fair. I had a notion myself, that the piece had some merit; but to prevent the worst, I gave a copy of it to a friend who was very fond of such things, and told him that I could not guess who was the author of it, but that. I thought it pretty clever. The piece was certainly descrd of the clergyman, as well as laity, it met with a roar of applause. Holy Willie's Prayer next made its appearance, and alarmed the kirk-session so much, that they held several meetings; there was the danger of it being pointed out against profane rhymer. Unluckily for me, my wanderings led me on another side, within point the shot of their heaviest metal. It was the unfortunate story that gave rise to my printed poem, The Lament. This was a most melancholy affair, which I cannot yet bear to reflect on, and had very nearly given me one or two of the principal qualifications for a place among those who have lost the chart, and mistaken the reckonings of Rationality. I gave up my part of the farm to my brother; in truth it was only nominally mine; and made what little preparation was in my power for Jamaica. But before leaving my native country for ever, I resolved to publish my poems. I weighed my production as impartially as was in my power; I thought they had merit; and it was a delicious idea that I should be called a clever fellow, even though it should never reach my ears—an poor negro driver,—or perhaps a victim to that inhospitable clime, and gone to the world of spirits! I could truly say, that paucire incore, as I then was, I had pretty nearly as high an idea of the knowledge of my country as the honest soul, when the public has decided in their favour. It was ever my opinion, that the mistakes and blunders, both in a rational and religious point of view, of which we see thousands daily guilty, are owing to their ignorance of the Author of their being. To myself I always claimed a constant study. I weighed myself alone; I balanced myself with others; I watched every means of information, to see how much ground I occupied as a man and as a poet; and I was occasionally natural design in my formation—where the lights and shades in my character were intended. I was pretty confident my poems would meet with some applause; but, at the very start of the Atlantidean world of censure, and the novelty of West Indian scenes make me forget neglect. I threw off six hundred copies, of which I had got subscriptions for about three hundred and fifty. My vanity was highly gratified by the reception I met with from the public; and besides I pocketed, all expenses deducted, nearly twenty guineas. This came so very seasonably, as it was a thinking of indenting myself, for want of money to procure my passage. As soon as I was master of nine guineas, the price of waiting to me the torrid zone, I took a steerage passage in the first ship that was to sail from the Clyde; for,

"Hungry ruin had me in the wind."

"I had been for some days skulking from covert to covert, under all the terror of a full, some ill-advised people had uncoupled the merciless pack of the law at my heels. I had taken the farewell of my few friends; my chest was on the road to Greenock; I had composed the last song I should ever measure in the Edinburgh, The gloomy night is gathering fast, when a letter from Dr. Blacklock, to a friend of mine, overthrew all my schemes, by opening new prospects to my poetic ambition. The Doctor belonged to a set of critics, for whose applause I had not dared to hope. His opinion that I would meet with encouragement in Edinburgh for a second edition, fired me so much, that away I posted for that city, without a single acquaintance, or single letter of introduction. The bareful star which had so long shed its blasted influence in my youth, for once came revolutionly in radiance, and a kind I rovulence placed me under the patronage of one of the noblest of men, the Earl of Glesca
cairn. Gubila noit, Grand Dieu, at fausis Je l'oubli.

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

My most respectful compliments to Miss W. Her very elegant and friendly letter I cannot answer at present, as my presence is requisite in Edinburgh, and I set out to morrow."

At the period of our poet's death, his brother, Gilbert Burns, was ignorant that he had himself written the foregoing narrative of his life while in Ayrshire; and having being applied to by Mrs. Doupig for some memoirs of his brother, he compiled with her request in a letter, from which the following narrative is chiefly extracted. When Gilbert Burns afterwards saw the letter of our poet to Dr. Moore, he made some annotations upon it, which shall be noticed as we proceed.

"There are various copies of this letter in the autho's hand-writing; and one of these, evidently corrected, is in the book in which he had copied several of his letters. This has been used for the press, with some omissions, and one slight alteration suggested by Gilbert Burns."
Robert Burns was born on the 25th day of January 1759, in a small house about two miles from the town of Ayr, on the Maidens estate, in the parish of Beith, in Ayrshire, a church, which his poem of **Tam o' Shanter** has rendered immortal. The name which the poet and his brother modernized into Burns, was originally Burns, or Bums. The father of William Burns, was the son of a farmer in Kincardineshire, and had received the education common in Scotland to persons in his condition. It is related of him that his father had in a measure some knowledge of arithmetical. His family have fallen into reduced circumstances, he was compelled to leave his home in his nineteenth year, and turned his steps towards Edinburgh, in search of a livelihood. The same necessity attended his older brother Robert.

"I have often heard my father," says Gilbert Burns, in his letter to Mrs. Dunlop, "describe the anguish of mind he felt when they parted on the top of a hill on the confines of their native place, each going off on several ways in search of new adventures, and scarcely knowing whether he went. My father undertook to act as a gardener, and shaped his course to Edinburgh, where he worked hard while he could get work, passing through a variety of difficulties. Still, however, he endeavoured to spare something for the support of his aged parents; and I recollect hearing him mention his having sent a bank-note for this purpose, when money of that kind was so scarce in Kincardineshire. On his return home, he had a house ready for him to employ it when it arrived." From Edinburgh, William Burns passed westward into the county of Ayr, where he was engaged for a time as a gardener in the garden of Fairly, with whom lived two years: then changing his service for that of Crawford of Doonside. At length, being desirous of settling in life, he took a per

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The life of Robert Burns, the Scottish poet, is a rich tapestry of events and experiences that shaped his character and his enduring legacy. Born in 1759 in Ayrshire, Burns faced early hardships, and his life was marked by a blend of perseverance and resilience. From his humble beginnings, he pursued an education that allowed him to develop his skills in poet

"It appears that William Burns approved himself greatly in the service of Mr. Ferguson, by his intelligence, industry, and integrity. In consequence of this, he received a view of promoting his interest, Mr. Ferguson leased him a farm, of which we have the following account:

"The farm was upwards of seventy acres (being between eighty and ninety English statute measure), the rent of which was to be forty pounds annually for the first six years, and afterwards forty-five pounds. My father endeavoured to sell his leasehold property, for the purpose of stocking this farm, but at that time was unable, and Mr. Ferguson lent him a hundred pounds for that purpose. He removed to his new situation at Whitecraigs, 1768. It was, I think, not above two years after this, that Murdoch, our tutor and friend, felt this part of the country; and there being no chance of any marriage for William, he was desired by the farmer, my father undertook to teach us arithmetic in the winter evenings by candle-light; and in this way the use of numbers was first taught me. I received a memory of a circumstance that happened at this time, which, though trivial in itself, is fresh in my memory, and may serve to illustrate the early character of my brother. Murdoch came to spend a night with us, and, to take his leave when he was about to go into Carrick. I brought us, as a present and memorial of him, a small compendium of English grammar, and the tragedy of *Titus Andronicus*, and by way of passing the evening, he began to read the play aloud. We were all attention for some time, till presently the whole party was dissolved in tears. A scene in the play (I have but a confused remembrance of it) had her hands chopped off, and her tongue cut out, and then was insultingly desired to call for water to wash her hands. At this, in an agony of distress, we with one voice desired he would read no more. My father, however, then that he would not read anything needless to leave the play with us. Robert replied, that we would have a little. My father was going to chide him for this ingrateful return to his tutor's kindness; but Murdoch inter

Letter of Gilbert Burns to Mrs. Dunlop.

The name of this farm is Mount Ulliphant, in Ayr parish.

It is to be remembered that the poet was only nine years of age and the relation of the incident under eight, at the time it happened. The effect was very natural in children of sensibility at their age. At a more mature period of the judgment, such absurd representations are calculated rather to produce disgust or laughter, than tears. The scene to which Gilbert Burns alludes, opens thus:

*Titus Andronicus*, Act II, Scene 5.

Letter from Gilbert Burns to Mrs. Dunlop.

The house in the right-hand side of the road from Ayr to Maybole, which forms a part of the road from Glasgow to Port Patrick. When the poet's father afterwards removed to Tarbolton parish, he sold his leasehold right in this house, and a few acres of land adjoining, to the corporation of shoemakers in Ayr, it is now a country ale house.

* Letter from Gilbert Burns to Mrs. Dunlop

he could get a book. Murdoch, whose library at the time had no great variety in it, lent him **The Life of Mary, A Virgin Martyr**, and a schoolbook excepted) and almost the only one he had an opportunity of reading while he was at school; for *The Life of Wallace*, which he classes with it in one letter, it is possible he may have for some time after

"The farm was upwards of seventy acres (being

tween eighty and ninety English statute measure),

The rent of which was to be forty pounds annually for

the first six years, and afterwards forty-five pounds. My father endeavoured to sell his leasehold property, for the purpose of stocking this farm, but at that time was unable, and Mr. Ferguson lent him a hundred pounds for that purpose. He removed to his new situation at Whitecraigs, 1768. It was, I think, not above two years after this, that Murdoch, our tutor and friend, felt this part of the country; and there being no chance of any marriage for William, he was desired by the farmer, my father undertook to teach us arithmetic in the winter evenings by candle-light; and in this way the use of numbers was first taught me. I received a memory of a circumstance that happened at this time, which, though trivial in itself, is fresh in my memory, and may serve to illustrate the early character of my brother. Murdoch came to spend a night with us, and, to take his leave when he was about to go into Carrick. I brought us, as a present and memorial of him, a small compendium of English grammar, and the tragedy of *Titus Andronicus*, and by way of passing the evening, he began to read the play aloud. We were all attention for some time, till presently the whole party was dissolved in tears. A scene in the play (I have but a confused remembrance of it) had her hands chopped off, and her tongue cut out, and then was insultingly desired to call for water to wash her hands. At this, in an agony of distress, we with one voice desired he would read no more. My father obeyed, that if we would not read anything needless to leave the play with us. Robert replied, that we would have a little. My father was going to chide him for this ingrateful return to his tutor's kindness; but Murdoch inter

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*Titus Andronicus*, Act II, Scene 5.

Euripides Demetria and Chiron, with Lavinia robed, her hands cut off, and her tongue cut out.

Why is this silly play still printed as Shakspere's, against the opinion of all the best critics? The bard of Avon was guilty of many extravagances, but he always performed what he intended to perform. That he ever excited in a British mind (for the French critics must be set aside) disgust or ridicule, where he meant to have awakened pity or horror, is what will not be imposed to that master of the passions.
“Nothing,” continues Gilbert Burns, “could be more retired than our general manner of living at Dalrymple, which was the resort of the rich and the noble, and included the family members of our own family. There were no boys of our own age, or near it, in the neighbourhood. Indeed the greatest part of the land in the vicinity was at that time under cultivation, and though we somehow or other learned to read and write, and to recite or declaim, we were, as the saying goes, in the world, and had retired from business, or who kept their farm in the country, at the same time that they followed business in town. My father was for some time a surveyor by profession, but we were not so much acquainted with him and the world, as to make his acquaintance, or confirm us in various habits. He borrowed Selden’s Geographical Grammar for us, and endeavoured to make us acquainted with the situations and history of the different countries in the world; while from a book society in Ayr, he procured for us the readings of D’Aubum’s Physico and Astro-Theology, and Ray’s Wisdom of God in Creation, to give us some idea of astronomy and natural history. Robert read all these books with an avidity and industry, scarcely to be equalled. My father had been a subscriber to Stackhouse’s History of the Bible then lately published by James Meuruss in Kirkinnock: from this Robert collected a competent knowledge of history, which he applied with such avidity and industry, or so antiquated as to damp his researches.

A brother of my mother, who had lived with us some time, and had learnt some arithmetic by winter evening’s candle, went into a bookseller’s shop in Ayr, to purchase The Ready Reader or Traveller’s Home Guide, and a book to teach him to write letters. Letter-writing was not then fashionable. But the writer, he got by mistake a small collection of letters by the most eminent writers, with a few sensible directions for obtaining an easy epistolary style. This book, as it happened, was brought into my study and inspired him with a strong desire to excel in letter-writing, while it furnished him with models of some of the first writers in our language.

My brother was about thirteen or fourteen, when my father, regretting that we wrote so ill, sent us, week about during a summer quarter, to the parish school of Dalrymple, which, though between two and three miles distance, was the nearest to us, that we might have an opportunity of remedying this defect. About this time we procured for us the readings of two volumes of Richardson’s Pamela, which was the first novel we read, and though, for some time, my brother thought I was his master, he was acquainted with till towards the period of his coming to me as his revising author. Till that time too he remained unacquainted with Fielding, with Smollett, (two volumes of History of England, besides Peregrine Pickle excepted,) with Hume, with Robertson, and almost all our authors of eminence of the later times. I recollect indeed my father borrowed a volume of English history from Mr. Hamilton of Borrowstoun’s gardener. It treated of the reign of James the First, and his unfortunate son, Charles, but I do not know who was the author; all that I remember of it is something of Charles’s conversation with his children. About this time Murdoch, our former teacher, after having been in different places in the country, procured for us a school some time in Dumfries, came to be the established teacher of the English language in Ayr, a circumstance of considerable consequence to us. The remembrance of my father’s kind word, some years after, when my own brother, made him do every thing in his power for our improvement. He sent us I hope’s works, and some other poetry, the first that we had an opportunity of reading, and I think we might collect, and in the volume of The Edinburgh Magazine for 1772, excepting also those excellent new songs of Mr. Wilson’s, which we acquired about the country in baskets, or exposed on stalls in the streets.

The summer after we had been at Dalrymple school, my father subscribes to a monthly lesson of English grammar, with his former teacher. He had been there only one week, when he was obliged to return to assist at the harvest. When the harvest was over, he went back to school, where he remained two weeks, and then returned. Thereafter he was sent to a school near by, wherein he was established, excepting one summer quarter, some time afterwards, that he attended the parish school of Kirk-Orwald, (where he lived with a brother of my mother’s,) to learn surveying.

During the two last weeks that he was with Murdoch, he himself was engaged in learning French, and he continued this, and we were not pecuniary, or in the least, excepting this, he procured for us a book, which, when he returned, brought home with him a French dictionary and grammar, and the Adven-^tures and Travels of Ripplin. While we were thus employed, while, by the assistance of these books, he acquired such a knowledge of the language, as to read and understand any French author in prose. This was considered as a sort of profligacy, and through the medium of Murdoch, procured him the acquaintance of several lads in Ayr, who were at that time gabbling French, and the notice of some families, particularly of Dr. Malcolm, where a knowledge of French was a recommendation.

Observing the facility with which he had acquired the French language, Mr. Robinson the established writing master in Ayr, and Mr. Murdoch’s particular friend, having himself acquired a considerable know-ledge of the language, took the opportunity of allowing out ever having learnt it at school, advised Robert to make the same attempt, promising him every assistance in his power. Agreeably to this advice, he pur-chased The Riddle of the Latin Tongue, and finding this study dry and uninteresting; it was quickly laid aside. He frequently returned to his Riddles on any little chaff or disappointment, but particularly in his love aunts; but the Latin seldom predominated more than a day or two at a time, or a week at most. Observing himself the ridicule that would attend the use of the language, he had made two or three humorous stanzas on the subject, which I cannot now recollect, but they all ended, “So I’ll try my Latin again.”

Thus you see Mr. Murdoch was a principal means of my brother’s improvement. Worthy man! though foreign to my present purpose, I cannot leave him without tracing his future history. He continued for some years a respected and useful teacher at Ayr, till one evening that he had been overindulged in liquor, he happened to speak somewhat disrespect-fully of Dr. Dalrymple, the parish physician, who had not paid him that attention to which he thought him- self entitled; which was followed by a threat of blasphemy. He found it proper to give up his appointments. He went to London, where he still lives, a physician of repute.

The father of Dr. Patterson, now physician of Ayr, was, I believe a native of Ayrshire, and was one of the established teachers in Ayr, when my father settled in the neighbourhood. He early recog-nized my father as a fellow native of the north of Scott-land, and a certain degree of intimacy subsisted between them during Mr. Patterson’s life. After his death, his widow, who was a very gentle woman, and of great worth, delighted in doing what she thought her husband would have wished to have done, and assiduously kept up her attentions to all his acquaintances. Friendly relations subsisted between our families, by frequently inviting my father and mother to her house on Sundays, when she met them at church.

When she came to know my brother’s passion for books, she kindly offered us the use of her husband’s library, and from her we got the Spectator, Pope’s Translation of Homer, and several other books that were no longer wanted. In the same manner, when my father possessed in the parish of Ayr, is almost the very poorest soil I know of in a state of cultivation. A part of this I cannot give, than that, notwithstanding the extraordinary rise in the value of lands in Scotland, it was after a considerable length of time, 

The Life of Burns. 15
By a stipulation in my father's lease, he had a right to any crop that he thought proper, at the end of every sixth year. He therefore purchased a better farm at the end of the first six years, but falling in that attempt, he continued where he was for six years more, and cultivated about 150 acres, of the rent of twenty shillings an acre. The parish of 'Tarbolton, of Mr. —,' then a merchant in Ayr, and now (1779,) a merchant in Liverpool. He removed to this farm on Wednesday, 1777, and possessed it only seven years. No writing had ever been made out of the conditions of the lease; a misunderstanding took place respecting them; the subjects in dispute were submitted to arbitration, and the decision involved my father's affairs in ruin. He lived to know of this decision, but not to see any execution in consequence of it. He died on the 15th of February, 1791.

The seven years we lived in Tarbolton parish (extending from the seventeenth to the twenty-third year of my brother's age,) were not marked by much literary improvement; but during this time, the foundation was laid of certain habits in my brother's character, which afterwards became but too prominent, and which malice and envy have taken delight to enlarge on. Though when young he was bashful and awkward in his intercourse with women, yet when he approached manhood, his attachment to their society became very strong, and he was constantly the victim of some fair enslaver. The symptoms of his passion were often such as nearly to equal those of the celebrated Sapho. I never indeed knew that he fasted, sunk, and died away; but the agitation of his mind and body exceeded any thing of the kind I ever knew in real life. He had always a particular jealousy of people who were richer than himself, or who had more consequence in life. His love, therefore, rarely settled on poor females; and when he selected any one out of the sovereignty of his good pleasure, upon whom he should pay his particular attention, she was instantly invested with a sufficient stock of charms, out of any value of her own. The principal of his affection was often a great dissimilitude between his fair capti-

The farm of Moss-giel lies very high, and mostly on a cold wet bottom. The first four years that we were on the farm were very frosty, and the spring was very late. Our crops in consequence were very unprofitable; and, notwithstanding our utmost diligence and economy, we found ourselves obliged to give up our bargain, with the loss of a considerable part of our original stock. It was during these four years that Robert formed his connexion with Jean Armour, afterwards Mrs. Burns. This connexion could no longer be concealed, about this time we came to a final determination to quit the farm. Robert does not engage with a light heart; and as he was anxious to shield his partner, by every means in his power, from the consequence of their imprudence. It was not with the character of a friend that he should make a legal acknowledgment of an irregular and private marriage; and that he should go to Jamaica to push his fortune! and that she should remain with her father, and the plaintiff put the means of supporting a family in his power.

Mrs. Burns was a great favorite of her father's. The intimacy at a marriage was the first suggestion he received of her real situation. He was in the greatest distress and faintest away. The marriage did not appear to make the matter better. A husband in Jamaica appeared to him and his wife little better than none.
Gilbert has made the following remark, which seems entitled to implicit credit:—"I wonder how Robert could have been so unfortunate as to go to a dancing school, and be so unfortunate as to be incapable of going to a dancing school against his will, of which he was incapable. I believe the truth was, that he, being an adherent of the dancing-schools, was not able to convince counsel, which often irritated my father; and which he would naturally think a dancing school was not likely to give him any advantage in taking his20 personal and political powers. He had indeed that dislike of dancing-schools which Robert mentions; but so far overcame it during Robert's last month of attendance, that he allowed all the rest of the family that were fit for it to accompany him during the second month. Robert excelled in dancing, and was for some time distantly fond of it."

In the original letter to Dr. Moore, our poet described his ancestors as "renting lands of the noble Keith of Marischal, and having had the honour of sharing their fate." "I do not!" continues he, "use the word honour with any reference to political principles; legal as well as moral, I take to be merely relative terms, in that ancient and procumbent country by the name of Club-laws, where the right is always with the strongest. But those who dare welcome the title, I have no answer for, but that they sincerely believe to be the cause of God, or their king, are, as Mark Antony says in Shakespeare of Brutus and Cassius, noble men. I mention this circumstance because it threw my father on the world at large."

This paragraph has been omitted in printing the letter, at the desire of Gilbert Burns; and it would have been unnecessary to have noticed it on the present occasion, had not several manuscript copies of that letter been in circulation. "I do not!" observes Gilbert Burns, "how my brother could be misled in the account he has given of the Jacobite of his ancestors. I believe the earl Marischal forfeited his title and estate in 1715, before my father was born; and among a collection of parish certificates in his possession, I have read one, stating that the bearer had no concern in the fatal rebellion." On the information of one, who knew William Burns soon after he arrived in the county of Ayr, it may be mentioned, that a report did prevail, that he had taken the field with the young Marischal, in which he was suspected as being by his son was, perhaps, intended to counteract. Strangers from the north, settling in the lower country of Scotland, were shy days liable to suspicious of having been, in the family of the young Marischal, "Out in the forty-five," (1715) especially when they had any statelessness or reserve about them, as was the case with William Burns. It may easily be conceived, that our poet would cherish the belief of his father's having been engaged in the daring enterprise of Prince Charles Edward. The generous attachment, the heroic valour, and the final misfortunes of the adherents of the house of Stewart, touched with sympathy his youthful and ardent mind, and influenced his original political opinions."

"There is another observation of Gilbert Burns on his brother's narrative, in which some persons will be interested. It refers to where the poet speaks of his youthful friends. "My brother," says Gilbert Burns, "seems to set off his early companions too consequent a manner. The principal acquaintances we had in Ayr, while boys, were four sons of Mr. Andrew M'Cooloch, a distant relation of my mother's, who had a bookshop, and had made a little money in the contraband trade very much at that time. He died while the boys were young, and my father was nominated one of the tutors. The two eldest were bred shopkeepers, the third a surgeon, and the fourth a merchant in the city, who started his own."
THE LIFE OF BURNS.

The father of our poet is described by one who knew him well as the model of the Scotch peasantry, a good deal conversant in speculative theology. There is in Gilbert's a hand's a little manual of religious belief, in the form of a dialogue between a father and his son, composed by him for the use of his children. Of the benevolence of his heart seems to have led him to soften the rigid Calvinism of the Scottish Church, into something more in accordance with his own notions. He was a devout man, and in the practice of calling his family together to join in prayer. It is known that the exquisitely picture, drawn in stanzae xii., xiii., xiv., xvi., and xviii. of the Cotter's Saturday Night, represents William Burns and his family at their evening devotions.

Of a family so interesting as that which inhabited the cottage of William Burns, and particularly of the father of the family, the reader will perhaps be willing to listen to some father account. What I present, I have borrowed from one already mentioned with so much honour in the narrative of Gilbert Burns, Mr. Mordoch, the present of the poet, who, in a letter to Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., in the Scottish History Journal, gives a Doctoral Memoirs of the Irish Bards, and the Historical Memoirs of the Italian Tragedy, thus expresses himself:

"SIR,—I was lately favoured with a letter from our worthy friend, the Rev. Wm. Adair, in which he requested me to communicate to you whatever particulars I could recollect concerning Robert Burns, the Ayrshire poet. My business being at present multifarious and harassing, I paid no attention consequently so much divided, and I am so little in the habit of expressing my thoughts on paper, that at this distance of time I can give but a very imperfect sketch of the early part of the life of that extraordinary genius, with which alone I am acquainted.

William Burns, the father of the poet, was born in the shire of Kincardine, and bred a gardener. He had been settled in Ayrshire ten or twelve years before I knew him, and had been in the service of Mr. Crawford, of Doonholm, in the parish of Alloway, which is now united with that of Ayr. In this parish, on the road side, a Scotch cottage about a half a mile from the town of Ayr, and half a mile from the bridge of Doon, William Burns took a piece of land, consisting of about seven acres; part of which he laid out in garden ground, and part of which he kept to graze a cow, &c. till continuing in the employ of Provost Ferguson. Upon this little farm was erected an humble dwelling, of which William Burns was the architect. It was, with the exception youngest, the only surviving one, was bred in a count ing-house in Glasgow, where he is now a respectable merchant. I believe all these boys went to the West Indies. Then there were two sons of Dr. Malcolm, whom I have mentioned in my letter to Mrs. Dunlop. The eldest, a very worthy young man, went to the East Indies, where he had a commission in the army; he is the person whose heart says to other say, 'My Bogen scenes could not corrupt.' The other by the interest of Lady Wallace, got an ensigncy in a regiment raised by the Duke of Hamilton, during the American war. I believe neither of them are now (1797) alive. We also knew the present Dr. Paterson of Ayr, and a younger brother of his now in Jamaica, who were much younger than us. I had almost forgot to mention Dr. Charles of Ayr, who was a little older than my brother, and with whom we had a longer and closer intimacy than with any of the others, which did not, however, continue in after life."
school at Ayr; and in 1793, Robert Burns came to board and lodge with me, for the purpose of revising the English grammar, &c. that he might be better qualified to instruct his brothers and sisters at home.

He was now with me day and night in school, at meals, and in all my walks. At the end of one week, I told him, that as he was now pretty much master of the parts of speech, &c. I should like to teach him some rudiments of Latin, that when he should meet with the name of a French town, ship, officer, or the like, in the newspapers, he might be able to pronounce it something like a French word. Robert was glad to hear this proposal, and immediately we attacked the French with great courage.

"Now there was little else to be heard but the declension of nouns, the conjugation of verbs, &c. When walking together, and even at meals, I was constantly telling him the names of different objects as we presented themselves, in French; so that he was hourly laying in a stock of words, and sometimes little phrases. In short, he took such pleasure in learning, and in teaching, that it was difficult to distinguish which of the two was most zealous in the business; and about the end of the second week of our study of the French, we began to read a little of the Adventures of Telemaque, in Pension's own words.

"But now the plains of Mount Oliphant began to yield me a presentiment of new scenes. It was not without the pleasing scenes that surrounded the grotto of Calypso; and, armed with a sickle, to seek glory by signaling himself in the fields of Ceres—and so he did; for although but about fifteen, I told him that he performed the work of a man.

"Thus was I deprived of my very apt pupil, and consequently agreeable companion, at the end of three weeks, one of which was spent entirely in the study of English, and the other two chiefly in that of French. I do not believe that the loss of so agreeable a person, who was so nicely blended as to render it palatable to all parties, Robert had a hundred questions to ask of me and a hundred answers to give. But the fickle fortune of life, and the want of whatever information in view, still had some question to propose to my more learned friends, upon moral and natural philosophy, or some such interesting subject. Mrs. Burns too was of the party as much as possible;"

"But still the house affairs would draw her thence, Which ever as she could with haste despatch, She'd come again, and with a greedy ear, Devour up their discourse."—

and particularly that of her husband. At all times, and in all companies, she listened to him with a more marked attention than to any body else. When under the necessity of being absent while he was speaking, she seemed to regret, as a real loss, that she had missed what the good man had said. This worthy woman, Agnes Burns, had the most thorough esteem for the husband of any woman I ever knew. I can by no means wonder that she highly esteemed him; for myself have always considered William Burns as by far the most polished and refined man in the profession of being acquainted with—and many a worthy character I have known. I can cheerfully join with Robert, in the full line of his epitaph (borrowed from Goldsmith):

"And even his failings lend to virtue's side."

"He was an excellent husband, if my judge from his amiable attention to the care and comfort of his worthy partner, and from her affectionate behaviour to him, as well as her unbroken attention to the duties of a mother.

"He was a tender and affectionate father; he took pleasure in being with the children, and was not slow to correct them when he saw they were not in driving them as some parents do, to the performance of duties to which they themselves are averse. He took care to find fault but very seldom; and therefore, when he was heard to speak, it was with a kind of reverential awe. A look of disapprobation was felt; a reproof was severely so; and a stripe with the twine, extremely severe. Whenever the least advice, gave heartfelt pain, produced a loud lamentation, and caused a flood of tears.

"He had the art of gaining the esteem and good-will of those that were labourers under him. I think I never saw him angry but twice; the one time it was with the foreman of the land, for not reaping the field as he was desired; and the other time, it was with an old man for using smutty innendencies and double entendres. Were every foul-mouthed old man to receive a part3 of the foreman's, it would be the advantage of the rising generation. As he was at no time overbearing to inferiors, he was equally incapable of that passive, pitiful, paltry spirit, that induces some people to the use of pertaining and lordly to the presence of a great man. He always treated superiors with a becoming respect; but he never gave the smallest enmity or unsociable sentiment to any one man, because he carefully practised every known duty, and avoided every thing that was criminal; or in the apostle's words, Herein did he exercise himself in living a life void of offence towards God and towards men. For a world of men of such dispositions! We should then have no wars. I have often wished, for the good of mankind, that it were as customary to bow down to the memory of those who excel in moral rectitude, as it is to idolatry what are called heroic actions: then would the mausoleum of the friend of my youth overtop and surpass most of the monuments I see in Westminster Abbey.

"Although I cannot do justice to the character of this worthy man, yet you will perceive from these few particulars, how, in this kind of place the principal education of our poet. He spoke the English language with more propriety (both with respect to diction and pronunciation) than I ever knew with no greater advantages. This Burns was a very clear reader, not to the boys, who began to talk, and reason like men, much sooner than their neighbours. I do not recollect any of his young friends to be more pretentious in learning, or to twain towards made any great figure, as literary characters, except Dr. Tennant, who was chaplain to Colonel Fullarton's regiment, and who is now in the East Indies. He is a man of genius and learning; yet affable, and free from pedantry.

"Mr. Burns, in a short time, found that he had over-rated Mount Oliphant, and that he could not rear his numerous family upon it. After being there some years, he removed to Lochlea, in the parish of Tarbolton, where I believe, Robert wrote most of his poems.

"But here, Sir, you will permit me to pause. I can tell you but little more relative to our poet. I shall, however, in my next, send you a copy of one of his letters to me, about the year 1758. I received one since, but it is mislaid. I shall remember me, in the best manner, to my worthy friend Mr. Adair, when you see him, or write to him."

"Hart street, Bloombury-square, 1773, Feb. 22, 1773."

As the narrative of Gilbert Burns was written at a time when he was ignorant of the existence of the preceding narrative of his brother, so that Murdoch was written without his having any knowledge that either of his pupils had been employed on the same subject. The three relations serve, there-
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fore, not merely to illustrate, but to authenticate each other. Though the information they convey might have been presented within a shorter compass, by reduc- 
ing the whole into one unbroken narrative, it is scarcely to be doubted, that the intelligent reader will be gratified by a sight of these original documents themselves.

Under the humble roof of his parents, it appears in- deed, that one of the greatest advantages; was his op- portunities of information at school were more limited as to time than they usually are among his country- men in his condition of life; and the acquisitions which he acquired, and the poetical talent which he ex- 

panied, under the pressure of early and incessant toil, and of inferior, and perhaps scanty nutritive, testifies at once the extraordinary force and activity of his mind. In his frame of body he rose nearly to five feet ten inches, and assumed the proportions that in- 
dicate agility as well as strength. In the various la- 
bours of the farm he excelled all his competitors. Gil- bert Burns declares that in mowing, the exercise that tires all the muscles most severely, Robert was the only man, that at the end of a summer's day he was ever obliged to acknowledge as his master. But though our poet gave the powers of his body to the labours of the farm, he refused to bestow on them his thoughts or his sacrifice of time. "When the pastures were passed through the award, or the grass fell under the sweep of his scythe, he was humming the songs of his country, musings on the deeds of ancient valour, or writing the allusions of ancient poets, and that was seen to rose on his view. Happily the Sunday is yet a Sab- 
bath, on which man and beast rest from their labours. On this day, therefore, Burns could indulge in a free interchange with the churlish thoughts that had before him, as 
light to wander alone on the banks of the Ayr, whose 
stream is now immortal, and to listen to the song of the 
blackbird at the close of the summer's day. But 
either was his pleasure, as he was walking or in walking on the sheltered side of a wood, in a cloudy 
winter day, and hearing the storm rave among the trees; and more elevated still his delight, to see 
some eminence during the agitations of nature; to 
strike along its summit, while the lightning flashed 
around him; and amidst the howlings of the tempest, to 
apostrophize the spirit of the storm. Such situa-
tions he declares most favourable to devotion. — "Rapt 
in enthusiasm, I seem to ascend towards Him who 
makes the wings of the winds." If other proofs were 
wanting to prove his natural endowment with the powers of 
poetry, this one might determine it. The heart of the poet is peculiar-
ly awake to every impression of beauty and sublimity; but, with the higher order of poets, the beautiful is less 
pleasant than the sublime.

The gayety of many of Burns' writings, and the buoyancy of his temper, which has more than once portrayed his own character, may lead some persons to suppose, that the melancholy which hung over him towards the end of his days was not an original part 
of his constitution. It is not to be doubted, indeed, that 
this melancholy acquired a darker hue in the progress of 
his life; but, independent of his own and of his brother's testimony, evidence is to be found among his 
papers, that he was subject very early to those de-
pressions of mind, which are perhaps not wholly separate from the sensibility of genius, but which, in 
him, rose to a uncommon degree. The following 
letter addressed to his father, will serve as a proof 
of this observation. It was written at the time when 
he was learning the business of a flax-dresser, and is 
dated, 

Irwine, December 27, 1731.

Honoured Sir—I have purposely delayed writing, in the hope that I should have the pleasure of seeing you on New-Year's day; but work comes so hard up-
on us, that I do not choose to be absent on that ac-
count, as well as for some other little reasons, which I shall mention in meeting you. My health is nearly the same as when you were here, only my sleep is a little sounder; and, on the whole, I am rather better than e'er, though I mend by very slow degrees. The 
weakness of my nerves has so debilitated my mind, that I dare neither review past wars, nor look for-
ward into futurity; for the least anxiety or perturba-
tion produces more uneasiness on my whole frame. Sometimes, indeed, when for an hour or two my spirits are a little lightened, I glimmer into an idea of my own pleasing employment, is looking backwards and forwards in a moral and religious way. I am trans-
ported at the thought, that are long, very soon, I shall bid an eternal adieu to all the pains and unpeace-
ness; and disquietudes of this weary life; for I as-
sure you I am heartily tired of it; and if I do not very much deceive myself, I could contentedly and gladly resign it.

The soul, uneasy, and confin'd at home, 
Resis and expatriates in a life to come.
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where there is neither thirst, nor hunger, nor sorrow; and where happiness shall be in proportion to the capacity of happiness.

Such a disposition is far from being at variance with social enjoyments. Those who have studied the affinities of human nature, will readily perceive that, under the protection of affection, after a while, seeks relief in the endeavours of society, and that it has no distant connexion with the flow of cheerfulness, or even the extravagance of amusements, or the mirth of mirth.

Having finished the letter that our poet, "in giving a welcome carosage to the new year, with his gay companions," suffered his flax to catch fire, and his shop to be consumed to ashes.

The energy of Burns's mind was as exhausted by his daily labours, the effusion of his muse, his social measures, or his solitary meditations. Some time previous to his engagement as a flax-dresser, having heard that a debating club had been established in Ayr, he resolved to try how such a meeting would succeed in the village of Tarbolton. About the end of the year 1782, our poet, his brother, and five other young peasants of the neighbourhood, formed themselves into a society of this sort, the declared objects of which were to relax themselves after toil, to promote friendship, and to improve the mind. The first meetings were furnished by Burns. The members were to meet after the labours of the day were over, once a week, in a small public house, and there make the rules, and should offer his opinion on a question or subject, supporting it by such arguments as he thought proper. The debate was to be conducted with order and decorum; and after it was finished, the members were to choose a subject for discussion at the ensuing meeting. The sum expended by each was not to exceed three pence; and, with the humble petition that this could procure, they were to contribute their mites, and to cultivate friendship with each other. This society continued its meetings regularly for some time; and in the autumn of 1782, wishing to preserve some account of their proceedings, they purchased a book into which their laws and regulations were copied, with a preamble, containing a short history of their transactions down to that period. This curious document, which is evidently the work of our poet, has been discovered, and it deserves a place in his memoirs.

"History of the Rise, Proceedings, and Regulations of the Bachelor's Club.

"Of birth or blood we do not boast, nor gentry does our club afford; but Haughmen and mechanic's we are in Nature's simple dress record."

"As the great end of human society is to become wiser and better, this ought therefore to be the principal view of every man in every station of life. But as experience has taught us that such studies as inform the head and mend the heart, when long continued, are apt to exhaust the faculties of the mind, it has been found proper to relieve and unbind the mind by some employment or another, that may be agreeable enough to keep its powers in exercise, but at the same time to increase their usefulness, and to superintend this, by far the greater part of mankind are under the necessity of earning the subsistence of human life by the labours of their bodies; whereby, though the various sicknesses of the body, as well as those of the mind; are so fatigued, that it is absolutely necessary to have recourse to some amusement. And, if we have the fortune man, worn out with the necessary labours of life,

"As the best of things, however, have been perverted to the worst of purposes, so, under the pretence of amusements, they are introduced to dissipate the madness of riot and dissipation; and, instead of attending to the grand design of human life, they have begun with extravagance and folly, and ended with guilt and vice. Impressed with these considerations, we, the following lads in the parish of Tarbolton, viz. Hugh Reid, Robert Burns, Gilbert Burns, Alexander Brown, Walter Mitchell, Thomas Banting, and John Ritchie, for our mutual entertainment, to unite ourselves into a circle, or society, under such rules and regulations, that while we should forget our cares and labours in mirth and amusements, we should not forget our innocence and decorum; and after agreeing on these, and some other regulations, we held our first meeting at Tarbolton, in the house of John Richard, upon the evening of Monday, November 17th, commonly called Hallowe'en, and after choosing Robert Burns president for the night, we proceeded to debate on this question—Suppose a young man, bred a farmer, but without any fortune, had it in his power to marry either of two women, the one a girl of large fortune, but neither handsome in person, nor agreeable in conversation, but who can manage the household affairs of a farm well enough; the other of them a girl every way agreeable in person, conversation, and behaviour, but without any fortune: which of them shall he choose? Finding ourselves very happy in our society, we resolved to continue to meet once a month in the same house, in the way and manner proposed, and shortly thereafter we chose Robert Ritchie for another member. In May, 1783, we brought in David Sillars, and in June, Adam Jamison, as members. About the beginning of the year 1782, we admitted Matthew Patterson, whose brother, Orr Tarbolton, was on the race night, the Jolly following, and had discharged in honour of our club. Accordingly we did meet, each one with a partner, and spent the evening in such innocence and merriment, such good-humoured mirth and joy, that each brother will long remember it with pleasure and delight. To this preamble are subjoined the rules and regulations."

The philosophical mind will dwell with interest and pleasure, on an institution that combined so skilfully the means of instruction and of happiness, and if grandeur be linked with a smile on those simple annals, let us trust that it will be a smile of benevolence and approbation. It is with regret that the sequel of the history of the Bachelor's Club of Tarbolton must be told. It survived several years after our poet was removed from Ayrshire, but no longer sustained by his talents, or cemented by his social affections its meetings lost much of their attraction, and it was an evil hour, dissolution arising amongst its members, the institution was given up, and the records committed to oblivion. Happily the preamble and the regulations were spared, and it is a matter of instruction and of example, they are transmitted to posterity.

After the family of our bard removed from Tarbolton to the neighbourhood of Mauchline, he and his brother were requested to assist in forming a similar institution there. The regulations of the club at Mauchline were nearly the same as those of the club at Tarbolton: but one laudable alteration was made. The fines for non-attendance at Tarleton being spent in enlarging their scanty potations; at Mauchline it was fixed, that the money so arising, should be set apart for the purchase of books, and the first work procured in this manner was the Mirror, the separate numbers of which were soon so extensively collected and published in volumes. After it, followed a number of other works, chiefly of the same nature and among these the Loeng R. The society of Mauchline still exists, and we are indebted to the first edition of the works of its celebrated associate.

The members of these two societies were originally all young men from the country, and chiefly sons of farmers; a description of persons, in the opinion of our poet, more agreeable in their manners, more vivacious..."

* The person to whom Burns addressed his Epistle to Davis, a brother poet.

† For which see Appendix, No. II. Note G.
tuous in their conduct, and more susceptible of improvement, than the self-sufficient mechanics of country. The more we approach to the condition of the man of Mauchline, it may be doubted, whether the books which they purchased were of a kind best adapted to promote the interest and happiness of persons in this situation. The men and women of the minor and the minor works of great merit, may be said, on a general view of their contents, to be less calculated to increase the knowledge and improve the moral character of those who read them; and to this last object, their morality itself, which, however, always perfectly pure, may be considered as subordinate. As works of taste, they deserve a place in the library. Indeed, the highest degree of delicacy; and to this circumstance it is perhaps owing, that they exhibit little or nothing of the peculiar manners of the age or country in which they were produced. But delicacy of taste, though the source of many pleasures, is not without some disadvantages; and to render it desirable, the possessor should perhaps in all cases be raised above the necessity of useful labour, unless, indeed, we should include under this term the exercise of the imitative arts, over which, taste immediately presides. Delicacy of taste may be a blessing to him who has the disposal of his own time, and who can choose what book he shall read, of what diversion he shall partake, and what company he shall keep. To men so situated, the cultivation of the taste for that delicate, yet useful, and essential, and opens a path to many other gratifications. To men of genius, in the possession of opulence and leisure, the cultivation of the taste may be said to be essential to a high degree of happiness. It is the delight of the soul, which without employment would destroy the happiness of the possessor, and corrects that morbid sensibleness which is the consequence of not having that delicacy of passion, which is the base of the tempora-ment of genius. Happy had it been for our bard, after he emerged from the condition of a peasant, had he despised the delights of the country, or the seductions, regulating all the effusions of his muse, and presiding over all his social enjoyments. But to the thousands who share the original condition of Burns, and who are doomed to pass their lives in the Shannon in which they were born, delicacy of taste, were it even of easy attainment, would, if not a positive evil, be at least a doubtful blessing. Delicacy of taste may make a man carping, critical, or disputing; and should it render the cultivator of the soul unhappy in his situation, it presents no means by which that sitters may be banished. To the rural muse, which diffuse so many charms throughout society, which sometimes secure to their votaries distinction while living, and which still more frequently obtain for them a kind of immortality after death, the rural muse may, or even independence, when cultivated with the utmost attention; and can scarcely be pursued with advantage by the peasant in the short intervals of leisure which his occupations allow. Those who raise them- selves from the condition of daily labour, are usually men who excel in the practice of some useful art, or who join habits of industry and sobriety to an acquain-tance with some of the more common branches of knowledge. The penmanship of Betterworth, and the arithmetic of Cocker, may be studied by men in the meanest walks of life: and they too may have the peasant more in the pursuit of independence, than the study of Homer or of Shakespeare, though he could comprehend, and even imitate the beauties of those immortal bard.

These observations are not offered without some portion of doubt and hesitation. The subject has many relations, and would justify an ample discussion. It may be observed, on the other hand, that the first step to improvement is to awaken the desire of im-provement. It is not probable that a taste might be produced by such reading as interests the heart and excites the imagination. The greater part of the sacred writings themselves, in which Scotland are more especially the main sources of knowledge, contained nothing more calculated to excite a taste for the beautiful by such reading as interests the heart and excites the imagination. The greater part of the sacred writings themselves, in which Scotland are more especially the main sources of knowledge, contained nothing more calculated to excite a taste for the beautiful. It may be farther observed, that every human being, is the proper judge of his own happiness, and within the path of innocence, ought to be permitted to pursue it. Since it is the taste of the Scottish pensantry to give a preference to works of taste and of fancy,* it may be presumed they find a superior gratification in the perusal of the whiffling, high taste, than would be the consequence, if they were to be made happy in their original condition, than furnished with the means, or with the desire of rising above it. Such considerations are doubtless mistaken, but, nevertheless, the more con- vious reflections may deserve to be examined, and here we shall leave the subject.

Though the records of the society at Tarbolton are lost, and those of the society at Mauchline have not been transmitted, yet we may safely affirm, that our accounts of its illustrious members are not of the number of the minor and the minor works of great merit, which were well calculated to excite and to develop the powers of his mind. From seven to twelve persons constituted the society of Tarbolton, and such a number is best suited to the purposes of information. Where this is the object of these societies, the number should be such, that each person may have an opportu-nity of imbibing its sentiments, as well as of receiving those of others, and the powers of private conversa-tion are to be employed, not those of public debate. A limited society of this kind, where the subject of con-versation is fixed beforehand, so that each member may revolve it previously in his mind, is perhaps one of the happiest contrivances hitherto discovered for shortening the acquisition of knowledge, and hastening the production of useful and important productions. The law of society, which may be said to have been somewhat more of regulation than the rules of politeness establish in common conversation; or rather perhaps, it requires that the rules of politeness, which are founded on the idea of a social distinction, should be vigorously enforced. The order of speech established in the club at Tarbolton, appears to have been more regular than was required in so small a society; if where all that is necessary seems to be the fixing on a member to whom every speaker shall ad-dress himself, and who shall in return secure the speak-er from all painful interruption, and save the junior members whom intimacy and friendship have relieved from re-serve and restraint, is liable, when left to itself, to so many inequalities, and which, as it becomes rapid, so highly divergent into separate and collateral branches, in which it is dissipated and lost, being kept within its channel by a simple limitation of this kind which prac-tice renders easy and familiar, flows along in one one stream, and becomes smoother, and clearer, and deeper, as it flows. It may also be observed, that in this way the acquisition of knowledge becomes more pleas-ing, because it is less painful; the members have so little care of the faculty employed to convey it. Though some atten-tion has been paid to the eloquence of the senate and the bar, which in this, as in all other free governments, is a matter of the highest importance, there has been little in it, yet little regard has been paid to the humber ex-cerise of speech in private conversation; an art that is of consequence to every description of persons under every form of government, and on which eloquence of every kind ought—perhaps to be founded.

The first requisite of every kind of eloquence, a dis- tinct attention, is the offspring of much time and of long practice. Children are always defective in clear articulation, and so are young people, though in a less degree. What is called altering in speech, prevails with some persons through life, especially in those who are taciturn. Articulation does not seem to reach its final degree of distinctness in men before the age of twenty, or even in some men somewhat earlier. Female occupations require much use of speech because they are dulls in detail. Be- cause of such works; and it may be added, that it is the expiration is left at liberty. Their nerves being more delicate, their sensibility as well as fancy is more lively; the natural consequence of which is, a more fre-
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quest utterance of thought, a greater fluency of speech, and a distinct articulation at an earlier age. But in men who have not mingled early and familiarly with the world, though rich perhaps in knowledge, and clear in general apprehension, it is often difficult with which their ideas are communicated by speech, through the want of those habits that connect thoughts, words, and sounds together; which, when these two faculties have been long associated, and by which, in truth, are the result of long and painful practice; and when analyzed, exhibit the phenomena of most curious and complicated association.

Societies then, such as we have been describing, while they may be said to put each member in possession of the knowledge of all the rest, improve the powers of utterance; and by the collision of opinion, excite the faculties of reason and reflection. To those who wish to improve their minds in such intervals of labour as the condition of a peasant allows, this method of abbreviating instruction, may, under proper regulations, be highly useful. To the student, whose opinions, springing out of solitary observation, are seldom in the first instance correct, and which have, notwithstanding, while confined to himself, an increasing tendency to assume in his own eye the character of truth, it is often painful to observe these thoughts to be examined as they arise, of the utmost importance; since it may prevent those illusions of imagination, by which genius being first formed, is afterwards perverted through successive generations. And to men who have cultivated letters, or general science, in the course of their education, but who are engaged in the active occupations of life, and no longer able to devote study to or to books the time requisite for improving or preserving their acquisitions, associations of this kind, where the mind may be formed from its usual cares in discussions of literature or science, afford the most pleasing, the most useful, and the most rational of gratifications.*

Whether in the humble societies of which he was a member, Burns acquired much direct information, may perhaps be questioned. It cannot however be doubted, that by collision, the faculties of his mind would be excited: that by practice his habits of enunciation would be established; and thus we have some explanation of that early command of words and of expression which enabled him to pour forth his thoughts in language not unworthy of his genius, and which of all his endowments, seemed, on his appearance in Edinburgh, the most extraordinary.† For associations

* When letters and philosophy were cultivated in ancient Greece, the press had not multiplied the tables of learning and science, and consequently produced the habit of studying as it were in common. Poets were found reciting their own verses in public assemblies; in public schools only philosophers delivered their speculations. The taste of the hearers, the ingenuity of the scholars, were employed in appreciating and examining the works of fancy and of speculation submitted to their consideration, and the irreproachable words were not given to the world before the composition, as well as the sentiments, were again and again retouched and improved. Death alone put the last seal on the labours of genius. Hence, perhaps, may be in part explained the extraordinary art and skill with which the monuments of Grecian literature that remain to us, appear to have been constructed.

† It appears that our Poet made more preparation than might be supposed, for the discussion of the society of Tarbolton. There were found some detached memoranda, evidently prepared for these meetings, and on subsequent occasions, as the title of a speech on the question mentioned in p. 21, in which, as might be expected, he takes the improper side of the question. The
"The enclosed song was the work of my return home; but perhaps I have not written what might have been expected from such a scene."

"I have the honour to be, Madam, Your most obedient, and ever faithful servant, ROBERT BURNS."

In the manuscript book in which our poet has recounted this incident, and into which the letter and poem are copied, he complains that the lady made no reply to his effusions, and this appears to have wounded his self-love. It is not, however, difficult to find an excuse for her silence. The condition of the at that time little known; and where known at all, noted rather for the wild strength of his humour, than for those strains of tenderness in which he afterwards so much excelled. To the lady herself his name had perhaps never been mentioned, and of such a poem she might not consider herself as the proper judge. Her modesty must have prevented her perceiving that the poem of Tibullus breathed in this nameless poet, and that her beauty was awakening strains destined to immortality, on the bank of the Ayr. It may be conceived, al- so, that supposing the verse duly appreciated, delicacy might find it difficult to express its acknowledge- ments. The fervent imagination of the rustic bard possessed more of tenderness than of respect. Instead of raising himself to the condition of the object of his admiration, he presumed to reduce her to his own, and strain this high-born beauty to his daring bosom. It is true, Burns might have found precedents for such freedom among the poets of Greece and Rome, and in- deed of every country. And it is not to be denied, that lovely women have generally submitted to this sort of profession with patience, and even with humour. To what purpose is it to replein at a misfortune which is the necessary consequence of their own charms, or to renounce with a description of men who are incapable of control?

"The inanimate, the lover, and the poet, Are of immagination all compact."

It may be easily presumed, that the beautiful nymph of Ballochmyle, whoever she may have been, did not reject with scorn the adorations of our poet, though she received them with silent modesty and dignified re- serve.

The sensibility of our bard's temper, and the force of his imagination, exposed him in a particular manner to the impressions of beauty; and these qualities, unit- ed to his impassioned eloquence, gave in turn a power- ful influence over the female heart. The Banks of the Ayr formed the scene of youthful passions of a still tenderer nature, the history of which it would be im- proper to reveal, were it even in our power; and the traces of which will soon be discoverable only in those strains of nature and sensibility to which they gave birth. The song entitled Highland Mary, is known to many, of whom one perhaps may doubt whether it was writ- ten," says our bard," or one of the most interesting passages of my youthful days." The object of this passage in his early life, and the impression left on the mind of Burns seems to have been deep and lasting. Several years afterwards, when he was removed to Nithsdale, he gave vent to the sensibility of his rec- ollections in that impassioned poem, which is address- ed To Mary, in Heaven!

* The song entitled the Lass of Ballochmyle.

To the delineations of the poet by himself, by his brother, and by his tutor, these additions are necess- ary, in order that the reader may see his character in its various aspects, and may have an opportunity of forming a just notion of the variety, as well as of the power of his original genius.*

The history of the poems formerly printed, will be found in the Appendix to this volume. It is in- serted in the words of Gilbert Burnes, who, in a letter addressed to the Editor, has given the following ac- count of the friends which Robert's talents procured him before he left Ayrshire, or attracted the notice of the world.

"The farm of Mossgiel, at the time of our coming to it, (Martinmas, 1783,) was the property of the Earl of Loudon, but was held in tack by Mr. Gavin Hamilton, writer in Mauchline, from whom we had our bargain - who had thus an opportunity of knowing, and showing a sincere regard for my brother, before he knew that he was a poet. The poet's estimation of him, and the strong outlines of his character, may be collected from the dedication to this gentleman. When the publica- tion was begun, Mr. H. entered very warmly into its interests, and promoted the subscription very exten- sively. Mr. Robert Aiken, writer in Ayr, is a man of worth and taste, of warm affections, and connected with a most respectable circle of friends and relations. It is to this gentleman The Cotter's Saturday Night is inscribed. The poems of my brother which I have for- merly mentioned, no sooner came into his hands, than they were quickly known, and well received in the ex- tensive circle of Mr. Aikins's friends, which gave them a sort of currency, necessary in this wise world, even for the good reception of things valuable in themselves. But Mr. Aiken not only admired the poet; as soon as he became acquainted with him, he showed the warm- est regard for the man, and did every thing in his power to forward his interest and respectability. The Epistle to a Young Friend was addressed to this gentleman's son, Mr. A. H. Aiken, now of Liverpool. He was the third of a young family, who were taught to receive my brother with respect, as a man of genius, and their father's friend.

The Brig of Ayr is inscribed to John Ballentine, Esq. banker in Ayr; one of those gentlemen to whom my brother was introduced by Mr. Aiken. He interest- ed himself very warmly in my brother's concerns, and constantly showed the greatest friendship and at- tachment to him. When the Kilmarrock edition was all sold off, and a considerable demand pointed out the propriety of publishing a second edition, Mr. Wilson, who had printed the first, was asked if he would print the second, and take his chance of being paid from the first sale. This he declined, and when this came to Mr. Ballentine's knowledge, I generously offered to accommodate Robert with what money he might need for that purpose; but advised him to go to Edinburgh, as the fittest place for publishing. When he did go to Edinburgh, his friends advised him to publish again by subscription, so that he did not need to accept the offer. Mr. William Parker, merchant in Kilmarrock was a subscriber for thirty-five copies of the Kilmarrock ed- ition. This may perhaps appear not deserving of notice here; but if the comparative obscurity of the poet,
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We have dwelt the longer on the early part of his life, because it is the least known; and because, as has already been mentioned, this part of his history is connected with some views of the condition and manners of the humblest ranks of society, hitherto little observed, and which will perhaps be found neither useless nor uninteresting.

About the time of his leaving his native county, his correspondence commences; and in the series of letters now given to the world, the chief incidents of the remaining part of his life will be found. This authentic life, though melancholy record, will supersede in future the necessity of any extended narrative.

Burns set out for Edinburgh in the month of November, 1786. He was furnished with a letter of introduction to Dr. Blacklock, from a gentleman to whom the Doctor had addressed the letter which is represented by our bard as the immediate cause of his visiting the Scottish metropolis. He was acquainted with Mr. Stewart, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the university; and had been entertained by that gentleman at Oatrine, his estate in Ayrshire. He had been introduced by Mr. Alexander Dalzel to the earl of Glencairn, who had expressed his high approbation of his poetical talent. He had also being admitted into the circle of literary fashion, and his own manners and appearance exceeded every expectation that could have been formed of him, he soon became an object of general curiosity and admiration. The following circumstance contributed to this in a considerable degree. At the time when Burns arrived in Edinburgh, the periodical paper at this period, be taken into consideration, it appears to me a greater effort of generosity, than many things which appear more brilliant in my brother's future history.

"Mr. Robert Muir, merchant in Kilmarnock, was one of those friends Robert's poetry had procured him, and one who was dear to his heart. This gentleman had no very great fortune, or a long line of dignified ancestry; but what Robert says of Captain Matthew Henderson, might be said of him with great propriety, that he held the potent of his honours immediately from Almighty God. Nature had indeed marked him a gentleman in the most legible characters. He died while yet a young man, soon after the publication of my brother's first Edinburgh edition. Sir William Cunningham of Robertland, paid a very flattering attention, and showed a good deal of friendship for the poet. Before his going to Edinburgh, as well as after, Robert seemed peculiarly pleased with Professor Stewart's friendship and conversation."

"But of all the friendships which Robert acquired in Ayrshire and elsewhere, none seemed more agreeable to him than that of Mrs. Dunlop, of Dunlop; nor any which has been more uniformly and constantly exerted in behalf of him and his family, of which, were it proper, I could give many instances. Robert was on the point of setting out for Edinburgh before Mrs. Dunlop had heard of him. About the time of my brother's publishing in Kilmarnock, she had been afflicted with a long and severe illness which had reduced her mind to the most distressing state of depression. In this situation, a copy of the printed poems was laid on her table by a friend; and happening to open on The Cotter's Saturday Night, she read it over with the greatest pleasure and surprise; the poet's description of the simple cottagers, operating on her mind like the charm...

...
able to mention the date particularly, by some verses which Burns wrote after he returned home, and in which he expresses his joy at recalling and the many pleasant incidents of his manners, he was impressed on the mind of the poet, which never was effaced. The verses I allude to are among the most imperfect of his pieces; but a few stanzas may perhaps be as much of an object to the character to which they relate, and of the light which they throw on the situation and feelings of the writer, before his name was known to the public."

"I cannot positively say at this distance of time, whether at the period of our first acquaintance, the Kilmar-nock edition of his poems had been just published, or was yet in the press. I suspect that the latter was the case, as I have still in my possession copies in his own hand writing, of some of his favorite performances; particularly of verses in "turning up a Mouse with his plough":--"On the Mountain Daisy," and "the Lament." On my return to Edinburgh, I showed the volume, and mentioned what I knew of the author's history to several of my friends; and among others, to Mr. Henry Mackenzie, who first recommended him to public notice in the 97th number of The Loung.-

"At this time Burns's prospects in life were so excessively gloomy, that he had seriously formed a plan of going to London; but the obstacles to this interruption, not however without lamenting that his want of patronage should force him to think of a project so repugnant to his feelings, when his ambition aimed at no higher an object than the edition of an excursion or gauger in his own country.

"His manners were then, as they continued ever afterwards, simple, frank, and inoffensive, accompanied by expression of genuine and worth; but without anything that indicated forwardness, arrogance, or vanity. He took his share in conversation, but not more than belonged to him; and listened with apparent attention and deference on subjects where his want of education deprived him of the means of information. If there had been a little more gentleness and accommodation in his temper, he would, I think, have been still more interesting; but he had been accustomed to give law in the circle of his ordinary acquaintance; to have often imposed on him the appearance of servility, rendered his manner somewhat decided and hard. Nothing, perhaps, was more remarkable among his various attainments, than the fluency, and cogency, and originality of his language, which he could express, more than his own, his education, his manners or servility, rendered his manner somewhat decided and hard.

"He came to Edinburgh early in the winter following, and remained there for several months. By whose advice he took this step, I am unable to say. Perhaps it was suggested only by his own curiosity to see a little more of the world; but, I confess, I dreaded the consequences from the first, and always apprehended, that his pursuits and habits should continue the same as in the former part of life; with the addition of, what I considered as then completely within his reach, a good farm on modern terms, in a part of the country agreeable to his taste.

"The attention he received during his stay in town, from all ranks and descriptions of persons, was such as would have turned any head but his own. I cannot say that I could perceive any unfavourable effect which they left on his mind. He retained the same simplicity of manners and appearance which had struck me so forcibly when I first saw him in the country; nor did he seem to feel any additional self-importance from the number and rank of his new ac-
quaintance. His dress was perfectly suited to his station, plain, and unpretending, with a sufficient attention to cleanliness. If I may judge by my own observations, I saw him wear wood boots; and, when on more than usual ceremony, buckskin breeches.

"The variety of his engagements, while in Edin-

burgh, prevented me from seeing him so often as I could have wished. In the course of the spring he called on me once or twice, at my request, early in the morning, and walked with me to Braid Hills, in the neighborhood of the town, where he charmed me still more with a few verses of his composition than he had done in company. He was passionately fond of the beauties of nature; and I recollect once he told me when I was admiring a distant prospect in one of our morning walks, that the sight of so many smoking cottages gave a pleasure to his mind, which none could understand who has not witnessed, like himself, the happiness and the worth which they con-
tained."

"In his political principles he was then a Jacobite; while his own tastes were of a very moderate sort. He was originals from the estate of Lord Mareschal. Indeed he did not appear to have thought much on such subjects, nor very consistently. He had a very strong sense of liberty, and expressed desire of being at the liberty with which he had heard it treated occasional-

ly in some convivial meetings, which he frequented. I recollect his saying he was in the winter of 1786-7; for afterwards we met but seldom, and our conversations turned chiefly on his literary projects, or his private af-

fairs.

"I do not recollect whether it appears or not from any of your letters to me, that you had ever seen Burns. I must, however, it is superfluous to me to add, that the idea which his conversation conveyed of the powers of his mind, exceeded, if possible, that which is suggested by his writings. Among the poets whom I was happened to know, I have been struck in more than one instance, with the unaccountable disparity between their general talents, and the occasional in-
spirations of their more favourable moments.

But all the faculties of Burns's mind were, as far as I could judge, equally vigorous; and his predilection for poe-
ty was rather the result of his own enthusiastic and impetuous temper, than of a genius exclusively adapted to that species of composition. From his con-
versation I should have pronounced him to be fitted to excel in whatever walk of ambition he had chosen to exert his abilities.

"Among the subjects on which he was accustomed to dwell, the characters of the women whom he had been disposed to love was a plainly favourite one. The remarks he made on them were always shrewd and pointed, though frequently inclining too much to sarcasm. His praise of those he loved was sometimes indiscriminate and extravagant; but this, I suspect, proceeded rather from the caprice and hu-

mor of the moment, than from the effects of attach-

ment in blinding his judgment. His wit was ready, and always impressed with the marks of a vigorous un-

derstanding; but to my taste, not often pleasing or

happy. His attempts at elegy in his printed works, are the only performances perhaps, that he has produced, totally unworthy of his genius.

"In summer, 1787, I passed some weeks in Ayrshire, and saw Burns occasionally. I think that he made a pretty long excursion that season to the Highlands, and that he also visited what Batey calls the Arcadi-

an in the Blackland, upon the banks of the Teviot and the Tweed.

"I should have mentioned before, that notwithstanding various reports I heard during the preceed-

ing winter, of Burns's predilection for convivial, and not very select society, I should have concluded in fa-

vour of what I had seen from all I have heard and read, till under my own observation. He told me indeed himself, that the weakness of his stomach was such as

"See the poem entitled "Lines on an Interview with Lord Daer."
THE LIFE OF BURNS.

27

to deprive man entirely of any merit in his temperance. I was addressed, but not distinctly, by a voice so distant as to be at the end of his now comparatively sedentary and luxurious life, when he confessed to me, the first night he spent in my house after his winter's campaign in town, that he had been much disturbed when he lay, by a palpitation of his heart, which, he said, was a complaint to which he had of late become subject.

"In the course of the same season I was led by curios- ity to attend for an hour or two a Mason-Lodge in Mauchline, where Burns presided. He had occasion to converse some short unmeditated compliments to different individuals from whom he had no reason to expect a visit, and every thing he said was happily conceived, and forcibly as well as fluently expressed. If I am not mistaken, he told me that in that village, before going to Edinburgh, he had belonged to a small club of such the inhabitants as had taste for books, and concerning questions that occurred to them in the course of their reading. His manner of speaking in public had evidently the marks of some practice in extemporary elocu-
tion.

"I must not omit to mention, what I have always considered and characterized in a high degree of originality, the extreme facility and good-nature of his taste in judging of the compositions of others, where there was any real ground for praise. I repeated to him the first engraving of the" Poems of Thomson, in which he was unacquainted, and have more than once wit- nessed the tears of admiration and rapture with which he heard them. The collection of songs by Dr. Aikin, which I first put into his hands, he read with unmixed delight, notwithstanding his former efforts in that very difficult species of writing; and I have little doubt that it had some effect in polishing his subsequent compositions.

"In judging of prose, I doubt not his taste was equally sound. I once read to him a passage or two in Franklin's Works, which I thought very happily ex- ecuted, upon the model of Addison; but he did not appear to relish, or to perceive the beauty which they derived from their exquisite simplicity, or from the feelings with them in indifference, when compared with the point, and antithesis, and quaintness of Juvenis. The influ-
ence of this taste is very perceptible in his own prose compositions, although their great and various excel-
lences render some of them scarcely less objects of wonder than his poetical performances. The late Dr. Hervey, on the contrary, used to say, that considering his education, the former seemed to him the more extraordinary of the two.

"His memory was uncommonly retentive, at least for poetry, of which he recited to me frequently long compositions with the most minute accuracy. They were chiefly ballads, and other pieces in Scottish dialect; great part of them (he told me) he had learned in his childhood from his mother, who delighted in such recitants, and whose poetical taste, rude, as it proba-
ly was, gave, it is presumable, the first direction to her son's genius.

"Of the more polished verses which accidentally fell into his hands in his early years, he mentioned par-
ticularly the recommendatory poems, by different au-
thers, prefixed to Hervey's Meditations; a book which has always had a very wide circulation among such of the country people of Scotland, as affect to unite some degree of taste with their religious studies. And these poems (although they are certainly below the mark of Burns, and have continued read with a degree of rup-
ture beyond expression. He took notice of this fact himself, as a proof how much the taste is liable to be influenced by accidental circumstances.

"His father appeared to me, from the account he gave of him, to have been a respectable and worthy character, possessed of a mind superior to what might have been expected from his station in life. He acquir-
ed much of his own principles and feelings to the ear-
ly impressions he had received from his instruction and

example. I recollect that he once applied to him (and he added, that the passage was a literal statement of fact) the two last lines of the following passage in the Minstrel; the whole of which he repeated with great enthusiasm:

"Shall I be left forgotten in the dust,
When fate, relenting, lets the flower revive?
Shall nature's voice, to man alone unjust,
Bind him, though doom'd to perish, hope to live?

"With disappointment, penury, and pain?
No! Heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive;
And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
Bright through the eternal year of love's triumphant reign.

This truth sublimes, his simple sire had taught;
In sooth, 'twas almost all the shepherd knew.

"With respect to Burns's early education, I cannot say anything with certainty. He always spoke with respect and gratitude of the schoolmaster who had taught him to read English; and who, finding in his scholar a more than ordinary ardour for knowledge, had encouraged and instructed him in the grammatical principles of the language. He began the study of La-
tius, and dropped it before he had finished the verses. I have sometimes heard him quote a few Latin words, such as omnium vincit amor, &c, but they seemed to be such as he had caught from conversation, and which he repeated by rote. I think he had a project, after he came to London, of instructing himself as his intimate friend, the late Mr. Nicol, one of the masters of the grammar-school here; but I do not know that he ever proceeded so far as to make the attempt.

"He certainly possessed a smattering of French; and, if he had an affectation in any thing, it was in in-
troducing occasionally a word or phrase from that lan-
guage. It is possible that his knowledge in this respect might be more extensive than I suppose it to be; but this you can learn from his more intimate acquaint-
ance. It would be worth while to inquire, whether he was able to read the French authors with such facility as to receive from them any improvement to his taste. For my own part, I doubt it much; nor would I believe it, on very strong and pointed evi-
dence.

"If my memory does not fail me, he was well in-
structed in arithmetic, and knew something of prac-
tical geometry, particularly of surveying—All his other attainments were entirely his own.

"The last time I saw him was during the winter, 1788-89, when he passed an evening with me at Drumsheugh, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, where I was then living. My friend, Mr. Alison, was the only other person in company. I never saw him more agreeable or interesting. A present which Mr. Al-
ison sent him afterwards of his Essay on Theatre drew from Burns a letter of acknowledgment which I remember to have read with some degree of surprise at the time, and since with much wonder. It was formed of the general principles of the doctrine of asso-
ciation. When I saw Mr. Alison to Shropshire last autumn, I forgot to inquire if the letter be still in exist-
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[This letter is No. CXIV.]

* Or rather 1789-90. I cannot speak with confidence with respect to the particular year. Some of my other dates may possibly require correction, as I keep no journal of such occurrences.

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The scene that opened on our bard in Edinburgh was altogether new, and in a variety of other respects very interesting, especially to one of the disposition of mind. To use an expression of his own, he found himself, "suddenly translated from the visitiert shades of life," into the presence, and, indeed, into the society of a number of persons, previously known to him by report as of the highest distinction in his country, and whose characters it was natural for him to examine with no common curiosity.

From the men of letters, in general, his reception was particularly flattering. The late Dr. Robinson, Dr. Blair, Dr. Gregorius, Mr. Stewart, MacKay, and Mr. Frazer Tyler, may be mentioned in the list of those who perceived his uncommon talents, who acknowledged more especially his powers in conversation, and who interested themselves in the cultivation of his genius. In Edinburgh, literary and fashionable society are a good deal mixed. Our bard was an acceptable guest in the gay and most elevated circles, and frequently received from female beauty and vogue, those attentions above all others most grateful to him. At the table of Lord Monboddo he was a frequent guest; and while he enjoyed the society, and partook of the hospitalities of the venerable judge, he experienced the kindness and condescension of his lovely and accomplished daughter. The singular beauty of this young lady was illuminated by a happy expression of countenance which results from the union of cultivated taste and superior understanding, with the finest affections of the heart. The influence of such a person was not lost on our poet. "There has not been any thing like Miss Burnet, (said he in a letter to a friend,) in all the combination of beauty, grace, and goodness The Great has formed, since Milton's Eve, on the first day of her existence." In his Address to Edinburgh, she is celebrated in a strain of still greater elevation:

"Fair Burnet strikes th' adoring eye,
Heaven's beauties on my fancy shine!
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own his work indeed divine!"

This lovely woman died a few years afterwards In the flower of youth. Our bard expressed his sensibility on that occasion, in verses addressed to her memory.

Among the men of rank and fashion, Burns was particularly distinguished by James, Earl of Gieicau. On the motion of this nobleman, the Caledonian Hunt, a society of Edinburgh, of which the Earl was president, sent a letter to Burns, requesting him to come to Edinburgh, and to assume the patronage of the club, which he accepted. The Earl of Gieicau, in his capacity of nobleman, expressed a high regard for Burns, on that occasion, in the following words:

"I congratulate my country that the blood of her ancient heroes runs uncontaminated; and that, from your courage, knowledge, and public spirit, she may expect protection, wealth, and liberty. A scholar, a man of taste and sensibility, died so long after, had he lived, and had his power equalled his wishes, Scotland might still have existed in the greatest and of lamenting the early loss of her favourite bard.

A taste for letters is not always conjoined with habits of temperance and regularity; and Edinburgh, at the periodBurns lived, contained perhaps an uncommon proportion of men of considerable talents, devoted to social excesses, in which their talents were wasted and debased.

Burns entered into several parties of this description, with the usual vehemence of his character. His generous affections, his ardent eloquence, his brilliant turn of fancy, and the more delicate effects of his genius, enabled him to be the idol of such associations; and accounting himself to conversation of unlimited range, and to festive indulgences which scorned restraint, he gradually lost some portion of his relish for the more pure, but less poetical pleasures, to be found in the circles of taste, elegance, and literature. The sudden alteration of his habits of life operated on him physically as well as morally. The bubble face of an Ayrshire peasant he had exchanged for the luxuries of the Scottish metropolis, and the effects of this change on his ardent constitution could not be unconsiderable. But whatever influence might be produced on his conduct his excellent understanding suffered no corresponding debasement. He estimated his friends and associates of every description with the same proper value, and appreciated his own conduct with a precision that gave scope to much curious and melancholy reflection. He saw his danger, and at times formed resolutions to guard against it; but he had only to think of the title of dissipation, and was born along its stream.

Of the state of his mind at this time, an authentic, though imperfect document remains, in a book which he procured in the spring of 1757, for the purpose, as he himself informs us, of recording in it whatever seemed worthy of observation. The following extracts may serve as a specimen:

Edinburgh, April 9, 1757.

"As I have seen a good deal of human life in Edinburgh, a great many characters which are new to one bred up in the shades of life as I have been, I am determined to take down my remarks on the spots Gray observes, in a letter to Mr. Falgrave, that 'half a word fixed upon, or near the spot, is worth a cart load of recollection.' I don't know how it is with the world at large, and the world may be amusing, but it is nothing by no means a solitary pleasure. I want some one to laugh with me, some one to be grave with me, some one to please me, and help my discrimination, which is very more weak, and at times of no degree to admire my acuteness and penetration. The world are so busied with selfish pursuits, ambition, vanity, and the like, that I cannot find my satisfaction in their while to make any observation on what passes around them, except where that observation is a snicker, or branch of the daring plant they are rear- ing in their fancy. Nor am I sure, notwithstanding all the sentimental flights of novel-writers, and the sage philosophy of moralists, whether we are capable of so intimate and conical a coalition of friendship, as that one man may pour out his bosom, his every thought and fleeting fancy, his very inmost soul, with unreserved confidence to another, without hazard of losing part of that respect which man deserves from man; or, from the unavoidable imperfections attending human nature, of one day repeating his confidence.

"For these reasons I am determined to make these pages my confidant; I will sketch every character that any way strikes me, to the best of my power, without regard to the personal circumstances of the individual. I will insert anecdotes, and take down remarks in the old law phrase, without finding favour. Where I hit on any thing clever, my own applause will be the lowest. The name of 'Achates,' and "Achates' patron, I think a lock and key a security, at least equal to the bosom of any friend whatever.

"My own private story likewise, my love adventures, my rambles; the frowns and smiles of fortune on my hardships; my poems and fragments, that must never see the light, shall be occasionally insert-

"The dedication prefixed to the poems.
The Life of Burns. 29

ed. In short, never did four shillings purchase so much friendship, since condescendingly to part with, or to set up to sale.

"To these seemingly invincible, but too just ideas of human friendship, I would cheerfully make one exception—the connexion between two persons of different sexes, when their interests are united and absorbed by the tie of love—"

When thought meets thought, 'ere from the lips it part, And each warm wish springs mutual from the heart.

There confidence, confidence that exalts them more in one another's opinion, that exalts them more to each other's hearts, unreceiv'dly 'regius and reales.' But this is not my lot; and, in my situation, if I am wise, (which, by the by, I have no great chance of being,) my fate should be cast with the Psalmist's sparrow, 'to watch alone on the house-top.'—Oh! the pity.

"There are few of the sorer evils under the sun that give me more uneasiness and chirgian than the comparison how a man of genius, nay, of avowed worth, is received everywhere, with the reception which a mere ordinary character, decorated with the trappings of fun'ny distinction, meets. I imagine a man of abilities, his breast glowing with honest pride, conscious that men are born equal, still giving honour to whom honour is due; he meets at a great man's table, a Squire something, or a Sir somebody; he knows the noble landlord, at heart, gives the bard, or, whatever he is, a share of his good wishes, beyond perhaps, any one at table; yet how will it judiciously endear him to see a fellow, whose abilities would scarcely have made an eightpenny tailor, and whose heart is worth three farthings, meet with attention and notice, that are withheld from the son of genius and poverty?"

"The noble Glencarn has wounded me to the soul here, because I dearly esteem, respect, and love him. He showed so much attention, engaging attention one day, to the only blockhead at table, (the whole company consisted of his lordship, dundarpike, and myself,) that I was within half a point of throwing down my gage of contemplative dignity; but his shook my hand, and looked so benevolently good at parting. God bless him I though I should never see him more, I shall love him until my dying day! I am pleased to disabuse him of the threes of his standards, as I am miserably deficient in some other virtues.

"With Dr. Blair I am more at ease. I never respect him with humble veneration; but when he kindly interests himself in my welfare, or still more, when he descends from his port, and meets me on equal ground in conversation, my heart overflows with what is called liking. When he neglects me for the mere carcass of greatness, or when his eye measures the difference of our points of reputation, and himself, with scarcely any emotion, what do I care for him or his pompe either?"

The intentions of the poet in procuring this book, so fully described by himself, were very imperfectly exerted. He has inserted in it few or no annotations, but several observations and reflections, of which the greater part are proper for the public eye, will be found preserved in his letters. The most of those particularia in the book are the delineations of the characters he met with. These are not numerous; but they are chiefly persons of distinction in the respectable and benevolent, and but few with any dignity and respect due to living characters, prevents us from committing them to the press. Though it appears but little, he quotes some of his acquaintance, some sarcastic remarks on the men with whom he lived, nothing of this kind is discoverable in these more liberate efforts of his understanding, which, while they exhibit great clearness of expression, manifest also the wish, as well as the power, to bestow and generous praise.

As a specimen of these delineations, we give in this edition the character of the Dr. Blair, who has now paid the debt of nature, in the full confidence that this friendship will not be found out of accord with the respect and veneration due to that excellent man, the last star in the literary constellation, by which the metropolis of Scotland was, in the earlier part of the present reign, so beautifully illuminated.

"It is not easy forming an exact judgment of any one; but, in my opinion, Dr. Blair is merely an astonishing proof of what industry and application can do. Natural parts like his are frequently to be met with; his vanity is proverbially known among his acquaintances; but he is justly at the head of what may be called fine writing; and a critic of the first, the very first rank in prose; even in poetry, a bard of Nature's making can only take the pas of him. He has had at least of the very finest wits, but far from being an ordinary one. In short, he is truly a worthy and most respectable character."

By the new edition of his poems, Burns acquired a vast property in Scotland, that enabled him to take a part of the pleasures of Edinburgh, but to gratify a desire he had long entertained, of visiting those parts of his native country, most attractive by their beauty or their history, that will not be found out of accord with the respect and veneration due to that excellent man, the last star in the literary constellation, by which the metropolis of Scotland was, in the earlier part of the present reign, so beautifully illuminated.

The scenes on the banks of the Tweed, and of its tributary streams, strongly interested his fancy; and accordingly he left Edinburgh on the 8th of May, 1787, on a tour through a country so much celebrated in the rural songs of Scotland. He travelled on horseback, and was accompanied, during some part of his journey, by Mr. Ainslie, the poet, whose writer to the signet, a gentleman who enjoyed much of his friendship and of his confidence. On this tour a journal remains, which, however, contains only occasional remarks on the scenes, and which is chiefly occupied with an account of the author's different stages, and with his observations on the various characters to whom he was introduced. In the course of this tour he visited the country of Dunse, the birthplace of his companion; Mr. Brydone, the celebrated traveller, to whom he carried a letter of introduction from Mr. Mackenzie; the Rev. Dr. Sommerville, of Jedburgh, the historian; Mr. and Mrs. Scott, of Wachacope; Dr. Elliot, a physician, retired to a romantic spot on the banks of the Roole; Sir Alexander Don; Sir James Hall; Mr. and Mrs. Dunglass. He met with a great variety of delightful and endearing characters. Every where the fame of the poet had spread before him, and every where he received the most hospitable and flattering attentions. At Jedburgh he continued several days, and was honoured by the magistrates with the freedom of their borough. The following may serve as a specimen of this tour, which the perpetual reference to living characters prevents our giving at large.

* * *

"Saturday, May 6th. Left Edinburgh—Lammermuir-biils, miserably dreary in general, but at times very picturesque.

"Laonson-edge, a glorious view of the Merse—Reach Berrywell. The family-meeting with my compagnons de voyage, very charming, particularly the sister. * * *

"Saturday, went to church at Dunse. Heard Dr. Bowmaker.

* * *

* * *

Tuesday. Coldstream—glorious river Tweed—sear and majestic—fine bridge—one at Coldstream with Mr. Ainslie and Mr. Ferguson. Best Mr. Patrice Voltaire. Drink tea at Leeni- House with Mr. and Mrs. Brydone. * * * Reception externally flattering. Sleep at Coldstream.
Tuesday. Breakfast at Kelso—charming situation of the town—fine bridge over the Tweed. Enchanting views and prospects on both sides of the river, especially on the Scottish side. * * * Visit Roxbury Palace—fine situation of it. Ruins of Roxbury Castle—a holly-bush growing where James II. was accidentally killed by the bursting of a cannon. A small old religious ruin, and a fine old garden planted by the religious, roofed over and destroyed by a hottenet, a maître d'hôtel of the Duke's—Climate and soil of Berwickshire and even Roxburyshire, superior to Ayrshire, with its scurvy turnips and sheep bleat little river. Dined with Capt. Rutherford, * * return to Jedburgh. Walk up the Jed with some ladies to be shown Local antiquities. Then proceeded to Mr. Potts, writer, and to Mr. Summersville, the clergyman of the parish, a man, and a gentleman, but sadly addicted to punning.

Jedburgh, Saturday. Presented by the magistrates with the freedom of the town.

Took farewell to Jedburgh with some melancholy sensations.

Monday, May 14th, Kelso. Dine with the farmer's club—all gentlemen talking of high matters—each one taking his portion, to 50/- value, and attends the fox-hunting club in the country. Go out with Mr. Ker, one of the club, and a friend of Mr. Ainslie's, to sleep. In his mind and manners, Mr. Ker is astonishingly like my dear friend Robert Mair—everything in his house elegant. He offers to accompany me in my English tour.

Tuesday. Dine with Sir Alexander Don: a very wet day. * * * Sleep at Mr. Ker's again, and set out next day for Melrose—visit Dryburgh, a fine old ruin of a Abbey, but without the grandeur of Melrose. Dined there, and visit that far-famed golden ruin—Come to Selkirk up the banks of Ettrick. The whole country hereabouts, both on Tweed and Ettrick, remarkably story.* * * * * * Having spent three weeks in exploring this interesting scenery, Burns crossed over into Northumberland. Mr. Ker, and Mr. Hood, two gentlemen with whom he had become acquainted in the course of his tour, accompanied him. He visited Alnwick Castle, the princely seat of the Duke of Northumberland; the bermitage and old castle of Warkworth; Morpeth, and Newcastle.—In this last town he spent two days, and then proceeded to the south-west by Hexham and Wardrun, to Carlisle.—After spending a day at Carlisle with his friend Mr. Mitchell, he returned to Scotland, and at Annan his journal terminates abruptly.

Of the various persons with whom he became acquainted in the course of this journey, he has, in general, given some account; and almost always a good one. The manner in which he describes the scenery and its inhabitants, produced any effort of his muse, as was to have been wished and expected. From Annan, Burns proceeded to Dumfries, and thence through Sanquhar, to Maybole, near Mauchline, in Ayrshire, where he arriv-

ed about the 8th of June, 1757, after a long absence a six busy and eventful months. It will easily be conceived what pleasure and pride he was received with by his mother, his brothers, and sisters. He left the old home, and comparatively friends: he returned to them high in public estimation, and easy in his circumstances. He returned to them unchanged in his ardent affections, and ready to share with them to the utmostmost farthing, the pittance that fortune had bestowed.

Having remained with them a few days, he proceeded again to Edinburgh, and immediately set out on a journey to the Highlands. Of this tour no particulars have been found in any manuscript. A letter to his friend Mr. Ainslie, dated Arrochar, near Crochachas, by Lochcarty, June 28, 1757, commences as follows:

"I write you this on my tour through a country where savage streams tumble over savage mountains, thinly overspread with savage flocks, which stylishly follow their uncouth inhabitants: I am, however, in the most accurate and candid observation. The reader will be amused with the following extract.

"On our return, at a Highland gentleman's hospitable mansion, we fell in with a merry party, and danced till the ladies left us, at three in the morning. Our hired coach brought us, after a long tedious journey, to Dunbarton, the splendid formal movements; the ladies sung Scotch songs like angels, at intervals; then we flew at Bob at the Browster, Tullochgorm, Loch Erroch side, &c. like pigeons sporting in a mornin' sun, or craws protocasting a storm in a hair-day. When the dear lasses left us we ranged round the bowl till the good fellow hour of six; except a few minutes that we went out to pay our devotions to the glorious lamp of day peeping over the towering top of Benlomond. We all kneaded; our worthy landlord's son held the bowl; each man a full glass in his hand; and I, as great, repeated some rhyming nonsense, like Thomas a-Rhymer's prophecies I suppose.—After a small refreshment of the gifts of Solomon, we proceeded to spend the evening in the best society. We arrived at Dumbarton, the evening. We dined at another good fellow's house, and consequently pushed the bottle; when we went out to mount our horses we found ourselves in a sort of a group. Mr. M'Gillan and I rode soberly down the Loch side, till by came a Highlandman at the gallop, on a tolerable good horse, but which had never known the ornaments of iron or leather. We scourc to be out galloped by a Highlandman, so off we started, whip and spur. My companions, though seemingly gayly mounted, fell sadly astern; but my old mare, Jenny Geddes, one of the finest family, she strained past the Highlandman in spite of all his efforts, with the hair-halter: just as I was passing him, Donald wheeled his horse, as if by a signal the horse to me to mar my progress, when down came his horse, and threw his rider's breakless d—e in a clipt hedge; and down came Jenny Geddes over all, and my hardship between her and the Highlandman's horse. Jenny Geddes trode over me with such cautious reverence, that matters were not so bad as might well have been expected; so I came off with a few cuts and bruises, and my Highlandman's drooch resolution to be a pattern of subtlety for the future.

"I have yet fixed on nothing with respect to the serious business of life. I am, just as usual, a rhyming, mason making, raking, aimless, idle fellow. How- ever I shall somewhere have a farm soon. I was going to bring a turn to my business, but was suffocated by the heat. I am but a younger son of the house of Farnes- sus, and like other younger sons of great families, I may

* Scotch tunes.
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intrigue, if I choose to run all risks, but must not marry.

I am afraid I have almost ruined one source, the principal one indeed, of my former happiness; that eternal propensity I always had to fall in love. My heart no more glows with fervent rapture, I have no jurisprudential evening interview was stolen from the circle of cares and prying inhabitants of this weary world. I have only * * *. This last is one of your distant acquaintances, was you met the 1st of July, I and in the train of some great folks whom you know, and seen the politest quarters in Europe. I do like her a good deal; but what piques me is her conduct at the commencement of her acquaintance. I frequently visit

ed her when I was in —, and after passing regularly the intermediate degrees between the distant formal bow and the familiar grasp round the waist, I ventured in my careless way to talk of friendship in rather ambiguous terms; and after her return to —, I wrote to her in the same style. Miss, construing my words "I suppose than ever I intended, flew off in a tangent of feminine dignity and reserve, like a mountain lark in an April morning; and wrote me an answer which measured out very completely what an impression I had to travel before I could reach the climate of her favour. But I am an old hawk at the sport; I wrote her such a cool, deliberate, peremptory reply, as brought my bird from her lowerings, pop down at my foot like corporal Trim's hat.

As for the rest of my acts, and my wars, and all my wise sayings, and why my mare was called Jenny Goddes; they shall be recorded in a few weeks time, at Lithoughton, in the chronicles of your memory, by "ROBERT BURNS."

From this journey Burns returned to his friends in Ayrshire, with whom he spent the month of July, renewing his friendships and extending his acquaintance throughout the country, where he was now very generally known and addressed. In August he again visited Edinburgh, whence he undertook another journey towards the middle of this month, in company with Mr. M. Adair, now Dr. Adair, of Harrowgate, of which this gentleman has favoured us with the following account.

BURNS and I left Edinburgh together in August, 1787. We rode by Lithoughton and Carron, to Stirling. We visited the iron works at Carron, with which the power of Scotland is so much connected. The resemblance between that place, and its implements, and the cave of Cyclops, which must have occurred to every classic reader, presented itself to Burns. At Stirling the prospects from the castle strongly interested him in a former visit to which, his national feelings had been powerfully exalted by the ruinous and roofless state of the hall in which the Scottish parliaments had been held. His indignation had vented itself in some imprudent, but not improper lines, which had given much offence, and which he took this opportunity of erasing, by breaking the pane of the window at the inn on which they were written.

At Stirling we met with a company of travellers from Edinburgh, among whom was a character in many respects congenial with that of Burns. This was Nicol, one of the teachers of the High Grammar School at Edinburgh—the same wit and power of conceit, the same fondness for creative and spurious thoughtlessness of to-morrow, characterized both. — Jacobitical principles in politics were common to both of us, but he was too fond of the Revolution of France, to have given place in each, to opinions apparently opposite. I regret that I have preserved no memorials of their conversation, either on this or on other occasions, when I happened to meet them together. Many songs were sung, which I mention for the sake of observing, that when Burns was called on in his turn, he was accustomed, instead of singing, to recite one or the other of his own shorter poems, with a tone and emphasis, which, though not correct or harmonious, were impressive and pathetic. This he did on the present occasion.

From Stirling we went next morning through the romantic and fertile vale of Devon to Harviston, in Clackmannanshire, then inhabited by Mrs. Hamilton, with the younger part of whose family Burns had been previously acquainted. He introduced me to the family, and there was formed my first acquaintance with Mrs. Hamilton's eldest daughter, Miss Hamilton, who was most kind and obliging to me. I was much surprised to see her face, as I had very rarely had cause to form an opinion of her before. She was very much surprised to see me. Thus I was indebted to Burns for a connexion from which I derived and expect further to derive much happiness.

During a residence of about ten days at Harviston, we made excursions to visit various parts of the surrounding scenery, inferior to none in Scotland, in beauty, sublimity, and romantic interest; particularly Castle Campbell, the ancient seat of the family of Argyll; and the famous Cataract of the Devon; called the Colbourn Line; and the Rumbling Bridge, a single broad arch, thrown by the Devil, if tradition is to be believed, across the river, at about the height of a hundred feet above its bed. I am surprised that none of the ladies who accompany me returned from a visit to Burns's muse. But I doubt if he had much taste for the picturesque. I well remember, that the ladies at Harviston decayed in importance when I had reason to express their disappointment at his not expressing in more glowing language, his impressions of the Colbourn Line scene, certainly highly sublime, and somewhat horrible.

A visit to Mrs. Bruce, of Clackmannan, a lady above ninety, the lineal descendant of that race which gave the Scottish throne its brightest ornament, interested his feelings more powerfully. This venerable dame, with characteristical dignity, informed me on my oblique, and I believed she was descended from the family of Robert Bruce, that Robert Bruce was sprung from her family. Though almost deprived of speech by a paralytic affection, she preserved her dignity and urbanity. She was in the possession of the hero's helmet and two-handed sword, with which she conferred on Burns and myself the honour of knighthood, remarking, that she had a better right to confer that honours on us, than we had to confer them on her. We thereby concluded that the old lady's political tenets were as Jacobitical as the poet's a conformity which contributed not a little to the cordiality of our reception and entertainment. She gave us as her first toast after dinner, Awa' Uncos, or Away with the Strangers. Who these strangers were, you will readily understand; but it is a custom of the country that in the course of the evening, a host, or host uncos, a sound used by shepherds to direct their dogs to drive away the sheep.

We returned to Edinburgh by Kinross (on the shore of Lochleven and Queen's ferry), I am inclined to think Burns knew nothing of poor Michael Bruce, who was then alive at Kinross, or had died there a short while before. A meeting between the bards, or a visit to the deserted cottage and early grave of poor Bruce, would have been highly interesting.

At Dunfermline we visited the ruined abbey and the church abbey, now consecrated to Presbyterian worship. Here I mounted the cutty stoo, or stool of a penitent for fornication; while Burns from the pulpit addressed to me a ludicrous reproof and exhortation, parodied from that which had been delivered to himself in Ayrshire, where he had, as he assured me, once been one of seven who mounted the seat of shame together.

"In the church-yard two broad flag-stocks marked the grave of Robert Bruce, for whose memory Burns had more than common veneration. He knelt and kissed the spot towards which he said it was his intention to go, and in the name of God, I am at this moment exclaim the worse than Gothic neglect of the first of Scottish heroes."*  

* Bruce died some years before. E.  
† Extracted from a letter of Dr. Adair to the Editor.
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The surprise expressed by Dr. Adair, in his excellent letter, that the romantic scenery of the Devon should be found as delightful as that of the Caedron Linn, is not in its nature singular; and the disappointment felt at not expressing in more glowing language his emotions on the sight of the famous cataract of that river, is similar to what was felt by the friends of Burns on other occasions of the same nature. Yet the inference that Dr. Adair seems inclined to draw from the comparison of these two objects, with the objects, particularly the energies of fancy, if communicated to Burns, seemed in him as in other poets, destructive of the effect expected. Hence perhaps may be explained, why the banks of the Devan and of the Tweed form no part of the subjects of his song.

A similar train of reasoning may perhaps explain the want of emotion with which he viewed the Caedron Linn. Certainly there are no affections of the mind more deadened by the influence of previous expectation, than those arising from the sight of natural objects, which are not supposed to excite the energies of fancy, and to transcend the situation of which the imagination of Burns might form a cataract, in comparison with which the Caedron Linn should seem the purring of a rill, and even the mighty falls of Niagara, an humble cascade.

Whether these suggestions may assist in explaining our Bard's deficiency of impression on the occasion referred to, or whether it ought rather to be imputed to some pre-occupation, or indisposition of mind, we presume not to decide; but that he was in general feelingly alive to the beautiful or sublime in scenery, may be supported by irresistible evidence. It is true this pleasure was greatly heightened in his mind, as might be expected, when combined with moral emotions of a kind with which it happily unites. That under these circumstances the cataracts of the Tweed and of the Devan with the eye of a genuine poet, some lines which he wrote at this very period, may bear witness.

The different journeys already mentioned did not satisfy the curiosity of Burns. About the beginning of September, he again set out from Edinburgh on a more extended tour to the Highlands, in company with Mr. Nicol and Mr. Fyers. Their journey was of a particular intimacy, which lasted during the remainder of his life. Mr. Nicol was of Dumfriesshire, of a descent equally humble with our poet. Like him, he was by nature the possessor of his talents, and fell by the strength of his passions. He died in the summer of 1797. Having received the elements of a classical education at the University of Glasgow, he entered the Edinburgh University, where he was a student of medicine, and was afterwards employed in the assistance and instruction of graduates in medicine, in those parts of their exercises in which the Latin language is employed. In this situation he was the contemporary and rival of the celebrated Dr. Brown, whom he resembled in the particulars of his character, as well as in the leading features of his history. The office of assistant-teacher in the High- school being vacant, it was, as usual, filled up by competition; and in the face of some prejudices, and, perhaps, of some well-founded objections, Mr. Nicol, by superior learning, carried it from all the other candidates. This office he filled at the period of which we speak.

It is to be lamented that an acquaintance with the writers of Greece and Rome, does not always supply the poet with a classical impression of what he has beheld, and with the power of expressing it. It is the nature of great strength, neither his person nor his manners had any thing but taste or elegance; and his correctness was not compensated by that romantic sensitivity, and those towering flights of imagination which distinguished the conversation of Burns, in the blaze of whose genius all the deficiencies of his manners were absorbed and disappeared.

Mr. Nicol and our poet travelled in a postchaise, which they engaged for the journey; and, passing through the heart of the Highlands, stretched northwards, about ten miles beyond Inverness. There they took their course eastward, across the island of Skye, which they entered at the county town of Portree. Mr. Fyers was thus enabled to make a second visit to Inverness. In the course of this tour, some particulars of which will be found in a letter of our bard, No. XXX, they visited a number of remarkable scenes, and the feeling with which they were viewed was constantly excited by the wild and sublime scenery through which they passed. Of these several facts may be found in the poems formerly printed. Of the history of one of these poems, The Humble Petition of Burns Writer, and of the bard's visit to Athole House, some particulars will be found in No. XXIX; and by the favour of Mr. Walker of I' erth, then residing in the family of the Duke of Athole, we are enabled to give the following additional account:

"On reaching Blair, he sent me notice of his arrival (as I had been previously acquainted with him,) and hastened to meet him at the inn. The Duke to whom he brought a letter of introduction, was from home; but the Dutchess, being informed of his arrival, gave him an invitation to sup and sleep at Athole House. He accepted the invitation; but as the hour of supper was at some distance, begged "would in the meantime do him the kindness to wait with him a short time, and let us have a chat."

"The conversation was of a general kind, and was already growing dark; yet the softened though faint and uncertain view of their beauties, which the moon-

"See "Lines on scaring some water-fowl in Loch-Turit, a wild scene among the hills of Lochtyreter," "Lines written with a Pencil over the Chimney-piece, in the Inn at Kenmore, Taymouth." "Lines written with a pencil beginning with the fall of Fyers near Lochness."
light afforded us, seemed exactly suited to the state of his feelings at the time. I had often, like others, experienced the sublime effect of the sublime or elegant landscape, but I never saw those feelings so intense as in Burns. When we reclined a rustic bath on the lawn at Fetter, where it is overhung by a woody precipice, from which there is a noble water-fall, he threw himself on the heathy seat, and gave himself up to a tender, abstracted, and voluptuous enthusiasm of imagination. I cannot say that I caught the idea of the following lines, which he afterwards introduced into his poem on Bruar Water, when only fancying such a combination of objects as were now present to his eye.

Or, by the reaper’s nightly beam,
Mild, coursing through the trees,
Rave to my darkly-dashing stream,
Hoarse-swelling to the breeze.

It was with much difficulty I prevailed on him to quit this spot, and to be introduced in proper time to supper.

"My curiosity was great to see how he would conduct himself in company so different from what he had been accustomed to." His manner was unembarrassed, plain, and firm. He appeared to have complete reliance on his own native good sense for directing his behaviour. He seemed at once to perceive and to appreciate what was due to the company and to himself, and never to forget a proper respect for the separate species of dignity belonging to each. He did not arrogate conversation, but, when led into it, he spoke with ease, propriety, and manliness. His truest efforts to exert his abilities, because he knew it was his duty alone gave him a title to be there. The Duke’s fine young family attracted much of his admiration; he drank their healths as with the most tender solicitude, and with which he very felicitously closed his poem.

"Next day I took a ride with him through some of the most romantic parts of that neighbourhood, and was highly gratified by his conversation. As a specimen of his happiness of conception and strength of expression, I will mention a remark which he made on his fellow-traveller, who was walking at the time a few paces before us. He was a man of a robust but clumsy person; and while Burns was expressing to me the value he entertained for him on account of his vigorous talents, although they were clouded at times by inconstancy, and ill-humour, I added, ‘His mind is like his body, he has a conformation strong, limned sort of a soul.’"

"Much attention was paid to Burns both before and after the Duke’s return, of which he was perfectly sensible without being vain; and at his departure I recommended to him, as the most appropriate return he could make, to write some descriptive verses on any of the scenes with which he had been so much delighted. After leaving Blair, he, by the Duke’s advice, visited the Falls of Bruar, and in a few days I received a letter from Iverness, with the verses enclosed."

It appears that the impression made by our poet on the noble family of Athole, was in a high degree favourable; it is certain he was charmed with the reception he received from them, and he often mentioned the two days he spent at Athole House as amongst the happiest in his life. He was warmly invited to prolong his stay, but sacrificed his inclinations to his engagements. He returned with Mr. Nicol, who was to be regretted, as he would otherwise have been introduced to Mr. Dunbar (then daily expected on a visit to the Duke), a circumstance which might have had a favourable influence on Burns’s future fortune. At Athole House he met, for the first time, Mr. Graham of Fintry, to whom he was afterwards indebted for the office in the Excise.

The letters and poems which he addressed to Mr. Graham, bear testimony of his sensibility, and justice to himself, who was not in a situation deficient in gratitude to have been elevated to a situation better suited to his disposition and to his talents.*

A few days after leaving Blair of Athole, our poet and his fellow traveller arrived at Fochabers. In the course of the preceding winter Burns had been introduced to the Duchess of Gordon at Edinburgh, and presuming on his acquaintance, 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. To the invitation he accepted, and after drinking a few glasses of wine, rose up, and proposed to withdraw. On being pressed to stay, he mentioned for the first time, his engagement with a fellow-traveller; he had offered to send a servant to conduct Mr. Nicol to the castle; Burns insisted on undertaking that 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 of politeness. The invitation came too late; the pride of Nicol was inflamed to a high degree of passion. He had ordered the horse to be brought 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, beating his angler on the pillion, for the slowness with which he obeyed his commands. As no explanation or 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 seating himself beside Nicol’s horse, he rode away by the lane that leads from Carbisdale, with mortification and regret, he turned his back on Gordon Castle without having promised himself some happy days. Sensible, however, of the great kindness of the noble family, he made the best return in his power, by the poem beginning,

"Streams that glide in orient plains."

Burns remained at Edinburgh during the greater part of the winter, 1782-3, and again entered into the society and dissipation of that metropolis. It appears that on the 31st day of December, he attended a meeting to celebrate the birth day of the lineal descendant of the Scottish race of kings, the late unfortunate Prince Charles Edward. Whatever might have been the wish or purpose of the original institution of this annual meeting, there is no reason to suppose that the gentlemen of whom it was at this time composed were not justly indebted to the Duke of Gordon, who, by his agreement, as well as ability, was more to be congratulated on the nobleman’s condescension than in the wish or purpose of the original institution of this annual meeting, there is no reason to suppose that the gentlemen of whom it was at this time composed were not justly indebted to the Duke of Gordon, who, by his agreement, as well as ability, was more to be congratulated on the nobleman’s condescension than in being a patron of that which he had made use of to calculate to inspire; and commemorated the heroic value which strove to sustain it in vain—value worthy of all the laudatory sentiments which he on that occasion our bard took upon himself the office of poet-
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aureate, and produced an ode, which though deficient in the complicated rhythm and polished versification, and such compositions require, might on a fair comparison, where energy of feeling and of expression were alone in question, have won the butt of Malmasay from the real laureate of that day.

The following extracts may serve as a specimen:

* * *

False flatterer, Hope, away! Nor think to lure us in days of yore! We solemnize this sorrowing natal day, To prove our loyal truth—we care no more! And owing 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 Duncan, who smiling victory led, And fell a martyr in her arms, What breast of northern ice but warm? To bold Balmerino's undying name, Whose soul of fire, lighted at Heaven's high flame, Deserves the proudest wreath departed heroes claim.*

Nor unrevealed your fate shall be, It only lays the fatal hour; Your blood shall with incessant cry Awake at the last the unsparing power. As from the cliff, with thundering course The snowy rain smokes along, With doubling speed and gathering force, Till deep it crashingwhelms the cottage in the vale! So Vengeance * * *

In relating the incidents of our poet's life in Edinburgh, we ought to have mentioned the sentiments of respect and sympathy with which he traced out the grave of his predecessor Ferguson, over whose ashes in the Canongate church-yard, he obtained leave to erect a humble monument, which will be viewed by reflecting minds with no common interest, and which will awake in the bosom of kindred genius, many a high emotion.* Neither should we pass over the continued friendship he experienced from a poet then living, the amiable and accomplished Blacklock.—To his encouraging advice it was owing (as has already appeared) that Burns instead of emigrating to the West Indies, repaired to Edinburgh. He received him there with all the ardour of affectionate admiration; he eagerly introduced him to the respectable circle of his friends; he consulted his interest; he blazoned his fame; he lavished upon him all the kindness of a generous and feeling heart, into which nothing selfish or envious ever found admittance. Among the friends to whom he introduced Burns was Mr. Ramsay of Ochtertyre, to whom our poet paid a visit in the Autumn of 1787, at his delightful retirement in the neighbourhood of Stir- zan, such compositions require, might on a fair comparison, where energy of feeling and of expression were alone in question, have won the butt of Malmasay from the real laureate of that day.

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at, with more than usual deliberation. Having made
choice of the farm of Ellisland, he employed two of his
friends, skilled in the value of land, to examine it,
and with their approbation offered a rent to Mr. Mil-
er, which was immediately accepted. It was not
convenient for Mrs. Burns to remove from Ayrshire,
and the resolution was taken up to his resi-
dence alone at Ellisland, to prepare for the reception
of his wife and children, who joined him towards the
end of the year.

The situation in which Burns now found himself,
was calculated to awaken reflection. The different
steps he had of late taken, were at once highly
important, and might be said to have in some mea-
sure, fixed his destiny. He had become a husband
and a father; he had engaged in the management of
a considerable farm, a difficult and laborious underta-
kings; in his success the happiness of his family was
involved; it was time, therefore, to abandon the
gaity and dissipation of which he had been too much
enamoured; to ponder seriously on the past, and to
form virtuous resolutions respecting the future. That
such was actually the state of his mind, the following
extract from his common-place book may bear witnes-
s:

Ellisland, Sunday, 14th June, 1789.

"This is now the third day that I have been in this
country. 'Lord, what is man!' What a bustling
little bundle of passions, appetites, ideas, and fancies!
and to think too, that he has existence he has here! *
*
* There is indeed an elsewhere, where, as
Thomson says, virtue sole survives.

"Tell us ye dead
Will none of you in pitty disclose the secret
What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be?
A little time
Will make us wise as you are, and as close."

"I am such a coward in life, so tired of the service,
that I would almost at any time, with Milton's Adam,
gladly lay me in my mother's lap, and be at peace."

"But a wife and children bind me to struggle with
the stream, till some sudden squall shall overset the
stilly vessel; or in the listless return of years, its own
gratitude reduce it to a wreck. Farewell now to those
giddy follies, those varnished vices, which, though
half sanctified by the bewitching novelty of wit and hu-
nor, are at best but three years' occupation of a circuit,
and may, or perhaps the whole, that, like the plains of Jericho, the water is nought,
and the ground barren, and nothing short of a super-
naturally gifted Elisha can ever after heal the evils.

"Wedlock, the circumstance that buckles me hardest
to care, if virtue and religion were to be any thing
with me but names, was what in a few seasons I must
have resolved on; in my present situation it was abso-
lutely necessary. Humanity, generosity, honest pride
of character, justice to my own happiness for after-
life, so far as it could depend (which it surely will
a great deal) on internal peace; all these joined their
warmest suffrages, their most powerful solicitations,
and induced the peace of 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 hap-
piest, which he had ever experienced."

It is to be lamented that at this critical period of his
life, our poet was without the society of his wife
and children. A great change had taken place in his situa-
tion; his old habits were broken; and the new cir-
cumstances, in which he was placed, were calculated
to give a new direction to his thoughts and conduct. But his application to the cares and labours of his
farm, was interrupted by several visits to his family
in Ayrshire; and as the certain means of livelihood,
for a single day's journey, he generally spent a night at an
inn on the road. On such occasions he sometimes
fell into company, and forgot the resolutions he had
formed in a little while temptation assailed him
nearer home.

His fame naturally drew upon him the attention of his
neighbours, and he soon formed a general ac-
quaintance in the district in which he lived. The
public voice had now pronounced on the subject of his
works; the reception he had met with in Edin-
burgh had done much for his character, which fashion
betrov'd; he had surmounted the prejudices arising
from his humble birth, and he was received at the
table of the gentlemen of Nithsdale with welcome,
with kindness, and even with respect. Their social
parties too often seduced him from his rustic labour
and his rustic fare, overthrew the unstable fabric of his
resolutions, and inflamed those propensities which
temperance might have weakened, and prudence ul-
timately suppressed. It was not long, therefore,
before Burns began to view his farm with dislike and
despondence, if not with disgust.

Unfortunately, he had for several years looked to an
office in the Excise as a certain means of livelihood,
should his other expectations fail. As has already
been mentioned, he had been recommended to the
Board of Excise, and had received the instructions
necessary for such a station. He now applied to be
employed; and by the interest of Mr. Graham of
Fintry, was appointed exciseman, or, as it is vul-
carly called, gauger, of the district in which he lived.

"Animated sentiments of any kind, almost always
gave rise in our poet to some production of his muse.
His sentiments on this occasion were in part expressed
by the vigorous and characteristic, though not very
delicate song, beginning,

"I have a wife o' my ain,
I'll partake wi' nae body!"

† Mrs. Burns was about to be confined in child bed,
and the house at Ellisland was rebuilding.

† The poem of The Whistle, (Poem, p. 60) cele-
brates a Bacchalian contest among three gentlemen of
Nithsdale, where Burns appears as umpire. Mr
Riddell died before our Bard, and some elegiac verses
to his memory will be found entitled, So'met on the
death of Robert Riddell. From him, and from all
the members of his family, Burns received not kind-
ness only, but friendship; and the society he met in
general at Friar's Carse, was calculated to improve
his habits as well as his manners. Mr. Ferguson of
Craigdarroch, so well known for his eloquence and
social talents, died soon after our poet. Sir Robert
Laurie, the third person in the drama, survives, and
has since been engaged in a contest of a bloodier na-
ture; Long may he live to fight the battles of his
country! (1799.)
The farm was after his, in a great measure abandoned to servants, while he betook himself to the duties of his new appointment.

He might, indeed, still be seen in the spring, directing his plough, a labour in which he excelled; or with a white sheet, containing his seed-corn, slung across his horse's neck, he would go forth, driving his horses, his carthorse following, his turnip up furrows, and scattering the grain in the earth. But his farm no longer occupied the principal part of his care or his thoughts. It was no at Slia-
lane, the farm in general to be found. Mounted on horseback, this high-minded poet was pursuing the defaulters of the revenue, among the hills and vales of Nithsdale, his raving eye wandering over the charms of nature, and musing his wayward fancies as he moved along.

"I had an adventure with him in the year 1790," says Mr. Ramsay, of Ochtertyre, in a letter to the editor, when passing through Dumfriesshire, on a tour to the South, with Dr. Stewart of Luss. Seeing him pass quickly, near Closeburn, I said to him, "that is Burns." On coming to the inn, the hostler told us he would be back in a few hours to grant permis-
sion for the wants of the flakes of the poet. He says he had no better than any other gauger; in every thing else, that he was perfectly a gentleman. After leav-
ing a note to be delivered to him on his return, I pro-
ced with my companion, and gave him the note. &c. I was much pleased with his saw Sabina qualia, and the poet's modest mansion, so unlike the habitation of ordinary rustic. In the evening he suddenly bounc-
ed up upon us, and said, as he entered, I come to use the words of Shakespeare, stined in haste. In fact he had ridden incredibly fast after receiving my note. We fall into conversation directly, and soon got into the more magnum of poetry. He told me that he had now got a story for a Drama, which he was to call Bob Macquinan's Elijah, from a popular story of Robertson. We then passed on to the compositions of the Poet, when the heel of his boot having loosen'd in his flight, he applied to Robertson to fit it; who, to make sure, ran his awl nine inches up the king's heel. We were now going on in a great rate, when Mr. S—— pipp'd in his head, which put a stop to our dis-
course, which had become very interesting. Yet in a little while it was resumed; and such was the force and versatility of the bard's genius, that he has the years run down Mr. S——'s cheek, albeit unused to the poetic strain. From that time we met no more, unless in the public places, in the regular of the year. Poor Burns! we shall hardly ever see his like again. He was, in truth, a sort of comet in litera-
ture, irregular in its motions, which did not do good proportion to the blaze of light it displayed."!

In the summer of 1791, two English gentlemen, who had before met with him in Edinburgh, paid a visit to him at Ellistown. On calling at the house where they were informed that he had walked out on the banks of the river; and dismounting from their horses, they proceed-
ed in search of him. On a rock that projected into the stream, they saw a man employed in angling, of a sin-
gular appearance. He had a cap made of a fox's skin on his head, a loose great coat fixed round him by a belt, from which depended an enormous Highland broadsword. It was Burns. He received them with great cordiality, and asked them to share his humble dinner—an invitation which they accepted. On the table was a dish of potatoes, with vegetables, and har-
ley-broth, after the manner of Scotland, of which they partook heartily. After dinner, the bard told them inimitably that he had no wine to offer them, nothing better than a bottle of grog, which, he said, Mr. S——
Burns set by heart. He produced at the same time his punch-bowl made of Inverary marble; and, mix-
ning the punch, he threw into it his pipe, which filled its glasses, and invited them to drink.* The tavern was in haste, and besides, the flavour of the whiskey to their

* This bowl was made of the lapis olarri, the stone of which Inverary-house was built, the mansion of the family of Argyle.

southron palates was scarcely tolerable; but the gener-
ous poet offered them his best, and his ardor had pitilessly they found it impossible to resist. Burns was in his happiest mood, and the charms of his conversa-
tion were particularly fascinating. He ranged over a great variety of topics, diminishing whatever he touch-
ed. He related the tales of his infancy and of his youth; the stories of the visit of a gentlemen who had prom-
est of his poems; in the wildest of his straits of mind, he threw in some tinges of melancholy, and spread around him the electric emotions of his powerful mind. The marble bowl was again and again emptied and repol-
iished; the guests of our poets forgot the flight of time, and the dictates of prudence; at the last of midnight they lost their way in returning to Dumfries, and could scarcely distinguish it when assisted by the morning's dawn."

Besides his duties in the excise and his social pleas-
ures, other circumstances interfered with the atten-
tion of Burns to his farm. He engaged in the formation of a plot for purchasing and circulating books among the farmers of his neighbourhood, of which he undertook the management; and he occupied himself in the regular and methodical work of Mr. Johnson, in the course of publication. These engagements, useful and honourable in themselves, contributed, no doubt, to the ob-
struction of his thoughts from the business of agricul-
ture.

The consequences may be easily imagined. Not-
withstanding the uniform prudence and good manage-
ment of Mrs. Burns, and though his rent was moder-
ate and reasonable, our poet found it convenient, if not necessary, to resign his farm to Mr. Miller; after hav-
ing occupied it three years and a half. His office in the excise had originally produced about fifty pounds per annum. Having acceded himself to the satisfac-
tion of being thus relieved from the burdens of a dis-
trict, the emoluments of which rose to about seventy pounds per annum. Hoping to support himself and his family on this humble income till promotion should reach him, he disposed of his stock and his crop on Ellistown by public auction, and removed to a small house which he had taken in Dumfries, about the end of the year 1791.

Hitherto Burns, though addicted to excess in social parties, had abstained from the habitual use of strong drink. His constitution had not suffered any per-
manent injury from the indulgences which he had partic-
ipated. In Dumfries, temptations to the sin that so easily beset him, continually presented themselves; and his irregu-
lar habits of life, his neglect of health, his irregular habits of life, as his increase of years. He was scat-
ter unhappily occurred during his engagements in the business of his office, as well as during his hours of relaxation; and though he clearly foresew the conse-
quences of yielding to them, his appetites and sensa-
tions, which could not prevent the dictates of his judg-
ment, finally triumphed over the powers of his will. Yet this victory was not obtained without many obsti-
inate struggles, and at times temperance and virtue seemed to have obtained the mastery. Besides his engagements in the excise, and the society into which he led, many circumstances contributed to the mel-
ancholy fate of Burns. His great celebrity made him an object of interest and curiosity to strangers, and a few persons of cultivated minds passed through Dum-
fries; and with the poet's name came the poet's relics; and the pleasures of his conversation. As he could not re-
erve them under his own humble roof, these interviews were held at the inns of town, and often terminated in those convivial discourses, which are the worst that was seldom able to resist. And among the inhabi-
tants of Dumfries and its vicinity, there were never less than five or six persons who were desirous to lead or accompany him to the tavern; to partake of the wildest sallies of his wit; to witness the strength and the degradation of his genius.

* Given from the information of one of the party.  
† See No LXXXVIII.
Sail, however, he cultivated the society of persons of taste and of respectability, and in their company he could impose on himself the restraints of temperance and decorum. Nor was his muse dormant. In the four years which he lived in Dumfries, he produced many of his beautiful lyrics, though it does not appear that he attempted any poem of considerable length. During this time he made several excursions into the neighbouring country, one of which, through Gallowsay, an account is preserved in a letter of Mr. Syme, written soon after; which, as it gives an animated picture of him by a correct and masterly hand, we shall present to the reader.

"I go. Burns a grey Highland sheltie to ride on—

We rode the first day, 27th July, 1795, at Glengoyne's of Parton! to the Dee. In the evening we walked out, and ascended a gentle eminence, from which we had as fine a view of Alba's scenery as can well be imagined. A delightful soft evening showed all its wilder as well as its grander graces. Immediately opposite, and within a mile of us, we saw Alida, a charming romantic place, where dwelt Low, the author of Nocturne. for me." This was classical ground for Burns. He viewed "the highest hill which rises o'er the source of Dee; and would have staid till "the spirit," had agreed, but we not resolved to reach Kenmore that night. We arrived as Mr. and Mrs. Gordon were sitting down to supper.

"Here is a genuine baron's seat. The castle, an old building, stands on a natural mound. In front of the river Ken winds for several miles through the most fertile and beautiful valley, till it expands into a lake twelve miles long, the banks of which, on the south, present a fine and soft landscape of green knolls, natural wood, and here and there a gray rock. On the north, the aspect is great, wild, and, I may say, tremendous. In short, I can scarcely conceive a scene more terribly romantic than the castle of Kenmore. Burns thinks so highly of it, that he meditated on its subject of a poem. Indeed I believe he has begun the work. We spent three days with Mr. Gordon, whose polished hospitality is of an original and endearing kind. Mrs. Gordon's lap-dog, Echo, was dead. She had an epitaph for him. Several had been made. Burns was asked for one. This was setting Hercules to his distaff; he disliked the subject; but to please the lady he would try. Here is what he produced.

"In wool and wild, ye warbling throng,

Your heavy loss deplore!

Now half extinct your powers of song,

Sweet Echo is no more.

Ye jarring screeching things around,

Scream your discordant joys!

Now half your din of tuneless song

With Echo silent lies."

"We left Kenmore, and went to Gatehouse, I took him the moor-road, where savage and desolate regions extended wide around. The sky was sympathetic with the wretchedness of the soil; it became lowering and dark. The hollow winds sighed, the lightnings gleamed, the thunder rolled. The poet enjoyed the awful scene—he spoke not a word, but seemed wrapt in meditation. In a little while the rain began to fall: I poured it into his hat, to which it poured with fury. The wild elements rumbled their belly full upon our defenseless heads. Oh! Oh! 'twas foul. We got utterly wet; and to revenge ourselves Burns insisted at Gatehouse on our getting utterly drunk.

"From Gatehouse, we went next day to Kirkcudbright, through a fine country. But here I must tell you that there had got a pair of Tommy boots for the journey, which had been thoroughly wet, and which had been dried in such a manner that it was not possible to get them on again. The brawny poet tried forces and tore them to shreds. A whiffing vexation of this sort is more trying to the temper than a serious calamity. We were going to St. Mary's Isle, the seat of the Earl of Selkirk, and the forlorn Burns was discontented at the thought of his ruined boots. A sick stomach, and a head ache, sent their aid; and the man of verse was quite irascible. I attempted to reason with him. "Mercy on me! I knew I did come with rage! Nothing could reinstate him in temper. I tried various expedients, and at last hit upon one that succeeded. I show him a copy of his poems, both in the original and a translation of them. Against ' ' ' ' whom he was offended, he extemporized his splice, and regained a most agreeable temper. He was in a most epigrammatic humour indeed.

"There is one ' ' ' ' whom he does not love. He had a passing blow at him.

"When — deceased, to the devil went down,

'Twas nothing would serve him but Satan's own crown:

Thy foul's heal, quoth Satan, that crown shall wear

never,

I grant thou'rt as wicked, but not quite so clever."

"Well, I am to bring you to Kirkcudbright alone with our poet, without boots. I carried the torn ruin across my saddle in spite of his remonstrances, and in contempt of appearances; and what is more, Lord Selkirk carried them in his coach to Dumfries. He insisted they were worth mending.

"We reached Kirkcudbright about one o'clock. I had promised that we should dine with one of the first men of Dumfries, Mr. J. Dalmell. But the gain of a wild obstreperous humour, and aware he would not dine where he should be under the smallest restraint. We prevailed, therefore, on Mr. Dalmell to dine with us in the inn, and had a very reasonable and agreeable party. In the evening we went out for St. Mary's Isle. Robert had not absolutely regained the mildness of good temper, and it occurred once or twice to him, as he rode along, that St. Mary's Ile was the seat of a Lord; but that Lord was not an aristocrat, at least in the sense of the word. We arrived at about eight o'clock, as the family were at tea and coffee. St. Mary's Isle is one of the most delightful places that can, in my opinion, be formed by the assemblage of every soft, but not tame object which constitutes natural and cultivated beauty. But not to dwell on its external graces, let me tell you that we found all the ladies of the family (all beautiful) at home, and some strangers; and among others who but Urquhart! The Italian sung on many Scottish songs by Mrs. Syme. "There were two young ladies of Selkirk sung also. We had the song of Lord Gregory, which I asked for, to have an opportunity of seeing on the stage, or recite it bald to that time. He did recite it; and such was the effect that a dead silence ensued. It was such a silence as a mind of feeling naturally preserves when it is touched with something so vivid, so fresh, so pure, so elevated. But the contemplation and indulgence of the sympathy produced. Burns's Lord Gregory is, in my opinion, a most beautiful and affecting ballad. The facts of the story are true; the sentiments and imagery are of too elevated kind for such a style of composition; for instance, "Thou bolt of bea-
THE LIFE OF BURNS.

ven that passeth by;” and "Ye, musing thunder,” &c.; but this is a cold-blooded objection, which will be said rather than felt.

"We enjoyed a most happy evening at Lord Selkirk's. We had, in every sense of the word, a feast, in which our minds and our senses were equally gratified. The poet was delighted with his company, and acquitted himself to admiration. The lion that had raged so violently in the morning, was now as mild and gentle as a lamb. Next day we returned to Dunkirk, and so ended our regeneration. I told you, that in the midst of the storm, on the wilds of Kenmore, Burns was rapt in meditation. What do you think he was about? He was charging the English army along with Bruce at Bannockburn. He was engaged in the same manner on our ride home from St. Mary's Isle, and I did not disturb him. Next day he produced me the following address of Bruce to his troops, and gave me a copy for Daizell."

"Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled," &c.

Burns had entertained hopes of promotion in the excise; but circumstances occurred which retarded this event, and his hopes were deferred and excited all expectation of their being fulfilled. The extraordinary events which ushered in the revolution of France, interested the feelings, and excited the hopes of men in every corner of Europe. Prejudice and national pride seemed to disappear among men, and the day-star of reason to rise upon a enlightened world. In the dawn of this beautiful morning, the genius of Burns, with a just pride, appeared on our horizon, with the countenance of an angel, but speedily assum'd the features of a demon, and vanished in a shower of blood.

Though previously a Jacobite and a cavalier, Burns had shared in the original hopes entertained of this ancient cause, which he himself had not been able to repress; yet when he saw the consequence these hopes had on men's minds. The novelty and the hazard of the attempt meditated by the First, or Constituent Assembly, served rather, it is probable, to recommend it to his daring temper; and the unfettered scope proposed to be given to every kind of talents, was doubtless gratifying to the feelings of conscious but insignificant genius. Burns foresaw not the mighty ruin that was to be the immediate consequence of the enterprise, which on its commencement, promised so much happiness to the human race. And even after the career of guilt and of blood commenced, he could not impute its success to the public policy of his country; but he imagines, with a just pride, that he could have raised from a people who had so lately breathed the sentiments of universal peace and benignity; or obliterating these sentiments from the bosom of the nation, has proceeded to those which those sentiments had given birth. Under these impressions, he did not always conduct himself with the circumspection and prudence which his dependent situation seemed to demand. He engaged indeed in no popular associations, so common at the time of which we speak; but in company he did not conceal his opinions of public measures, or of the reforms required in the practice of our government; and sometimes in his social and unguarded moments, he uttered them with a wild and unjustifiable vehemence. Information of this was given to the Board of Excise, with the exaggerations so general in such cases. A superior officer in that department was authorised to inquire into his conduct. Burns defended himself in a letter addressed to one of the Board, written with great independence of spirit, and with more than his accustomed eloquence. The officer appointed to inquire into his conduct, gave a favourable opinion of his character and conduct. Sir William Fintry, interposed his good offices in his behalf; and the imprudent gauger was suffered to retain his situation, but given so understand that his promotion was deferred, and must depend on future conduct.

"This circumstance made a deep impression on the mind of Burns. Fame exhagrated his misconduct, and represented him as actually dismissed from his office; and this report induced a gentleman of much respectability to propose a subscription in his favour. The offer was refused by our poet in a letter of great elevation of sentiment, in which he gives an account of how his countrymen have signed themselves from the imputation of disloyal sentiments on the one hand, and on the other, from the charge of having resign'd his commission for the sake of his office, un worthy of his character.

"The partiality of my countrymen," he observes, "has brought me forward as a man of genius, and has given me a character to support. In the poet I have avowed many and independent sentiments, which I hope have been found in the world. Reason and sentiments of less than ordinary magnitude, have pointed out my present occupation as the only eligible line of life within my reach. Still my honest fame is my deepest concern, and a thought I trembled at the idea of the degrading epithets that malice or misrepresentation may allit to my name. Often in blasting anticipation have I listened to some future huckster, with the heavy malice of savage stupidity, exultingly asserting that Burns, notwithstanding the Fanfaronade of independence to be found in his works, and after having displayed his patriotic spirit, has deserted the cause of freedom, as a man of some genius, yet, quite destitute of resources within himself to support his borrowed dignity, dwindled into a paltry exciseman, and alonk his way through life a meanest of beings, in the meanest of pursuits, and among the lowest of mankind.

"In your illustrious hands, Sir, permit me to lodge my strong disavowal and defiance of such slanderous falsehoods. Burns was a poor man from his birth, and an exciseman by necessity; but—I will say it—the management of his poverty could not domest with, and his independent British spirit, oppression might bend, but could not subdue."

It was one of the last acts of his life to copy this letter into his book of manuscripts, accompanied by some additional remarks on the same subject. It is not surprising, that at a season of universal alarm for the safety of the constitution, the indiscretions of an expression so powerful as Burns, should have attracted notice. The times certainly required extraordinary vigilance in those intrusted with the administration of the government, and to ensure the safety of the constitution was doubtless their first duty. Yet generous minds will lament the means which have been employed to curb the imagination of our poet of the last prop on which his hopes of independence rested; and by embittering his peace, have aggravated those excesses which were soon to conduct him to an untimely grave.

"Though the vehemence of Burns's temperament, as it often was by stimulating liquor, might lead him into many improper and unguarded expressions, there seems no reason to doubt of his attachment to our mixed form of government. In his commonplace book, where he could have no temptation to disguise, are the following sentiments. "Whatever might be my sentiments of republics, ancient or modern, as to Britain I ever abjured the idea. A constitution, which in its original principles, experience has proved to be every way fitted for our happiness, would be insanity to abandon for an untried visionary theory. I have not a tenet of my own, which, I can see, has prevailed in the imagination of our poet of the last prop on which his hopes of independence rested; and by embittering his peace, have aggravated those excesses which were soon to conduct him to an untimely grave.

See Poem entitled The Dumfries Volunteers.

The Song of Death, Poems, p. 65. This poem was written in 1791. It was printed in Johnson's Mu seum. The poet had an intention, in the latter part of his life, of printing it separately, so to
Though by nature of an athletic form, Burns had in his handsome person what he called a "very considerable" delicacy that belonged to the temperamen of genius. He was liable, from a very early period of life, to that interruption in the process of digestion, which arises from deep and anxious reflection, and which is accompanied by a languor of the body, and sometimes the cause of depression of spirits. Connected with this disorder of the stomach, there was a disposition to head aches, affecting more especially his right side, and frequently accompanied by violent and irregular movements of the heart. Endowed by nature with great sensibility of nerves, Burn's mind was quick to the impression of any accidental shock, and he was liable to inordinate fits of tears; for body as well as of mind. This predisposition to disease, which strict temperance in diet, regular exercise, and sound sleep, might have subdued, habits of a very different nature strengthened and inflamed. Perpetually stimulated by alcohol in one or other of its various forms, the inordinate actions of the circulatory system became at length habitual; the process of nutrition was unable to supply the waste, and the powers of life began to fail. Upwards of a year before his death there was an evident decline in our poet's personal appearance; and though his appetite continued unimpaired, he was himself sensible that his constitution was sinking. In his moments of thought he would reflect, that as he was about to cease, without the strength of mind necessary to stop, or even to slacken his course. His temper now became more delicate, and that tenderness, which before had been confined within the bounds of his own person, now over which uncontrolled passion generally presided. He suffered the pollution of indecency, how shall he escape other pollution? But let us refrain from the mention of errors over which delicacy and human decency draw the veil.

In the midst of all his wanderings, Burns met nothing in his domestic circle but gentleness and goodness, except in the guavings of his own remorse. He acknowledged his transgressions to the wife of his bosom, presented amends and again and again re-solved pardon for his offences. But as the strength of his body decayed, his resolution became feebler, and habit acquired predominating strength.

From October 1795, to the January following, an accidental complaint confined him to the house. A few days after he began to go abroad, he dined at a tavern in the town, about half-past ten o'clock; a very cold morning, benumbed and intoxicated. This was followed by an attack of rheumatism, which continued for about a week. His appetite now began to fail; his hand shook, and his voice faltered on any exertion or emotion. His pulse became weaker and more rapid, and pain in the larger joints, and in the hands and feet, deprived him of the enjoyment of refreshing sleep. Too much dejected in his spirits, and too well aware of his real situation to entertain hopes of recovery, he was ever musing on the active, poaching, drinking, of his family, and his spirits sunk into a uniform gloom.

It was hoped by some of his friends, that if he could live through the months of spring, the succeeding season might restore him. But they were disappointed. The genial beams of the sun infused no vigour into his languid frame; the summer wind blew upon him, but produced no refreshment. About the latter end of his life, he was advised to go into the country, and improvidently followed the advice, as well from the influence of a species of control, determined for himself to try the effects of bathing in the sea. For this purpose he took up his residence at Brow, in Annandale, about ten miles east of Dumfries, on the shore of the Solway-Firth.

It happened that at that time a lady with whom he had been connected in friendship by the sympathies of their domestic situation, but not of blood, came to him, and he was unable to walk. "I was struck," says this lady, "in a confidential letter to a friend written soon after, "with his appearance on entering the room. The stamp of death was imprinted upon him. He was already touching the brink of eternity. His first sensation was, 'Well, Madam, have you any commands for the other world?' I replied, that it seemed a dreadful scene when such scenes were to be witnessed, and that I hoped he would yet live to write my epitaph. (I was then in a bad state of health.) He looked at me for some time, with great kindness, and said, 'Do not enter into your concern at seeing me look so ill, with his accustomed sensibility. At table he ate little or nothing, and he complained of having entirely lost the tone of living. He would no longer entertain any conversation about his present situation, and the approaching termination of his earthly prospects. He spoke of his death without any of the ostentation of philosophy, with the simplicity of an honest man. He began to reflect on the necessity of securing to himself a decent posthumous monument, with seeming pride and satisfaction, the promising genius of his eldest son, and the flattering approbation he had received from his teachers, and dwelt particularly on his hopes of obtaining a future conduct and merit. His anxiety for his family seemed to hang heavy upon him, and the more persons from the reflection that he had not, what most of the justice he had so well qualified to do, was from this subject, he showed great concern about the care of his literary fame, and particularly the publication of his posthumous works. He also was well aware that his death would occasion some noise, and that every scrap of his writing would be revolved against him, to the injury of his future reputation; that letters and verses written with ungallant and improper freedom, and which he earnestly wished to have buried in oblivion, would be handed about like vanity or malice, when no dread of his reprobation, and the desire of perpetuating these verses by the addition of shrill-tongued malice, or the insidious sardonic envies, from pouring forth all their venom to blast his fame."

"He lamented that he had written many epigrams on persons against whom he entertained no enmity, and whose characters he should be sorry to wound; and many indifferent yet poetical pieces, which he feared would now, with all their imperfections on their head, be thrust upon the world. On this account he deeply regretted not having written with ungallant and improper freedom, and which he earnestly wished to have buried in oblivion, would be handed about like vanity or malice, when no dread of his reprobation, and the desire of perpetuating these verses by the addition of shrill-tongued malice, or the insidious sardonic envies, from pouring forth all their venom to blast his fame."

"I have seen the musings of a private nature on which he spoke. "The conversation," she added, "kept up with great evenness and animation on his side. I had seldom seen his mind greater or more collected. There was frequently a considerable degree of vivacity in his salutations, and they would probably have had a greater share, had not the concern and projection I could not disguise, damped the spirit of pleasantry he seemed not unwilling to indulge."

"We parted about sunset on the evening of that day (the 5th July, 1796;) the next day I saw him again, and we parted to meet no more!"
The Life of Burns.

At first Burns imagined bathing in the sea had been of benefit to him; the pains in his limbs were relieved, and this was immediately followed by a new attack of fever. When he arrived at Dumfries, in the 18th of July, he was no longer able to stand upright. At this time a tertian period of his former trichina had returned, the fever was protracted, and his mind sunk into delirium, when not roused by conversation. On the second and third day the fever increased, and his strength diminished. On the fourth, the sufferings of this great and ill-fated genius, were terminated; and a life was closed in which virtue and passion had been at perpetual variance.*

The death of Burns made a strong and general impression on all who had interested themselves in his character and especially on the inhabitants of the town and county in which he had spent the latter years of his life.Flagrant as his follies and errors had been, they had not deprived him of the respect and regard entertained for the extraordinary powers of his genius, and the generous qualities of his heart. The gentle volunteers of Dumfries determined to bury their illustrious associate with military honours, and every preparation was made to render this last service with solemnity. In the church-yard of the Southern church, there was placed a magnificent coffin, and the regiment of cavalry of the 41st corps, at that time quartered in Dumfries, offered their assistance on this occasion. The principal inhabitants of the town were in the church-yard to receive the body. The bells of the church were tolled in general procession; and a vast concourse of persons assembled, some of them at considerable distance, to witness the pomp of the Scottish Bard. On the evening of the 25th day, the remains of Burns were removed from his house to the Town-hall, and the funeral took place on the succeeding day. A party of volunteers, selected to perform the military duty in the church-yard, stationed themselves in the front of the procession, with their arms reversed; the main body of the corps surrounded and supported the coffin, on which several of the citizens placed their friend and fellow-soldier; the numerous body of attendants ranged themselves in the rear; while the Feasible regiments of infantry and cavalry lined the streets from the Town-hall to the burying-ground in the Southern church-yard, a distance of more than half a mile. The whole procession moved forward to that sublime and affecting strain of music, the Dead March in Saul; and the streets were filled with the voice of him whose name is Burns in his parent earth! The spectacle was in a high degree grand and solemn, and accorded with the general feeling of sympathy and sorrow which the occasion had called forth.

It was an affecting circumstance, that, on the morning of the 26th day, Sir Walter Scott's funeral, Mrs. Burns was undergoing the pains of labour; and that during the solemn service we have just been describing, the posthumous son of our poet was born. This infant boy, who received the name of Maxwell, was destined to a long life. He has already become an inhabitant of the same grave with his celebrated father. The fourth other children of our poet, all sons, (the eldest at that time about ten years of age) yet survive, and give every promise of prudence and virtue that can be expected from their tender years. They remain under the care of their affective mother in Dumfries, and enjoying the means of education which the excellent schools of that town afford; the teachers of which, in their conduct to the children of Burns, do themselves great credit. We are informed that Mrs. Burns deserves to be particularly mentioned, herself a poet, as well as a man of science.*

Burns died in great poverty; but the independence of his spirit and the exemplary prudence of his wife, had preserved him from debt. He had received from his poems a clear profit of about nine hundred pounds. * The particular respecting the illness and death of Burns, were obligingly furnished by Dr. Maxwell, the physician who attended him.+

† Author of "St. Guerdon's Well," a poem; and of "A Tribute to the Memory of Burns."

Of this sum, the part expended on his library (which was far from extensive) and in the humble furniture of his house, remained; and obligations were found for two hundred pounds advanced by him to the assistance of those to whom he was united by the ties of blood, and still more by those of esteem and affection. He has declared, that his expenses in Edinburgh and on various occasions, would not amount to much; that his agricultural undertaking was unsuccessful; that his income from the excise was for some time as low as fifty, and never rose to above seventy pounds a year; that his family was large, and his spirit liberal—no one will be surprised that his circumstances were so poor, or that, as his health decayed, his mind was filled with a proud and feeling heart sunk under the secret consciousness of indifference, and the apprehensions of absolute want. Yet poverty never bent the spirit of Burns to any puerile meanness. Neither chancy nor sordidness ever appeared in his conduct. He carried his disregard of money to a blameless excess. Even in the midst of distress he bore himself loftily to the world, and received with a jealous reticence every offer of friendly assistance. His printed poems had procured him great celebrity, and a just and fair remuneration for the latter offspring of his pen might have propitiated Heaven with the wish of the same. In 1795, the Editor of a London newspaper, high in its character for literature, and independence of sentiment, made a proposal to him that he should furnish the world with new and original facts, with an absolute security of remuneration. Burns, with the greatest ease, signed the contract, and received from them a recompense of fifty-two guineas per annum; an offer which his pride of genius disdained to accept. Yet he had for several years been assured that the first act of government for his assistance to the greater work of Mr. Thomson, which the justice and generosity of that gentleman was pressing upon him.

The sense of his poverty, and of the approaching distress of his infant family, pressed heavily on Burns as he lay on the bed of death. Yet he alluded to his indigence, at times with something approaching to his wonted gayety. "What business," said he to Dr. Maxwell, who attended him with the utmost zeal, "has a physician to waste his time on me? I am a poor pigeon, not worth plucking, Ala! I have not the least idea of my want!" And when his reason was lost in delirium his ideas ran in the same melancholy train; the horrors of a guilty conscience were then given vent to his imagination, and produced the most affecting exclamations.

As for some months previous to his death he had been pined away, the story is told, that he had calculated that his salary should be reduced one half as is usual in such cases. His full emoluments were, however, continued to him by the kindness of Mr. Stobie a young expectant in the Excise, who performed the duties of his office without fee or reward; and Mr. Graham of Fintry, hearing of his illness, though unacquainted with its dangerous nature, made an offer of his assistance towards procuring him the means of preserving his health. Whatever might be the faults of Burns, ingratitude was not of the number. Amongst his manuscripts, various proofs are found of the sense he entertained of Mr. Graham's friendship, which delicacy towards that gentleman has induced us to suppress; and on that last occasion there is so much evidence of that deep and abiding friendship, that he had no longer the power of expressing his feelings.*

On the death of Burns the inhabitants of Dumfries and its neighbourhood opened a subscription for the support of his wife and family; and Mr. Miller, Mr. M. Strudde, Dr. Maxwell, Mr. Syme, and Mr. Cunninghame, of the five respectively,+

* The letter of Mr. Graham, alluded to above, is dated on the 13th of July, and probably arrived on the 15th. Burns became delirious on the 17th or 18th, and died on the 21st.
This indeed, is to represent Burns in his happiest phase. The raptures of his fancy were often invidious and dis- tinctly selfish; he was jealous of the proud man's scorn, jealous to an extreme of the insouciance of wealth, and prone to overturn at a word the most precarious of human fortunes. By nature kind, brave, sincere, and in a sin- gular degree compassionate, he was on the other hand proud, magnanimous, and vindictive. His virtues and his faults were of a similar nature. 

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trustees for the application of the money to its proper objects. He had lived the life of a country gentleman in Scotland, and of England also, particularly London and Liverpool. By this means a sum was raised amounting to seven hundred pounds; and thus the widow of Burns, his mother, Lord Melville, and the most melancholy of the forebodings of Burns happily disappointed. It is true, this sum, though equal to their present support, is insufficient to secure them a comfortable life; but if such a moderate provision be made, the security depends on the favourable reception of these volumes from the public at large, in the promoting of which the candour and humanity of the reader may indi- cate to him the kind of support he should bestuot. 

Burns, as has already been mentioned, was nearly five feet ten inches in height, and of a form that indi- cated agility as well as strength. His well-raised fore- head, shaded with black curling hair, indicated exten- sive counsel. His eyes were large, dark, full of ardour and intelligence; his face was well formed; and his countenance uncommonly interesting and expressive. His mode of dressing, which was often slovenly, and a certain weakness of physiognomy, had excluded him from parts of society, characteristic of his original profession, disguised in some degree the natural symmetry and elegance of his form. The external appearance of Burns was most strikingly in- direct, especially when seen at close quarters; his physiognomy had a certain air of coarseness, mingled, however, with an expression of deep penetration, and of calm thoughtfulness, approaching to melan- choly, a broad forehead set off by a dark, deep, and large, fine eyes, expressive of all the faculty, perfect ease and self possession, but a stern and almost supercilious elevation, not, indeed, incompati- ble with openness and affability, which, however, bore a kind of consciousness of superior talents. Strangers that supposed themselves approaching an Ayrshire peasant who could make rhymes, and to whom their notice was an honour, found themselves speedily over- awed by the presence of a man who bore himself with dignity, and who possessed a singular power of correct- ing forwardness, and of repelling intrusion. But thought and feeling were the result of the reflection he could not, however, enforce it where he saw it was willingly paid; and though inaccessible to the approach of pride, he was open to every advance of kindness and of benevo- lence. His dark and haughty countenance easily relaxed into a look of good-will, of pity, or of tenderness; and, as the various emotions succeeded each other in his mind, assumed with equal ease the expression of the strongest contrast of humour, of the most extravagant mirth, of the deepest melancholy, or of the most sublime emotion. The tones of his voice happily corresponded with the expression of his countenance; he knew his own failings of his mind. When to these endowments are ad- d ed a rapid and distinct apprehension, a most pow- erful understanding, and a happy command of lan- guage, the reflection of which he could not be forced to, and which engaged all his faculties with equal strength of expression — we shall be able to account for the extraordinary attractions of his conversation—for the sor- vety which in his society parties seemed to extort on all around him. In the company of women his surre- ry was more specially apparent. Their presence charmed the fluid of melancholy in his bosom, and awoke his happiest feelings: it excited the powers of his fancy, as well as the tenderest emotions of his heart: and by restraining the vehemence and the exuberance of his language, at times gave to his manner the impres- sion of those of a man who, in the affections of other men, differed not in degree from that of these, who were next to himself, of whom he was so fond: thus, at times, there was a charm about Burns which she had never seen equalled. This charm arose not more from the power than the versatility of his genius. No langu- age, no form, is in the power of Burns to gratify. He seems to have drawn all the faculties of his mind with equal strength and ease, and never failed to impress the offspring of that fancy with the stamp of his understanding.
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bly founded on experience. The being he sup-
poses, "with senses more delicate and refined, with percep-
tions more acute and penetrating," is to be found in real life. He is of the temperament of genius, and possesses the port of a scholar, which while they may at first be, is the true remedy. Occupation in which the powers of the understanding are exercised, will diminish the force of external impressions, and keep the imagination under restraint.

That the bent of every man's mind should be fol-
lowed in his education and in his destination in life, is a maxim which has been often repeated, but which cannot be admitted, without many restrictions. It may be generally true when applied to weak minds, which being capable of nothing, must be encouraged and strengthened in the feeble imprints by which that lit-
tle is produced. But where indulgent nature has be-
stowed her gifts with a liberal hand, the very reverse of this maxim ought frequently to be the rule of con-
duct. In minds of a higher order, the object of in-
struction and of discipline is very often to restrain, rather than to impel; to curb the impulses of imagi-
nation, and to show that the passions also may be kept under control.*

Hence the advantages, even in a moral point of view, of studies of a severer nature, which while they inform the understanding, employ the volition, that regulating power of the mind, which, like all our oth-
er faculties, is strengthened by exercise, and on the superiority of which, virtue, happiness, and knowl-
dge, are wholly dependent. Hence also the ad-
vantage of regular and constant application, which aids the voluntary power by the production of habits so powerful, that the support of those virtues, and so difficult to be formed in the temperament of genius.

The man who is so endowed and so regulated, may pursue his course with confidence in almost any of the various walks of life which choice or accident shall open to him; and, provided he employs the talents he has cultivated, may hope for such imperfect happy-
ness, and such limited success, as are reasonably to be expected from human exertions.

The pre-eminence among men, which procures per-
sonal respect, and which terminates in lasting reputa-
tion, is seldom or never obtained by the excellence of a single faculty of mind. Experience teaches us, that it has been acquired by those only who have possessed the comprehension and the energy of general talents, and who have regulated their application. In the line which choice, or perhaps accident, may have deter-
mined, by the dictates of the ruling passion, imagination is supposed, and with justice, to be the leading faculty of the poet. But what poet has stood the test of time by the force of this single faculty? Who does not see that Homer and Shakespeare excelled the rest of their

* Quintillian discusses the important question, whether the bent of the individual's genius should be followed in his education (an secundum sut quiue ingenii docendus sit naturam,) chiefly, indeed, with a reference to the orator, but in a way that admits of very general application. He has shown that intellectual and moral development are connected with the text. "An vero locatra-
tes cum de Ephorho atque Thesmopomo sic judicaret, at et eriun, ateri calvuciis opus esse discerat; aut in illo lentiore tardatis, aut in illo pene praecipit consocrinam adjuvandum docendo existimavit? cum alterum alterius natura mendacum arbitratur. Im-
becillus iamen ingenii sanci obsequendum, sit, ut suntam in id quo vocat natura, ducatur. Ita eum, quod volum possum, nullius efficient." Inst. Orator., lib. ii. 9.

species in understanding as well as in imagination; that they were educated, in the highest degree of knowledge—the knowledge of the nature and charac-
ter of man? On the other hand, the talent of rhetoric is more especially requisite to the orator; but it was never obtained the palm of oratory, even by the highest excellence in this single talent. Who does not perceive that Demosthenes and Cicero were not more happy in their addresses in the reason, than in their ap-
peals to the passions? They knew, that to excite, to agitate, and to delight, are among the most potent arts of persuasion; and they enforced their impreg-
tate instrument, by the command of all the sympathies of the heart. Those observations might be extended to other walks of life. He who has the faculties fitted to excel in poetry, has the faculties which, duly governed, and differently directed, might lead to pre-eminence in other, and, as far as respects himself, perhaps in happier destinations. The talents necessary to the construction of an orator, under differ-
ent discipline and application, might have led armies to victory, or kingdoms to prosperity; might have wielded the thunder of eloquence, or discovered and enlarged the sciences that constitute the power and improve the condition of our species.* Such talents

* The reader must not suppose it is contended that the same individual could have excelled in all these directions. A certain degree of instruction and practice is necessary to excellence in every one, and life is too short to admit of one man, however great his talents, acquiring this in all of them. It is only asserted, that the same talents, differently applied, might have succeeded in any one, though perhaps, not equally well in each. And, after all, this position re-
cquires certain limitations, which the reader's candour and judgment will supply. In supposing that a great orator might have made a great poet, the physical qualities necessary to oratory are presupposed. In supposing that a great poet might have made a great orator, it is a necessary condition, that he should have devoted himself to poetry, and that he should have ac-
quired a proficiency in metrical numbers, which by patience and attention may be acquired, though the want of it has embarrassed and chilled many of the first efforts of true poetical genius. In supposing that Homer might have led armies to victory, more indeed is assumed than the physical qualities of a general. To these must be added that hardihood of mind, that coolness in the midst of difficulty and danger, which great poets and orators are found sometimes, but not always to possess. The nature of the institutions of Grace and Rome produced more instances of single individuals who excelled in various departments of active and speculative life, than occur in modern Eu-
rope, where the employments of men are more subdi-
vided. Many of the greatest warriors of antiquity excelled in literature and in oratory. That they had the minds of great poets also, will be admitted, when the qualities are justly appreciated which are neces-
ary to excite, combine, and command the active ener-
gies of a great body of men, to rouse that enthusiasm which sustains fatigue, hunger, and the inclemencies of the elements, and which triumphs over the fear of death, the most powerful instinct of our nature.

The authority of Cicero may be appealed to in fa-
vour of the close connexion between the poet and the orator. Est enim hominis ingenium oratorio, numero alsistor ciur apotam licentia libror.,&e. De Oratoro, Lib. i. c. 16. See also Lib. ii. c
are, indeed, rare among the productions of nature, and occasions of bringing them into full exertion are rarer still. But safe and satisfactory occupations may be found for men of genius in every direction, while the useful and ornamental arts remain to be cultivated, with the sciences to be studied and to be extended, and principles of science to be applied to the correction and improvement of art. In the temperament of sensibility, which is in truth the temperament of general talent, the principal object of discipline and instruction is, as has already been mentioned, to strengthen the self-command; and this may be promoted by the direction of the studies, more effectually perhaps than has been generally understood.

If these observations be founded in truth, they may lead to practical consequences of some importance. It has been so much the custom to consider the possession of poetical talents as excluding the possibility of application to the severer branches of study, as in some degree incapacitating the possessor from attaining those habits, and from bestowing that attention, which are necessary to success in the details of business, and in the engagements of active life. It has been common for persons conscious of talents, to look with a sort of disdain on other kinds of intellectual excellence, and to consider themselves as in some degree

7.—It is true the example of Cicero may be quoted against his opinion. His attempts in verse, which are praised by Plutarch, do not seem to have met the approbation of Juvenal, or of some others. Cicero probably did not take sufficient time to learn the art of the poet; but that he had the aptness necessary to poetical excellence, may be abundantly proved from his compositions in prose. On the other hand, nothing is more clear than that, in the character of a great poet, all the mental qualities of an orator are included. It is said by Quintillian, of Homer, Omnibus eloquentia partibus exemplum et ortum dedi. Lib. i. 47. The study of Homer is therefore recommended to the orator, as of the first importance. Of the two sublime poets in our own language, who are hardly inferior to Homer, Shakespeare and Milton, a similar. recommendation may be given. It is scarcely necessary to mention how much an acquaintance with them has availed the great orator who is now the pride and ornament of the English bar, a character that may be appealed to with singular propriety, when we are contending for the universality of genius.

The identity, or at least the great similarity, of the talents necessary to excellence in poetry, oratory, painting, and war, will be admitted by some, who will be inclined to dispute the extension of the position to science or natural knowledge. On this occasion I may quote the following observations of Sir William Jones, whose own example will however far exceed in weight the authority of his precepts. "Abul Olia had so flourished a reputation, that several persons of uncommon genius were ambitious of learning the art of poetry from so able an instructor. His most illustrious scholars were Poleki and Kikakani, who were no less his disciples in their Persian compositions, than for their skill in every branch of Persian learning, mathematics, and particularly in astronomy; a striking proof that a sublime poet may become master of any kind of learning which he chooses to profess; since a fine imagination, a lively wit, an easy and copious style, cannot possibly obstruct the acquisition of any science whatever; but must necessarily assist him in his studies, and shorten his labour."—Sir William Jones's Works, vol. ii. p. 317.

absolved from those rules of prudence by which humbler minds are restricted. They are too much disposed to abandon their exertion at times of relaxation, or to suffer life to pass away without regular exertions or settled purpose.

But though men of genius are generally prone to indolence, with them indolence and unhappiness are in a more especial manner allied. The unbidden spicering of imagination is speedily to irritate the gloom which inactivity produces; but such visions, though bright, are transient, and serve to cast the realities of life into a deeper shade. In bestowing great talents, Nature seems very generally to have imposed on the possessor the necessity of exertion, if he would escape wretchedness. Better for him than sloth, toils the most painful, or adventures the most hazardous. Happy to him in his idleness, there are few arts sublimer than that of the peasant, earning with incessant labour his scanty food; or that of the sailor, though hanging on the yard-arm, and wrestling with the hurricane.

The observations might be amply illustrated by the biography of men of genius of every denomination, and most especially to those who have cultivated poetry as an occupation, and have it constantly laid before them. The visions of the mind that have been so clearly described as to the importance of exertion on the part of the possessor. Even taste, virtue, and comparative independence, do not seem capable of bestowing on men of genius, peace and tranquillity, without such occupation as may give range to their designs in the exercise of the powers of body and mind. The amiable Shenstone has left us the records of his imprudence, of his indolence, and of his unexampled happiness. In the shades of the Leasowes and the virtues, the learning, and the genius of Gray equal to the loftiest attempts of the epic muse, failed to procure him in the academic bowers of Cambridge, that tranquillity and respect which less fortunate, abounding of taste, and greater constancy and vigour of exertion would have doubtless obtained.

It is more necessary that men of genius should be aware of the importance of self-command, and of exertion, because their indolence is peculiarly exposed, not merely to unhappiness, but to diseases of mind, and to the effects of those diseases which harm the body. The interesting subject deserves a particular investigation; but we must content ourselves with one or two cursory remarks. Relief is sometimes sought from the melancholy of inactivity by the amusements of the senses, and gratify the sensations, but which in the end involve the sufferer in darker gloom. To command the external circumstances by which happiness is effected, is not in human power; but there are various circumstances in nature which operate on the system of the nerves, so as to give a fictitious gayety to the ideas of imagination, and to alter the effect of the external impressions which we receive. Opium is chiefly employed for this purpose by the disciples of Mahomet and the inhabitants of Asia; but alcohol, the principle of inspiration, acts on the brain in an injurious manner in Europe, and is universally used in the Christian world." Under the various wounds to which in

* See his Letters, which, as a display of the effects of poetical idleness, are highly instructive.
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Sedent sensibility is exposed, and under the gloomy apprehensions respecting futurity to which it is often a prey, how strong is the temptation to have recourse to an antidote by which the pain of those wounds is suspended, by which the heart is exhilarated, visions of external nature clothed with new beauty!

"Elysium opens round,
A pleasing frenzy boos the light’den soul,
And sanguine hopes dispel your fleeting care;
And what was difficult, and what was dire,
Yields to your prowess, and superior stare:
The happiest you of all that e’er were mad,
Or are, or shall be, could this folly last.
But soon your heaven is gone; a heavier gloom
Shuts o’er your head—"

Morning comes; your cares return
With ten fold rage. An anguishous stomach well
May be endured; so may the throbbing head;
But such a dim delirium; such a dream
Involves you; such a dastardly despair
Unmans your soul, as mad’ning rentheful felt,
When, baited round Citizeron’s cruel sides,
He saw two suns and double Thébes ascend."  

Armstrong's Art of Preserving Health.

Such are the pleasures and the pains of intoxication, as they occur in the temperament of sensibility, described by a genuine poet, with a degree of truth and energy which nothing but experience could have dictated. There are, indeed, some individuals of this temperament on whom wine produces no cheering influence. On some, even in very moderate quantities, its effects are painfully irritating; in large draughts it excites dark and melancholy ideas; and in draughts still larger, the ferocities of insanity itself. Such men are happily exempted from a temptation, to which experience teaches us the finest dispositions often yield, and the influence of which, when strengthened by habit, it is a humbling truth, that the most powerful minds have not been able to resist.

This place at some length; but he found the subject too extensive and too professional to be introduced with propriety. The difficulty of abandoning any of these narcotics (if we may so term them,) when inclination is strengthened by habit, is well known. Johnson, in his discourses, had experienced the distressing but treacherous influence of wine, and by a powerful effort abandoned it. He was obliged, however, to use tea as a substitute, and this was the solace to which he constantly had recourse under his habitual melancholy. The praises of wine form many of the most excellent lyrics of the poets of Greece and Rome, and of modern Europe. Whether opinion, which produces visions still more ecstatic, has been the theme of the eastern poems, I do not know.

Wine is drunk in small quantities at a time, in company, where, for a time, it promotes harmony and social affection. Opium is swallowed by the Ancients in full doses at once, and the inebriate returns to the solitary indulgence of his delicious imaginations. Hence the wine drinker appears in a superior light to the imbibers of opium, a distinction which he owes more to the form than to the quality of his \textit{agows}.

It is the more necessary for men of genius to be on their guard against the habitual use of wine, because it is a narcotic which strengthens the imagination and causes the temptation to excess usually presents itself to them in their social hours, when they are alive only to warm and generous emotions, and when produce and moderation are often contumied as selfishness and timidity.

It is the more necessary for them to guard against excess in the use of wine, because on them its effects are, physically and morally, in an especial manner injurious. In proportion to its stimulating influence on the system (in which the pleasurable sensations depend,) is the debility that ensues; a debility that destroys digestion, and terminates in habitual fever, dropsy, jaundice, paralysis, or insanity. As the strength of the bodily decays, the vicious fall; in proportion as the sensations are muted and gratified, the sensibility increases; and moral sensibility is the parent of infirmities, because, while it impairs the regulating power of the mind, it exaggerates all the obstacles to exertion. Activity, perseverance, and self-command, become more and more difficult, and the great purposes of utility, patriotism, or of honourable ambition, which had occupied the imagination, die away in fruitless resolutions or in feeble efforts.

To apply these observations to the subject of our memoirs, would be a useless as well as a painful task. It is, indeed, a duty we owe to the living, not to allow o—admiration of great genius, or even our pity for its unhappy destiny, to conceal its disguise its errors. But there are sentiments of respect; and even of tender—ness, with which this duty should be performed; there is an awful dignity which restrains the hands of the dead; and let those who moralize over the graves of their contemporaries, reflect with humility on their own errors, nor forget how soon they may themselves require the censure and the sympathy they are called upon to bestow.

Soon after the death of Burns, the following article appeared in the Dumfries Journal, from which it was copied into the Edinburgh newspapers, and into various other periodical publications. "It is from the elegant pen of a lady already alluded to in the course of these memoirs," whose exertions for the family of our bard, in the circle of literature and in its which she moves, have done her so much honour.

The attention of the public seems to be much occupied at present with this loss it has recently sustained in the death of the Caledonian poet, Robert Burns; a loss calculated to be severely felt: throughout the literary world, as well as lamented in the narrower sphere of private friendship. It was not, therefore, probable, that such an event should be long unattended with the accustomed profusion of posthumous anecdotes and memoirs which are usually circulated immediately after the death of every rare and celebrated personage; I had, however, conceived no intention of appropriating to myself the privilege of criticising Burns"s character, and character, or of anticipating on the province of a biographer.

Conscious, indeed, of my own inability to do justice to such a subject, I should have continued wholly silent, had mismatch and calamity been less indistinct; but a regard to truth, no less than affection, will induce me, although I am desirous of offering to the public a few at least of these observations which an intimate acquaintance with Burns, and the frequent opportunities I have of observing his qualities and his habits for several years past, have enabled me to communicate.

It will actually be an injustice done to Burns"s character, notably by foreign writers, to publish the character, or by his native Scotland, and perhaps a number of his contemporaries, that he is gener-

See p. 39.
ally talked of and considered, with reference to his po-
tical talents only: for the fact is, even allowing his
great and original genius (due tribute of admiration, in-
ternally we must give, he always was a man of remark-
ong being personally acquainted with him) was ac-
turally not his fortia. Many others, perhaps, may
have had a greater for their irregularities; but
nassus, but none certainly ever unburned Burns in the
charsm—the sorcery, I would almost call it, of fasci-
nating conversation, the spontaneous eloquence of so-
mendous, that the uninitiated were more or less
paralyzed; nor was any man, I believe, ever gifted with
a larger portion of the "iviuda vie anihi." His
personal endowments were perfectly correspondent to the
infinitesimal, and though even his fortune was
character, action, energy itself; devoid in a great measure per-
haps of those graces, of that polish, acquired only in the
refinement of societies where in early life he could have
no opportunities of mixing; but where such was the
irresistible power of attraction that encircled him,
though his appearance and manners were always pe-
uliar, he never failed to delight and to excel. His
figure seemed to bear testimony to his earlier destina-
tion and employments. It seemed rather moulded by
nature for the rough exercises of agriculture, than
the gentler cultivation of the Belles Letters. His features
were stamped with the hardy character of indepen-
dence, and the firmness of conscious, though not arro-
gative, energy: his eye was as erect as the
courtance was almost peculiar to himself; the rap-
'id lightnings of his eyes were always the harbingers
of some dash of genius, whether they darted the fiery
of his native blood, or struck the ear with the melody of poetic numbers, the perspicuity of
nervous reasoning, or the ardent sallies of enthusiastic
excitement. If you could say to him, "Take a last
attempt to say, your forte or his for: but
though nature had endowed him with a portion of the
most pointed excellence in that dangerous talent, he
suffered it too often to be the vehicle of personal, and
sometimes unfounded aims. It was not always
that sportiveness of humour, that 'unwary pleasantry'
which Sterne has depicted with touches so conciliatory
that he might almost be said to have been
for every ten jokes he got a
quarter of an hour, or perhaps more: for the
incredulous and skeptical possessed of whims who
'stress had spilt with the world,' and
which unhounded in its intellectual sallies and pursuits,
continued experienced the curbs imposed by the way-
the most precious fortune. The vivacity of his wish
and temper was indeed checked by almost habitual
disappointments, which sat heavy on a heart that
acknowledged the ruling passion of indolence, without
ever having been placed beyond the grasp of
penury. His soul was never languid or inactive,
and his genius was extinguished only with the last spark
if he could as it were pour forth his eloquence,
when as they disclosed themselves in affection or antipa-
thy, an object of enthusiastic attachment, or of decided
enmity; for he possessed none of that negative indi-
ence, whose disciples would have found in his
innocence, or whose resentment could be considered
with contempt. In this, it should seem, the temper of
the times was acknowledged in the universe but two classes of objects,
those of adoration the most fervent, or of aversion the
most uncontrollable; and it has been frequently a re-
proach to him, that, unsusceptible of indifference,
often hating where he ought only to have despised, he
exhorted the tribes to the chase, and the wisest of science
in the chariot of a character so unlim-
ished.

"It is said that the celebrated Dr. Johnson professe-
d to 'love a good hater,'—a temperament that would
have singularly adapted him to cherish a prepossession
in favour of our bard, who perhaps felt but little short
of an aversion 'for his little heart.' From the
antagonism to the disposition ill-will continued; but the warmth of
his passions was fortunately corrected by their ver-
satility. He was seldom, indeed never, implacable in
his resentments, and sometimes, it has been alleged,
not invocably faithful in his engagements of friendship.
Moch, indeed, has been said about his inconstancy
and caprice; but I am inclined to believe that
his often exaggerated less in a levity of sentiment, than from an
extreme impetuosity of feeling, which rendered him
apt to take umbrage; and his sensations of pique,
where he had discovered the traces of neglect,
scorn, or unkindness, took their measure of as-
perity from the overflows of the opposite sentiment
which he had excited. He was, in short, the
that of his bosom on the return of calmer
reflection. He was candid and manly in the avowal of
his errors, and his avowal was a reparation. His
fortune, as other great men likewise have been
said to have been in a manner derived from the value of a frank acknowledgment was enhanced ten
told towards a generous mind, from its never being at-
tended with servility. His mind, organized only for
the stronger, and more acute operations of the pas-
sions, was impracticable to the efforts of supercilious-
ness that would have depressed it into humility, and
which was equally superior to the encroachments of venal sugges-
tions that might have led him into the mazes of hypo-
ry.

"It has been observed, that he was far from aver-
to the incense of flattery, and could receive it tem-
pered with less delicacy than might have been ex-
pected, as he seldom transgressed extravagantly in
that sphere. But I have said, it might indeed claim the power of intoxication, as an
abstraction from him was always an honest tribute from the
warmth and fidelity of his heart. It has been
sometimes represented by him, and he
had a view to deprecate, though they could not hope
wholly to obscure that native brilliancy, which the
perplexity of one power, which he was able to
stowed on everything that came from his lips or pen,
that the history of the Ayshire plough-boy was an
ingenious fiction, fabricated for the purposes of obtain-
ing the interest of the great, and enhancing the merit of
what required no foil. The Cotter's Saturday
Night, Tam o' Shanter, and The Mountain Daisy,
as a number of later productions, where the matur-
ity of his genius will be readily traced, and which will
be given to the public as soon as his friends have col-
lected and arranged them, speak sufficiently for them-
selves. When they fall from a hand more disdi-
ied in the ranks of society than that of a peasant, they
had, perhaps, bestowed on unusual a grace there, as
even in the humble shade of rustic inspiration from
whence they really sprung.

"To the obscure scene of Burns's education, and to
the laborious, though honourable station of rural in-
dustry, where he was a straw-gatherer, and every inhabitant of the south of Scotland can give tes-
timony. His only surviving brother, Gilbert, Burns,
now possesses the respectable fortune of an
shire, at a farm near Mauchline;" and our poet's
eldest son (a lad of nine years of age, whose early dis-
positions already prove him to be in some measure the
this very respectable and very superior man is
now removed to Dumfriesshire. He reaps lands on the
town of Closeburn, and is a tenant of the venerable
Dr. Moutleth, 1800."
The Life of Burns.

But yet the light that led astray
Was light from heaven.

I have already transgressed beyond the bounds I had proposed to myself, on first committing this sketch to paper, which comprehends what at least I have been able to collect of the earliest reminiscences of a character: a literary critique I do not aim at; mine is wholly fulfilled, if in these pages I have been able to delineate any of those strong traits, which raised him from the plough, where he passed the blest morning of his life, weaving his rude wreath of posy with the wild-field-flowers that sprang around his cottage, to that eminent position of literary eminence, where his name will long cherish every remembrance with delight and gratitude; and proudly remember, that beneath her cold sky a genius was ripened, without care or culture, that would have done honour to cities more favourable to those luxuries— that warmth of colouring and fancy in which he so eminently excelled.

From several paragraphs I have noticed in the public prints, ever since the idea of sending this sketch to some one of them was formed I find private animosities have not yet subsided, and that envy has not extinguished all that I held true, however, that humble fame will be permanently affixed to Burns's character, which I think it will be found he has merited by the production of a few verses, which, though not, where a recollection of the imprudence that shielded his brighter qualifications interpose, let the imperfections of all human excellence be remembered at the same time, leaving those inconsistencies, which alternately exalted his nature into the seraph, and sunk it again into the man, to the tribunal which alone can investigate the labyrinths of the human heart—

'Where they alike in trembling hope repos't,
The bosome of his father and his God.'

GRAY'S ELEGY

Annandale, Aug. 7, 1666.'

After this account of the life and personal character of Burns, it may be expected that some inquiry should be made into his literary merits. It will not, however, be necessary to enter very minutely into this investigation. If fiction be, as some suppose, the soul of poetry, no one had ever been more pretentious to the name of poet than Burns. Though he has displayed great powers of imagination, yet the subject on which he has written, are seldom, if ever, imaginary; his poems, as well as his letters, may be said to be written as the expressions of his sensibility, and the transcript of his own musings on the real incidents of his humble life. If we add, that his genius is sometimes delineated with exquisite force of character, manners, and scenery that presented themselves to his observation, we shall include almost all the subjects of his muse. His writings may, therefore, be regarded as affording a great variety of subjects on which our account of his personal character has been founded; and most of the observations we have applied to the man, are applicable, with little variation, to the poet.

The impression of his birth, and of his original station in life, was not more evident on his form and manners, than on his poetical productions. The incidents which form the subjects of his poems, though some of them highly interesting, and susceptible of being even a poetical subject, are more than the descriptions of a mere 'lyric muse,' who concludes an address to her pupil, almost as unique for simplicity and beauty of poetry, with these lines—

"I saw thy pulse's madd'ning play
Wild send thy pleasure's devious way;
Misled by fancy's meteor ray
By passion driven;"

This description is now altered; (1803, P. 7)

"Yide the Vision—Dun Aig.

of his father's talents, as well as indigence') had been so long distinguished by his family to the humble employment of the boons.'
still adheres more or less to the speech of almost every Scotchman, all the police and the ambitious are now endeavouring to banish from their tongues as well as from their writings, that manner of speaking which, naturally therefore calls up ideas of vulgarity in the mind. These singularities are increased by the character of the poet, who delights to express himself with a nicety of diction that approaches to preciousness, and with an unmeasured energy that often alarms delicacy, and sometimes offends taste. Hence, in approaching him, the first impression of his style is repulsive; there is a want of easiness about him which is difficulty reconciled with our established notions of poetical excellence.

As the reader however becomes better acquainted with the poet, the effects of his peculiarities lessen. He perceives in his poems, even on the lowest subjects, expressions of sentiment, and delineations of manners, which are highly interesting. The scenery he describes is evidently taken from real life; the characters he introduces, and the incidents he relates, have the impress of nature which approaches to truth; and genuine humour so happily unites. Nor is this the extent of his power. The reader, as he examines farther, discovers that the poet is not confined to the descriptions and sentiments of his native tongue, but that he has found, as occasion offers, to rise with ease into the terrible and the sublime. Every where he appears divested of artifice, performing what he attempts with little apparent effort; and impressing on the spectator of his fancy the stamp of his understanding. The reader, capable of forming a just estimate of poetical talents, discovers in these circumstances marks of genuine genius, and a propensity to investigate more minutely its nature and its claims to originality. This last point we shall examine first.

That Burns had not the advantages of a classical education, or of any degree of acquaintance with the Greek or Roman writers in their original dress, has appeared in the history of his life. He acquired indeed some knowledge of the French language, but it does not appear that he was ever much conversant in French literature, nor is there any evidence of his having derived any of his poetical stores from that source. With the English classics he became well acquainted in the course of his life, and the effects of this acquaintance are observable in his latter productions; but it is evident that his power of language was developed very early, and the model which he followed, as far as he can be said to have had one, is to be sought for in the poetry of the poets who have written in the Scottish dialect—most of whom lived at a period comparatively remote, especially as are familiar to the peasantry of Scotland. Some observations on these may form a proper introduction to a more particular examination of the poetry of Burns. The studies of the Editor in this direction are indeed very recent and very imperfect. It would have been imprudent for him to have entered on this subject at all, but for the kindness of Mr. Ramsay, of Ochtertyre, whose assistance he is proud to acknowledge, and to whom the reader must ascribe whatever is of any value in the following imperfect sketch of literary compositions in the Scottish idiom.

It is a circumstance not a little curious, and which does not appear satisfactorily explained, that in the thirteenth century, the language of the two British nations, if at all different, differed only in the dialect, the Gaelic in the one, the Welsh and Armoric in the other, of the Harpism, and the Harpists in the districts. The English under the Edwards, and the Scots under Wallace and Bruce, spoke the same language. We may observe also, that in Scotland the harpers were the ascendants of the literary men as in England. Barbour, and Blind Harry, James the First, Dunbar, Douglas and Lindsay, who lived in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, were

covel with the fathers of poetry in England; and as the opinion of Mr. Wharton, not inferior to them in genius or in composition. There are, however, two circumstances, which deviated from each other during this period, yet the difference on the whole was not considerable; not perhaps greater than between the productions of the different parts of England in our own time.

At the death of James the Fifth, in 1568, the language in Scotland was as it had been for ages, not wanting only writers in prose equal to those in verse. Two circumstances, propitious on the whole, operated to prevent this. The first was the passion of the Scots for Latin; and in the second, the accession of James the Sixth to the English throne. It may easily be imagined, that if Buchanan had devoted his admirable talents, even in part, to the cultivation of his native tongue, as was done by the revivers of letters in Italy, he would have left compositions in that language which might have inclined other men of genius to have followed his example, and given duration to the language itself. The union of the two crowns in the person of James, overthrew all reasonable expectation of this kind. That monarch vested on the English language the same pre-eminence and advantages as at home. The poets of Scotland were now addressed in the rude dialect in which the Scottish clergy had so often insulted his dignity. He encouraged Latin or English only, both of which he prized himself as exhibiting the true spirit and heart of Scotland. The Scottish poet could acquire the English pronunciation, but spoke with a Scottish idiom and intonation to the last. Scotsmen of talents declined writing in their native language, which they knew was not acceptable to the learned and pedantic monarch; and at a time when national prejudice and curiosity prevailed to a great degree, they declined to study the niceties of the English tongue, though of so much easier acquisition than a dead language. Lord Stirling and Drummond, of Hawthornden, the only Scotsmen who wrote poetry in those times, were exceptions. They studied the language of England, and composed in it with precision and elegance. They were however the last of their countrymen who deserved to be considered as poets in that century. The muses of Scotland sunk into silence, and did not again raise their voices for a period of eighty years.

To what causes are we to attribute this extreme depression among a people comparatively learned, enterprising, and ingenious? Shall we impute it to the fanaticism of the covenanters, or to the tyranny of the Stuarts, or to both? After the death of James the Sixth, was the French tongue any more cultivated than it had been? Doubtless these causes operated, but they seem unequal to account for the effect. In England, the cultivation and durability of the English tongue and poetry flourished there in a remarkable degree. During this period, Cowley, and Waller, and Dryden sung, and Milton raised his strain of unparalleled grandeur. To the causes already mentioned, another must be added, in accounting for the torpor of Scottish literature—the want of a proper vehicle for men of genius to employ. The civil wars had frightened away the Latin Muse, and no standard had been established of the Scottish tongue, which was deviating still farther from the pure English idiom.

The revival of literature in Scotland may be dated from the establishment of the union, or rather from the extinction of the rebellion in 1715. The nations being finally incorporated, it was clearly seen that their tongues must in the end incorporate also; or rather indeed that the Scottish language must degenerate into a provincial idiom, to be avoided by those who would aim at distinction in letters, or rise to eminence in the united legislature.

Soon after this, a band of men of genius appeared, who studied the English classics, and imitated their beauties, in the same manner as they studied the classics of Greece and Rome. They had admirable models of composition lately presented to them by the writers as  

* e. g. The Authors of the Deliciae Poetarum Scotiæ, &c.
the reign of Queen Anne; particularly in the periodical papers published by Steele, Addison, and their associates, in the London journals. In Scotland, and diffused everywhere a taste for purity of style and sentiment, and for critical disquisition. At length the Scottish writers succeeded in English compositions and in the Edinburgh journals, and their works were soon noticed by the Edinburgh journals, and their works were noted by the English societies, as well as of the legislatures of the two nations. On this occasion the poets took the lead. While Henry Home, "the" Dr. , Wallace, and their contemporaries, were only laying in their intellectual stores, and studying to clear themselves of their Scottish idioms, , and made their appearance between 1720 and 1730, and were enrolled on the list of English poets. The writers in prose followed a numerous and powerful band, and poured their ample stores in the general stream of British literature.

Scotland possessed her universities before the accession of James to the English throne. Immediately before the union, she acquired her parochial schools. These establishments combining happily together, made the elements of knowledge easy acquisition, and presented a direct path, by which the ardent student might be carried along into the recesses of science. Civil broils ceased, and faction and prejudice gradually died away, a wider field was opened to literary ambition, and the influence of the Scottish institutions for instruction, on the productions of the press, became more and more apparent.

It seems indeed probable, that the establishment of the parochial schools produced effects on the rural muse of Scotland also, which have not hitherto been suspected, and which, though less splendid in their nature, are not however to be regarded as trivial, when we consider the happiness or the morals of the people.

There is some reason to believe, that the original inhabitants of the British isles possessed a peculiar and interesting species of music, which being banished from the plains by the successive invasions of the Saxons, Danes, and Normans, was preserved with the native race, in the wilds of Ireland and in the mountains of Scotland and Wales. The Irish, the Scotch, and the Welsh music differed, indeed, from each other, but the difference may be considered as in dialect only, and probably induced by the influence of time, and like the different dialects of their common language. If this conjecture be correct, the tales immediately of Highland origin, and the Lowland tunes, though now of a character somewhat distinct, must have descended from the musical form of the former period, only so far as is given to conjectures, evidently involved in great uncertainty, there can be no doubt that the Scottish peasantry have been long in possession of a number of songs and ballads composed in their native dialect, and sung in their native music. The subjects of these compositions are such as most interested the simple inhabitants, and in the succession of time varied probably as the condition of the society varied. During the separation and the hostility of the two nations, these songs and ballads, as far as our imperfect documents enable us to judge, were chiefly the evidences of such as the "Battle of Cleghorn," and the "Battle of Hvert." After the union of the two crowns, when a certain degree of peace and of tranquillity took place, the rural inhabitants, who were dressed in the most beautiful of the Scottish tunes, were clothed with new words after the union of the crowns. The inhabitants of the borders, who had formerly been warriors from choice, and their situations taken in the wilds of the country, or were transformed into real shepherds, easy in their circumstances, and satisfied with their lot. Some sparks of that spirit of chivalry which animated the Scottish literary style, of "Fries" remained, sufficient to inspire elevation of sentiment and gallantry towards the fair sex.

"Lord King.,"

11 As those rural poets sung for amusement not for gain, their effusions seldom exceeded a love-song, or a ballad of satire or humour, which, like the works of the elder minstrels, were seldom committed to writing, but for the immediate amusement of their neighbours. Neither known to the learned, nor patronized by the great. These rustic bards lived and died in obscurity; and by a strange fatality, their story, and their songs, have been preserved by the primitive models of pastoral songs, were there would be no want of imitators. To succeed in this species of composition, soundness of understanding, and sensibility of heart were more requisites than flights of imagination or pomp of numbers. Great changes have certainly taken place in Scottish song-writing, though we cannot trace the step by step; and few of the pieces admired in Queen Mary's time are now to be discovered in modern collections. It is possible, though not probable, that the music may have remained of the same nature, though the words to the tunes were entirely new-modified."

These conjectures are highly ingenious. It cannot however be presumed, that the state of ease and tranquility, in the Feys Collection, there are a few Scottish songs of the last century, but the names of the authors are not preserved.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Ramsay of Ochtertyre, to the Editor, Sept. 11, 1799.—In the Bee, vol. ii. is a communication to Mr. Ramsay, under the signature of J. Rucole, which enters into this subject somewhat more at large. In that paper he gives his reasons for questioning the antiquity of many of the most celebrated Scottish songs.
tally] Described by Mr. Ramsay, took place among the Scottish peasantry immediately on the union of the crowns, or indeed during the greater part of the seventeenth century. The Scottish nation, through will and resistance, preserved its national character, it was their religion, the religious persecution which succeeded each other in that disastrous period; it was not till after the revolution, and the establishment of their beloved form of church government, that the peasantry of the Lowlands enjoyed comparative repose; and it is since that period, that a great number of the most admired Scottish songs have been composed, though the tunes to which they are sung, are in general, of much greater antiquity. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the peace and security derived from the Revolution and the Union, produced a favourable change on the rustic poetry of Scotland; and it can scarcely be doubted, that the institution of parish schools in 1605, by which a certain degree of instruction was diffused universally among the peasantry, contributed to this happy effect.

Soon after this appeared Allan Ramsay, the Scottish Theocritus. He was born on the high mountains that divide Clydesdale and Ayrsmale, in a small valley of poems of his own in 1721, which was followed, and probably received much instruction from his parents admitted. Ramsay made his appearance in Edinburgh in the beginning of the present century, in the humble character of an apprentice to a barber, or peruke maker; he was then fourteen or fifteen years of age. By degrees he acquired notice for his social disposition, and his talent for the composition of verses in his Scottish idiom; and, changing his profession for that of a bookseller, he became intimate with many of the literary, as well as of the gay and fashionable characters of his time. Having published a volume of his poems, which was favourably received, he undertook to make a collection of ancient Scottish poems, under the title of the Enter-Green, and was afterwards encouraged to present to the world a collection of Scottish songs. "From what sources procured them," says Mr. Ramsay of ochtreyte, "whether whom tradition or manuscript, is uncertain. As in the Enter-Green he made some rash attempts to improve on the originals, and was duped by the learned, more ancient than the present century, shall be produced; or access be obtained to his own papers, if they are still in existence. To several tunes which were lost by the death of his beloved daughter, an improper or imperfect, he, or his friends, adapted verses worthy of the melodies they accompanied, worthy indeed of the golden age. These verses were perfectly intelligible to every rustic, yet justly admired by poets to the classic, who regarded them as the genuine offspring of the pastoral muse. In some respects Ramsay had advantages not possessed by poets writing in the Scottish dialect in our days. Songs in the dialect of Scotland have not been written in search of fashion, because these dialects have never been spoken by persons of fashion. But till the middle of the present century, every Scotsman from the peer to the peasant, spoke a truly Scotch language; it is true, that the rural moralists and poets were of this time read by every person of condition, and considered as the standard for polite composition. But an national prejudices were still strong, the busy, the learned, the gay, and the fair, continued to speak their native dialect, and that with an elegance and poignancy, of which Scotsmen of the present day can have no just notion. I am old enough to have conversed with Mr. Spittal, of Leuchist, a scholar and a man of fashion, who survived all the members of the Union Parliament, in which I was brought up. His pronunciation and phraseology differed as much from the common dialect, as the language of St. James's from that of Thames-side. In these respects, and more, the country poets of our own time, the tongues of the two North-West kingdoms would indeed have differed like the Castilian and Portugese; but each would have had its own classics, its own schools, and a single branch, but in the whole circle of literature.

"Written in dialect, with the men of wit and fashion of that age; and several of them attempted to write poetry in his manner. Persons too idle or too dissipated to think of compositions that required much exercise, succeeded very happily in making tedious sonnets to favourite tunes in compliment of their musical tastes, land, transforming themselves into impecunious shepherds, caught the language of the characters they assumed. Thus, about the year 1735, Mr. Crawford of Auchinsome, wrote the modern song of "To ed Side," which has been so much admired. In 1738, Sir Gilbert Elliot, the first of our lawyers who both spoke and wrote English elegantly, composed, in the character of a love-sick swain, a beautiful song, beginning, My sheep I neglect'd, I lost my sheep,ook, on the marriage of his mistress, Miss Forbes, in 1738, with Miss Smollett, sister to the author. Afterward, the sister of Sir Gilbert wrote the original words to the tune of the Flowers of the Forest; and this song, approaching in character to the Enter-green itself, the double rhyme, it is sweet, and thought in some parts allegorical, a natural expression of national sorrow. The more modern words to the same tune, being written by Mr. James Robertson, were written long before by Mrs. Cockburn, a woman of great wit, who outlived all the first group of literati of the present century, all of whom were very few of her. I was delighted with her company, though, when I saw her, she was very old. Much did she know that is now lost."

In addition to these instances of Scottish songs produced in the earlier part of the present century, may be mentioned the ballad of "Hark, Hark," by Lady Wardlaw; the ballad of William and Margaret; and the song entitled, The Bird's of End-may, by Mallet; the love song, beginning, For ever, Fortune, wilt thou prove, produced by the youthful muse of Thomson; and the erudite pathetic ballad, The Brees of Barrow, by Hamilton of Bangour. On the revival of letters in Scotland, subsequent to the Union, a very general taste seems to have arisen for the national poems and music. "For many years," says Mr. Ramsay, "the singing of songs was the great delight of the higher and middie order of the people, as well as of the lower; and though a taste for Italian music has interfered with this amusement, it is still very prevalent.

"Beginning, "What beautes does Flora disclose!"

"Beginning "I have heard a liling at our sweet-milking."

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It has frequently been observed, that Scotland has produced, comparatively speaking, few writers who have excelled in humour. But this observation is true only when applied to those who have continued to reside in their own country, and have confined themselves to composition in pure English; and in these respects the Scotchman falls very much short of his Scottish poets, who have written in the dialect of Scotland, have been at all times remarkable for dwelling on subjects of humour, in which indeed many of the best of them were born and brought up. Now, it is the dialect of Scotland having become provincial, is now scarcely suited to the more elevated kinds of poetry, which, as we may believe, the poem of *Christie Kirk of the Grene*, written by James the First of Scotland, this accomplished monarch who had received an English education under the direction of Henry the Fourth, and whose arms under his gallant successor, gave the model on which the greater part of the humorous productions of the rustic muse of Scotland has been formed. *Christie Kirk of the Grene* was reprinted by Ramsay, somewhat modernized in the orthography, and two cantos were added by him, in which he attempts to carry on the design. Hence the poem of King James is usually printed in Ramsay's *vogue*, with the royal bard describes, in the first canto, a rustic dance, and afterwards a contention in archery, ending in an affray. Ramsay relates that, on this occasion, the whole of Scotland, or at least the pastoral sports, with the humour of a country wedding. Though each of the poets describes the manners of his respective age, yet in the whole piece there is a very strong similarity of spirit. Each attempts to show the identity of character in the Scottish peasantry at the two periods, distant from each other three hundred years. It is an honourable distinction to this body of men, that the situations in which they lived and moved, were not embellished, have been found to be susceptible of an amusing and interesting species of poetry; and it must appear not a little curious, that the single nation of modern poets, who possess an original rural poetry, should have received the model, followed by their rustic bands, from the monarch on the throne.

The two additional cantos to *Christie Kirk of the Grene*, written by Ramsay, though objectionable in point of delicacy, are among the happiest of his productions. His chief excellence, indeed, lay in the description of rural characters, incidents, and scenery; for he did not possess any very high powers either of imagination or of understanding. He was well acquainted with the Scottish schools of art and opinion. The subject was in a great measure new; his talents were equal to the subject; and he had the happiness of selecting as his model the very best poetry. In his *Gentle Shepherd* the characters are delineations from nature, the descriptive parts are in the genuine style of beautiful simplicity, the passions and affections of rural life are fully portrayed; and the heart is pleasingly interested in the happiness that is bestowed on innocence and virtue. Throughout the whole there is an air of reality which the most careless reader cannot but perceive; and in fact no poem ever perhaps acquired so high a reputation, in which truth received so little embellishment from the imagination or by pastoral songs, and in his rural tales, Ramsay appears to less advantage, his style is rather still with considerable attraction. The story of the *Mouk and the Miller's Wife*, though somewhat licentious, is a subject which proves the application of L'Orti or La Fontaine. But when he attempts subjects from a higher life, and aims at pure English composition, he is feebly and uninteresting, and seldom...
THE LIFE OF BURNS.

But reaches mediocrity. Neither are his familiar epistles and elegies in the Scotch idiom held in so much approbation. Though Ferguson had higher powers of imagination than Ramsay, his genius was not of the highest order; nor did his learning, which was considerable, inspire, in his imitations, the German poems written in pure English, in which he often follows classical models, though superior to the English poems of Ramsay, seldom rise above mediocrity; but in this respect, in the Scotch dialect he is often very successful. He was in general, however, less happy than Ramsay in the subjects of his muse. As he was the earliest part of his life in Edinburgh, and wrote for his amusement in the intervals of business or dissipation, his Scotch poems are chiefly founded on the incidents of a town life, which, though, they are susceptible of humour, do not amount to a series of sceneries and manners, which vivify the rural poetry of Ramsay, and which so agreeably animate the fancy and interest the heart. The town elegies of Ferguson, if we may so denominate them, are however faithful to nature, and often distinguished by a very happy vein of humour. His poems entitled, The Drift Boys, The King's Birth-day, The Four Firs, Leith Races, and The Hallow Fair, will justify this character. In these, particularly in the last, he imitated Christia Kirk of the Grone, as Ramsay had done before him. Admitting, then, the genuine, exquisite piece of humour, which Burns has scarcely excelled. In appreciating the genius of Ferguson, it ought to be recollected, that his poems are the careless effusions of an immature poet, those amiable poems, who wrote for the periodical papers of the day, and who died in early youth. Had his life been prolonged under other circumstances, they might have become what would probably have risen to much higher reputation. He might have excelled in rural poetry: for though his professed pastornal on the established Sicilian model, are stale and uninteresting, The Farmer's Lilt, which may be considered as a Scotch pastoral, is the happiest of all his productions, and certainly was the archetype of the Cotter's Saturday Night. Ferguson, and more especially Burns, have shown us that the character and manners of the peasantry of Scotland, at the present time, are as well adapted to poetry, as in the days of Ramsay, or of the author of Christine Kirk of the Grone.

The humour of Burns is of a richer vein than that of Ramsay, and superior to others, as he himself informs us, he had "frequently in his eye, but rather with a view to kindle at their flame, than to servile imitation." His descriptive powers, whether the object is that of the Irish Kirk, Bell, or the Lothian, show him to be an inferior among the serious, animate or inanimate, are of the highest order. A superiority of this kind is essential to every species of poetical excellence. In one of his earlier poems, his plan seems to be to imitate a lesson of contempt in 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 a form of a dialogue between two dogs. He introduces this dialogue by an account of the persons and characters of the speakers. The first, whom he has named Caesar, is a dog of condition:

"His locked, letter'd, braw brass collar,
Show'd him the gentleman and scholar." High-bred though he is, he is however full of conceit:

"At kirk or market, mill or smidder,
Nae tawed tyke, tho', e'er sae dudi,
But he wast'nae, as glad to see him,
And strount on stanes an' hilllocks wi' him."

The other, Loun, is a "ploughman's collie, but a cur of a good heart and a sound understanding.


"The farmer's fire-side.

"His honest, sonlie, baw'nt face,
Ay gat him friends in ilk place;
His breast was white, his towzie back.
Waal clad wi' coat o' glossy black,
Hog gausie telt, wi' upward curl,
Hog o'er his hurrles wi' a snout."

Never were two dogs so exquisitely delineated. Their gambols before they sit down to moratine, are described with an equal degree of happiness; and their sounds and situation distinctly drawn, as well as the different condition of the two speakers, is kept in view.

The speech of Lounth, in which he enumerates the comforts of the poor, gives the following account of their merriment on the first day of the year:

"That merry day the year begins,
They bar the door on frosty winds;
The nappy reeks wi' mantling ream,
And sheds a heart-inspiring stem.
The lustin pipe, and sneschin mill,
Are handed round wi' richt gud will.
The cantie audi folk crackin crouse,
The young anes rantin thro' the house,
My heart has been sae faim to see them,
That I for joy hae burnt wi' them!"

Of all the animals who have moralized on human affairs since the days of Aesop, the dog seems best entitled to this privilege, as well from his sagacity, as from his being more than any other, the friend and associate of man. The dogs of Burns, excepting in their talent for moralizing, are downright dogs; and in the warmest spirit of Scotland, or the rugged, but cheerful, spirit of Dryden, men in the shape of brutes. It is this circumstance that heightens the humour of the dialogue. The 'tw dogst are constantly kept before our eyes, and the contrast between their form and character as dogs, and the sagacity of their conversation, heightens the humour and deepens the impression of the poets satire. Though in his poem the chief excellence may be considered as humour, yet great talents are displayed in its composition; the happiest powers of description and the deepest insight into the human heart. It is seldom, however, that the humour of Burns appears in so simple a form. The liveliness of his sensibility frequently impels him to introduce into subjects of humour, emotions of tenderness or of pity; and where occasion requires, he inserts this sentiment to exert the higher powers of the imagination. In such instances he leaves the society of Ramsay and of Ferguson, and addresses himself to the language of English poetry, whose language be frequently assumes.

Of the union of tenderness and humour, examples may be found in The Death and Dying Words of poor Maitie, in The Auld Farmer's New-Year's Morning Salutation to his Mare Maggie, and in many of his other poems. The praise of whiskay is a favourite subject with Burns. To this he dedicatess his poem of Scotch Drink. After mentioning its

* When this poem first appeared, it was thought by some very surprising that a peasant, who had not had an opportunity of associating even with a simple gentleman, should have been able to portray the character of high life with such accuracy. And when it was recollected that he had probably been at the races of Ayr, where nobility as well as gentry are to be seen, it was concluded that the race-ground had been the field of his observation. This was sagacious enough; but it did not require such instruction to inform Burns, that human nature is essentially the same in the high and the low; and a genius which comprehends the human mind, easily comprehends the accidental varieties introduced by situation.
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cheering influence in a variety of situations, he describes, with singular liveliness and power of fancy, its stimulating effects on the blacksmith working at his forge:

"Nae mercy, then, for sirn or steel;
The brawnie, bainie, ploughman chiel,
Brings hard owrship, wi' sturdy wheel,
The strung fore hammer,
Till block an' studdie ring an' reel
Wi' dinsome clamour."

On another occasion, choosing to exalt whisky above wine, he introduces a comparison between the natives of more general climes, to whom the vine furnishes their beverage, and his own countrymen who drink the spirit of malt. The description of the Scotsman is humorous:

"But bring a Scotoman frae his hill,
Clap to his cheek a' Highland gill,
Say such is Royal George's will,
An' there's the fo'e,
He has nae thought but how to kill
Twa at a blow."

Here the notion of danger rouses the imagination of the poet. He goes on thus:

"Nae cauld, faint-hearted doubtsings tem he;
Death comes, wi' fearlesss eye he sees him;
Wi' bludy hand a welcome gies him
An' when he fa's,
His latest draught o' breathing len'eth him
In faint buzzas."

Again, however, he sinks into humour, and concludes the poem with the following most laughable, but most irreverent apostrophe:

"Scotland, my auld respected Mother!
The' whiles ye mustify your leather,
Till where ye sit, ou craps o' beather,
Ye tine your Jam;
Freedom and whisky gang together,
Tak' off your dram!"

Of this union of humour with the higher powers of imagination, instances may be found in the poem entitled Death and Dr. Horrocks, and in almost every stanza of the Address to the Hiel, one of the happiest of his productions. After reproaching this terrible being with all his "dougs" and "misdeeds, in the course of which he passes through a series of Scottish superstitions, and rises at times into a high strain of poetry; he concludes this address, delivered in a tone of great familiarity, not altogether unmixed with approbation, in the following words:

"But, fare ye weel, auld Nickle ben! O wad ye tak a thought an' men! Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
Still hae a stake—
I'm was to think up! yon den
E'en for your sake?"

Humour and tenderness are here so happily intermixed, that it is impossible to say which preponderates.

Ferguson wrote a dialogue between the Causeway and the Plainstones, of Edinburgh. This probably

"The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer to the Scotch Representatives in Parliament."

† The middle of the street, and the side-way.

suggested to Burns his dialogue between the Old and the New bridge over the river Ayr. The nature of such subjects requires that they should be treated humourously, and Ferguson has attempted nothing beyond this. Though the Causeway and the Plainstones talk together, no attempt is made to personify the speakers. A "cadie" 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 on which it occurred is related with great circumstantiality. The poet, "pressed by care," or "inspired by whim," had left his bed in the town of Ayr, and wandered out alone in the darkness and solitude of a winter night, to the mouth of the river, where the stillness was interrupted only by the rushing sound of the influx of the tide. It was after midnight. The Dungie-cart had struck two, and the sound had been repeated by Wallace-Tower. All else was hushed. The moon shone brightly, and

"The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Creep, gently cursting, o'er the glittering stream."

In this situation the listening bard hears the "clanging spig" of wings moving through the air, and speedily he perceives two beings, reared the one on the Old, the other on the New Bridge, whose form and attire he describes, and whose conversation with each other he rehearses. These genii enter into a comparison of the respective edifices over which they preside, and afterwards, as is usual between the old and young, compare modern characters and manners with those of past times. They differ, as may be expected, and taunt and scold each other in broad Scotch. This conversation, which is certainly humourous, 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 wonders:

"——all before their sight
A fairy train appeared in order bright;
Adown the glittering stream they fealty danc'd;
Bright to the moon their various dresses gian'd;
They footed o'er the watry glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet;
While arts of Muses, among them rung,
And soul-emobbling Bard's heroic ditties sung."

"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 follow a number of other allegorical beings, among them are the four seasons, Rural Joy, Plenty, Hospitality, and Courage.

"Benevolence, with mild benignant air,
A female form, came from the tow'r's of Stair;
Learning and Wealth in equal measures trode,
From simple Catrine, their long-loud abode;
Last, white-robed Peace, crown'd with a hazel-wreath,
To Rustic Agriculture did bequeath
The broken iron instrument of Death;
At sight of whom our spirits forgat their kindling wrath."

"The Brigs of Ayr."

† A messenger.

‡ The two stepsies of Ayr.
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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.

In Ferguson’s poems, the Plainstanes and Caesars, the imitative powers of the charmers and mountebanks who walked up to them. Burns probably conceived, that, by a dialogue between the Old and New Bridge, he might form a hominuous contrast between ancient and modern manners in the town of Ayr. Such a dialogue could only be supposed to pass in the stillness of night; and this led our poet into a description of a midnight scene, which existed in a high degree the powers of his imagination. During the whole dialogue the scenery is present to his fancy, and at length it suggests to him a fairy dance of aerial beings, under the beams of the moon, by which the wrath of the Genii of the Bride of Ayr is appeased.

Incongruous as the different parts of this poem are, it is not an incongruity that displeases; and we have only to regret that the poet did not bestow a little pains in making the figures more correct, and in smoothing the versification.

The epistles of Burns, in which may be included his Dedication to G. H. Eay, discover, like his other writings, the powers of his imagination. They display deep insight into human nature, a gay and happy strain of reflection, great independence of sentiment, and generosity of heart. It is to be regretted, that, in his Holy Fair, and in some of his other poems, his humour degenerates into personal satire, and that it is not sufficiently guarded in other respects. The Halloween of Burns is free from every objection of this sort. It is interesting, not merely from its humorous description of manners, but as it records the spells and charms used on the celebration of a festival, now, even in Scotland, falling into neglect, but which was once observed over the greater part of Britain and Ireland.* These charms are supposed to afford an insight into futility, especially on the subject of marriage; the most interesting event of rural life. In the Halloween, a female in performing one of the spells, has occasion to go out by moonlight to dip her shift-sleeve into a stream running towards the South. It was not necessary for Burns to give a description of this stream. But it was the character of his ardent mind to ponder forth not merely what the occasion required, but what he had observed; and the temptation to describe so beautiful a natural object by moonlight, was not to be resisted.

"Whyles owre a lime the burnie plays
As thro’ the glen it wimpit’;
Whyles round a rocky scar it stays;
Whyles in a wiel it dipit’;
Whyles glitter’d to the nightly rays,
W’i’ bickering, dancing dazle;
Whyles cookit underneath the braes,
Below the spreading hazel,
Unseen that night."

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 Thompson’s description of a river swollen by the rains of winter, bursting through the straits that confine its torrent, "olling, wheeling, foaming, and thundering along."†

In pastoral, or, to speak more correctly in rural poetry of a serious nature, Burns excelled equally as

* In Ireland it is still celebrated. It is not quite in chuse in Waires.
† See "Halloween," Stanzas xxiv. and xxv.
‡ See Thompson’s Winter.

In that of a humorous kind; and, using less of the Scottish dialect in his serious poems, he becomes more generally intelligible. It is difficult to decide whether the Stanzas not once turned up with the plough, should be considered as serious or comic. Be this as it may, the poem is one of the happiest and most finished of his productions. If we smile at the "flickering battle" of this flying animal, it is a smile of tenderness and pity. The descriptive part is admirable; the moral reflections beautiful, and arising directly out of the occasion; and in the conclusion there is a deep melancholy, a sentiment of doubt and dread, that rises to the sublime. The Ad- lus, or the "Gatherer," turned on to the plough, is a poem of the same nature, 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. The Vision, in two cantos, from which a beautiful extract is taken by Mr. MacKenzie, in the 7th number of The Loaneur, is a poem of great excellence. — The opening, in which the poet describes his own state of mind, retiring in the evening, wearied from the labours of the day, to moralize on his conduct and prospects, is truly interesting. The chamber, if we may so term it, in which he sits down to muse, is an exquisite painting:

"Theres, laneely, by the ingle-check
I sat and ey’d the spearing reek,
That fill’d, w’i’ hoast-provoking sneek,
The aid a biggin;
And heard the restless ratsions squeak
About the riggin."

To reconcile to our imagination the entrance of an aerial being into a mansion of this kind, required the powers of Burns—he has succeeded. Colin enters, and her countenance, attitude, and dress, unlike those of other spiritual beings, are distinctly portrayed. To the painting, on her mantle, on which is depicted the most striking scenery, as well as the most distinguished characters, of his native country, some exceptions may be made. The mantle of Colin, like the cop of Thyriras, and the shield of Achilles, is studded, and covered with figures, and some of the objects represented upon it are scarcely admissible, according to the principles of design. The generous temperament of Burns led him into the error of overloading the number of figures originally introduced, that he might include objects to which he was attached by sentiments of affection, or moral attachment. The woman Dea, or Dea Dea, of this poem, in which Colin describes her own nature and occupation, particularly her superintendence of his infant genius, and in which she reconciles him to the character of a bard, is an elegant and solemn strain of poetry, ranking in all respects, excepting the harmony of numbers, with the higher productions of the English muse. The concluding stanza, compared with that already quoted, will show what height Burns rises in this poem, from the point at which he set out—

"And wear thow this—she sollem said,
And, bound the Holly round my head:
The polis’d leaves, and berries red,
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light a’way."

In various poems, Burns has exhibited the picture of a mind under the deep impression of real sorrow. The Lament, The Ode to Rain, Despondency, and Winter, A Dirge, are of this character. In the first stanza, which describes a sleepless night from anguish of mind, is particularly striking. Burns often indulged in those melancholy

* See the first Idyllium of Theocritus.
views of the nature and condition of man, which are so congenial to the temperament of sensibility.—The poem entitled Mus mus de to Mour is, affords an instance of his kind. The former is one of the last description. The host is characteristically, both of the temper of mind, and of the condition of Burns. It begins with a description of a dreadful storm in a night in winter. The poet represents himself as laying in bed, and listening to its howling. In this situation he naturally turns his thoughts to the curst Cattle and the silly Sheep, exposed to all the violence of the tempest. Having lamented their fate, he proceeds in the following manner:

"Ilk happy bird—wae, helpless thing! That, in the merry months o' spring,
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee? Where wilt thou o'wt thy chittering wing, An' else thy e'e?"

Other reflections of the same nature occur to his mind; and as the midnight moon "muffled with cloud to the imagination," the poet, though of a darker and more melancholy nature crowd upon him. In this state of mind, he hears a voice pouring through the window, and describes a solitary object of reflection. The mourner compares the fury of the elements with that of man to his brother man, and finds the former light in the balance.

"See stern oppression's iron grip,
Or mad ambition's gory hand,
Sending, like blood hounds from the slip,
Wo, want, and murder, o'er a land!"

He pursues this train of reflection through a variety of particulars, in the course of which he introduces the following animated apostrophe:

"Oh ye! who, sunk in beds of down,
Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
Think, for a moment, on his wrecked state,
Whom friends and fortune quite disin\n\nIll-satisfied they Nature's clam'rous call,
Stretch'd on his straw he lays himself to sleep,
While thro' theragged roof and chimney wall,
Chill o'er his slumbers jilts the drifty heap!"

The strain of sentiment which runs through the poem is noble, though the execution is unequal, and the versification is defective.

Among the serious poems of Burns, The Cotter's Saturday Night is perhaps entitled to the first rank. The Farmer's Lute of Ferguson evidently suggested the plan of this poem, as has already been mentioned; but after the plan was formed, Burns trusted entirely to his own powers for the execution. Ferguson's poem is certainly very beautiful. It has all the charms which depend on rural characters and manners happily portrayed, and exhibited under circumstances highly grateful to the imagination. The Farmer's Lute begins with describing the return of evening. The toils of the day are over, and the farmer retires to his comfortable fire-side. The reception which he and his men servants receive from the careful housewife, is pleasingly described. After their supper is over, they begin to talk on the rural events of the day.

"Bout kirk and market eke thee tales gae on,
How Jock wood Jenny hore to be his bride;
And there how Marion for a bastard son,
Uppi the cutty-stool was forced to ride,
The waesfu' scald o' our Miss John to bide."

The "Guidame" is next introduced as forming a circle round the fire, in the midst of her grand-chil
dren, and while she spins from the rock, and the spindle plays on her 'ruse: lap,' she is relating to the young ones tales of witches and ghosts. The poet explains:

"O mock na this, my friends! but rather mourn,
Ye in life's bravest spring wi' reason clear,
Wii' cil our idle fancies a' return,
And dian oor doofie' days wi' bairnly fear;"

The mind's aye cemund when the grave is near."

In the mean time the farmer, wearied with the fatigue of the day, stretches himself at length on the settle, a box of rushes much, which extends outside of side of the fire, and the cat and house-dog leap upon it to receive his cares. Here resting at his ease, he gives his directions to his men servants for the succeeding day. The housewife follows his example, and gives her orders to the maids. By degrees the oil in the cruise begins to fail; the fire runs low; sleep steals upon this rustic group; and they move off to enjoy the peaceful slumbers. The poet concludes by bestowing his blessings on the "husbandman and all his tribe;"

This is an original and truly interesting pastoral. It possesses every thing required in this species of composition. We might have perhaps said everything that it admits, had not Burns written his Cotter's Saturday Night.

The cotter returning from his labours, has no servant to receive to partake of his fare, or to receive his instructions. The circle which he joins, is composed of his wife and children only; and if it admits of less variety, it affords an opportunity for representing scenes that more strongly interest the affections. The younger children running to meet him, and clambering round his knee; the elder, returning from their weekly labours with the neighbouring farmers, introducing to their conversation the little gentry with their parents, and receiving their father a blessing and instructions; the incidents of the courtship of Jenny, their eldest daughter, "woman grown?" are circum-stance of the most interesting kind, which are most happily delineated; and after their frugal supper, the representation of these humble cottagers forming a circle round their hearth, and muttering in the worship of God, is a picture the most deeply affecting of any which the rural muse has ever presented to the view. Burns was admirably adapted to this delineation. Like all men of genius, he was of a spirit and disposition of devotion, and the powers of memory co-operated in this instance with the sensibility of his heart, and the fervour of his imagination. The Cotter's Saturday Night is tender and moral, it is solemn and devotional, and rises at length into a strain of grandeur and sublimity, which modern poetry has not surpassed. The noble sentiments of patriotism with which it concludes, correspond with the rest of the poem. In no age or country have the pastoral muses breathed such elevated accents, if the Messiah of Pope be excepted, which is indeed a pastoral in form only. It is to be regretted that Burns did not employ his genius on other subjects of the same nature, which the manners and customs of the Scottish peninsula would have ample supplied. Such poetry is not to be estimated by the degree of pleasure which it bestows; it sinks deeply into the heart, and is calculated far beyond any other human means, for giving permanence to the ideas and characters it so exquisitely describes."

Before we conclude, it will be proper to offer a few observations on Burns's style. His compositions of this kind are chieftly songs, generally in the Scottish dialect, and always after the model of the Scottish songs, on the general character and moral influence of which, so observantly noticing, has already been offered. We may hazard a few more particular remarks.

* The reader will recollect that the Cotter was Burns's father. See p. 18.

† See Appendix, No. II, Note D.
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Of the historic or heroic ballads of Scotland, it is 
unnecessary to speak. Burns has no where intimated them, a circumstance to be regretted, since in this species of composition he displayed more than ordinary ability. In his (or many) the most agreeable of his poems (which he wrote to please his friends), and among the more agreeable of his ordinary songs, he was almost without exception pastoral, or rather rural. Such of them as are comic, frequently treat of a rustic courtship or a country wedding; or they describe the difficulties of an old age, of which Burns is eminently qualified to have excelled. The Scottish songs which served as a model to Burns, are almost without exception pastoral, or rather rural. Burns has intimated this species, and surpassed his models. The song, beginning, "Her husband, husband, cease your strife," may be cited in support of this observation. His other comic songs are of equal merit. In the rural songs of Scotland, whether humorous or tender, the sentiments are given to particular characters, and very generally, the incidents are referred to particular scenery. This last circumstance may be considered as the distinguished feature of the Scottish songs, and on it a considerable part of their attraction depends. On all occasions the sentiments, of whatever nature, are delivered in the character of the person principally interested. If love be described, it is not as it is observed, but as it is felt; and the passion is delineated under a particular aspect. Neither is it the fiercer impulses of desire that are expressed, as in the celebrated ode of Sappho, the model of most modern songs, but those milder emotions of tenderness and affection, which do not entirely absorb the lover; but permit him to associate his emotions with the charms of external nature, and breathe the accents of purity and innocence, as well as of love. In these respects the love-songs of Scotland are honourably distinguished from the most admired classical compositions of the same kind; and by such advantages, a variety, as well as liveliness, is given to the representation of this passion, which are not to be found in the poetry of Greece or Rome, or perhaps of any other nation. Many of the love-songs of Scotland describe scenes of rural courtship; many may be considered as invocations from lovers to their mistresses. On such occasions a degree of interest and reality is given to the sentiments, by the spot destined to these happy interviews being particularized. The lovers perhaps meet at the Bushabooon Traquair, or on the Banks of Ettrick; the nymphs are invoked to wander among the wilders of Roslin, in the woods of Inverness. Nor is the spot merely pointed out; the scenery is often described as well as the characters, so as to present a complete picture to the fancy. Thus the dialogues between husbands and their wives, which form the subjects of the Scottish songs, are almost all ludicrous and satirical, and in these contests the lady is generally victorious. From the collections of Mr. Finkerton, we find that the comic muse of Scotland delighted in such representations from very early times, in her rude dramatic efforts, as well as in her rustic songs.

\* One or two examples may illustrate this observation. A Scottish song, written about a hundred years ago, begins thus:"

"On Ettrick banks, on a summer's night,
At gloaming, when the sheep drove home,
I met my lassie, braw and bright,
Come wading barefoot a' her lane;
My eyes grew hight, I ran, I hanged
My arms about her brooch,
And kiss'd and clasped there fu' lang,
My words they were no mony feek.""

The lover, who is a Highlander, goes on to relate the language he employed with his Lowland maid to win her heart, and to persuade her to fly with him to the Highland hills, there to share his fortune. The

\* Mony feek, not very many.

The maxim of Horace ut pictura poesis, is faithfully observed by these rustic bards, who are guided by the same impulse of nature and sensibility which influence the father of epic poetry, on whose example the precept of the Roman poet was perhaps founded. By this means the imagination is employed to interest the feelings. When we do not conceive distinctly we do not sympathize deeply in any human affection; and we perceive nothing in the abstract. Abstraction, so useful in morals, and so essential in science, must be abandoned when the leprous is to be subdued by the powers of poetry or of eloquence. The bard of a ruder condition of society paint individual objects; and hence, among other causes, the easy access they obtain to the heart. Generalization is the vice of poets whose learning overpowers their genius; of poets of a refined and scientific age.

The dramatic style which prevails so much in the Scottish songs, while it contributes greatly to the interest they excite, also shows that they have originated among a people in the earlier stages of society. Where this form of composition appears in songs of a modern date, it indicates that they have been written after the ancient model."

sentiments are in themselves beautiful. But we feel them with double force, while we conceive that they were addressed by a lover to his mistress, whom he met all alone, on a summer’s evening, by the banks of a beautiful stream, which some of us have actually seen, and which all of us can paint to our imagination. Let us take another example. It is now a nymph that speaks. Hear how she expresses herself—"

"How blythe each morn was I to see
My swain come o’er the hill!
He skipt the burn, and flew to me,
I met him with gild will."

Here is another picture drawn by the pencil of Nature. We see a shepherdess standing by the side of a brook, watching her lover as he descends the opposite hill. He bounds lightly along; he approaches nearer and nearer; he leaps the brook, and flies into her arms. In the recollection of these circumstances, the surrounding scenery becomes endeared to the fair mourner, and she bursts into the following exclamation:

"O the broom, the bonnie, bonnie broom,
The broom of the Cowden Knowes!
I wish I were with my dear swain,
With his pipe and my own!"

Thus the individual spot of this happy interview is pointed out, and the picture is completed.

That the dramatic form of writing characterizes the productions of an early, or, what amounts to the same thing, of a rude stage of society may be illustrated by a reference to the most ancient compositions that we know of, the Hebreu scriptures, and the writings of Homer. The form of dialogue is adopted in the old Scottish ballads even in narration, whenever the situations described becomes interesting. This sometimes produces a very striking effect, of which an instance may be given from the ballad of Edorn o’ Gordon, a composition apparently of the sixteenth century. The story of the ballad is shortly this:—The castle of Rhodas, in the absence of its lord, is attacked by the robber Edorn o’ Gordon. The lady stands on her defence, beats off the assailants,
The Scottish songs are of a very unequal poetical merit, and this inequality often extends to the different parts of the same song. Those that are humorous, or characteristic of the people, and in which they have in general the merit of copying nature: those that are serious, are tender, and often sweetly interesting, but seldom exhibit high powers of imagination, which, indeed, do not readily arise in a country of such extensive species of composition. The alliance of the words of the Scottish songs with the music, has in some instances given the former a popularity, which otherwise they would not have obtained.

The association of the words and the music of these songs, with the more beautiful parts of the scenery of Scotland, contributes to the same effect. It has given them not merely popularity, but permanence; it has imparted to the works of man some portion of the durability of the works of nature. If, from our imperfect experience of the past, we may judge with any confidence respecting the future, songs of this description are of all others least likely to die. In the changes of language they may no doubt suffer change; but the associated strain of sentiment and of music will perhaps survive, while the clear stream sweeps down the vale of Yarrow, or the yellow bower waves on Cowden-Knowes.

The first attempts of Burns in song-writing were not very successful. His habitual attention to the exactness of rhymes, and to the harmony of number, arising probably from the models on which the versification was formed, were faults likely to appear to more disadvantage in this species of composition, than in any other; and we may also remark, that the strength of his imagination, and the exuberance of his sensibility, were with difficulty restrained within the limits of gentleness, delicacy, and tenderness, which seemed to be assigned to the love-songs of his nation. Burns was better adapted by nature for following, in such compositions, the model of the Grecian, and of that of the Scottish muse. By study and practice he however surmounted all these obstacles. In his earlier songs, there is some ruggedness; but this gradually disappears in his successive efforts; and some of his later compositions of this kind may be compared, in polished delicacy, with the finest songs in our language, while in the eloquence of sensibility they surpass them all.

The songs of Burns, like the models he followed and excelled, are often dramatic, and for the greater part amatory; and the beauties of rural nature are everywhere associated with the passions and emotions of and wounds Gordon, who, in his rage, orders the castle to be set on fire. That his orders are carried into effect, we learn from the exposition of the lady, who is represented as standing on the battlements, and exclaiming, "I will bespeak her little son, Sate on her nurse's knee; Says, 'mother dear, gi' owre this house, For the reek it mitherings me.' I wad gie a' my gowt, my childe, Sae wad I a' my fee, For se blast o' the winlaw wind, To blaw the reek frae thee." The circumstantiality of the Scottish love-songs, and the dramatic form which prevails so generally in them, probably arises from their being the descendants and successors of the ancient ballads. In the beautiful modern song of Mary of Castle-Cary, the dramatic form has a very happy effect. The same may be said of Donald and Flora, and Come under my plaitie, by the same author, Mr. Macnab.

The mind. Dismissing to copy the works of others, he has not, like some poets of great name, admitted into his descriptions exotic imagery. The landscapes he has painted, and the objects with which they are embellished, are, in every single instance, such as are to be found in his own country. In a mountainous region, especially when it is compared with a place like Cowden-Knowes, the number of the days of summer, indeed, diminishes; but from this cause, as well as from the mildness of the temperature, the attraction of the season increases, and the summer-night becomes still more beautiful. The greater obscurity of the sun's path on the escarp, prolongs the grateful sensations of twilight to the midnight hours; and the shades of the evening seem to mingle with the morning's dawn. The rural poets of Scotland, as may be expected, associate in their songs the expressions of passion, with the most beautiful of their scenery, in the fairest season of the year, and generally in those hours of the evening when the beauties of nature are most interesting.*

To all these adventitious circumstances, on which so much of the effect of poetry depends, great attention is paid by Burns. There is scarcely a single song of his, whose principal interest, or allusions made to natural objects, remarkable for beauty or interest; and though his descriptions are not so fine as are sometimes met with in the older Scottish songs, they are in the highest degree acute and picturesque, and interesting. In proofs of this might be quoted from the Lea Rig, Highland Mary, The Soldier's Return, and several others. As from that beautiful pastoral Bonnie Jane, and a great number of others. Occasionally the force of his genius carries him beyond the usual boundaries of Scottish song, and the natural objects introduced have more of the character of sublimity. An instance of this kind is noticed by Mr. Synn, and many others might be adduced:

* A lady, of whose genius the editor entailed high admiration (Mrs. Barbauld), has fallen into an error in this respect. In her prefatory address to the works of Collins, speaking of the natural objects that may be employed to give interest to the descriptions of passion, she observes, "they present in inexhaustible variety, from the Song of Solomon, breathing of cas-

mary, and cinnamon, to the Gentle Shepherd of Ramsay, whose damsels carry their milking-pails through the frosts and snow of their less genial but not less pastoral country." The damsels of Ramsay do not walk in the midst of frost and snow. Almost all the scenes of the Gentle Shepherd are laid in the open air, amidst beautiful natural objects, and on the most genial season of the year. Ramsay introduces all his acts with a prefatory description to assure us of this. The fault of the climate of Britain is not, that it does not afford us the beauties of summer but that the season of such beauties is comparatively short, and even uncertain. There are days and nights, even in the northern division of the island, which equal, or perhaps surpass, what are to be found in the latitude of Sicily, or of Greece.—Buchanan, when he wrote his exquisite Ode to May, felt the charm as well as the transtency of these happy days:

Salve fucagas gloria seculi,
Salve secundas digna dies nota.
Salve vetusta visa image.
Et specimen volescit Evi.

1 See pp. 37, 44.
general he confines it to sentiments or descriptions of a tender or humorous kind; and where he rises into elevation of thought, he assumes a purer English style. The singular faculty he possessed of mingling in the same strain a variety of luminous sentiments, with imagery of a sublime and terrific nature, enabled him to use this variety of dialect on some occasions with striking effect. His poem of "Tam o' Shanter" affords us an instance of this. There he passes from a scene of the lowest humour, to situations of the most awful and terrible kind. He is a musician that from the lowest to the highest of key; and the use of the Scottish dialect enables him to add two additional notes to the bottom of his scale.

Great efforts have been made by the inhabitants of Scotland, of the superior ranks, to approximate in their speech to the pure English standard; and this has made it difficult to write in the Scottish dialect, without exciting in them some feelings of disgust, which in England are scarcely felt. An Englishman who understands the meaning of the Scottish words, is not offended, nay, on certain subjects, he is perhaps, pleased at the picturesque effect, as he may be with the Doric Greek of Theocritus.

But a Scotchman inhabiting his own country, if a man of education, and more especially if a literary character, is inclined to exhibit such words from his writings, and has attempted to banish them from his speech; and being accustomed to hear them from the vulgar, daily and familiarly address him, he is naturally led to adopt that variety which requires a style elevated and ornamental. A dislike of this kind is, however, accidental, not natural. It is peculiar to the species of disgust which we feel at a familiar word or phrase, employed in a dress of rusticity; which, if it be really young and beautiful, a little habit will enable us to overhear. A lady who assumes such a dress, poises her beauty, indeed; but she does not excel.

She rejects—she indeed—opposes the influence of fashion; she possibly abandons the grace of elegant and flowing drapery; but her native charms remain the more pleasing; the high birth in the dress of a rustic; which, if it be really young and beautiful, a little habit will enable us to overhear. A lady who assumes such a dress, poises her beauty, indeed; but she does not excel.

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To the use of the Scottish dialect in one species of poetry, the composition of songs, the taste of the public has been for some time reconciled. The dialect in question excels, as has already been observed, in the copiousness and exactness of its terms for natural objects; and in pastoral or rural songs, it gives a Doric simplicity, which is very generally approved. Neither does the regret seem well founded which some persons of taste have expressed, that Burns used this dialect in so many other of his compositions. His declared purpose was to paint the manners of rustic life among his humble compatriots; and it is not easy to conceive that this could have been done with equal humour and effect, if he had not adopted their idioms. There are some, indeed, who will think the subject too low for poetry. Persons of this sickly taste will find their delicacies consulted in many a polite and learned author: let them not seek for gratification in the rough and vigorous lines, in the unbridled humour, or the overpowering sensibility of this bard of nature.

To determine the comparative merit of Burns would be no easy task. Many persons, afterwards distinguished in literature, have been born in as humble a situation of life; but it would be difficult to find any other who, while earning his subsistence by daily labour, has written verses which have attracted and retained universal attention, and which are likely to give the author a permanent and distinguished place among myriads, a beautiful strain, which, it may be confidently predicted, will be sung with equal or superior interest on the banks of the Ganges or of the Mississippi, as on those of the Tay or the Tweed.

The followers of the muse. He is deficient in grace, he is distinguished for ease as well as energy; and these are indications of the higher order of genius.—

The father of epic poetry exhibits one of his heroes as excelling in strength, another in swiftness—to form his perfect warrior, these attributes are combined.—Every species of intellectual superiority admits perhaps of a similar arrangement. One writer excels in force—another in ease: he is superior to them both, in whom both these qualities are united. Of Homer himself it may be said, that, like his own Achilles, he surpasses his competitors in nobility as well as strength.

The force of Burns lay in the powers of his understanding, and in the sensibility of his heart; and these will be found to infuse the living principle into all the works of genius which seem destined to immortality. His sensibility had an uncommon range. He was alive to every species of emotion. He is one of the few poets that can be mentioned, who have at once excelled in humour, in tenderness, and in sublimity; a praise unknown to the ancients, and which in modern times is only due to Ariosto, to Shakespeare, and perhaps to Voltaire. To compare the writings of the Scottish peasant with the works of these giants in literature, might appear presumptuous: yet it may be asserted that he has displayed the foot of Hercules. How near he might have approached them by proper culture, with lengthened years, and under happier auspices, it is not for us to calculate. But while we run over the melancholy story of his life, it is impossible not to have a sigh at the asperity of his fortune; and as we survey the records of his mind, it is easy to see, that out of such materials have been reared the fairest and the most durable of the monuments of genius.
ADVERTISMENT

TO

DR. CURRIE'S

EDITION OF THE CORRESPONDENCE.

It is impossible to dismiss this volume* of the Correspondence of our Bard, without some anxiety as to the reception it may meet with. The experiment we are making has not often been tried; perhaps on no occasion has so large a portion of the recent and unpremeditated effusions of a man of genius been committed to the press.

Of the following letters of Burns, a considerable number were transmitted for publication, by the individuals to whom they were addressed; but very few have been printed entire. It will easily be believed, that in a series of letters written without the least view to publication, various passages were found unfit for the press, from different considerations. It will also be readily supposed, that our poet, writing nearly at the same time, and under the same feelings to different individuals, would sometimes fall into the same train of sentiment and forms of expression. To avoid, therefore, the tediousness of such repetitions, it has been found necessary to mutilate many of the individual letters, and sometimes to excise parts of great delicacy—the unbridled effusions of panegyric and regard. But though many of the letters are printed from originals furnished by the persons to whom they were addressed, others are printed from first draughts, or sketches, found among the papers of our Bard. Though in general no man committed his thoughts to his correspondents with less consideration or effort than Burns, yet it appears that in some instances he was dissatisfied with his first essays, and wrote out his communications in a fairer character, or perhaps in more studied language. In the chaos of his manuscripts, some of the original sketches were found; and as these sketches, though less perfect, are fairly to be considered as the offspring of his mind, where they have seemed in themselves worthy of a place in this volume, we have not hesitated to insert them, though they may not always correspond exactly with the letters transmitted, which have been lost or withheld.

Our author appears at one time to have formed an intention of making a collection of his letters for the amusement of a friend. Accordingly he copied an inconsiderable number of them into a book, which he presented to Robert Riddell, of Glenriddel, Esq.—Among these was the account of his life, addressed to Doctor Moore, and printed in the first volume.* In copying from his imperfect sketches, (it does not appear that he had the letters actually sent to his correspondents before him,) he seems to have occasionally enlarged his observations, and altered his expressions. In such instances his am inductions have been adopted; but in truth there are but five of the letters thus selected by the poet, to be found in the present volume, the rest being thought of inferior merit, or otherwise unfit for the public eye.

In printing this volume, the editor has found some corrections of grammar necessary; but these have been very few, and such as may be supposed to occur in the careless effusions, even of literary characters, who have not been in the habit of carrying their compositions to the press. These corrections have never been extended to any habitual modes of expression of the poet, even where his phraseology may seem to violate the delicacies of taste; or the idiom, of our language, which he wrote in general with great accuracy. Some difference will indeed be found in this respect in his earlier and in his later compositions; and this volume will exhibit the progress of his style, as well as the history of his mind. In the fourth edition, several new letters were introduced, and some of inferior importance were omitted.

* Dr. Currie's edition of Burns's Works was originally published in four volumes, of which the following Correspondence formed the second.

* Occupying from page 9 to page 16 of this Edition.
DEAR SIR,

As I have an opportunity of sending you a letter, without putting you to that expense which any production of mine would but ill repay, I embrace it with pleasure, to tell you that I have not forgotten nor ever will forget, the many obligations I lie under to your kindness and friendship.

Do not doubt, Sir, but you will wish to know what has been the result of all the pains of an indulgent father, and a masterly teacher; and I wish I could gratify your curiosity with such a recital as you would be pleased with; but that is what I am afraid will not be the case. I have, indeed, kept pretty clear of vicious habits; and in this respect, I hope my conduct will not disgrace the education I have gotten: but as a man of the world, I am most miserably deficient.—One would have thought that bred as I have been, under a father who has figured pretty well as un homme de lettres, I might have been what the world calls a passing, active fellow; but, to tell you the truth, Sir, there is hardly anything more my reverse. I seem to be one sent into the world to see, and observe; and I very easily compound with the knaves who trick me of my money, if there be any thing original about him which shows me human nature in a different light from any thing I have seen before. In short, the joy of my heart is to "study men, their manners, and their ways," and for this darling object, I cheerfully sacrifice every other consideration. I am quite indolent about those great concerns that set the bustling busy sons of care agog; and if I have to answer for the present hour, I am very easy with regard to any thing farther. Even the last worthy shift, of the unfortunate and the wretched, does not much terrify me: I know that even then my talent for what country folks call "a sensible crack," when once it is sanctified by a hoary head, would procure me so much esteem, that even then—I would learn to be happy. However, I am under no apprehensions about that; for, though indolent, yet, so far as an extremely delicate constitution permits, I am not lazy; and in many things, especially in tavern matters, I am a strict economist; not indeed for the sake of the money, but one of the principal parts in my composition is a kind of pride of stomach, and I scorn to fear the face of any man living: above every thing, I adore, as hell, the idea of speaking in a corner to avoid a du any possibly some pitiful, sordid wrretch, whom in my heart I despise and detest. 'Tis this, and this alone, that endears economy to me. In the matter of poetry, I am very profuse. My favorite authors are of the sentimental kind, such as Shenstone, particularly his Essayes; Thomson; Man of Feeling, a book I prize next to the Bible; Man of the World; Sterne, especially his Sentimental Journey; M'Pherson's Ossian, &c. These are the glorious models after which I endeavour to form my conduct; and "the incongruous, the absurd," to suppose that the man whose mind glows with the sentiments lighted up at their sacred flame—the man whose heart distends with benevolence to all the human race—he "who can soar above this little scene of things," can be descended to mind the paltry concerns about which the terrestrial race fret, and fume, and vex themselves? O how the glorious triumph swells my heart! I forget that I am a poor insignificant devil, unnoticed and unknown, strolling up and down fairs and markets, when I happen to be in them, reading a page or two of mankind, and "catching the manners living as they rise," whilst the men of business jostle me on every side as an idle inconsiderate in their way. But I am sorry I have by this time tired your patience; so I shall conclude with begging you to give Mrs. Murdoch—not my compliments, for that is a mere common-place story, but my warmest, kindest wishes for her welfare; and accept of the same for yourself from, DEAR SIR, Yours, &c.

No. II.

The following is taken from the MS. Prose presented by our Bard to Mr. Riddell.

On rummaging over some old papers, I lighted on a MS. of my early years, in which I had determined to write myself out, as I was placed by fortune among a class of men to whom my ideas would have been nonsense. I had meant that the book should have lain by me, in the fond hope that, some time or other, even after I was no more, my thoughts would fall into the hands of somebody capable of appreciating their value. It sets off thus:

Observations, Hints, Songs, Scraps of Poetry, &c. by R. R.—a man who had little art in making money, and still less in keeping it; but was, however, a man of some sense, a great deal of honesty, and unbounded good will to every creature rational and irrational. As he was but little inclined to scholastic education, and bred at a plough tall, his performances must be strongly tinctured with his unpolished rustic way of life; but as I believe they are really his own, it may be some entertainment to a curious observer of human nature, to see how a ploughman thinks and feels, under the pressure of love, ambition, anxiety, grief, with
LETTERS.

the like cares and passions, which, however diversified by the modes and manners of life, operate pretty much alike, I believe, on all the species.

"There are numbers in the world who do not want the means to make a figure, so much as an opinion of their own abilities, to put them upon recording their observa-
tions, and allowing them the same importance, which they do to those which appear in print."—_Shen.
tine.

"Pleasing, when youth is long expir'd, to trace
The forms our pencil or our pen designed!

Such was our youthful air, and shape, and face,
Such the soft image of our youthful mind."—_Ibid._

April, 1783.

Notwithstanding all that has been said against love, respecting the folly and weakness it lends a young inexperienced mind into; still I think it in a great measure deserves the highest 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 company of the mistress of his heart, when she repays him with an equal return of affection.

August.

There is certainly some connexion between love, and music, and poetry; and therefore I have always thought a fine touch of nature, that passage in a modern love composition:

"As tow’rd her cut he jogg’d along,
Her name was frequent in his song."

For my own part, I never had the least thought or inclination of turning poet, till I got once heartily in love; and then rhyme and song were, in a manner, the spontaneous language of my heart.

September.

I entirely agree with that judicious philosopher, Mr. Smith, in his excellent _Theory of Moral Sentiments_, that remorse is the most painful sentiment that can imprint the human bosom. Any ordinary pitch of fortitude may bear up tolerably well under those calamities, in the procurement of which we ourselves have had no hand; but when our own follies, or crimes have made us miserable and wretched, to bear up with manly firmness, and at the same time have a proper penitential sense of our misconduct, is a glorious ef-
fort of self command.

"Of all the numerous ills that hurt our peace,
That press the soul, or wring the mind with anguish,
Beyond comparison the worst are those
That to our folly or our guilt we owe.
In every other circumstance the mind
Has to say—It was no deed of mine;
But when to all the evils of misfortune
This sting is added—Blame thy foolish self!"

Or worser far, the range of keen remorse;
The terrouring growing consciousness of guilt—
Of guilt, perhaps, where we’ve involved others;
The young, the innocent, who fondly lov’d us,
Nay, more, that very love their cause of ruin!
O burning hell! in all thy store of torments,
There’s not a keene—lash! I

lives there a man so firm, who, while his heart
Feels all the bitter horrors of his crime,
Can reason down its agonizing throngs;
And, after proper purpose of amendment,
Can firmly force his jarring thoughts to peace?

"Happy! happy! enviable man!

"Glorious magnanimity of soul!"

March, 1781.

I have often observed, in the course of my experience among us, and the very many that have the worst, has something good about him; though very often no-
thing else than a happy temperament of constitution inclining him to this or that virtue. For this reason, so man can say in what degree any other person, be-
side himself, can be, with strict justice, called wicked. Let any of the strictest character for regularity of con-
duct among us, examining impartially how many vices he has never been guilty of, from not any care or vigil-
ance, but for want of opportunity, or some accidental circumstance intervening; how many of the weak-
nesses of human nature, he has been sort of carried, heedless, out of the line of such temptation; and, what often, if not always, weighs more than all the rest, how much he is an object of good opinion, because the world does not know all. I say any man who can thus think, will scan the failings, nay, the faults and crimes of mankind around him, with a brother’s eye.

I have often courted the acquaintance of that part of mankind commonly known by the ordinary phrase of _mock guards_, sometimes farther than was consistent with my character; those who, by thoughtless prodigality or headstrong passions have been driven to ruin. Though disgraced by follies, nay, ruined by their own language, and deprived of the means and talents that others possess, I have yet found among them, in not a few in-
stances, some of the noblest virtues, magnanimity, generosity, disinterested friendship, and even mod-
esty.

April.

As I am what the men of the world, if they knew such a man, would call a whimsical mortal, I have va-
rious sources of pleasure and enjoyment, which are, in a manner, peculiar to myself, or some here and there such other out-of-the-way person. Such is the peculiar pleasure I take in the season of winter, more than the rest of the year. This, I believe, may be parly owing to my misfortunes giving my mind a melancholy cast; but there is something even in the

"Mighty tempest, and the hoary waste
Abrupt and deep, stretch’d o’er the buried earth."

which rises the mind to a serious sublimity, favourable to every thing great and noble. There is scarcely any earthly object gives me more—I do not know if I should call it pleasure—but something which exalts me something which enraptures me—than to walk through the sheltered side of a wood, or high plantation, in a cloudy wintry day, and hear the stormy wind howling among the trees, and waving the tree plains. It is the best season for devotion; my mind is rapt up in a kind of enthusiasm to _Him_, who in the pommous language of the _H._-saw bard, "walks on the wings of the wind."

In or of these seasons just after a train of misfortunes,
I composed the following:

The wintry west extends his blast, &c.—_Poems_, p. 25.

Shenstone finely observes, that love-verses writ without any real passion, are the most numerous of all com-
positions; and I have often thought that no man can be a proper critic of love composition, except he himself, in one or more instances, have been a warm votary of this passion. As I have been all along a miserable dupe to love, and have been led into a thousand weak-
nesses and follies by it, for that reason I put the more confidence in my critical skill, in distinguishing affectation and conceit from real passion and nature. Whether the following song will stand the test, I will not pretend to say, because it is my own; only I can say it was, at the time genuine from the heart.

Behind you bills, &c.—_See Poems_, p. 40.

I think the whole species of young men be nat-
urally enough divided into two grand classes, which
shall call the grave and the mercy; though, by the by, these terms do not with propriety enough express my idea. I shall say of those who are gloated on by the love of money, and whose darling wish is to make a figure in the world. The mercy are, the men of pleasure of all the denominations; the jovial lads, who have too much fire and spirit to have any settled rule of action; but, without much deliberation follow the strong impulses of nature; the thoughtless, the careless, the indolent—in particular he, who, with a happy sweetness of natural temper, and a cheerful vacancy of thought, shall pass through life—generally, indeed, in poverty and obscurity; but poverty and obscurity are only evils to him who can sit gravely down and make a repining comparison between his own situation and that of others; and lastly, to grace the quorum, such as are, generally, those whose heads are capable of all the terrors of genius, and whose hearts are warmed with all the delicacy of feeling.

As the grand end of human life is to cultivate an intercourse with that Being to whom we owe our life, we should manifest that sentiment in the world—and to maintain an integrative conduct towards our fellow-creatures; that so, by forming piety and virtue into a habit, we may be fittest members of that society so glorious and the good, which reason and revelation teach us to except above the grave; I do not see that the turn of mind and pursuits of any son of poverty and obscurity, are in the least more insinuated to the sacred interests of piety and virtue, than the even lawful, bustling and straining after the world's riches and honours; and I do not see but that he may gain heaven as well (which, by the by, is no mean consideration,) who steals through the vale of life, amusing himself with every little flower, that fortune throws in his way; as he who, straining straight forward, and perhaps bespattering all about him, gains some of life's little eminences; whereas, after all, he can only see, and be seen, a little more conspicuously than what, in the pride of his heart, he is apt to term the poor indolent devil he has left behind him.

There is a noblie sublimity, a heart-melting tenderness, in some of our ancient ballads, which show them to be the work of a masterly hand; and it has often given me a heart-ache to reflect, that such glorious numbers and truths—numbers and truths which very probably owed all their talents to native genius, yet have described the exploits of heroes, the pangs of disappointment, and the melting love, with such singular justice, that their very names (O how mortifying to a bard's vanity!) are now "buried among the wrecks of things which were."

O ye illustrious names unknown! who could feel so strongly and describe so well: the last, the meanest of the muses' train—one who, though far inferior to your flights, yet eye your path, and with trembling wing would sometimes soar after you—a poor rustic bard unknown, pays this sympathetic pang to your memory! Some of you tell us of all the charms of verse, that you have been unfortunate in the delight—unfortunate in love; he too has felt the loss of his little fortune, the loss of friends, and, worse than all, the loss of a woman he adored. Like you, all his consolation was his muse; she taught him in the restive measures to complain. Happy could he have done it with your strength of imagination and flow of verse! May the turf lie lightly on your bones! and may you now enjoy that solace and rest which this world rarely gives to the heart tuned to all the feelings of poesy and love!

This is all worth quoting in my MSS and more than all.

R. B.

No. III.

TO MR. AIKEN.

The Gentleman to whom The Cotter's Saturday Night is addressed.

Agryhite, 1786.

SIR,

I was with Wilson, my printer, to-day, and set all our by-gone matters between us. After I had given him his account, I found from him, by the second edition, on the hazard of being paid out of the first and treating, which he declines. By his account the paper of a thousand copies would cost about twenty seven pounds, and the printing about fifteen or sixteen; he offers to agree to this for the printing, if I will advance for the paper; but this you know, is out of my power, so farewell hopes of a second edition till I grow richer! an epoche, which, I think, will arrive at the payment of the British national debt.

There is scarcely any thing hurts me so much in being disappointed of my second edition, as not having it in my power to show my gratitude to Mr. Ballantyne, by publishing my poem of The Brig o' Apr. I would detest myself as a wretch, if I thought I were capable, in a very long life, of forgetting the honest, warm, and tender delicacy with which he enters into my interests. I am sometimes pleased with myself in my grateful sensations; for I love, on the whole, I have very little merit in it, as my gratitude is not a virtue, the consequence of reflection, but shrewdly the instinctive emotion of a heart toolititative to allow worldly maxims and views to settle into selfish habits.

I have been feeling all the various rotations and movements within, respecting the excise. There are many things plente strongly against it, the uncertainty of getting soon into business, the consequences of my colleagues, which may perhaps make it impracticable for me to stay at home; and besides, I have for some time been pinning under secret wretchedness, from causes which you pretty well know—the pang of disappointment, the sting of pride, with some wandering tilts of remorse, which never fail to settle on my vitals like vultures, when attention is not called away by the calls of society, or the vagaries of the muse. Even in the hour of social mirth, my gaiety is the madness of an intoxicated criminal under the hinds of an executioner. All these reasons urge me to go abroad; and I will take the opportunity to publish these feelings of a father. This, in the present mood I am in, overbalances every thing that can be laid in the scale against it.

You may perhaps think it an extravagant fancy, but it is a sentiment which strikes home to my very soul; though sceptical in some points of our current belief, yet, I think, I have every evidence for the reality of a life beyond the straitened bounds of our present existence; if, so, then how should I, in the presence of that tremendous Being, the Author of existence, how should I meet the reproaches of those who stand to me in the dear relation of children, whom I deserted in the smiling innocence of helpless infancy? O thou great, unknown Power! thou Almighty God! who hast lighted up the way of my heart, and blessed me with immortality! I have frequently wandered from that order and regularity necessary for the perfection of thy works, yet thou hast never left me nor forsaken me.

Since I wrote the foregoing sheet, I have seen something of the storm of mischief thickening over my folly-devoted head. Should you, my friends, my benefactors, be successful in your applications for me, perhaps it may not be in my power in that way to repay the fruits of your friendly efforts. What I have written
To tell the truth, I have little reason for complaint, as the world, in general, has been kind to me, fully up to my deserts. I was, for some time past, fast getting into the pining, distrustful sort of the misanthrope. I saw myself alone, unfit for the struggle of life, shrieking at every rising cloud in the chance-directed atmosphere of fortune; while, all defenceless, I looked about in vain for a cover. It never occurred to me, at least, never with the force it deserved, that this world is a busy scene, and a man a creature destined for a progressive struggle; and that however I might possess a warm heart, and insensible manners, (which, last, by the by, was rather more than I could well boasts) still, more than these passive qualities, there was something to be done. When all my school-fellows and youthful companions (these misguided few excepted who joined, to use a Gentoo phrase, the hautheachers of the human race,) were striking off with eager hope and earnest intent; I sometimes valued for many paths of busy life, I was standing stil in the market-place, or only left the chase of the butterfly from flower to flower, to hunt fancy from whim to whim.

You see Sir, that if to know our errors were a probability of remedying them, I stand a fair chance, but, according to the reverend Westminster divines, though conviction must precede conversion, it is very far from always implying it.

No. IV.

TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP.

Ayrshire. 1766.

MADAM,

I am truly sorry I was not at home yesterday when I was so much honoured with your order for my copies, and incomparably more by the handsome compliments you are pleased to pay my poetical abilities. I am fully persuaded that there is not any class of mankind so feehingly alive to the infallations of applause, as the sons of Parmassus; nor is it easy to conceive how the heart of the poor bard dances with rapture, when those whose character he loves throw a light to be polite judges, honour him with their approbation. Had you been thoroughly acquainted with me, Madam, you could not have touched my heartier chord more sweetly than by noticing my attempts to celebrate your illustrious ancestor, the Staur of his Country.

"Great patriot-hero! ill-requited chief!"

The first book I met with in my early years, which I perused with pleasure, was The Life of Hamaib; the next was The History of Sir William Wallace; for several of my earlier years I had few other authors; and many a solitary hour have I stole out, after the laborious vocations of the day, to shed a tear over their glorious but unfortunate stories. In those boyish days I remember in particular being struck with that part of Wallace's story where these lines occur—

"Bye the Legien wood, when it was late,
To make a silent and safe retreat."

I chose a fine summer Sunday, the only day in my life allowed, and walked half a dozen miles to pay * This letter was evidently writ under the distress of mind occasioned by our Pet. separation from Mrs. Burns.

my respects to Legien wood, with as much devout enthusiasm as ever pilgrim did to Loreto; and, as I explored every den and dell, where I could suppose my countryman to have lodged, I recollect (for even then I was a beginner) that my heart glowed with a wish to be able to make a song on him in some measure equal to his merits.

No. V.

TO MRS. STEWART, OF STAIR.

MADAM.

The hurry of my preparations for going abroad has hindered me from performing my promise as soon as I intended, I have here sent a parcel of songs, &c. which never made their appearance, except to a friend or two at first. Perhaps some of them may be no great entertainment to you; but of that I am far from being an adequate judge. The song to the tune of Etrick Banks, you will easily see the improvidence of exposing much, even in manuscript. I think, myself, it has some merit, both as a tolerable description of one of Nature's sweetest scenes, a Joys evening, and one of the finest pieces of Nature's wonders, the Great Stair, indeed, we know any thing of, an amiable, beautiful young woman; but I have no common friend to procure me that permission, without which I would not dare to spread the copy.

I am quite aware, Madam, what task the world would assign me in this letter. The obscure bard, when any of the great condescended to take notice of him, should heap the altar with the incense of flattery... Their highance, their own great and godlike qualities and actions, should be recoupled with the most exaggerated description. This, Madam, is a task for which I am altogether unfit. Besides a certain disqualifying pride of heart, I know nothing of your con- nexions in life, and have no access to where your real character is to be found—the company of your companions; and more, I am afraid that even the most refined isolation is by no means the road to your good opinion.

One feature of your character I shall ever with grateful pleasure remember—the reception I got when I had the honour of waiting on you at Stair. I am little acquainted with politeness; but I know a good deal of benevolence of temper and goodness of heart. Surely, did those in exalted stations know how happy they could make some classes of their inferiors by con- descension and affability, they would never stand so high, measuring out with every look the height of their elevation, but condescend as sweetly as did Mrs. Stewart of Stair.

VI.

In the name of the niae. Amen. We Robert Burns by virtue of a warrant from Nature, bearing date the Twenty-fifth day of January, Anno Domini one thou- sand seven hundred and forty-five, Poet-Laureat and Bard in Chief in and over the Districts and Countries of Kyle, Cunningham, and Carrick, of old extent, To our trusty and well-beloved William Hamilton and John M'Adam, Students and Practitioners in the ancient and mysterious Sciences of Confounding Right and Wrong.

RIGHT TRUSTY,

Be it known unto you, That whereas, in the course of our care and watchings over the Order and Police of

* The song enclosed is the one beginning, &c

† His birth-day.
LETTERS.

all and sundry the Manufacturers, Retailers, and Vendors of Poesy; Bardic, Poets, Poetasters, Rheymers, Jingleers, Songsters, Ballad-singers, &c., &c., &c., &c., male and female—We have discovered a certain, *, * nefarious, abominable, and Wicked Song, or Ballad, a copy of which, we have here enclosed; Our Will therefore is that it be put upon the most execrable Individual of that most execrable Species, known by the appellation, phrase, and nickname of The Devil's Yell Note*; and, after having caused him to kindle a fire at the Cross of Agg, ye shall at noodtime of the day, put into the said wretch's merciless hands the said copy of the said nefarious and wicked Song, to be burnt amidst the presence of all Beholders, in abhorrence of, and terror to all such Compositions and Composers. And this in no wise leave ye undone, but have it executed in every point as this Our Mandate bears before the twentieth day, when in person, we hope to applaud your faithfulness and zeal.

Given at Muckline, this twentieth day of November, Anno Domini one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six.

GOD SAVE THE BARD!

No. VII.

DR. BLACKLOCK,
TO THE REVEREND MR. G. LOWRIE.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

I am giving up to you now your favour long ago, not only as a testimony of your kind remembrance, but as it gave me an opportunity of sharing one of the finest, and perhaps, one of the most genuine entertainments, of which the human mind is susceptible. A number of avocations retarded my progress in reading the poems; at last, however, I have finished that pleasing perusal. Many instances have I seen of nature's force and benevolent exerted under numerous and formidable disadvantages; but none equal to that with which you have been kind enough to present me. There is a pathos and delicacy in his serious poems, a vein of wit and humour in those of a more festive turn, which cannot be too much admired, nor too warmly approved; and I think I shall never open the book without feeling my astonishment renewed and increased. It was my wish to have expressed my approbation in verse; but whether from declining life, or a temporary depression of spirits, it is at present out of my power to accomplish that agreeable intention.

Mr. Stewart, Professor of Morals in the University, has liberally read me three of the poems, and I had desired him to get my name inserted among the subscribers; but whether this was done, or not, I never could learn. I have little intercourse with Dr. Blair, but will take care to have the poems communicated to him by the intervention of some mutual friend. It has been told me by a Gentleman, to whom I showed the performances, and who bought a copy with diligence and ardour, that the whole impression is already exhausted. It were, therefore, much to be wished, for the sake of the young man, that a second edition, more numerous than the former, could immediately be printed: it appears certain that its intrinsic merit and the exertion of the author's friends, might give it a more universal circulation than any thing of the kind which has been published within my memory.

* Old Bachelors.
† Enclosed was the ballad, probably Holy Willie's Prayer. E.
‡ The reader will perceive that this is the letter which produced the determination of our Bard to give up his scheme of going to the West Indies, and to try the fate of a new Edition of his Poems in Edinburgh.

No. VIII.

FROM THE REVEREND MR. LOWRIE.

22nd December, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

I last week received a letter from Dr. Blacklock, in which he expresses a desire of seeing you, I write this to you, that you may lose no time in waiting upon him, should you not yet have seen him.

* * *

I rejoice to hear, from all corners, of your rising fame, and I wish and expect it may tower still higher by the new publication. But, as a friend, I warn you to prepare to meet with your share of detraction and envy—a train that always accompany great men. For your comfort I am in great hopes that the number of your friends and admirers will increase, and that you have some chance of ministerial, or even patronage. Now, my friend, such rapid success is very uncommon: and do you think you in no danger of suffering by applause and a full purse? Remember Solomon's advice, which he spoke from experience, "Fair Re is in the companionship of the wise, and the hold of your rural simplicity and purity, like Telomachus, by Mentor's aid, in Calypso's isle, or even in that of Cyprus. I hope you have also Minerva with you. I need not tell you how much the presence of an invincible temperance adorns the most shining talents, and elevate the mind, and exalt and refine the imagination, even of a poet.

I hope you will not imagine I speak from suspicion or evil report. I assure you I speak from love and good report, and good opinion, and a strong desire to see you shone as much in the sunshine as you have done in the shade; and in the practice, as you do in the theory of virtue. This is my prayer, in return for your elegant composition. All join in compliments and good wishes for your further prosperity.

No. IX.

TO MR. CHALMERS.

Edinburgh, 21st December, 1796.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I confess I have sinned the sin for which there is hardly any forgiveness—ingratitude to friendship. In not writing to you sooner; but of all men living, I had intended to send you an entertaining letter; and by all the plodding stupid powers that in nodding concurrence, and the weight, and the grandeur, and the greatness, and the great Creator has formed, since Milton's Eve on the first day of her existence.

I have sent you a parcel of subscription-bills; and have written to Mr. Ballantyne and Mr. Aiken, to call on you for some of them, if they want them. My A copy of this letter was sent by Mr. Lowrie to Mr. G. Hamilton, and by him communicated to Burns, among whose papers it was found. For an account of Mr. Lowrie and his family, see the letter of Gilbert Burns to the Editor.
LETTERS.

No. X.

TO THE EARL OF EGLINTON.

Edinburgh, January, 1737.

MY LORD,

As I have but slender pretensions to philosophy, I cannot rise to the exalted ideas of a citizen of the world; but have all those national prejudices which, I believe, grow peculiarly strong in the breast of a Scot. There is scarcely any thing to which I am so feelingly alive, as the honour and welfare of my country; and, as a poet, I have no higher enjoyment than singing her sons and daughters. Pate had cast my station in the veriest shades of life; but never did I hear a heart pant more earnestly than mine, to be distinguished; though, till very lately, I looked on every side for a ray of light. It is easy, then, to guess how much I was gratified with the countenance and approbation of one of my country's most illustrious sons, when Mr. Watcho called on me yesterday on the part of your Lordship. Your munificence, my Lord, certainly deserves my very grateful acknowledgment; but your patronage is a bounty peculiarly suited to my feelings. I am not master enough of the etiquette of life, to know whether there be not some impropriety in troubling your Lordship with my thanks; but my heart whispered me to do it. From the emotions of my inmost soul I do. Selfish gratitudtate, I hope, I am incapable of; and mercenary slyvility, I trust I shall ever have so much honest pride as to detest.

No. XI.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Edinburgh, 15th January, 1737.

MADAM,

Yours of the 9th current, which I am this moment honoured with, is a deep reproach to me for ungrateful neglect. I will tell you the real truth, for I am miserably awkward at a fly; I wished to have written to Dr. Moore before I wrote to you; but though, every day since I received yours of December 20th, the idea, the wish to write to him, has constantly pressed on my thoughts, yet I could not for my soul set about it. I know his fame and character, and I am one of "the sons of little men." To write him a mere matter-of-fact affair, like a merchant's order, would be disgracing the little character I have; and to write the author of The View of Society and Manners a letter of sentiment—I declare every artery runs cold at the thought. I shall try, however, to write to him to-morrow or next day. His kind interposition in my behalf I have already experienced, as a gentleman waited on me the other day on the part of Lord Eglinton, with ten guineas, by way of subscription for two copies of my next edition.

The word you object to in the mention I have made of my glorious countryman and your immortal ancestor, is indeed borrowed from Thomaon; but it does not strike me as an improper epithet. I distrusted my own judgment on your fortunate fault with it, and applied for the opinion of some of the literati here, who honour me with their critical strictures, and they all allow it to be proper. The song you ask I cannot recollect, and I have not a copy of it. I have not composed any thing on the great Wallace, except what you have seen in print, and the enclosed, which I will print in this edition. * You will see I have mentioned *Stanzas in The Vision, beginning "By stately tower or palace fair," and ending with the first Dian, E., some others of the name. When I composed my life of Calumny, I attempted a description of Coytie, of which this was the original stanza. Had part, as it originally stood. My heart glows with a wish to be able to do justice to the merits, of the Scourer of His Country, which, sooner or later, I shall at least attempt.

You are afraid I shall grow intoxicated with your prosperity as a poet. Alas! Madam, I know myself and the world too well. I do not mean any airs of affected modesty; I am willing to believe that my abilities deserved some notice; but in a more enlightened, informed age and nation, when poetry is and has been the study of men of the first natural genius, aided with all the powers of polite learning, polite books, and polite company—to be dragged forth with the full glare of learned and polite observation, with all my imperfections of awkward rusticity and crude unpolished ideas on my head—I assure you, Madam, do not dissemble when I tell you I tremble for the consequences. The novelty of a poet in my obscure situation, without any of those advantages which are reckoned necessary for that character, at least at this time of day, has raised a partial tide of public notice, which has borne me to a height where I am absolute by feelingly certain my abilities are inadequate to succeed. I do not mean by this to say that the same tide will leave me, and recede, perhaps, as far below the mark of truth. I do not say this in the ridiculous affectation of self-abasement and modesty. I have studied myself, and know what ground I occupy; and, however a friend or the world may differ from me in that particular, I stand for my own opinion in silent resolve, with all the tenaciousness of prosperity. I mention this to you, once for all, to disburden my mind, and I do not wish to hear or say more about it. But

"When proud fortune's ebbing tide recedes,"
you will bear me witness, that, when my bubble of fame was at the highest, I stood, unpretending, with the inebriating cup in my hand, looking forward with rueful resolve to the hastening time when the blow of Calumny should dash it to the ground, with all the eagerness of vengeful triumph.

* * *

Your patronising me, and interesting yourself in my fame and character as a poet, I rejoice in; it exalts me in my own idea; and whether you can or cannot add to my subscription-bill any charms to the heart of a bard, compared with the patronage of the descendant of the immortal Wallace?

No. XII.

TO DR. MOORE.

1737.

SIR,

Mrs. Dunlop has been so kind as to send me extracts of letters she has had from you, where you do the rustic bard the honour of noticing him and his works. Those who have felt the anxieties and solicitude of authors, can only know what pleasure it gives to be noticed in such a manner by judges of the first character. Your criticisms, Sir, I receive with reverence; only I am sorry they mostly came too late; a peacant passage or two, that I would certainly have altered, were gone to the press.

The hope to be admired for ages is, in by far the greater part of those even who were authors of repute, an unsubstantial dream. For my part, my first ambition was, and still my strongest wish is, to please my contemporaries, the rustic immortals of the hamlet, while the ever-changing language and manners shall allow me to be relished and understood. I am very willing to admit that I have some poetical abilities; and as

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No. XIII.
FROM DR. MOORE.
Clifford-street, January 23d, 1787.

SIR, I have just received your letter, by which I find I have reason to complain of my friend Mrs. Dunlop, for transmitting to you extracts from my letters to her, by much too freely and irregularly written for your amusement. I must forgive her, however, in consideration of her good intention, as you will forgive me, I hope, for the freedom I use with certain expressions, in consideration of my admiration of the poems in general. If I may judge of the author's disposition from his works, with all the good qualities of a poet, he has not the inducements ascribed to that race of men by one of their own number, whom you have the happiness to resemble in ease and curious felicity of expression. Indeed the poetical beauties, however original and brilliant, and lavishly scattered, are not all I admire in your works; the love of your native country, that feeling sensibility to all the objects of humanity, and the independent spirit which breathes through the whole, give me a most favourable impression of the poet, and have made me often regret that I did not see the poems, the certain effect of which would have been my seeing the author last summer, when I was longer in Scotland than I have been for many years.

I rejoice very sincerely at the encouragement you receive at Edinburgh, and I think you particularly fortunate in the patronage of Dr. Blair, whom I am informed interests himself very much for you. I beg to be remembered to him; nobody can have a warmer regard for that gentleman than I have, which, independent of the intrinsic worth of his character, would be kept alive by the memory of our common friend, the late Mr. George E——.

Before I received your letter, I sent inclosed in a letter to — a sonnet by Miss Williams a young poetical lady, which she wrote on reading your Mountain-Daisy; perhaps it may not displease you.*

I have been trying to add to the number of your subscribers, but find many of my acquaintance are already among them. I have only to add, that with every sentiment of esteem and the most cordial good wishes, I am,
Your obedient, humble servant,
J. MOORE.

No. XIV.
TO THE REV. G. LOWRIE, OF NEW-MILLS, NEAR KILMARNOCK.

Edinburgh, 5th Feb. 1787.
REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,
When I look at the date of your kind letter, my heart reproaches me severely with ingratitude in neglecting so long to answer it. I will not trouble you with any account, by way of apology, of my hurried life and distracted attention; do me the justice to believe that my delay by no means proceeded from want of respect. I feel, and ever shall feel, for you, the mingled sentiments of esteem for a friend, and reverence for a father.

I thank you, Sir, with all my soul, for your friendly hints; though I do not need them so much as my friends are apt to imagine. You are dazzled with newspaper accounts and distant reports; but in reality I have no great temptation to be intoxicated with the cup of prosperity. Novelties may attract the attention of mankind awhile; but I see the time is not far distant, when the popular title, which has borne me to a height of which I am perhaps unworthy, shall recede with silent celerity, and leave me a barren waste of sand, to descend at my leisure to my former station. I do not say this in the affectation of modesty; I see the consequence is unavoidable, and am prepared for it. I have been at a good deal of pains to form a just, impartial estimate of my intellectual powers, before I came here; I have not added, since I came to Edinburgh, any thing to the account; and trust I shall take every atom of it back to my shades, the covert of my unnoticed, early years.

In Dr. Blacklock, whom I see very often, I have found, what I would have expected in our friend, a clear head and an excellent heart.

By far the most agreeable hours I spend in Edinburgh must be placed to the account of Miss Lowrie and her piano-forte. I cannot help repeating to you and Mrs. Lowrie a compliment, which Miss Mackenzie, the celebrated 'Man of Feeling,' paid to Miss Lowrie the other night, at the concert. I had come in at the interlude, and sat down by him, till I saw Miss Lowrie in a seat close to him, and I thought I might pay my compliments to her. On my return to Miss Mackenzie, she asked me who she was; I told him 'twas the daughter of a reverend friend of mine in the west country. He returned, 'There was something very striking, to his idea, in her appearance. On my desiring to know what it was, he was pleased to say, 'She has a great deal of the elegance of a well bred lady of her age, with all the sweet simplicity of a country girl.'"

My compliments to all the happy inmates of Saint Margaret's.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours most gratefully,
ROBT. BURNS.

XV.
TO DR. MOORE.

Edinburgh, 15th February, 1787.

SIR, I own my seeming neglect in delaying so long to acknowledge the honour you have done me, in your kind notice of me, January 23d. Not many months
No. XVII.

TO THE EARL OF GLENCAIRN.

Edinburgh, 1781.

MY LORD,

I wanted to purchase a profile of your Lordship, which I was told was to be got in town; but I am truly sorry to see that a blundering painter has spoiled it. In reality, I intended to have written below a picture or profile of your Lordship, could I have been so happy as to procure one with any thing of a likeness.

As I will soon return to my shades, I wanted to have something like a material object for my gratitude; I wanted to have it in my power to say to a friend, There is my noble patron, my generous benefactor. Allow, me, my Lord, to publish these verses. I conjure your Lordship, by the honest three of gratitude, by the generous wish of benevolence, by all the powers and feelings which compose the magnanimous mind, do not deny me this petition. I owe much to your Lordship; and, what has not in some other instances always been the case, the weight of the obligation is a pleasing load. I trust I have a heart as indelible as your Lordship’s, than which I can say no thing more: And I would not be held in favour that would crucify my feelings. Your dignified character in life, and manner of supporting that character, are flattering to my pride; and I would be jealous of the purity of my grateful attachment where I was under the patronage of one of the much-favoured sons of fortune.

Almost every poet has celebrated his patrons, particularly when they were names dear to fame, and illustrious in their country; allow me, then, my Lord, if you think the verses have intrinsic merit, to tell the world how much I have the honour to be, Your Lordship’s highly indebted, and ever grateful humble servant.

No. XVIII.

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.

MY LORD,

The honour your Lordship has done me, by your notice and advice in yours of the last instant, I shall ever gratefully remember:

“Raise from thy lips ‘tis mine with joy to boast,
They best can give it who deserve it most.”

Your Lordship touches the darling chord of my heart, when you advise me to fire my muse at Scottish story and Scottish scenes. I wish for nothing more than to make a leisurely pilgrimage through my native country: to sit and muse on these once hard-contended fields where Caledonia, rejoicing, saw her bloody lion borne through broken ranks to victory and fame; and catching the inspiration, to pour the deathless names in song. But, my Lord, in the midst of these enthusiastic revels, a long-visaged, dry, moral-looking phantom strides across my imagina tion, and pronounce these emphatic words:

“Tis wisdom, dwell with prudence. Friend I do not come to open the ill-closed wounds of your foes and confound their merit, nor give you pain. I wish through these wounds to imprint a lasting lesson on your heart, I will not mention how many of my salutary advices you have despised; I have given you line upon line, and precept upon precept; and while I was chalking out to you the straight way to wealth and character,

“Tis not the place that the Earl granted this request, nor have the verses alluded to been found among the MSS. E.
LETTERS.

with audacious effrontery, you have zig-zagged across the path, contemning me to my face; you know the consequences. It is not yet three months since home was so hot for you, that you were on the wing for the western shore of the Atlantic, not to make a fortune, but to hide your misfortune.

"Now that your dear-loved Scotia puts it in your power to return to the situation of your forefathers, will you follow these Will-o'-Wisp meteors of fancy and whim, till they bring you once more to the brink of ruin? I grant that the utmost ground you can occupy is but half a step from the veriest poverty; but still it is half a step from it. If all that I can urge be ineffectual, let her who seldom calls to you in vain, let the call of pride, prevail with you. You know how you feel at the grip of ruthless oppression; you know how you bear the galling sneer of contumelious great- ness. I hold you out the conveniences the comforts of life, independence and character, on the one hand; I tender you servility, dependence, and wretchedness, on the other, I will not insult your understanding by bidding you make a choice."

This, my Lord, is unanswerable. I must return to my humble station, and woe my rustic muse in my wond'ring way at the plough-tail. Still, my Lord, while the drops of life warm my heart, gratitude to that dear loved country in which I boast my birth, and gratitude to those her distinguished sons, who have honoured me so much with their patronage and approbation, shall while stealing through my humble shades, ever distend my bosom, and at times, as now, draw forth the swelling tear.

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Ext. Property in favour of Mr. Robert Burns, to erect and keep up a Headstone in memory of Poet Fer- guson, 1757.

Session-House within the Kirk of Cannongate, the twenty-second day of February, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven years.

SEDERUNT OF THE MANAGERS OF THE KIRK AND KIRK-YARD FUNDS OF CAN- NONGATE.

Which day, the treasurer to the said funds produced a letter from Mr. Robert Burns, of date the sixth cur- rent, which was read, and appointed to be engrossed in their sedentary-book, and of which letter the tenor follows: 'To the Honourable Bailies of Cannongate, Edinburgh. Gentlemen, I am sorry to be told, that the remains of Robert Ferguson, the so justly cele- brated poet, a man whose talents, for ages to come, will do honour to our Caledonian name, lie in your church-yard, among the ignoble dead, unnoticed and unknown.

"Some memorial to direct the steps of 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 paying.

"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. I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your very obedient servant, (etc, subscribatur.)"

"ROBERT BURNS."

Thereafter the said managers, in consideration of the laudable and disinterested motion of Mr. Burns, and the propriety of his request, did and hereby do,

unanimously, grant power and liberty to the said Ro- bert Burns to erect a headstone at the grave of the said Robert Ferguson, and to keep up and preserve the same to his memory in all time coming. Extracted forth of the records of the managers, by

WILLIAM S: ROT, Clerk.

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No. XX.

TO

MY DEAR SIR,

You may think, and too justly, that I am a selfish, ingratitude fellow, having received so many repeated instances of kindness from you, and yet never putting pen to paper to say—thank you; but if you knew what a devil of a life my conscience has led me on that ac- count, your good heart would think yourself too much venged. By the by, there is nothing in the whole frame of man which seems to me so unaccountable as that thing called conscience. Had the troublesome, yelping cur powers efficient to prevent a mischief, he might be of use; but at the beginning of the business, his feebler efforts are to the workings of passion as the infant frosts of an autumn morning to the unclouded fervour of the rising sun: and no sooner are the tu- mutious doings of the wicked deed over, than the immediate and latent consequences of folly in the very vor- tex of our horrors, up starts conscience, and harasses us with the feelings of the other.

I have enclosed you, by way of expiation, some verse and prose, that if they merit a place in your truly entertaining miscellany, you are welcome to. The prose extract is literally as Mr. Sprot sent it me.

The Inscription of the stone is as follows:

HERE LIES

ROBERT FERGUSSON, POET.

Born, September 5th, 1751—Died, 16th October, 1774.

No sculptur'd Marble here, nor pompous lay,

"No storied urn nor animated bust;"

This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way
To pour her sorrows o'er her lost's dust.

On the other side of the stone is as follows:

"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."

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No. XXI.

Extract of a Letter from

8th March, 1757. I am truly happy to know that you have found a friend in " " " "; his patronage of you does him great honour. He is truly a good man; by far the best I ever knew, or, perhaps, ever shall know, in this world. But I must not speak all I think of him, lest I should be thought partial.

So you have obtained liberty from the magistrates to erect a stone over Ferguson's grave? I do not doubt it; such things have been, as Shakespeare says, 'in the olden time!'

"The poet's fate is here in emblem shown,
He ask'd for bread, and he receiv'd a stone."

It is, I believe, upon poor Butler's tomb that this is written. But how many brothers of Persians, as well
LETTERS.

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does me the honour of giving me his strictures; his hints, with respect to impropriety or indelicacy, I follow implicitly.

You kindly interest yourself in my future views and prospects; there I can give you no light:—it is all

"Dark as was chaos, ere the infant sun
Was roll'd together, or had try'd his beams
Athwart the gloom profound."

The appellation of a Scottish bard is by far the highest pride; to continue to deserve it, is my most exalt
ended ambition. Scottish scenes and Scottish story are the themes I could wish to sing. I have no dearer aim than to have it in my power, unagliged with the rou
tine of business, for, which, heaven knows! I am unfit enough, to make leisurely pilgrimages through Caledo
nia; to sit on the field of her battles; to wander on the romantic banks of her rivers; and to muse by the sate
tely towers or venerable ruins, once the honoured abodes of her heroes.

But these are all Utopian thoughts: I have dallied long enough with life; 'tis time to be in earnest. I have a fond, an aged mother to care for; and some other bosom ties perhaps equally tender.

Where the individual only suffers by the conse
quences of his own thoughtlessness, indulgence, or folly, he is accountable; may, shining abilities, and some of the nobler virtues may half sanction a heedless character: but where God and nature have intrusted the welfare of others to his care, where the trust is sacred, and the ties are dear, that man must be far gone in selfishness, or strangely lost to reflection, whom these connexions will not rouse to exertion.

I guess that I shall clear between two and three hun
dred pounds by my authorship; with that sum I inten
ds, so far as I may be said to have any intention, to return to my old acquaintance, the plough; and if I can meet with a lease by which I can live, to com
merce farmer. I do not intend to give up poetry; be
ing bred to labour secures me independence; and the muses are my chief, sometimes have been my only employment. If my practice second my resolution, I shall have principally at heart the serious business of life; but, while following my plough, or building up my shocks, I shall cast a leisure glance to that dear, that only feature of my character, which gave me the notice of my country, and the patronage of a Wal

Thus, honoured Madam, I have given you the bard, his situation, and his views, native as they are in his own bosom.

XXIII.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Edinburgh, March 22, 1787.

MADAM,

I read your letter with watery eyes. A little, very little while ago, I had scarce a friend but the stub
born pride of my own bosom; now I am distinguished, patronized, befriended by you. Your friendly advices, I will not give them the cold name of criticisms, I re
ceive with reverence. I have made some small altera
tions in what I before had printed. I have the advice of some very judicious friends among the literati here, but with them I sometimes find it necessary to him the principle of thinking for myself. The noble Earl of G Lencairn, to whom I owe more than to any man,

The above extract is from a letter of one of the ablest of our Poet's correspondents, which contains some interesting anecdotes of Ferguson, that we should have been happy to have inserted, if they could have been authenticated. The writer is mistaken in supposing the magnificence of Edinburgh had any share in the transaction respecting the monument erected for Ferguson by our bard; this, it is evident, passed between Burns and the Kirk-Session of the Canongate. Neither at Edinburgh nor any where else, do magis
trates usually trouble themselves to inquire how the house of a poor poet is furnished, or how his grave is adorned. E.
LETTERS.

I come abroad in print for certain on Wednesday: Your orders I shall punctually attend to; only, by the way, I must tell you that I was paid before for Dr. Moore's and Miss W.'s copies, through the medium of Commissioner Cochrane in this place; but that we can settle when I have the honour of waiting on you.

Dr Smith* was just gone to London the morning before I received your letter to him.

No. XXIV.

TO DR. MOORE.

Edinburgh, 23d April, 1787.

I received the books, and sent the one you mentioned to Mrs. Dunlop. I am ill-skilled in beating the coverts of imagination for metaphors of gratitude. I thank you, Sir, for the honour you have done me; and to my latest hour will warmly remember it. To be highly pleased with your book, is what I have in common with the world; but to regard these volumes as a mark of the author's friendly esteem, is a still more supreme gratification.

I leave Edinburgh in the course of ten days or a fortnight; and, after a few pilgrimages over some of the classic grounds of Caledonia, Cowden Knowes, Banks of Tay, Tweed, &c. I shall return to my rural shades, to likeliest be found more to quit them. I have formed many intimacies and friendships here, but I am afraid they are all of too tender a construction to bear carriage a hundred and fifty miles. To the rich, the great, the fashionable, the polite, I have no equivalent to offer; and I am afraid my meteor appearance will by no means entitle me to a settled correspondence with any of you, who are the permanent lights of genius and literature.

My most respectful compliments to Miss W. If once this tangent flight of mine were over, and I were returned to my wonted leisurely motion in my old circle, I may probably endeavour to return her poetical compliment in kind.

No. XXV.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Edinburgh, 30th April, 1787.

— Your criticisms, Madam, I understand very well, and could have wished to have pleased you better. You are right in your guess that I am not very amenable to counsel. Poets, much my superiors, have so flattered those who possessed the adventitious qualities of wealth and power, that I am determined to flatter no created being either in prose or verse.

I set as little by princes, lords, clergy, critics, &c. as all these respective gentry do by my hardship. I know what I may expect from the world by and by—illiberal abuse, and perhaps contemptuous neglect.

I am happy, Madam, that some of my own favourite pieces are distinguished by your particular approbation. For my Deam, which has unfortunately incurred your royal displeasure, I hope in four weeks, or less, to have the honour of appearing at Dunlop, in its defence, in person.

No. XXVI.

TO THE REV. DR. HUGH BLAIR.

Lawn-Market, Edinburgh, 3d May, 1787.

REVISED AND MUCH RESPECTED SIR,

I leave Edinburgh to-morrow morning, but could not go without troubling you with half a line sincerely to thank you for the kindness, patronage, and friendship you have shewn me. I often felt the embarrassment of my singular situation; drawn forth from the various shades of life to the glare of remark; and honoured by the introduction of various names of my country, whose works, while they gratified the passions of the time, will ever instruct and mend the heart. However the meteor-like novelty of my appearance in the world might attract, it has given me honourable union with the acquirement of the permanent lights of genius and literature, those who are truly benefactors of the immortal nature of man; I knew very well that my utmost merit was far unequal to the task of credit in a character when once the novelty was over. I have made up my mind, that, absent, or almost even neglect, will not surprise me in my quarters.

I have sent you a proof impression of Bevogo's work for me, done on India paper, as a trifle but sincere testimony with what heart-warm gratitude I am, &c.

No. XXVII.

FROM DR. BLAIR.

Argyle-Square, Edinburgh, 4th May.

DEAR SIR,

I was favoured this forenoon with your very obliging letter on the impression of your portrait, for which I return you my best thanks. The success you have met with I do not think was beyond your merits; and if I have had any small hand in contributing to it, I am sure that pleases me on every way in which literary persons, who are advanced in years, can do more service to the world, than in forwarding the efforts of rising genius, or bringing forth unknown merit from obscurity. I was the first person who brought out to the notice of the world, the poems of Ossian: first, by the Fragments of Ancient Poetry which I published, and afterwards by my setting on foot the undertaking for collecting and publishing the Works of Ossian; and I have always considered this as a meritorious action of my life.

Your situation, as you say, was indeed very singular; and, in being brought out all at once from the shades of deepest privacy, to so great a share of public notice and observation, you had to stand a severe trial. I am happy that you have stood it so well; and, as far as I have known or heard, though in the midst of many temptations, without reproach to your character and behaviour.

You are now, I presume, to retire to a more private walk; and, I have no doubt, will continue yourself, with industry, prudence, and honour. You have laid the foundation for just public esteem. In the midst of those employments, which your situation will render proper, you will not, I hope, neglect to promote that esteem, by cultivating your genius, and attending to such productions of it as may raise your character still higher. At the same time, be not too great a haste to come forward. Take time and leisure to improve and mature your talents; for on any second production you give the world, your fate, as a poet, is very much depend. There is no doubt, a gloss of novelty which time wears off. As you very properly hint yourself, you are not to be surprised, if, in your rural retreat, you do not find yourself surrounded with that glare of notice and applause which here shone upon you. No man can be a good poet, without being somewhat of a philosopher. He must lay his account, that any one, who exposes himself to public observation, will occasionally meet with the attacks of libellous censure, which it is always best to overlook and despise. He will be inclined sometimes to court reputation, and use his talent with still more skill; but he will not affect to shine always, that he may at proper seasons come forth with more advantage and energy. He will not think himself neglected, if he be not always praised; I have taken the liberty, you see, of an old man, to give advice and make reflections which your own good sense will, I dare say, render unnecessary.
As you mention your being just about to leave town, you are going, I should suppose, to Dumfries-shire, to look at some of Mr. Miller's farms. I heartily wish the offer to have made you there may answer, as I am persuaded you will not easily find a more generous and better-hearted proprietor to live under, than Mr. Miller. When you return, if you come this way, I will be happy to meet you and to know concerning your future plans of life. You will find me by the 2d of this month, not in my house in Argyle-square, but at a country-house at Keswick, about a mile east from Ed- inburgh, near the Musselburgh road. Wishing you all success and prosperity, I am, with real regard and esteem,

Dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

HUGH BLAIR.

No. XXVIII.

FROM DR. MOORE.

Clifford-Street, May 23, 1737.

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of your letter by Mr. Creech, and soon after he sent me the new edition of your poems. You seem to think it incumbent on you to send to each subscriber a number of copies proportionate to his subscription-money; but you may depend upon it, few subscribers expect more than one copy, when they subscribed. I must inform you, however, that I took twelve copies for those subscribers for whose names I had not received my receipt, and Lord Eglington told me he had sent for six copies for himself, as he wished to give five of them as presents.

Some of the poems you have added in this last edition are very beautiful, particularly the Winter Night, the Address to Edinburgh, Green grove the Ruins, and the two songs immediately following; the latter of which is exquisite. By the way, I imagine you have a peculiar talent for such compositions, which you ought to indulge. No kind of poetry demands more delicacy or higher polishing. Horace is more admired on account of his Odes than all his other writings. But nothing now added is equal to your Vision, and Cotter's Saturday Night. You have a very great degree of imagination, natural and pathetic description, with sublimity of language and thought. It is evident that you already possess a great variety of expression and command of the English language, you ought, therefore, to deal more sparingly for the future in the provincial dialect: why should you, by using that, limit the number of your admirers to those who understand the Scottish, when you can extend it to all persons of taste who understand the English language? In my opinion you should plan some larger work than any you have as yet attempted. I mean, reflect upon some proper subject, and arrange the plan in your mind, without beginning to execute any part of it till you have studied most of the best English poets, and read a little more of history. The Greek and Roman stories you can read in some abridgment, and soon become master of the most brilliant facts, which must delight a poetical mind. You should also, and very soon, may, become master of the heathen mythology, to which there are everlasting allusions in all the poets, and which in itself is charmingly fanciful. What will require to be studied with more attention, is modern history; that is, the history of France and Great Britain, from the beginning of Henry the Seventh's reign. I know they well, you have a mind capable of attaining knowledge by a shorter process than is commonly used, and I am certain you are capable of making a better use of it, when attained, than is generally done.

* The poems subsequently composed will bear testimony to the accuracy of Dr. Moore's judgment.

I beg you will not give yourself the trouble of writing to me when it is inconvenient, and make no apology when you do write, for having postponed it; be assured of this, however, that I shall always be happy to hear from you. I think my friend Mr. — told me that you had some poems in manuscript by you, of a satirical and humorous nature, (in which, by the way, I think you very strong,) which your prudent friends prevailed on you to omit; particularly one called Somebody's Confession; if you will intrust me with a sight of any of them, I will pawn my word to give no copies, and will be obliged to you for a perusal of them.

I understand you intend to take a farm, and make the useful and respectable business of husbandry your chief occupation; this, I hope, will not prevent your making occasional addresses to the nine ladies who have shown you much favour, one of whom visited you in the old clay cottages. Virgil, before you, proved to the world, that there is nothing in the business of husbandry inimical to poetry; and I sincerely hope that you may afford an example of good poet being a successful farmer. I fear it will not be in my power to visit Scotland this season; when do, I'll endeavour to find you out, for I heartily wish to see and converse with you. If you do the like to me, I make no doubt of your paying me a visit, and you may depend on a very cordial welcome from this family.

I am, dear Sir,
Your friend and obedient servant,

J. MOORE.

No. XXIX.

TO MR. WALKER,

BLAIR OF ATHOLE.

Inverness, 5th September, 1737.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have just time to write the foregoing,* and to tell you that it was (at least 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. N.—'s chat, and the juggling of the chaise, would allow. It eases my heart a good deal, as rhyme is the coin with which a poet pays his debts of honour or gratitude, and to the noble family of Athole, of the first kind, I shall ever proudly boast; what I owe of the last, to help me God in my hour of need I shall never forget.

The "little angel band" I declare I prayed for them very sincerely to-day at the Fall of Fyres. I shall never forget the fine family-piece I saw at Blair; the amiable, the truly noble Dutchess, with her smiling little seraph in her lap, at the head of the table; the lovely "olive plants," as the Hebrew bard finely says, round the happy mother; the beautiful Mrs. G.—; the lovely, sweet Miss C., &c. I wish I had the powers of Guido to do them justice. My Lord Duke's kind hospitality—markedly kind indeed! Mr. G., of F.—'s charms of conversation—Sir W. M.—'s friendship. In short, the recollection of all that polite, agreeable company, raises an honest glow in my bosom.

No. XXX.

TO MR. GILBERT BURNS.

Edinburgh, 17th Sept. 1787.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I arrived here safe yesterday evening, after a tour of twenty-two days, and travelling near six hundred miles.

* The humble Petition of Bruar Water to the Duke of Athole. See Poems, p. 73.
miles windings included. My farthest stretch was about seven miles beyond Inverness. I went through the heart of the Highlands, by Crieff, Taymouth, the famous seat of the Lord Breadalbane, down the Tay, among cascades of cascades of stones, to Dunkeld, a seat of the Duke of Atholl; thence cross Tay, and up one of his tributary streams to Blair of Atholl, another of the Duke's seats, where I had the honour of spending nearly two days with his Grace and family; thence many miles through a wild country, among cliffs gray with eternal snows, and gloomy savage gleeves, till I crossed Spey and went down the stream through Strathspey, so famous in Scottish music, Badench, &c. till I reached Grant Castle, where I spent half a day with Sir James Grant and family; and then crossed the country for Port George, but called by the way to Crawtor, the ancient seat of Macbeth; there I saw the identical bed in which, tradition says, King Duncan was murdered; lastly, from Port George to Inverness.

I returned by the coast, through Nairn, Forres, and so on, to Aberdeen; thence to Stonechive, where James Burness, from Montrose, met me, by appointment. I spent two days among our relations, and found our aunts, Jean and Isobel, still alive, and pale old women. John Caird, though born the same year with our father, walks as vigorously as I can; they have had several letters from his son in New-York. William Brand is likewise a stout old fellow; but further particulars I delay till I see you, which will be in two or three weeks. The rest of my stages are not worth rehearsing; warm as I was from Ossian's country, where I had seen his very grave, what care I for fishing towns or fertile carse? I slept at the famous Brodie of Brodie's one night, and dined at Gordon Castle next day with the Duke, Duchess, and family. I am thinking to cause my old mare to meet me, by means of John Ronald, at Glasgow; but you shall hear farther from me before I leave Edinburgh. My duty, and many compliments, from the north, to my mother, and my brotherly compliments to the rest. I have been trying for a birth for William, but am not likely to be successful. Farewell!

No. XXXI.
FROM MR. R******.
Ochtery, 22d October, 1757.

Sir,

"I was only yesterday I got Colonel Edmondstone's answer, that neither the words of Down the Burn Dave, nor D'Albert Davel, (I forgot which you mention'd,) were written by Colonel G. Crawford. Next time I meet him, I will inquire about his cousin's poetical talents.

Enclosed are the inscriptions you requested, and a letter to Mr. Young, whose company and musical talents will, I am persuaded, be a least to you." No.

* These Inscriptions, so much admired by Burns,
are as follows:

WRITTEN IN 1789.

For the Salicium* of Ochtery.

Salubritatis voluptatias causa,
Hoc Salicium,
Paludum ob lamina
Mibi meisque desicco et exorvo.
Hie, procul negotii stregique,
Innocues deliciis
Stiulius inter unsectes reptandis,
Aplunque laboros suspiciani
Frui.
Hic, si last Deus, opt. max.

* Salicium—Grove of Willows. Willow-ground.

body can give you better hints, as to your present plan than he. Receive also Omeron Cameron, which seemed to make such a deep impression on your imagination, that I am not without hopes it will beget something to delight the public in due time; and, no doubt, the circumstances of this little tale might be varied or extended, so as to make part of a pastoral comedy. Age or wounds might have kept Omeron at home, whilst his countrymen were in the field. His station may be somewhat varied, without losing his simplicity and kindness. **  * A group of characters, male and female, connected with the plot, might be formed from his family or some neighbouring one of rank. It is not indispensable that the guest should be a man of high station; nor is the political quarrel in which he is engaged, of much importance, unless it call forth the exercise of generosity and faithfulness, granted on patriarchal hospitality. To introduce state-affairs, would raise the style above comedy; though a small spice of them would season the converse of awains. Upon this head I cannot say more than to recommend the study of the character of Eumains in

Prope hunc fontem pellicullum,
Cum quadam juvenitis amico supersetis,
Seppe conquescam, senex,
Contentus modicus, moseque latius
Sin aliter—
Evique paululum supraerat,
Vos silvulce, et amici,
Ceteraque amara,
Valete, diuque latesmini

ENGLISHED.

To improve both air and soil,
I drain and decorate this plantation of willows
Which was lately an unprofitable moras,
Here, far from noise and strife,
I love to wander,
Now fondly marking the progress of my trees
Now studying the bee, its arts and manners.
Here, if it please Almighty God,
May I often rest in the evening of life,
Near that transparent fountain,
With some surviving friend of my youth;
Contended with a competency,
And happy with my lot.
If vain these humble wishes,
And life draw me near a close,
Ye trees and friends,
And whatever else is dear,
Farewell! and long may ye flourish.

Above the door of the house.

WRITTEN IN 1775.

Mihi meaque utinam contingi
Prope Taichi marginem,
Avido in Agello,
Bene vivero sanctaeque mori

ENGLISHED.

On the banks of the Teth, In the small but sweet inheritance Of my fathers, May I and mine live in peace And die in joyful hope!

These inscriptions, and the translations, are in the hand-writing of Mr. Ramsay.
the Odyssey, which, in Mr. Pope's translation, is an exquisite and invaluable drawing from nature, that would suit some of our country elders of the present day.

There must be love in the plot, and a happy discovery; and peace and pardon may be the reward of hospitality, and honest attachment to misguided principles. When you have once thought of a plot, and brought the stock into focus, you have, I., MacKenzie, may be useful in dividing it into acts and scenes; for in these matters one must pay some attention to certain rules of the drama. These you could afterwards fill up as you liked. But, whilst I presume to give a few well-meaning hints, let me advise you to study the spirit of your nameste's dialogue, which is natural without being low; and, under the trammels of verse, is such as country-people, in these situations, speak every day. You have only to bring down your strain a very little. A great plan, such as this, would concentrate all your ideas, which facilitates the execution, and makes it a part of one's pleasure.

I approve of your plan of retiring from din and dissipation to a farm of very moderate size, sufficient to find exercise for mind and body, but not so great as to absorb better things. And if some intellectual purse be not chosen and steadily pursued, it will be more lucrative than most farms, in this age of rapid improvement.

Upon this subject, as your well wisher and admirer, permit me to go a step further. Let those bright talents which the Almighty has bestowed on you, be henceforth employed to the noble purpose of supporting the cause of truth and virtue. An imagination so varied and forcible as yours, may do this in many different modes: nor is it necessary to be always serious, which, as a good purpose; good morals may be recommended in a comedy, or even in a song. Great allowances are due to the heat and inexperience of youth; and few poets can boast like Thomson, of never having written a line, which, dying, they would wish to blot. In particular I wish to keep clear of the thorny walks of satire, which makes a man a hundred enemies for one friend, and is doubly dangerous when one is supposed to extend the slips and weaknesses of individuals to their sect or party. About modes of faith, serious and excellent men have always differed; and there may be certain curious questions, which my author may, in the scope of metaphysical heads, but seldom mend the heart or temper. Whilst these points are beyond human ken, it is sufficient that all our sects enter into the views of morals. You will forgive me for these hints.

Well! what think you of good lady Clackmannan? It is a pity she is so deaf, and speaks so indistinctly. Her house is a specimen of the mansions of our gentry of the last age, when hospitality and elevation of mind were conspicuous amid plain fare and plain furniture. I shall be glad to hear from you at times, if it were no more than to show that you take the effusions of an obscure man like me in good part. I beg my best respects to Dr. and Mrs. Blacket.†

And am, Sir,
Your most obedient, humble servant,
J. RAMSAY.

† Allan Ramsay, in the Gentle Shepherd. E.
† Mrs. Bruce of Clackmannan. E.

TALE OF OMERON CAMERON.

In one of the wards betwixt the crown of Scotland and the Lords of the Isles, Alexander Stewart, Earl of Mar (a distinguished character in the fifteenth century), Sir Donald Stair, Lord of Clackmannan, had the command of the royal army. They marched into Lochaber, with a view of attacking a body of the M'Donalds, commanded by Donald Balloch, and posted upon an arm of the sea which intersects that country

No. XXXII.

FROM MR. J. RAMSAY, TO THE REVIVERD W. YOUNG, AT ERKSINE.

Ochtersyre, 22d October, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

Allow me to introduce Mr. Burns, whose poems, I dare say, have given you much pleasure. Upon a personal acquaintance, I doubt not, you will relish the man as much as his works, in which there is a rich vein of intellectual ore. He has heard some of our Highland Livings or songs played, which delighted

Having timely intelligence of their approach, the insurgents got off precipitately to the opposite shore in their curraghs, or boats covered with skins. The King's troops encamped in full security; but the M'Donalds, returned about midnight, surprised them, killed the Earl of Caltjinness, and destroyed or dispersed the whole army.

The Earl of Mar escaped in the dark, without any attendants, and made for the more hilly part of the country. In the course of his flight he came to the house of a poor man, whose name was Omeron Cameron. The landlord welcomed his guest with the utmost kindness; but, as there was no meal in the house, he told his wife he would directly kill Moal Add, to feed the stranger. "Kill our only cow!" said she, "our own and our little children's principal support!" More attentive, however, to the present call for hospitality than the remonstrances of his wife, or the future exigencies of his family, he killed the cow. The best and tenderest parts were immediately roasted before the fire, and plenty of tawich, or Highland soup, prepared to conclude their meal. The whole family, and their guest ate heartily, and the evening was spent, as usual, in telling tales and singing songs besides a cheerful fire. Bed-time came—Omeron brushed his hearth, spread the cow-hide upon it, and desired the stranger to lie down. The earl wrapped his plaid about him, and slept soundly on the hide, whilst the family betook themselves to rest in a corner of the same room.

Next morning they had a plentiful breakfast, and at his departure his guest asked Cameron, if he knew whom he had entertained. "You may probably," answered he, "be one of the king's officers; but whoever you are, you came here in distress, and here it was my duty to protect you. To what my cottage afforded you was most welcome. "Your guest, then," replied the other, "is the Earl of Mar; and if hereafter you fall into any misfortune, fall not to come to the castle of Kildrummie." "My blessing be with you noble stranger," said Omeron; "If I am ever in distress you shall soon see me."

The Royal army was soon after re-assembled, and the insurgents finding themselves unable to make head against it, dispersed. The M'Donalds, however, got notice that Omeron had been the Earl's host, and for this he came to the country. He came with his wife and children to the gate of Kildrummie castle, and required admittance with a confidence which hardly correspond—

* Moal Odhar i.e. the brown heathen now. L
No. XXXIII.
FROM MR. RAMSAY
TO DR. BLACKLOCK.

Ochtreype, October 27, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours by Mr. Burns, and give you many thanks for giving me an opportunity of conversing with a man of his calibre. He will, I doubt not, let you know what passed between us on the subject of my hints, to which I have made additions in a letter I sent t'other day to your care.

You may tell Mr. Burns, when you see him, that Colonel Edmondston tells me t'other day, that his cousin, Colonel George Crawford, was no poet, but a great singer of songs; but that his eldest brother Robert, (by a former marriage) had a great turn that way, having written the words of The Bish aboon Troyair and Tweeside. That the Mary to whom it was addressed was Mary Stewart, of the Castlemin family, a terwardis wife of Mr. John Kelchies. The Colonel never saw Robert Crawford, though he was at his burial fifty-five years ago. He was a pretty young man, ed with his habit and appearance. The porter told him rudely, his lordship was at dinner, and must not be disturbed. He gave no importunity at last his name was announced. Upon hearing that it was Omeron Cameron, the Earl started from his seat, and is said to have exclaimed in a kind of poetical stanza, "I was a night in his house, and fared most plentifully; but naked of clothes was my bed. Omeron from Breugach is an excellent fellow." He was introduced into the great hall, and received with the welcome he deserved. Upon hearing how he had been treated, the Earl gave him four merk land near the castle: and it is said there is still a number of Cameoes descended of this Highland Eumesus, and had lived long in France. Lady Ankerville is his niece, and may perhaps partake of his poetical vein. An epithet-like like me might moralize upon the vanity of life, and the vanity of those sweet effusions. But I leave you kindly to offer my best compliments to Mrs. Blacklock, and am,

Dear Doctor,
Your most obedient, humble servant,
J. RAMSAY.

No. XXXIV.
FROM MR. JOHN MURDOCH.

London, 28th October, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,

As my friend, Mr. Brown, is going from this place to your neighbourhood, I embrace the opportunity of telling you that I am yet alive, tolerably well, and at a very moderate expense of being better. By the much-valued letters before me, I see that it was my duty to have given you this intelligence about three years and nine months ago; and have nothing to allege as an excuse, but that we were, fastening bodies in London, are so much taken up with the various pursuits in which we are here engaged, that we seldom think of any person, creature, place, or thing that is absent. But this is not altogether the case with me; for I often think of you, and Hornie and Russell, and an unfeath- ered depth, and brown brunetice, all in the same minute, although you and they are (as I suppose) at a considerables distance. I flatter myself, however, with the pleasing thought, that you and I shall meet some time or other either in Scotland or England. If ever you come hither, you will have the satisfaction of seeing your poems relished by the Caledonians in London, full as much as they can be by those of Edin- burgh. We frequently recite some of your verses in our Caledonian society; and you may believe, that I am not a little vain that I have had some share in culti- vating such a genius. I was not absolutely certain that you were the author, till a few days ago, when I made a visit to Mrs. Hill, Dr. M'Combs eldest daugh- ter, who lives in town, and who told me that she was informed of it by a letter from her sister in Edinburgh, with whom you had been in company when in that capital.

Pray let me know if you have any intention of visit- ing this huge, overgrown metropolis? It would afford much pleasure to me if you would visit Scotland, for I think of you, but I am still in the same situation. I have no idea of indulging your vein in the study of man- kind, perhaps to a greater degree than in any city upon the face of the globe; for the inhabitants of London, as you know, are a collection of all nations, kindreds and tongues, who make it, as it were, the centre of their commerce.

Present my respectful compliments to Mrs. Burns, to my dear friend Gilbert, and all the rest of her amiable children. May the Father of the universe bless you all with those principles and dispositions that the best of parents took such uncommon pains to instil into your minds from your earliest infancy! May you become a man of great literature, and be happy! I feel myself grow serious all at once, and affect- ed in a manner I cannot describe. I shall only add, that it is one of the greatest pleasures I promise myself before I die, that of seeing the family in Edinburgh, and of those happy recollections. I trust I shall never revere more than that of any person that ever I was acquainted with.

I am, my dear Friend,
Yours sincerely,
JOHN MURDOCH.
No. XXXV.
FROM MR. —
Gordon Castle, Slat. Oct. 1787.

SIR,
If you were not sensible of your fault as well as of your loss in leaving this place so suddenly, I should condemn you to starve upon could know for noonmont at least! and as for Dick Lethie," your traveling companion, without knowing him self a the curses contained in your letter (which he'll value a bowsee,) I should give him much but Strybogie caste cockes to cheer him withal, and say he will be as sensible of his error as you seem to be of yours.

Your song I showed without producing the author; and it was judged by the Dutchess to be the production of Dr. Beattie. I sent a copy of it, by her Grace's desire, to a Mrs. M'Pherson in Dundee, who sings Morag and all other Gàidic songs in great perfection. I have recorded it likewise, by Lady Charlotte's desire, in a book belonging to her ladyship, which is in company with a great many other poems and verses, some of the writers of which are no less eminent for their political than for their poetical abilities. When the Dutchess, as informed, that you are of the author, she wished she had written the verses in Scotch.

Any letter directed to me here will come to hand safely, and, if sent under the Duke's cover, it will likewise come free; that is, as long as the Duke is in this country.

I am, Sir, yours sincerely.

No. XXXVI.
FROM THE REVEREND JOHN SKINNER.
Linlheat, 14th November, 1787.

SIR,
Your kind return, without date, but of post mark October 25th, came to my hand only this day; and, to testify my punctuality to my poetical engagement, I sit down immediately to answer it in kind. Your acknowledgment of my poor but just encomiums on your surprising genius, and your opinion of my rhyming excursions, are both, I think, by far too high. The difference between our two tracks of education and ways of life is entirely in your favour, and gives you the preference every manner of way. I know a classical education will not give you taste, but it mightly improves and assists it; and though, where both these meet, there may sometimes be ground for approbation, yet where taste appears single as it were, and neither cramped nor supported by acquisition, I will always sustain the justice of its prior claim of applause. A small portion of taste, this way, I have had from infant; and, especially, by the old Scotch dialect; and it is as old a thing as I remember, my fondness for Christ-kirk o' the Green, which I had by heart, era I was twelve years of age, and which, some years ago, I attempted to imitate; while I was young I dabbled a good deal in these things; but, on getting the black gown, I gave it pretty much over, till my daughters grew up, who, being all good singers, plunged me for words to some of their favourite tunes, and so exerted these effusions, which have made a public appearance beyond my expectations, and contrary to my intentions, at the same time that I hope there is nothing to be found in them uncharacteristic, or unbecoming the cloth which I would always wish to see respected.

As to the assistance you purpose from me in the undertaking you are engaged in; I am sorry I cannot give it so far as I could wish, and you perhaps expect my daughters, who were my only initilegeniers, are all foris-faelinitate, and the old woman their mother has lost that taste. There are two from my own pen, which I might give you, if worth the while. One to the old Scotch tune of Dumbar' Drums.

The other perhaps you have met with, as your noble friend the Dutchess has, I am told, heard of it. It was squeezed out of me by a brother parson in her neighbourhood, to accommodate a new Highland reel for the Marquis's birth day, to the stanza of "Tune your fiddles, tune them sweetly," &c.

If this last answer your purpose, you may have it from a brother of mine, Mr. James Skinner, writer in Edinburgh, who, I believe, can give the music too.

There is another humorous thing I have heard, said to be done by the Catholic priest Geddes, and which hit my taste much:

"There was a wee wifekie, was coming free the fair, Had gotten a little dragjkie which bred her meikle care, It took up' the wife's heart, and she began to spew, And co' the wee wifekie, I wish I bin fou, I wish, &c. &c.

I have heard of another new composition, by a young ploughman of my acquaintance, that I am vastly pleased with, to the tune of The Humours of Glen, which I fear won't do, as the music, I am told, of Irish original. I have mentioned these, such as they are, to show my readiness to oblige you, and to contribute my mite, if I could, to the patriotic work you have in hand, and which I wish all success to. You have only to notify your mind, and what you want of the above shall be sent you.

Mean time, while you are thus publicly, I may say, employed, do not sheath your own proper and piercing weapon. From what I have seen of yours already, I am inclined to hope for much good. One lesson of virtue and morality delivered in your amusing style, and from such as you will operate more than dozens would do from such as me, who shall be told it is our employment, and be ever more minded: whereas, from a pen like yours, as being one of the many, what comes will be admired. Admiration will produce regard, and regard will leave an impression, especially when example goes along.

Now binna saying I'll bin bred, Else, by my troth, I'll not be glad, For cadgers, ye have heard it said, And sic like fry, Maun ay be harland in their trade, And sae maun I.

Wishing you, from my poet-pen, all success, and, in my other character, all happiness and heavenly direction, I remain, with esteem,
Your sincere friend,

JOHN SKINNER.

No. XXXVII.
FROM MRS. ROSE.
Kirkmack Castle, 30th Nov. 1787.

SIR,
I hope you will do me the justice to believe, that it was no defect in gratitude for your punctual performance of your parting promise, that has made me so long in acknowledging it, but merely the difficulty I had in getting the Highland songs you wished to have, accurately noted; they are at last enclosed; but how shall I convey along with them those graces they se-
LETTERS.

quired from the melodious voice of one of the fair spirits of the Hill of Kilravock. These must leave to your imagination to supply. It has powers sufficient to transport me, that is, to recall a century, and to make them still vibrate in the ears of memory. To her I am indebted for getting the enclosed notes. They are clothed with "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn." These, however, being in an unknown tongue to you, you must again have recourse to that same fertile imagination of yours to interpret them, and suppose a lover's description of the beauties of an adored mistress—Why did I say unknown? The language of love is a universal one, that seems to have escaped the confusion of Babel, and to be understood by all nations.

I rejoice to find that you were pleased with so many things, persons, and places, in your northern tour, because it leads me to hope you may be induced to revisit them again. That the old castle of Kilravock, and its inhabitants, were amongst these, adds to my satisfaction. I am even vain enough to admit your very flattering application of the line of Addison's; at any rate, allow me to believe, that "friendship will maintain the ground she has occupied in both our hearts," in spite of absence, and that when we do meet, it will be as acquaintance of a score years' standing; and on this footing consider me as interested in the future course of your fame so splendidly commenced. When you come thither, and your muse will be received with great gratitude, and the fire of your genius will have power to warm even us, frozen sisters of the north.

The fire sides of Kilravock and Kildrummie unite in cordial regards to you. When you incline to figure either in your idea, suppose some of us reading your poems, and some of us singing your songs, and my little Hugh looking at your picture, and you'll seldom be wrong. We remember Mr. Nicol with as much good will as we can do any body who hurried Mr. Burns from us.

Farewell, Sir: I can only contribute the widow's wile, to the esteem and admiration excited by your merit and genius; but this I give, as she did, with all my heart—being sincerely yours.

EL ROSE.

No. XXXVIII.

TO THE EARL OF GLENCAIRN.

MY LORD,

I know your Lordship will disapprove of my ideas in a request I am going to make to you, but I have weighed, long and seriously weighed, my situation, my hopes, and turn of mind, and am fully fixed to my scheme, if I can possibly effectuate it. I wish to get into the Excise: I am told that your Lordship's interest will easily procure me the grant from the Commissioners; and your Lordship's patronage and goodness, which have already rescued me from obscurity, wretchedness, and exile, embolden me to ask that interest. You have likewise put it in my power to save the little tie of home that sheltered an aged mother, two brothers, and three sisters, from destruction. There, my Lord, you have bound me over to the highest gratitude.

My brother's farm is but a wretched lease; but I think he will probably weather out the remaining seven years of it; and, after the assistance which I have given, and will give him, to keep the family together, I think I can dispose of it. If we should be so lucky as to get the Excise, I shall be at the mercy of that deplorable government that dictated the act of 1793. I will give you as much notice as possible before removing; but I shall lodge my papers in a banking house, a sacred deposit, excepting only the calls of uncommon distress or necessitous old age.

These, my Lord, are my views; I have resolved from the maturest deliberation; and now I am fixed, I shall leave no stone unturned to carry my resolve into execution. Your Lordship's patronage is the strength of my hopes; nor have I yet applied to any body else. Indeed my heart sinks within me at the idea of applying to any other of the Great who have honoured me with their countenance. I am filled with the impertinence of solicitation, and tremble nearly as much at the thought of the cold promise, as the cold denial; but to your Lordship I have not only the honour, the comfort, but the pleasure of being Your Lordship's much obliged, And deeply indebted humble servant.

No. XXXIX.

TO SIR JOHN WHITFOORD.

Edinburgh, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I suppose the devil is so elated with his success with you, that he is determined, by a coup de main, to complete his purposes on you all at once, in making you a poet. I broke open your letter you sent me: hummed over the hymn; and as I saw they were extempore, said to myself, they were very well; but when I saw at the bottom a name I shall ever value with grateful respect, "I gapt wide but naething spak." I was nearly as much struck as the friends of Job, of affection-bearing memory, when they sat down with him seven days and seven nights, and spake not a word.

* * *

I am naturally of a superstitious cast, and as soon as my wonder-scarred imagination regained its consciousness, and resumed its functions, I cast about what this mausol of yours might portend. My foreboding ideas had the wide stretch of possibility; and several events, great in their magnitude, and important in their consequences, occurred to my fancy—The downfall of the clavicle, or the crushing of the cork rump; a ducal coronet to Lord George G____; and the protestant interest, or St. Peter's keys, to *

* *

You want to know how I come on. I am just in statuesque; my leg is sumptuously broken. I am reeling in my Latin, in "auld use and wont." The noble Earl of Glencairn took me by the hand to-day, and interested himself in my concerns, with a goodness like that benevolent Being whose image he so richly bears. He is a stronger proof of the immortality of the soul than any that philosophy ever produced. A mind like his can never die. Let the worshipful squire H. L. or the reverend Mass J. M. go into their primitive nothing. At best, they are but ill-digested lumps of chaos, only one of them strongly tinged with bituminous particles and sulphureous effluvia. But my noble patron, eternal as the heroic swell of magnanimity, and the generous thirst of benevolence, shall look on with princely eye at the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.

No. XL.

TO MR. M'KENZIE, OF MACULCHINE.

December, 1797.

SIR,

Mr. M'Kenzie, in Maculchine, my very warm and worthy friend, has informed me how much you are pleased to turn my old verses to my purpose (and what to me is incomparably dearer) my fame as a poet. I have, Sir, in one or two instances, been patronized by those of your character in life, when I was
introduced to their notice by * * * friends to them, and honoured acquaintance to me; but you are the first gentleman in the country whose benevolence and goodness of heart have interested him for me, unsolicited and unknown. I do not mean that the etiquette of these matters to know, nor did I stay to inquire, whether formal duty bade, or cold propriety disallowed, my thanking you in this manner, as I am convinced, from the light in which you kindly view me, that you will do me the justice to believe this letter is not the manoeuvre of the needy, sharping author, fastening on those in upper life, who honour him with a little notice of him or his works. Indeed, the situation of poets is generally such, to a proverb, as may in some measure, palliate that prostitution of art and talents they have at times been guilty of. I do not think prodigality is, by no means, a necessary concomitant of a poet's turn; but I believe a careless, indolent inattention to economy, is almost inseparable with it; then there must be, in the heart of every man, of Nature's making, a certain modest sensibility, mixed with a kind of pride, that will ever keep him out of the way of those windfalls of fortune, which frequently light on hardly impudence and footstool sensibility, is not easy to imagine a more helpless state than his, poetic saucy unites him for the world, and whose character as talent gives him some pretensions to the politesse of life—yet is as poor as I am.

For my part, I thank Heaven my star has been kinder; I have never elevated my ideas above the permanent juncture, and I have an independent fortune at the plough-tell.

I was surprised to hear that any one who pretended in the least to the science of the gentleness, should be so foolish, or worse, as to stoop to traduce the morals of such a one as I am; and so infinitely cruel, too, as to meddle with that late most unfortunate part of my story. With a tear of gratitude, I thank you, Sir, for the warmth with which you interposed in behalf of my conduct. I am, I acknowledge, too frequently the sport of whim, caprice, and passion—but reverence to God, and integrity to my fellow-creatures, I hope I shall ever preserve. I have no return, Sir, to make you for your goodness, but one—s a return which, I am persuaded will not be unacceptable—the honest, warm wishes of a grateful heart for your happiness, and every one of that lovely flock who stand to you in a filial relation. If ever Calumny aim the poisoned shaft at them, may friendship be by to ward the blow.

No. XLI.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Edinburgh, 31st January, 1788.

After six weeks confinement, I am beginning to walk across the room. They have been six horrible weeks, anguish and low spirits made me unfit to read, write, or think.

I have a hundred times wished that one could resign life as an officer resigns a commission; for which I would not take any poor, ignominious death, by a hanging out. Lately I was a sixpenny private and, God knows, a miserable soldier enough; now I march to the campaign, a startling cadet; a little more conscientiously wretched.

I am ashamed of all this: for though I do want bravery for the warfare of life, I could wish, like some other soldiers, to have as much fortitude or cunning as to dispose or conceal my cowardice.

As soon as I can hear the journey, which will be, I suppose, about the middle of next week, I leave Edin- burgh. I shall not trouble you after I shall pay my grateful duty at Dunlop-House.

No. XLII.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER.

TO THE SAME.

Edinburgh, 12th February, 1788.

Some things in your late letters hurt me; not that you say them, but that you mistake me. Religion, my honoured Madam, has not only been all my life my dearest dependence, but my dearest enjoyment. I have indeed been the luckless victim of wayward follies; but, alas! I have ever been "more fool than knave." A mathematician without religion is a probable char-acter; and an irreligious poet is a monster.

XLIII.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Mozegiel, 7th March, 1788.

MADAM,

The last paragraph in yours of the 8th February affected me most, as I should begin my answer where you ended your letter. That I am often a sinner with any little wit I have, I do confess: but I have taxed my recollection to no purpose to find out when it was em- ployed against you. I hate an ungenerous sarcasm a great deal worse than I do the devil; at least, as Mil- ton describes him; and though I may be rascally enough to be sometimes guilty of it myself, I cannot en- dure it in others. You, my honoured friend, who can- not appear in any light but you are sure of being re- spectable—you can afford to pass by an occasion to display your wit, because you know my depend on you for your sense; or, if you choose to be silent, you know you can rely on the gratitude of many and the esteem of all; but, God help us who are wits or writings by profession, if we stand not for fame there, we sink un- supported!

I am highly flattered by the news you tell me of Colia. I may say to the fair painter who does me so much honour, as Dr. Beattie says to Ross the poet of his muse Scotia, from which, by the by, I took the idea of Colia: ('Tis a poem, Colia's in the Scots di- alect, which perhaps you have never seen.)

"Ye shak your head, but' o' my fegs, Ye've set auld Scotia on her leggs, Lang had she lien wi' buffe and flags, Bombaz'd and dizzie, Her fiddle wanted strings and pegs, Waes me, poor hizzie!"

XLIV.

TO MR. ROBERT CLEGHORN.

Murchine, 31st March, 1788.

Yesterday, my dear Sir, as I was riding through a track of melancholy, joyless mists, between Galloway and Ayrshire, it being Sunday, I turned my thoughts to psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs: and your favourite sir Captin Okean, coming at length in my head, I tried these words to it. You will see that the first part of the tune must be repeated.

"A lady (daughter of Mrs. Dunlop) was making a picture from the description of Colia in the Vision.

E.

f Here the Bard gives the first stanza of the "Cher- veller's Lament."
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.

I am so harrassed with care and anxiety about this farming project of mine, that my muse has degenerated into the veriest prose wrench that ever picked cinders or followed a tinker. When I am fairly got into the routine of business, I shall trouble you with a longer epistle; perhaps with some queries respecting farming; at present the world sits such a load on my mind, that it has effaced almost every trace of the in me.

My very best compliments and good wishes to Mrs. Cleghorn.

FROM MR. ROBERT CLEGHORN.

Scaughton Mills, 27th April, 1783.

MY DEAR BROTHER FARMER,

I was favoured with your very kind letter of the 31st ult., and considering myself greatly obliged to you for your attention in sending me the song, to my favourite air, Captain Okeham. The words delight me much they fit the tune to a hair. I wish you would send me a verse or two more; and if you have no objection, I would have it in the Jacobite style. Suppose it should be song after the fatal field of Culloden by the unfortunate Charles. Tenducci personates the lovely Mary Stuart in the song, Queen Mary's Lamentation. Why may not I sing in the person of her great-great-grandson?

Any skill I have in country business you may truly command. Situation well, customs of countries, may vary from each other, but Farmer Attention is a good farmer in every place. I beg to hear from you soon. Mrs. Cleghorn joins me in best compliments.

I am, in the most comprehensive sense of the word, your very sincere friend,

ROBERT CLEGHORN.

No. XLVI.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Mauchline, 29th April, 1783.

MADAM,

Your powers of reprehension must be great indeed, as I assure you they made my heart ache with penitence, that pangs, even though I was really not guilty. As I commence farmer at Whitsunday, you will easily guess I must be pretty busy but that is not all. As I got the offer of the excise business without solicitation; as it costs me only six months' attendance for instructions to entitle me to a commission, which commission lies by me, and at any future period, on my simple petition, can be resumed: I thought five and thirty pounds a-year was no bad denier resort for a poor poet, if fortune, in her jade tricks, should kick him down from the little eminence to which she has lately helped him.

For this reason, I am at present attending these instructions, to have them completed before Whitsunday. Still, Madam, I prepared, with the sincerest pleasure, to meet you at the Mount, and came to my brother's on Saturday night, to set out on Sunday; but for some nights proceeding, I had slept in an apartment where the force of the winds and rains was

* The Chevalier's Lament.

† Our Peet took this advice. The whole of this beautiful song, as it was afterwards finished, is inserted in the Poems.

only mitigated by being sifted through numerous apertures in the windows, walls, &c. In consequence I was on Sunday, Monday, and part of Tuesday, unable to stir out of bed, with all the miserable effects of a violent cold.

You see Madam, the truth of the French maxim, Le sourire n'est pas toujours le visage humble. Your last was so full of expectation, and was something so like the language of an offended friend, that I began to tremble for a correspondence which I had with grateful pleasure set down as one of the greatest enjoyments of my future life.

Your books have delighted me: Virgil, Dryden, and Tasso, were all equally strangers to me; but of this more at large in my next.

No. XLVII.

FROM THE REV. JOHN SKINNER.

Lithchart, 26th April, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I received your last with the curious present you have favoured me with, and would have made proper acknowledgments before now, but that I have been necessarily engaged in matters of a different complexion. And now, that I have got a little respite, I make use of it to thank you for this valuable instance of your good will, and to assure you that, with the sincerest heart of true Scotman, I highly esteem both the gift and the giver; as a small testimony of which I have herewith sent you for your amusement (and in a form which I hope you will excuse for saving postage) the two songs I wrote about to you already. Charming Nancy is the real production of genius in a ploughman of twenty years of age at the time of its appearing, with no more education than what he picked up at an old farmer-grandfather's fire side, though now by the strength of natural parts, he is clerk to a thriving bleach field in the neighbourhood. And I doubt not but you will find it in a simplicity and delicacy, with some turns of humour, that will please one of your taste; at least it pleased me when I first saw it, if that can be any recommendation to it. The other is entirely descriptive of my own sentiments: and you may make use of one or both as you shall see good.*

* CHARMING NANCY.

A SONG BY A RICHAN PLOUGHMAN.

Tune—"Humours of Glen." 13

Some song of sweet Mally, some sing of fair Nelly,
And some call sweet Susie the cause of their pain;
Some love to be jolly, some love melancholy,
And some love to sing of the Humours of Glen.

But my only fancy is my pretty Nancy,
In waiting my passion I'll strive to be plain;
I'll ask no more treasure, I'll seek no more pleasure,
But thee, my dear Nancy, sink thou wert my ain.

Her beauty delights me, her kindness invite me,
Her pleasant behaviour is free from all stain,
Therefore, my sweet Jowal, O do not prove cruel;
Consent, my dear Nancy, and come be my ain.

Her carriage is comely, her language is homely,
Her dress is quite decent when tal'en in the main;
She's blooming in feature, she's handsome in stature;
My charming dear Nancy, O wert thou my ain!

Like Thames adorning the fair muddy morning,
Her bright eyes are sparkling, her brows are serene,

(To be continued.)
LETTERS.

You will oblige me by presenting my respects to your host, Mr. Cruickshank, who has given such high approbation to my poor Latinity; you may let him know, that as I have likewise been a babbler in Latin poetry, I have two things that I would, if he desires it, submit, not to his judgment, but to his amusement; the one, a translation of Christ's Kirk o' the Green, printed at Aberdeen some years ago; the other Baitachomomachia Homeri latiniæ vestita cum additamentis, given in lately to Chalmers, to print if he pleases. Mr. C. will know Sera non semper detestant, non jocas semper. Semper detestant certa maxime facies.

I have just room to repeat compliments and good wishes from,

SIR, your humble servant,

JOHN SKINNER.

No. LXVIII.

TO PROFESSOR DUGALD STEWART.

Mauchline, 3d May, 1788.

SIR,

I enclose to you one or two of my bagatelles. If the fervent wishes of honest gratitude have any influence

Her yellow locks shining, in beauty combining,
My charming sweet Nancy, wilt thou be my ain?
The whole of her face is with maidenly graces
Array'd like the gowans that grow in yon gien;
She's well-shap'd and slender, true-hearted and tender,
My charming sweet Nancy, O Wert thou my ain!
I'll seek thro' the nation for some habitation,
To shelter my jewel from cold, snow, and rain,
With songs to my deary, I'll keep her ay cheery,
My charming sweet Nancy, gin thou wert my ain.
I'll work at my calling to furnish thy dwelling,
With every thing needful thy life to sustain;
Thou shalt not sit single, but by a clear ingle,
I'll marrow thee, Nancy, when thou art my ain.

I'll make true affection the constant direction
Of loving my Nancy, while life doth remain:
Tho' youth will be wasting, true love shall be lasting,
My charming sweet Nancy, gin too wert my ain.
But what if my Nancy should alter her fancy,
To favour another be forward andfain,
I will not compel her, but plainly I'll tell her,
Begone, thou false Nancy, thou'se ne'er be my ain.

The Old Man's Song.

By The Reverend J. Skinner.

Tune—"Dumbarton Drums."

O! why should old age so much wound us? O,
There is nothing in't ad to confound us, O,
For how happy now am I,
With my old wife sitting by,
And our bairns and our oys all around us, O.

We began in the world wi' naething, O,
And we've jogg'd on and tol'd for the a thing, O,
We made use of what we had,
And our thankful hearts were glad,
When we got the bit meat and the claeathing, O.

We have liv'd all our life-time contented, O,
Since the day we became first acquainted, O,

with the great unknown Being, who frames the chain
of causes and events, prosperity and happiness will attend your visit to the Continent, and return you safe to your native shore.

Wherever I am, allow me, Sir, to claim as it is my privilege to acquaint you with my progress in my trade of rhymes; as I am sure I could say it with truth, that the next to my little frame, and the having it in my power to make life a little more comfortable to those whom nature has made dear to me, I shall ever regard your countenance, your patronage, your friendly good offices, as the most valued consequence of my late success in life.

No. XLIX.

Extract of a Letter

To Mrs. Dunlop.

Mauchline, 4th May, 1788.

MADAM,

Dryden's Virgil has delighted me. I do not know whether the critics will agree with me, but the Geo-

It's true we've been but poor,
And we are so to this hour,
Yet we never yet repined nor lamented, O,
We never thought of schemes to be wealthy, O
By ways that were cunning or stealthy, O,
But we always had the bliss,
And what further could we wish,
To be pleas'd wi' ourselves, and be healthy, O,
What tho' we cannot boast of our guineas, O,
We have plenty of jockies and Jennies, O,
And these I'm certain, are
More desirable by far,
Than a pocket full of poor yellow sleenets, O.

We have seen many wonder and fertile, O,
Of changes that almost are weary, O,
Among rich folks up and down,
Both in country and in town,
Who now live but scrimpily and barely, O.
Then why should people brag of prosperity, O,
A straitened life we see in no rarity, O,
Indeed we've been in want,
And our living been but scant,
Yet we never were reduced to need charity, O.

In this house we first came together, O,
Where we've long been a Father and a Mither, O,
And tho' not of stone and lime,
It will last us a' our time,
And, I hope, we shall never need anither, O.
And when we leave this habitation, O,
We'll depart with a good commendation, O,
We'll go hand in hand I wiss,
To a better house than this,
To make room for the next generation, O.
Then why should old age so much wound us? O,
There's nothing in't all to confound us, O,
For how happy now am I,
With my old wife sitting by,
And our bairns and our oys all around us, O.
LETTERS.

Madam,

I have been torturing my philosophy to no purpose to account for that universal partiality of yours, which, unlike * * * has followed me in my return to the shade of life, with assiduous benevolence. Often did I regret, in the fleeting hours of my Will's residence, that "there I had no continuing city;" and, but for the consolation of a few solid guineas, could almost lament the time that a momentary acquaintance with wealth and splendor put me so much out of conceit with the swarm companions of my road through life, insignificance and poverty.

There are few circumstances relating to the unequal distribution of the good things of this life, that give me more vexation (I mean in what I see around me,) than the importance the opulent bestow on their tri-ling family affairs, compared with the very same things on the contracted scale of a cottage. Last after-noon I had the honour to spend an hour or two at a good woman's fire-side, where the plants that com-posed the floor were decorated with a splendid carpet, and the gay tables sparkled with silver and china. "Tis now about term day, and there has been a revolu-tion among those creatures, who, though in appear-ance partakers, and equally noble partakers, of the same nature with Madam, are from time to time, their nerves, their sheaths, their health, strength, wis-dom, experience, genius, time, may, a good part of their very thoughts, sold for months and years, * * * not only to the necessities) the conveniences, but the caprices of the wife and her few.* We talked of the insignificant creatures; nay, notwithstanding their general stupidity and rascality, did some of the poor dear do the honour to commend the thought of the turf upon his breast who taught—Reverence thy-self." We looked down on the unpohished wretches, their impertinent wives and clutterous brats, as the lordly bull does on the lowly ant-ant, whose puer-inhabitants he crushes in the carelessness of his ramble, or tosses in the air in the wantonness of his pride.

* Servants in Scotland, are hired from term to term; i.e., from Whitsunday to Martinmas, &c.

No. LI.

TO THE SAME.

At Mr. Dunlop's, Haddington.

Ellisland, 13th June, 1788

"Where'er I roam, whatever realms I see,
My heart, unavailing'd, fondly turns to thee,
Still to my friend returns with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthen'd chain."

Goldsmith.

This is the second day, my honoured friend, that I have been on my farm. A solitary inmate of an old smoky Speice; far from every object I love, or by whom I am beloved; nor any acquaintance older than yesterday, except Jenny Geddes, the old mare I ride on; while securous cares and novel plans hourly insult my awkward ignorance and baser inexperience.

There is a foggy atmosphere native to my soul in the hour of care; consequently, the dreary objects seem larger than the life. Extreme sensibility, irritated and prejudiced on the glosny side by a series of mis-fortunes and disappointments, at that period of my existence when the soul is laying in her cargo of ideas for the voyage of life, in, because, the principal cause of this unhappy frame of mind.

"The valiant, in himself, what can he suffer?
Or what need he regard his single woes?" &c.

Your surmise, Madam, is just; I am indeed a bus-band.

I found a once much-loved and still much-loved female, literally and truly cast out to the mercy of the naked elements; but I enabled her to purchase a shelter; and the poor soul is sporting with a fellow-creature's happiness or misery.

The most placid good-nature and sweetness of disposi-tion; a warm heart, gratefully devoted with all its powers to love me; vigorous health and sprightly cheerfulness, set off to the best advantage by a more than commonly handsome figure; these, I think in a woman, may make a good wife, though she should never have read a page but the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, nor have danced in a brighter assembly than a penny-pay wedding.

No. LII.

To Mr. P. Hill.

My dear Hill,

I saw nothing at all to your mad preserv—you have long and often been of important service to me, and I suppose you mean to go on conferring obliga-tions until I shall not be able to lift up my face before you. In the mean time, as Sir Roger de Loveloy, be-cause it happened to be a cold day in which he made his will, ordered his servants great coats for mourning, so, because I have been this week plagued with an in-digestion, I have sent you by the carrier a fine old ewe milk cheese.

Indigestion is the devil! say, 'tis the devil and all. It bestows a man in every one of his senses—a taste for a delicious apple, and sicken to loathing at the nose and tasteless of self-important folly. When the hollow-hearted wretch takes me by the hand, the feeling spoils my dinner; the proud man's wine so offends my palate that it chokes me in
If ever you have any of these disagreeable sensations, let me prescribe for you patience and a bit of my cheese. I know that you are no niggard of your good things among your friends, and some of them are in much need of a slice. There in my eye is our friendship, a man positively of the first ability and greatest strength of mind, as well as one of the best hearts and keenest wits that I have ever met with; when you see him, as also he too is smarting at the punch of distressful circumstances, aggravated by the snare of contumacious greatness—a bit of my cheese alone will not cure him; but if you add a tankard of brown stout, and superabundant of RIGHT Oporto, you will see his sorrows vanish like the morning mist before the summer sun.

C——h, the earliest friend, except my only brother, that I have on earth, and one of the worthiest fellows that ever any man called by the name of friend, if a luncheon of my cheese would help to rid him of some of his superabundant modesty, you would do well to give it him.

David,* with his Courant, comes too, across my recollection, and I beg you will help him largely from the said ewe-milk cheese, to enable him to digest those bedaubing paragraphs with which he is eternally laden in the characters of certain great towns, I grant you the periods are very well turned; so, a fresh egg is a very good thing, but when thrown at a man in a pillory it does not at all improve his figure, not to mention the irreparable loss of the egg.

My facetious friend, D——r, I would wish also to be a partaker: not to digest his spleen, for that he laughs off, but to digest his last night's wine at the last field day of the Crochallan corps.

Among our common friends, I must not forget one of the dearest of them, Cunningham. The brutality, insolence, and selfishness of a world unworthy of having such a fellow as he is in It, I know sticks in his stomach; and if you can help him to any thing that will make him a little easier on that score, it will be very obliging.

As to honest J——e, he is such a contented happy man, that I know not what can annoy him, except perhaps he may not have got the better of a parcel of modest anecdotes which a certain poet gave him one night at supper, the last time the said poet was in town.

Though I have mentioned so many men of law, I shall have nothing to do with them professedly. The faculty are beyond my prescription. As to their clients, that is another thing: God knows they have much to digest!

The clergy I pass by; their profusion of erudition, and their liberality of sentiment; their total want of pride, and their detestation of hypocrisy, are so proverbially notorious as to place them far, far above either my praise or censure.

I was going to mention a man of worth, whom I have the honour to call friend, the Laird of Craiglar- rock; but I have spoken to the landlord of the King's arms inn here, to have, at the next county meeting, a large ewe-milk cheese on the table, for the benefit of the Dumfriesshire characters of certain great men. In the meanwhile let me beg the Duke of Queensberry's late political conduct.

I have just this moment an opportunity of a private hand to Edinburgh, as perhaps you would not digest double postage.

* Printer of the Edinburgh Evening Courant.

† A club of choice spirits.
LETTERS.

No. LIV.
TO THE SAME.

M.Instingle, 10th August, 1798.

MY MUCH HONOURED FRIEND,

Yours of the 26th June last I before received, I found it, as well as another valued friend—my wife, waiting to welcome me to Ayrshire: I met both with the sincerest pleasure.

When I write you, Madam, I do not sit down to an- swer every paragraph of yours, by echoing every sen- timent, like the faithful Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, answering a speech from the bench of Kings! I express myself in the fulness of my heart, and may perhaps be guilty of neglecting some of your kind inquiries; but not, from your very odd reason, that I do not read your letters. All your epistles for several months have cost me nothing, except a swelling throb of gratitude, or a deep felt senti- ment of veneration.

Mrs. Burns, Madam, is the identical woman

* * *

When she first found herself "as wish to be who love their lords," as I loved her nearly to distrac- tion, we too stood in ecstatic marriage. Her pa- rents of her heart: and not only forde me her com- pany and the house, but, on my rumoured West-Indi- an voyage, got a warrant to put me in jail till I should find security in my about-to-be paternal rela- tion. You know my lucky reverse of fortune. On my retum return to Mauchline, I was made very wel- come to visit my girl. The usual consequences began to betray her; and as I was at that time laid up as a cripple in Edinburgh, she was turfed, literally turned out of doors: and I wrote to a friend to shelter her till my return, when our marriage was declared. Her happiness or misery were in my hands; and who could trifle with such a deposite?

* * *

I can easily fancy a more agreeable companion for my journey of life, but, upon my honour, I have never seen the individual instance.

* * *

Circumstantial as I am, I could never have got a fe- male partner for life, who could have equalled my favourite studies, relished my favourite authors, &c. without probably entailing on me, at the same time, expensive living, fantastic caprice, perhaps apish af- fection, with all the other blessed boarding-school ac- quirements, which (pardonnes moi, Madame,) are sometimes, to be found among females of the upper ranks, but almost universally pervade the masses of the would-be-gentry.

* * *

I like your way in your church-yard lucubrations. Thoughts that are the spontaneous result of accidental situations, either respecting health, peace, or compa- ny, have often a strength and always an originality, that would in vain be looked for in fancied circum- stances and studied paragraphs. For me, I have often thought of keeping a letter in abeyance, by me, to send you when the sheet was written out. Now I talk of sheets, I must tell you, my reason for writing to you on paper of this kind, is my pruency of writing to you at large. A page of jest is on such a discoidal narrow minded scale that I cannot abide it; and dou- ble letters, at least in my miscellaneous manner, are a monstrous tax in a close correspondence.

* * *

No. LV.
TO THE SAME.

Elitshank, 16th, August, 1798.

I am in a fine disposition, my honoured friend, to send you an elegiac epistle; and want only genius to make it quite Shenstonean.

"Why droops my heart with fancied woes forlorn? Why sinks my soul beneath each win'try sky?"

"* * *

My increasing cares in this, as yet, strange country— gloomy conjectures in the dark vista of futurity—Con- sciousness of my own inability for the struggle of the world—my broadened mark to misfortune in a wife and children—I could indulge these reflections, till my humour should ferment into the most acrid chagrin, that would corrodiate the very thread of life.

To counterwork these baneful feelings, I have sat down to write to you; as I declare upon my soul, I always find that the most sovereign balm for my wounded spirit.

I was yesterday at Mr. 's to dinner for the first time. My reception was quite to my mind: from the lady of the house, quite flattering. She some- times hits on a couplet or two, improbable. She re- peated one or two to the admiration of all present. My sufrage as a professional man, was expected: I for once went agoging over the belly of my conscience. Pardon me, ye, my adored household gods—indepen- dence of Spirit, and integrity of Soul! In the course of a conversation, Johnson's Musical Museum, a col- lection 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 old Scottish proverb says well," "king's caffis better thaniter folk's 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.

* * *

After all that has been said on the other side of the question, man is by no means a happy creature. I do not speak of the selected few favoured by partial hea- ven; whose souls are turned to gladness, amity and honours, and prudence and wisdom. I speak of the neglected many, whose nerves, whose sinews, whose days, are sold to the minions of fortune.

If I thought I had never seen it, I would transcribe for you a stanza of an old Scottish ballad, called The Life and Age of Man; beginning thus:

"Twa's in the sixteenth bunder year
Of God and fifty-three,
Frae Christ was born, that bought us dear,
As writings testifie."

I had an old grand-uncle, with whom my mother lived awhile in her girlish years; the good old man, for such he was, was long blind ere he died, during which time, his highest enjoyment was to sit down and cry, while my mother would sing the simple old song of Th Life and Age of Man.

It is this way of thinking, it is these melancholy truths, that make religion so precious to the poor,

* See Poems, p. 103.
miserable children of men—if it is a mere phantom, existing only in the heated imagination of enthusiasm.

"What truth on earth so precious as the lie?"

My idle reasonings sometimes make me a little sceptical, but the necessities of my heart always give the cold philosophizing the lie. Who looks for the heart warmed from earth; the soul assiduous to her God; the correspondence fixed with heaven; the glorious supplications to the soul of an angel? For thanksgiving, thanksgiving! I now solicit among the obscure recesses of disappointment, affliction, poverty, and distress.

I am sure, dear Madam, you are now more than pleased with the length of my letters. I return to Ayrshire middle of next week; and it quickens my pace to think that there will be a letter from you waiting me there. I must be here again very soon for my harvests.

No. LVI.

TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ. OF FINTRY.

SIR,

When I had the honour of being introduced to you at Athole-house, I did not think so soon of asking a favour of you. When Lear, in Shakespeare, asks old Kent why he wishes to be in his service, he answers, "Because you have that in your face which I could like to call a king." For the same sufficient reason, Sir, do I now solicit your patronage. You know, I dare say, an application I lately made to your Board to be admitted an officer of excuse. I have, according to form, been examined by a supervisor, and to-day I gave in his certificate, with a request for an order for instructions. In this affair, if I succeed, I am afraid I shall but too much need patronizing friends. Propriety of conduct as a man, and fidelity and attention as an officer, I dare engage for; but with any thing like business, except manual labour, I am totally unacquainted.

I had intended to have closed my late appearance on the stage of life in the character of a country farmer; but, to discharging some kind and fraternal claims, I find I could only fight for existence in that miserable manner, which I have lived to see a venerable parent into the jaws of a jail; whence death, the poor man's last and often best friend, rescued him.

I know, Sir, that to need your goodness is to have a claim on it; may I therefore beg your patronage to forward me in this affair, till I be appointed to a division, where, by the help of rigid economy, I will try to support that independence so dear to my soul, but which has been too often so distant from my situation.*

No. LVII.

TO MR. PETER HILL.

Marchline, 1st October, 1788.

I have been here in this county about three days, and all that time my chief reading has been the "Address to Loch-Lomond," you were so obliging as to send to me. Were I empannelled one of the author's jury to determine his criminality respecting the sin of poesy, my verdict should be "guilty!" A poet of Nature's making! It is an excellent method for improvement, and what I believe every poet does, to place some favourite classic author, in his own walk of study and composition, before him as a model. Though your author had not mentioned the name I could have, at half a glance, guessed his model to be Thomson. Will my brother-poet forgive me, if I venture to hint, that his imitation of that immortal bard is, in two or three places, rather more servile than such a genius as his required—g.

To soothe the madding passions all to peace.

Address.

To soothe the throbbling passions into peace.

Thomson.

I think the Address is, in simplicity, harmony, and elegance of verseification, fully equal to the Seasons. Like Thomson, too, he has looked into nature for himself; you meet with no copied description. One particular criticism I made at first reading; in no one instance has he said too much. He never flags in his progress, but, like a true poet of Nature's making, kindles in his course. His beginning is simple and modest, as if distrustful of the strength of his pinion; only, I do not altogether like—

"Truth, The soul of every song that's nobly great,"

Fiction is the soul of many a song that is nobly great. I perhaps am wrong; this may be but a prose-criticism. Is not the phrase, in line 7, page 6, "Great Lake," too much vulgarized by every-day language, for so sublime a poem?

"Great mass of waters, theme for nobler song,"

is perhaps no emendation. His enumeration of a comparison with other lakes is at once harmonious and poetical. Every reader's idea must sweep the Winding margin of an hundred miles.

The perspective that follows mountains blue—the impractical mountain blue; the vapour the digression on the yew-tree—Ben-Lomond's lofty cloud envelop'd head, &c. are beautiful. A thunder-storm is a subject which has been often tried; yet Thomson has contrived, and his account of it is interjected a circumstance, so far as I know, entirely original:—

"The gloom Deep-seaemed with frequent streaks of moving fire.

In his preface to the storm, "The gleams, how dark between!" is noble highland landscape! The "rain ploughing the red mould, too, is beautifully fancied. Ben-Lomond's "lofty pathless top," is a good expression; and the surrounding view from it is truly great: the "Silver mist Beneath the beaming sun," is well described; and here he has contrived to enliven his poem with a little of that passion which bids fair, I think, to usurp the modern modes altogether. I know not how far for this episode is a beauty upon the whole; but the swain's wish to carry "some faint idea of the vision bright," to entertain her "partial listening ear," is a pretty thought. But, in my opinion, the most beautiful passages in the whole poem are the fowls crowing, in wintry frosts, to Loch-Lomond's "hospitalile roof?" their wheeling round, their lighting, mating, diving, &c.; and the glorious description of the aughtsman. This last is equal to any thing in the Seasons. The idea of "the floating tribes distant seen, far glittering to the moon," provoking his eye as he is obliged to leave them, is a nobl ray of poetie
branched our nature—the principle of universal selfishness, the proneness to all evil, they have given us; still the detestation in which humanity to the distressed, or insolvency to the fallen, are held by all mankind, shows that this principle is dear to the human heart.

Even the unhappy partner of our kind, who is undone by the bitter consequence of his follies or his crimes;—who sympathizes with the miserable, and protects his profligate brother? we forget the injuries, and feel for the man.

I went, last Wednesday to my parish church, most cordially to join in grateful acknowledgments to the Author of all Good, for the consequent blessings of the glorious Revolution. To that auspicious event we owe no less than our liberties, civil and religious, and to it we are likewise indebted for our present Royal Family, the ruling features of whose administration have ever been mildness to the subject, and tenderness of his rights.

Bred and educated in revolution principles, the prejudices of reason and common sense, it could not be any silly political prejudice which made my heart revolt at the harsh, abusive manner in which the revered gentleman mentioned the House of Stewart, and which, I must own, was too much the language of the day. We may rejoice sufficiently in our deliverance from past evils, without cruelly raking up the ashes of those which misfortune it was, perhaps as much as their crime, to be the authors of those evils; and we may bless God for all his goodness to us as a nation, without, at the same time, invoking a few ruined, powerless exiles, who only harboured ideas, and made attempts, that most of us would have done had we been in our situation.

"The bloody and tyrannical House of Stewart," may be said with propriety and justice when compared with the present Royal Family, and the sentiments of the times. If there be any superannuated interest for the "names of the time? Were the royal contemporaries of the Stewarts more attentive to their subjects' rights? Might not the epithets of "bloody and tyrannical" be with at least equal justice applied to the House of Tudor, of York, or any other of their predecessors?

The simple state of the case, Sir, seems to be this—At that period, the science of government, the knowledge of the true relation between king and subject, the other sciences, and other knowledge, just in its infancy, emerging from dark ages of ignorance and barbarity.

The Stewarts only contended for prerogatives which they knew their predecessors enjoyed, and which they saw their contemporaries enjoying; but these prerogatives were immeasurable to the happiness of a nation and the rights of subjects.

In this contest between prince and people, the consequence of that light of science which had lately dawned over Europe, the monarch of France, for example, was victorious over the struggling liberties of his people; with us, luckily, the monarch failed, and his unwarrantable pretensions fell a sacrifice to our rights and liberties. Whether he was owing to the whole line of leading individuals, or to the justifying of parties, I cannot pretend to determine; but likewise, happily for us, when his overthrow was shifted into the branch of the family, who, as they owed the throne solely to the call of a free people, could claim nothing inconsistent with the covenanted terms which placed them there.

The Stewarts have been condemned and laughed at for the topic of some of their attempts in 1715 and 1745. That they failed, I bless God; but cannot join in the ridicule against them. Who does not know that the abilities or defects of leaders and conductors of affairs do not come out till put to the touchstone of exigency; and that there is a caprice of fortune, an omnipotence in particular accidents and conjunctions of circumstances which extol us as heroes, 

The poem, entitled, An Address to Loch-Lomond, is said to be written by a gentleman, now one of the Masters of the High-school at Edinburgh; and the same who translated the beautiful story of the Paris, as published in the Bee of Dr. Anderson. E.

* Heifer.
LETTERS.

No. LXI.

TO MISS DAVIES.

A young lady who had heard he had been making a Ballad on her, enclosing that Ballad.

December, 1788.

MADAM,

I understand my very worthy neighbour, Mr. Riddie, has informed you that I have made you the subject of some verses. There is something so provoking in the idea of being the burden of a ballad, that I do not think Job or Moses, though such patterns of patience and meekness, could have resisted the curiosity to know what that ballad was: so my worthy friend has done me a mischief, which, I dare say, he never intended; and reduced me to the unfortunate alternative of leaving your curiosity ungratified, or else disgusting you with foolish verses, the unfinished production of a random moment, and never meant to have met your ear. I have heard or read somewhere of a gentleman, who had some genius, much eccentricity, and very considerable dexterity with his pencil. In the accidental group of life into which one is thrown, wherever this gentleman met with a character in a more than ordinary degree congenial to his heart, he used to steal a sketch of the face, merely, as he said, as a nota bene to point out the agreeable recollection to his memory. What this gentleman’s pencil was to him, is my muse to me: and the verses I do myself the honour to send you are a memeto exactly of the same kind that he indulged in.

It may be owing to the fastidiousness of my caprice, than the delicacy of my taste, but I am so often tired, disgusted, and hurt, with the insipidity, affectation, and pride of mankind, that when I meet with a person “after my own heart,” I positively see what an orthodox protestant would call a species of industry, as well as a kind of reverence, which I cannot resist, and without respect of person, even to those who were ungrateful, or worldly-minded. I have no more desire than to put an end to the impious, an Eolian harp can refuse its tones to the streaming air. A distich or two would be the consequence, though the object which hit my fancy were gray-bearded age: but where my theme is youth and beauty, a young lady whose personal charms, wit, and sensibility, are equally striking and unaffected, by heavens I though I had lived threescore years a married man, and threescore years before I was a married man, my imagination would hallow the very idea; and I am truly surly that the enclosed stanzas have done such poor justice to such a subject.

No. LXII.

FROM MR. G. BURNS.

Messigiel, 1st Jan. 1789.

DEAR BROTHER,

I have just finished my new-year’s-day breakfast in the usual form, which naturally makes me call to

[Here follows the song of Auld lang syne, as printed in the poems.]

[Here followed the song, My Bonnie Mary.]
mind the days of former years, and the society in which we used to begin them: and when I look at our family visitations, 'tis thro' the dark postern of time looked back. I understand your kindness to me, my dear brother, how good the God of Seasons is to us, and that, however some clouds may seem to lower over the portion of time before us, we have great reason to hope that all will turn out well.

Your mother and sisters, with Robert the second, join me in the compliments of the season to you and Mrs. Burns, and beg you will remember us in the same manner to William, the first time you see him.

I am, dear brother, yours,

GILBERT BURNS.

No. LXIII.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Ellistland, New-Year-Day Morning.

This, dear Madam, is a morning of wishes; and would to God that I came under the apostle James's description—the prayer of a righteous man avainteth much. In this case, Madam, you should welcome in a year full of blessings: every thing that obstructs or disturbs tranquillity and self-enjoyment, should be removed, and every pleasure that frail humanity can taste should be yours. I own myself so little a presbyterian, that I approve of set times and seasons of more than ordinary acts of devotion, for breaking in on that besotted routine of life and thought which is so apt to reduce our existence to a kind of lustinct, or even sometimes, and with some minds, to a state very little superior to mere machinery.

This day, the first Sunday of May, a breezy blue-skyed moon, some time about the beginning and a hoary morning and calm sunny day about the end of autumn;—these, turn out of mind, have been with me a kind of holiday.

I believe I owe this to that glorious paper in the Spectator, "The Vision of Mirza:" a piece that struck my young fancy before I was capable of fixing an idea to a word of three syllables. "On the fifth day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always keep holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my devotions, I ascended the high hill of Bagdat, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer."

We know nothing, or next to nothing, of the substance or structure of our souls, so 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 bare-bell, the fox-glove, the wild brier-rose, the budding birch, and the hony-hawthorn, that I view and hang over with particular delight. I never heard the loud solitary whistle of the corwel in a summer noon, or the wild mixing cacophy of a troop of grey plover in an autumnal month, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry. Tell me, my dear friend, to what can this be owing. Are we a piece of machinery, which, like the Eolian harp passively yields to the motion of the passing accident? Or do these workings argue something within us above the trodden clod? I own myself partial to such proofs of those awful and important realities—a God that made all this Madam, is unpriest without imitation, and mortal nature—and a world of weal or wo beyond death and the grave.

No. LXIV.

TO DR. MOORE.

Ellistland, near Dumfries, 4th Jan. 1799.

SIR,

As often as I think of writing to you, which has been too long, there will never be a moment will I dispense with it, it gives me something so like a look of an ordinary sized statue offering at a conversation with the Rhodian colossus, that my mind misgives me, and the affair always makes me feel that, which your letter has induced me to believe; namely, that I have, at last, got some business with you, and business-letters are written by the style-book. I say my business is with you, Sir, for you never had any with me, except the business that benevolence has in the mansion of poverty.

The character and employment of a poet were formerly my pleasure, but are now my pride. I know that a very great deal of my late ecalat was owing to the singularity of my situation, and the honest prejudice of Scotchmen; but still, as I said in the preface to my first edition, I do look upon myself as having some pretensions from Nature to the poetical character. I have not a doubt but the knack, the aptitude to learn the Muses' trade, is a gift bestowed by Him, "who forms the secret bias of the soul;"—but I as firmly believe, that excellence in the profession is the fruit of habit, meditation, art, and to the extent to which I have resolved to try my doctrine by the test of experience.

Another appearance from the press I put off to a very distant day, a day that may never arrive at all. I am determined to prosecute with all my vigour, Nature has given very few, if any, of the profession, the talents of shining in every species of composition. I shall try (for until trial is impossible to know) whatever or not it be my lot to shine in any one. The worst of it is, the time by one hand has finished a piece, it has been so often viewed and reviewed before the mental eye, that one loses, in a good measure, the powers of critical discrimination. Here the best criterion I know is a friend—not only of abilities to judge, but with good nature enough, like a prudent teacher with a young learner, to praise, perhaps, a little more than is exactly just, lest the tim'ed skinned animal fall into that most deplorable of all poetic diseases—heart-breaking despondency of himself. Dare I, Sir, already immensly indebted to your goodness, ask the additional obligation of your being that friend to me? I enclose you an essay of mine in a walk of verse to me entirely new; I mean the entitle addressed to the G. G. of Fintry, by the Misses Graham, of Fintry, Esq. a gentleman of uncommon worth, to whom I lie under very great obligations. The story of the poem, like most of my poems, is connected with what has happened to me, and is not so likely to give you something of the other. I cannot boast of—

I believe I shall, in whole, 100%. copy-right included, clear about 400%. some little odds; and even part of this depends upon what the gentleman has yet to settle with me. I give you this information, because you did me the honour to interest yourself much in my welfare.

To give the rest of my story in brief, I have married my "Jean," and taken a farm: with the first step, I incur every day more and more reason to be satisfied, with the last, it is rather the reverse. I have a younger brother who supports my aged mother; another still younger brother, and three sisters, in a farm. On my mother, and my three sisters, I am reduced. We are left with our farms, to save them from ruin. Not that I have lost so much—I only interposed between my brother and his impending fate by the loan of so much. I give myself no airs on that account. But I have been led to the conclusion, after a long consideration of the whole, that the wrong scale of the balance was very nearly charged; and I thought that throwing a little filial piety, and from paternal affection, into the scale in my favour, might help to smooth matters at the
grand reckoning. There is still one thing would make
my circumstances quite easy; I have an excise-officer's
commission, and I have just been appointed by the
midst of a country division.
Mr. Stewart, who is one of the
commissioners of excise, was if in his power, to pro-
cure me that division. If I were very sanguine, I
might hope that some of my great patrons might pro-
cure me a treasury warrant for supervisor, surveyor-
general, &c.

Thus secure of a livelihood, " to thee, sweet po-
ty, delightful maid!" I would consecrate my future
days,

No. LXV.
TO PROFESSOR D. STEWART.
Ellistiland, near Dumfries, 20th Jan. 1789.
SIR,
The enclosed sealed packet I sent to Edinburgh
a few days after I had the happiness of meeting you in
Ayrshire, but you were gone for the Continent. I have
added a few more of my productions, those for which I
am indebted to the Nithsdale Muses. The pieces in-
scribed to B. G. Esq. is a copy of verses I sent Mr.
Graham, of Fintry, accompanying a request for his
assistance in a matter, to me, of very great moment.
To that gentleman I am already doubly indebted, for
deeds of kindness of serious import to my dearest
interests, done in a manner grateful to the delicate feel-
lings of sensibility. This poem is a species of composi-
tion new to me; but I do not intend it shall be my last
essay of the kind, as you will see by the " Poet's Pro-
gress." These fragments, if my design succeeds, are
but a small part of the intended whole. I propose it
shall be the work of my utmost exertions ripened by
years; of course I do not wish it much known. The
fragment, beginning "A little, upright, tart, pert,"
&c. I have not shown to man living, till now I send it
you. It forms the postulata, the axioms, the defini-
tion of a character, which, if it appear at all, shall be
pleased in a variety of light. This particular part I
send you merely as a sample of my hand at portrait-
sketching; but lest idle conjecture should pretend to
point out the original, please let it be for your single,
sole inspection,

Need I make any apology for this trouble to a gen-
tleman who has treated me with such marked benevo-
teness and patronage as one who has entered into my
interests with so much zeal, and on whose personal
decisions I can so fully depend? A poet as I am by
trade, these decisions to me are of the last conse-
quency. My late transient acquaintance among some
of the mere rank and file of greatness, I resign with
ease, but to the distinguished champions of genius and
learning, I shall be ever ambitious of being known.
The native genius and accurate discernment in Mr.
Stewart's critical strictures; the justness (iron justice,
for he has no bowels of compassion for a poor poetic
sinner) of Dr. Gregory's remarks, and the delicacy of
Professor Dairle!s taste, I shall ever reverence. I shall
be in Edinburgh some time next month.
I have the honour to be, SIR,
Your highly obliged,
And very humble servant,
ROBERT BURNS.

No. LXVI.
TO BISHOP GEDDES.
Ellistiland, near Dumfries, 3d Feb. 1789.
VENERABLE FATHER,
As I am conscious, that wherever I am, you do me
the honour to interest yourself in my welfare, it gives
me pleasure to inform you that I am here at last sta-
tionary in the serious business of life, and have now not
only the retired leisure but the leisure time to attend to
those great and important questions, what I am and for
what I am destined?

In that first concern, the conduct of the man, there
was ever but one side on which I was habitually blame-
able, and there I have secured myself in the way
pointed out by Nature's God. I was sen-
sible that, to so helpless a creature as a poor poet, a
wife and family were encumbrances, which a species of
prudence would bid him shun; but when the al-
ternative was, being at eternal warfare with myself,
on account of habitual follies to give them no worse
name, which no general example, no licentious wit, no
sophistical idiocy, would to me, ever justify, I must
have been a fool to have hesitated, and a madman to
have made another choice.

In the affair of a livelihood, I think myself tolerably
secure: I have good hopes of my farm; but should
the attempt on the Nithsdale Muses fail, I have on my
simple petition, will at any time procure me bread.
There is a certain stigma affixed to the character of
an excise officer, but I do not intend to borrow honour
from any profession, and though the salary be compar-
atively small, it is great to any thing that the first
twenty-five years of my life taught me to expect.

Thus, with a rational aim and method in life, you
may easily guess, my reverend and much honoured
friend, that my characteristic trade is not forgotten.
I am, if possible, more than ever an enthusiast to the
Muses. I am determined to study man, and nature,
and in that view incessantly commission, which on my
simple petition, will at any time procure me bread.
There is a certain stigma affixed to the character of
an excise officer, but I do not intend to borrow honour
from any profession, and though the salary be compar-
atively small, it is great to any thing that the first
twenty-five years of my life taught me to expect.

You will see in your book, which I beg your pardon
for detaining so long, that I have been tuning my lyre
on the banks of Nith. Some large poetic plans that are
floating in my imagination, or partly put in execution,
I shall impart to you when I have the pleasure of meet-
ing with you: which, if you are then in Edinburgh, I
shall have about the beginning of March.

That acquaintance, worthy Sir, with which you were
pleased to honour me, you must still allow me to be
valuable; and would not, so far as I have been able to
transient connection with the merely great, I cannot
lose the patronizing notice of the learned and good,
without the bitterest regret.

No. LXVII.
FROM THE REV. P. CARPRAE.
2d Jan. 1789.
SIR,
If you have lately seen Mrs. Dunlop, of Dumfriess, you
have certainly heard of the author of the verses which
accompany this letter. He was a man highly esti-
bated for every accomplishment and virtue which
adorns the character of a man or a christian. To
a great degree of literature, of taste, and poetic genius,
was added an invincible modesty of temper, which
prevented in a great degree his figuring in life, and con-
fined the perfect knowledge of his character and tal-
ten to a small circle of his chosen friends. He was
sustained in his life a happy week, by an in-
flammatory fever, in the prime of life—beloved by all
who enjoyed his acquaintance, and lamented by all
who have any regard for virtue and genius. There is
a very high regret that the God of the玑ans has been
with whom all men speak well of; if ever that we fell upon
the head of mortal man, it fell upon him. He has left be-
LETTERS.

Your are right, Madam, in your idea of poor Myine a poem, which he has addressed to me. The piece has as much merit as any other of his, but it has one great fault,—it is, by far, too long. Besides, my success has encouraged such a shauld of ill-avowed monsters to crawl in to public notice, under the title of "Scottish Poets," that it very hardens the public taste, which is towards the little.—When I write to Mr. Carfrae, I shall advise him rather to try one of his deceased friend's English pieces. I am profoundly hurred with my own matters, else I would have requested a perusal of all Myine's poetic performances; and would have offered his friends my assistance in either selecting or correcting what would have been proper for the press, but the circumstance of it occupying me so much, and perhaps a little oppressus my present spirits, shall fill up a paragraph in some future letter. In the meantime, allow me to close this epistle with a few lines done by a friend of mine

I give you them, that, as you have seen the original, you may guess whether one or two alterations I have ventured to make in them, be any real improvement.

Like the fair plant that from our touch withdraws,
Shrink, mildly fear'd, even from applause.
Be all a mother's fondest hope can dream,
And all you are, my charming ***, seem,
Straight as the fox-glove, ere her bells disclose,
Mild as the maiden-blushing hawthorn blows,
Fair as the fairest of each lovely kind,
Your form shall be the image of your mind;
Your manners shall so true your soul express,
That all shall long to know the worth they guess;
Congenial hearts shall greet with kindred love,
And even sick'ning envy must approve.

No. LXVIII.
TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Ellisland 4th March, 1789.

Here am I, my honoured friend, returned safe from the capital. To a man who has a home, however humble or remote—if that home is like mine, the scene of domestic comfort—the bustle of Edinburgh will soon be a business of sickening disgust.

"Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate you."

When I must skulk into a corner, lest the rattling equipage of some gaping blockhead should mangie me in the mire, I am tempted to exclain—"What merit has he had, or what demerit have I found, in some state of pre-existence that he is paraded into this state of being with the spectacle of, and the key of riches in his puny fate, and I am kicked into the world, the sport of folly, or the victim of pride?" I have read some where of a monarch (in Spain I think it was,) who was so out of humour with the Fellowmen system of astronomy, that he said, had he been of the Creator's council, he could have saved him a great deal of labour and absurdity. I will not defend this blasphemous speech, but often, as I have glided with humble stealth through the pomp of Prince's street, it has suggested itself to me, as an improvement on the present human state, that a man, in proportion to his own conceit of his consequence in the world, could have pushed out the longitude of his common size, as a soul pushes out his horus, or as we draw out a perspective. I have enjoyed the blushing alternation, not to mention the prodigious saving it would be in the tear and wear of the neck and limbs, singular existence that he is paraded into this world, by way of tossing the head and tiptoe-strutting, would evidently turn out a vast advantage, in enabling us at once to adjust the ceremonies in making a bow, or making way to a great man, and that too within a second of the precise sphericall angle of reverence, or an inch of the particular point of respectful distance, which have been the source of incalculable inconvenience. As a measuring glance at its towering altitude would determine the affair like instinct.

P. CARFRAE.

No. LXIX.
TO THE REV. P. CARFRAE.

1789.

REVEREND SIR,

I do not recollect that I have ever felt a severer pang of shame, than on looking at the date of your obliging letter which accompanied Mr. Myine's poem.

I am much to blame: the honour Mr. Myine has done me, greatly enhanced in its value by the flattering melancholy circumstance of its being the last production of his muse, deserved a better return.

I have, as you hint, thought of sending a copy of the poem to some periodical publication; but, on second thoughts, I am afraid that, in the present case, it would be an improper step. My success, perhaps as much accidental as merited, has brought an inundation of nonsense, under the name of Scottish poetry. Subscription bills for Scottish poems have so dunned, and dinned into the public, that the very name is in danger of contempt. For these reasons, if publishing any of Mr. Myine's poems in a magazine, &c, be at all prudent, in my opinion, it certainly should not be a Scottish poem. The profits of the labours of a man of genius are, I hope, as honourable as any profits what ever; and Mr. Myine's relations are most justly entitled to that honest harvest which fate has denied him to reap. But let the friends of Mr. Myine's fame (among whom I crave the honour of ranking myself) always keep in eye his responsibility as a man and as a poet, and take no measure that before the world knows anything about him, would risk his name and character being classed with the fouls of the lines.

These beautiful lines, we have reason to believe, are the production of the lady to whom this letter is addressed. E. 
I have, Sir, some experience of publishing, and the way in which I should proceed with Mr. Myine's poems is this: I would publish in two or three English and Scottish public papers, any one of his English poems which should, by private judges, be thought the most excellent, and mention it, at the same time, as one of the productions of a Lothian farmer, of respectable character, lately deceased, whose poems his friends had an idea to publish soon, by subscription, for the sake of his numerous family — not in pity to that family, but in justice to what his friends think the poetic merits of the deceased; and to secure, in the most effectual manner, to those tender connexions, whose right it is, the pecuniary reward of those merits.

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No. LXX.

To Dr. Moore,

Ellistland, 22d March, 1789.

Sir,

The gentleman who will deliver you this is a Mr. Nielson, a worthy clergyman, in my neighbourhood, and a very particular acquaintance of mine. As I have troubled him with this packet, I must turn him over to your good disposition, to recompense him for it in a way most适合 his character, and you will find, where you can effectually serve him—Mr. Nielson is on his way for France, to wait on his Grace of Queensberry, on some little business of a good deal of importance to him, and he wishes for your instructions respecting the most eligible mode of travelling, &c., for him, when he has crossed the channel. I should not have dared to take this liberty with you, but that I am told, by those who have the honour of your person's acquaintance, that to be a poor honest Scot, is a letter of recommendation to you, and that to have it in your power to serve such a character gives me much pleasure.

The enclosed ode is a compliment to the memory of the late Mrs. *****, of *****. You, probably, know her personally, an honour of which I cannot boast; but I spent my early years in her neighborhood, and among her servants and tenants, I know that she was detested with the most heartfelt charity. However, in the particular part of her conduct which vouch'd my poetic wrath, she was much less blamable. In January last, on my road to Ayshire, I had put up at Bailie Whigman's in Sangochar, the only tolerable inn in the place. The frost was keen, and the evening being and howling wind were ushering on a night of snowy drift. My horse and I were both so much fatigued with the labours of the day; and just as my friend the Bailie and I were bidding defiance to the storm, over a smoking bowl, in wheels the funeral pageantry of the great Mrs. *****; and poor I am forced to brave all the horrors of the tempestuous night, and jade my horse, my young favourite horse, whom I had just christened Lescass, twelve miles farther on, through the wildest moors and hills of Ayshire, to New Cumnuck, the next inn. The powers of poyse and prose sink under me, when I would describe what I felt. Suffice it to say, that when a good fire at New Cumnuck, had so far recovered my frozen senses, I sat down and wrote the enclosed ode.*

I was at Edinburgh lately, and settled finally with Mr. Creech; and I must own, that at last, he has been amiable and fair with me.

No. LXXXI.

To Mr. Hill.

Ellistland, 2d April, 1789.

I will make no excuses, my dear Bibliopolus, (God forgive me for murdering language,) that I have sat down to write you on this vile paper.

It is economy, Sir; it is that cardinal virtue, prudence; so I beg you will sit down, and either compose or borrow a panegyric. If you are going to borrow, apply to

* to compose, or rather to compound something very clever on my remarkable frugality; that I write to one of my most esteemed friends on this wretched paper, which was originally intended for the venal files of some drunken exciseman, to take dirty notes in a miserable vault of an ale cellar.

O Frugality! thou mother of ten thousand blessings — thou cook of fat beef and dainty greens—thou manufacturer of warm Shetland hose, and comfortable surtouts! — thou old housewife, darning thy decayed stockings with thy ancient spectacles on thy aged nose; — lead me, hand in hand, in thy Clutching, palsied fist, up those heights, and through those thickets, hitherto inaccessible, and which the most potent of all power is impotent to — profound, that the hungry worshippers of fame are breathless, clambering, hanging between heaven and hell; but those eluding them — those, the all-sufficient, all-powerful deity, holds his immediate court of joys and pleasures; where the sunny exposure of plenty, and the hot walls of profession, produce those blissful fruits of luxury, exotics in this world, and natives of Paradise. — Thou withered sybil, my sage conductress, usher me into the refrigerant, adored presence! — The power, splendid and potent as it now is, was once the profligating warmth of thy faithful carer and tender arm; call me thy son, thy cousin, thy kinsman, or favourite, and abjure the gods, by the scenes of his infant years, no longer to require me as a stranger, or an enemy, to favour me with his peculiar countenance and protection! He daily bestows his greatest kindnesses on the undeserving and the worthless,—assure him that I bring ample documents of meritorious demerits! Pledge yourself for me, that for the glorious cause of Lucr, I will do any thing — be any thing— but the howling speech of public oppression, or the vulture of public robbery.

But to descend from heroics,

I want a Shakespeare; I want likewise an English Dictionary-Johnson's suppose is best. In these and all my prose commissions, the cheapest is always the best for me. There is a small debt of honour that I owe Mr. Robert Cleggou, in Sangoth Mills, my worthy friend, and your well wisher. Please give him, and urge him to take it, the first time you see him, ten shillings worth of any thing you have to sell, and place it to my account.

The library scheme that I mentioned to you is already begun, under the direction of Captain Riddell. There is another in emulation of it going on at Closeburn, under the auspices of Mr. Montg of Closeburn, which will be on a greater scale than ours. Capt. R. gave his infant society a great many of his old books, else I had written you on that subject; but one of these days, I shall trouble you with a communication for the Mankind Friendly Society; — a copy of The Spectator, Mirrour, and Lounger; Man of Feeling, of the World; Bishop's Geographical Grammar, with some religious pieces, will likewise be our first order.

When I grow richer I will write to you on gilt paper, to make amendments for this sheet. At present every guinea has a five guineas errand with, My dear Sir, your faithful, poor, but honest friend.

R. B.
LETTERS.

No. LXII.
TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Ellisland, 4th April, 1789.

I no sooner hit on any poetic plan or fancy, but I wish to send it to you; and if knowing and reading these give half the pleasure to you, that communicating them to you gives to me, I am satisfied.

I have a poetic whim in my head, which I at present dedicate, or rather inscribe, to the Right Hon. C. J. Fox: but how long that fancy may hold, I cannot say. A few of the first lines I have just rough-sketch'd, as follows.*

On the 20th current I hope to have the honour of assuring you, in person, how sincerely I am—

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No. LXIII.
TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.

Ellisland, 4th May, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your duty, free, the favour of the 28th April I received two days ago; I will not say I perused it with pleasure; that is the cold compliment of ceremony; I perused it, Sir, with delicious satisfaction—in short, it is such a letter, that not you nor your friend, but the legislator, by express proviso in their postage-laws, should frank. A letter informed with the soul of friendship is such an honour to human nature, that they should order it free ingress and egress to and from their bags and mails, as an encouragement and mark of distinction to supereminent virtue.

I have just put the last hand to a little poem which I think will be something to your taste. One morning lately as I was out pretty early in the fields sowing some grass seeds, I heard the burst of a shot from a neighbouring plantation, and presently a poor little wounded hare came crippling by me. You will guess my indignation at the inhuman fellow who should shoot a hare at this season, when they all of them have young ones. Indeed there is something in that business of destroying, for our sport, individuals in the animal creation that do not injure us materially, which I could never reconcile to my ideas of virtue.

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On seeing a Fellow wound a Hare with a Shot, April 1789.

Inhuman man I curse on thy barbarous art,
And blasted be thy murderous eye:
May never pity o'er thee with a sigh,
Nor ever pleasure glad thy cruel heart!

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

Seek, mangled innocent, some wond'rous form,
That wond'rous form, alas! thy dying bed,
The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
The cold earth with thy blood-stained bosom warm.

* Here was copied the Fragment inscribed to C. J. Fox. See Poems, p. 81.

Perhaps a mother's anguish adds its wo;
The playful pair crowd fondly by thy side;
Ah! helpless nurseries, who will now provide
That life a mother only can bestow.

Oft as by wining Nuth, I, murmuring, wait
The sober eve, or hail the cheerful dawn,
I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
And curse the ruthless wretch, and mourn thy hapless fate.

Let me know how you like my poem. I am doubtful whether it would not be an improvement to keep out the last stanza but one altogether.

C—— is a glorious production of the Author of man. You, he, and the noble Colonel of the F——- are to me

"Dear as the ruddy drops which warm my breast,"

I have a good mind to make verses on you all, to the tune of "Three gold fellows ayont the glen."

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No. LXXIV.

The poem in the preceeding letter had also been sent by our Bard to Dr. Gregory for his criticism. The following is that gentleman's reply.

FROM DR. GREGORY.

Edinburgh, 2d June, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I take the first leisure hour I could command, to thank you for your letter, and the copy of verses enclosed. As there is real poetical merit, I mean both fancy and tenderness, and some happy expressions in them, I think they well deserve that you should revise them carefully and polish them to the utmost. This I am sure you can do if you please, for you have great command both of expression and of rhymes: and you may judge from the two last pieces of Mrs. Hunter's poetry that I gave you, how much correctness and high polish enhance the value of such compositions. As you desire it, I shall, with great freedom, give you my most rigourous criticisms on your verses. I wish you would give me another edition of them, much amended; and I will send it to Mrs. Hunter, who I am sure will have much pleasure in reading it. I fay give me likewise for myself, and her too, a copy (as much amended as you please) of the Water Fowl on Loch Tarrit.

The Wounded Hare is a pretty good subject; but the measure or stanza you have chosen for it, is not a good one; it does not flow well; and the rhyme of the fourth line is almost lost by its distance from the first, and the two interpolated, close rhymes. If I were you, I would put it into a different stanza yet.

Stanza 1. The executions in the first two lines are too strong or coarse; but they may pass. "Murder-aiming is a bad compound epithet, and not very intelligible. "Blood-stained," in stanza iii. line 4, has the same fault: Ble'd div'd bosom is infinitely better. You have accustomed yourself to such epithets, and have no notion how soft and quaint they appear to others, and how incongruous with poetic fancy and tender sentiments. Suppose Pope had written, "Why that blood-stained bosom gored," how would you have liked it? Form is neither a poetic, nor a dignified, nor a plain common word: it is a mere sportsman's word; unsuitable to pathetic or serious poetry.

"Mangled!" is a coarse word. "Innocent," in this sense, is a nursery word, but both may pass.

Stanza 4. "Who will now provide that life a mother only can bestow?" will not do at all: it is not grammar—it is not intelligible. Do you mean, "pro-
vidia for that life which the mother had bestowed and used to provide for?*

There was a ridiculous air of the pen, "Feeling" (I suppose) for "Pillow," in the title of your copy of verses; but even fellow would be wrong; it is the little colloquial and vulgar word, unsuitable to your sentiments. "Shot" is improper too. On seeing a person (for a sportman) wound a hare, it is needless to add with what weapon; but if you think otherwise, you should say, with a fouling piece.

Let me see you when you come to town, and I will show you some more of Mrs. Hunter's poems.*

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No. LXXXV.

TO MR. MACLEAY, P. DUMBARTON.

4th June, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

Though I am not without my fears respecting my fate, at that grand, universal Inquest of right and wrong, commonly called The Last Day, yet I trust there is one sin, which that arch vagabond, Satan, who is waggish enough to be king's evidence, cannot throw in my teeth, I mean ingratitude. There is a certain pretty large quantity of kindness, for which I remain, and from instinct, I fear, is not still in your debtor; but, though unable to repay the debt, I assure you, Sir, I shall ever warmly remember the obligation. It gives me the sincerest pleasures to hear, by my old acquaintance, Mr. Kenney, that you are, in immortal Allan's language, "Hale and well, and living;" and that your charming family are well, and promising to be an amiable and respectable addition to the company of performers, whom the great Manager of the drama of Man is bringing into action for the succeeding age.

With respect to my welfare, a subject in which you once warmly and effectually interested yourself, I am here in my old way, holding my plough, marking the growth of my corn, or the health of my dairy; and at times sauntering by the delightful windings of the Nith, on the margin of which I have built my humble domicile, praying for reasonable weather, or holding an interlocution with the mice, the only glories with whom I have now any intercourse. As I am entered into the holy state of matrimony, I trust my face is turned completely Zifflordward; and as it is a rule with all honest fellows to repeat the good graces, I hope that the little poetical licenses of former days will of course fall under the obvions influence of some good-natured statute of celestial prescription. In my family devotion, which like a good presbyterian, I occasionally give to my household folks, I am extremely fond of the psalms, "Let not the errors of my youth," &c. and that other, "Lo, children are God's heritage" &c.; in which last, Mrs. Burns, who, by the by, has a glorious "woodnote wild!" at either old song or psalmody, joins me with the pathos of Handel's Messiah.

* * * * *

* It must be admitted, that this criticism is not more distinguished by its good sense, than by its freedom from ceremony. It is impossible not to smile at the manner in which the poet may be supposed to have received it. In fact, it appears, as the sailors say, to have thrown him quite oabcak. In a letter which he wrote soon after, he says, "Dr. G—— is a good man. but he crucifies me."—And again, "I believe in the iron justice of Dr. G——;" but, like the devils, "I believe and tremble." However he profited by these criticisms, as the reader will find by comparing the first edition of this piece with that published in p. 69 of the Poems.
LETTERS.

All the fine satire and humour of your Holy Fair is lost on the English; yet, without more trouble to yourself, you could have conveyed the whole of them. The same is true of your other poems. In your Epistle to J. S., the stanzas, from that beginning with this line, "This life, so far's I understand," to that which ends with—"Short while it graver," I am easy, flowing, gayly philosophical, and of Horatian elegance—the language is English, with a few Scottish words, and some of those so harmonious as to add to the beauty; for what poet would not prefer glowing to light!

I imagine, that by careful keeping, and occasionally polishing and correcting those verses, which the Muse dictates, you will, within a year or two, have another volume as large as the first, ready for the press: and this without diverting you from every proper attention to the study and practice of husbandry, in which I understand you are very learned, and which I fancy you will choose to adhere to, as a wife, while poetry amuses you from time to time as a mistress. The former, like a prudent wife, must not show ill-humour, although you retain a sneaking kindness to this agreeable gaiety, which in no manner alienates your heart from your lawful spouse, but tends on the contrary, to promote her interest.

I desired Mr. Cadell to write to Mr. Creech to send you a copy of Zelazo. This performance has had a great success here; but I shall be glad to have your opinion of it, because I value your opinion, and because I know your are above saying what you do not think.

I beg you will offer my best wishes to my very good friend, Mrs. Hamilton, who I understand is your neighbour. If she is as happy as I wish her, she is happy enough. Make my compliments also to Mrs. Burns: and believe me to be, with sincere esteem,

Dear Sir, yours, &c.

No. LXXVIII.

FROM MISS J. LITTLE.

Loudon House, 12th July, 1789.

SIR,

Though I have not the happiness of being personally acquainted with you, yet, amongst the number of those who have read and admired your publications, may I be permitted to trouble you with this. You know, Sir, I am somewhat in love with the Muses, though I cannot boast of any favours they have deigned to confer upon me as yet; my situation in life has been very much against me as to that. I have spent some years in and about Ecclefechan (where my parents reside,) in the station of a servant, and am now come to Loudon House, at present possessed by Mrs. J——: she is daughter of Mrs Dunlop of Dunlop, whom I understand you are particularly acquainted with. As I had the pleasure of perusing your poems, I felt a partiality for the author, which I should much have experienced had you been in a more dignified station. I wrote a few verses of address to you which I did not then think of ever presenting; but as fortune seems to have favoured me in this, by bringing me into a family, by whom you are as well known and much esteemed, and where perhaps I may have an opportunity of seeing you, I shall, in hopes of future friendship, take the liberty to transcribe them.

Fair fa' the honest rustic swain

The pride o' a' our Scottish plain,

Thou gie's us joy to hear thy strain,

And notes sae sweet:

Old Rama'y's shade reviv'd again

In thee we greet.

Lov'd Thalia, that delightful muse

Seem'd lang shut up as a recluse;

To all she did heraid refuse,

Since Allan's day;

Till Burns arose, then did she chuse

To grace his lay.

To hear thy sang all ranks desire,

Sae weel you strike the dormant lyre;

Apollo with poet's fire

Thy breast does warm;

And critics silently admire

Thy art to charm.

Caesar and Luath weel can speak,

'Tis pity o'er their gabs should стек

But into human nature keck,

And knots unravel:

To hear their lectures once a week,

Nine miles I'd travel.

The dedication to G. H.

An unco bonnie homespun speech,

Wi' winsome glee the heart can teach

A better lesson,

Than servile bands, who faw and flee.

Like beggar's messon.

When slighted love becomes your theme,

And women's faithless vows you blame;

With so much pathos you exclaim,

In your Lament;

But glanc'd by the most frigid dame,

She would relent.

The daisy too, ye sing wi' skill;

And weel ye praise the whisky gill;

In vain I blunt my feeble quill,

Your fame to raise;

While echo sounds from ilk a hill,

To Burns's praise.

Did Addison or Pope but hear,

Or Sam, 'tis critic most severe,

A ploughboy; sing with throat sae clear

They, in a rage,

Their works would a' in pieces tear,

And curse your page.

Sure Milton's eloquence were faint,

The beauties of your verse to paint;

My rude unpolish'd strokes but taint

Their brilliancy;

Th' attempt would doubtless vex a saint,

And well may thee.

The task I'll drop—with heart sincere

To heaven present my humble pray'r,

That all the blessings mortals share,

May be by turns

Dispense'd by an indulgent care,

To Robert Burns!

Sir, I hope you will pardon my boldness in this, my hand trembles while I write to you, conscious of my unworthiness of what I would most earnestly solicit, viz. your favour and friendship; yet hoping you will show yourself possessed of as much generosity and
LETTERS.

So good nature as will prevent your exposing what may justly be found liable to censure in this measure, I shall take the liberty to subscribe myself,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

JANET LITTLE.

P.S. If you would condescend to honour me with a few lines from your hand, I would take it as a particular favour; and direct me to you at Loudon House, near Ga!ston.

No. LXXIX.

FROM MR. *****.

London, 5th August, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR,

Excuse me when I say, that the uncommon abilities which you possess must render your correspondence very acceptable to any one. I can assure you I am particularly proud of your partiality, and shall endeavor, by every method in my power to merit a continuance of your politeness.

When you can spare a few moments, I should be proud of a letter from you, directed to me, Gerard-street, Soho.

I cannot express my happiness sufficiently at the instance of your attachment to my late inestimable friend, Bob Ferguson,* who was particularly intim- ate with myself and relations. While I recollect with pleasure his extraordinary talents, and many amiable qualities, it affords me the greatest consolation that I am honoured with the correspondence of his successor in the national simplicity of his genius, That Mr. Burns has refined it in the art of poetry, must readily be admitted; but notwithstanding many favourable representations, I am yet to learn that he inherits his convivial powers.

There was a richness of conversation, such a plenty of fancy and attraction in him, that when I call the happy period of our intercourse to my memory, I feel myself in a state of delirium. I was then younger than he by eight or ten years, but his manner was so solicitous, that he enraptured every person a round him, and infused into the hearts of the young and the old the spirit and animation which operated on his own mind.

I am, Dear Sir, yours, &c.

No. LXXX.

TO MR. *****.

In answer to the foregoing.

MY DEAR SIR,

The hurry of a farmer in this particular season, and the indulgence of a poet at all times and seasons, will, I hope, plead my excuse for neglecting so long to answer your obliging letter of the 5th of August.

That you have done well in quitting your laborsious concern in ***** I do not doubt: the weighty reasons you mention were, I hope, very, deservedly, indeed, weighty ones, and your health is a matter of the last importance; but whether the remaining proprietors of the paper have also done well, is what I much doubt. The ***** so far as I was a reader, exhibited such brilliancy of point, such an elegance of paragraph, and such a variety of intelligence, that I can hardly conceive it possible to continue a daily paper in the same degree of excellence; but, if there was a man who had abilities equal to the task, that man's assistance the proprietors have lost.

When I received your letter, I was transcribing for * * * * , my letter to the magistrates of the Cansongate Edinburgh, begging their permission to place a tombstone over poor Ferguson, and their edict, in consequence of my petition, they shall send them to * * * * poor Ferguson! If there be a life beyond the grave, which I trust there is; and if there be a good God presiding over all nature which I am sure there is, thou art now enjoying existence in a glorious world, where worth of the heart alone is distinction in the man; where riches, deprived of all their pleasure purchasing powers, return to their native surdité matter: where titles and honour are the disregarded reveries of an idle dream; and where that heavy virtue, which is the negative consequence of steady dullness, and those thoughtless, though often destructive follies, which are the unavoidable aberrations of frail human nature, will be thrown into equal oblivion as if they had never been.

Adieu, my dear Sir! so soon as your present views and schemes are concentrated in an aim, I shall be glad to hear from you; and your welfare and happiness is by no means a subject indifferent.

Yours, &c.

No. LXXIXI.

TO MISS WILLIAMS.

1789.

MADAM,

Of the many problems in the nature of that wonder ful creature, Man, that is one of the most extraordinary, that he shall go on from day to day, from week to week, or month to month; perhaps from year to year, suffering a hundred times more in an hour from the impotent consequences of neglecting what we ought to do, than the very doing of it would cost him. I am deeply indebted to you, first from a most elegant poetic compliment;* than for a polite obliging letter; and lastly, for your excellent poem on the Slave-trade; and yet, wretch that I am! I though the debts were debts of honour, and the debt of charity, I have put off, and put off, even the very acknowledgment of the obliga tion, until you must indeed be the very angel I take you for, if you can forgive me.

Your poem I have read with the highest pleasure. I have a way, whenever I read a book, I means a book in our own trade, Madam, a poetic one, and when it is my own property, that I take a pencil and mark at the ends of verses, or note on margins and odd paper, little criticisms of approbation or disapprobation as I perceive along. I will make no apology for presenting you with a few unconnected thoughts that occurred to me in my repeated perusals of your poem. I want to show you that I have honesty enough to tell you what I take to be truths, even when they are not quite on the side of approbation; and I do it in the firm faith, that you have equal greatness of mind to hear them with pleasure.

I had lately the honour of a letter from Dr. Moore, where he tells me that he has sent me some books. They are not yet come to hand, but I hear they are on the way.

Wishing you all success in your progress in the path of fame; and that you may equally escape the dan ger of stumbling through incautious speed, or losing ground through loitering neglect.

I have the honour to be, &c.

* See Miss Smith's Sonnet, page 101.—not4.
LETTESRS.

No. LXXXII.

FROM MISS WILLIAMS.

7th August, 1739.

DEAR SIR,

I do not lose a moment in returning you my sincere acknowledgments for your letter, and your criticism on my poem, which is a very flattering proof that you have read it with attention. I think your objections are perfectly just, except in one instance.

You have indeed been very profuse of panegyric on my little performance. A much less portion of applause from you would have been gratifying to me; since I think its value depends entirely upon the source from whence it proceeds—the incense of praise, like other incense, is more grateful from the quality than the quantity of the odor.

I hope you still cultivate the pleasures of poetry, which are precious, even independent of the rewards of fame. Perhaps the most valuable property of poetry is its power of disengaging the mind from worldly cares, and leading the imagination to the richest springs of intellectual enjoyment; since, however frequently life may be chequered with gloomy scenes, those who truly love the Muse can always find one little path adorned with flowers and cheered by sunshine.

DEAR MADAM.

Ellisland, 6th Sept. 1789.

I have mentioned, in my last, my appointment to the Excise, and the birth of little Frank, who, by the by, I trust will be no discredit to the honourable name of Wallace, as he has a fine manly countenance, and a figure that might do credit to a little fellow two months older; and likewise an excellent good temper, though, when he pleases, he has a pipe, only not quite so loud as the horn that his immortal namesake blew as a signal to take out the pin of Stirling bridge.

I had some time ago an epistle, part poetic, and part prosaic, from your poetess, Mrs. J. Little, a very ingenious but modest composition. I should have written her, as she requested, but for the hurry of this new business. I have heard of her and her compositions in this country; and I am happy to add, always to the honour of her character. The fact is, I know not well how to write to her: I should sit down to a sheet of paper that I know not how to stain. I am no dab at fine-drawn letter-writing; and except when prompted by friendship or gratitude, or, which happens extremely rarely, inspired by the Muse (I know not her name) that presides over apocryphal writing, I sit down, when necessitated to write, as I would sit down to beat hemp.

Some parts of your letter of the 9th August struck me with the most melancholy concern for the state of your mind at present.

Would I could write you a letter of comfort! I would sit down to tell you with as much pleasure as I would to write an Epic poem of my own composition that should equal the Iliad. Religion, my dear friend, is the true comfort. A strong persuasion in a future state of existence; a position so obviously probable, that, setting reveleth aside, every nation and people, so far as investigation has reached, for at least near four thousand years, have in some mode or other firmly believed it. In vain would we reason and pre-

tend to doubt. I have myself done so to a very daring pitch: but when I reflected that I was opposing the most ardent wishes, and the most darling hopes of good men, and dying in the face of all human belief, in all ages, I was shocked at my own conduct.

I know not whether I have ever sent you the following lines, or if you have ever seen them; but it is one of my favourite quotations, which I keep constantly by me in my progress through life, in the language of the book of Job,

"Against the day of battle and of war?"—

spoken of religion.

To MRS. DUNLOP.

10th August, 1789.

DEAR MRS. DUNLOP.

In answer to your request, I have the pleasure of acquainting you with the state of my health, which is, however, far from good. I have been very busy with Zeluco. The Doctor is so obliging as to request my opinion of it; and I have been revolving in my mind some kind of criticisms on novel-writing, but it is a depth beyond my research. I shall, however, digest my thoughts on the subject as well as I can. Zeluco is a most sterling performance.

Farewell! Dieu, le bon Dieu, je vous commends.

No. LXXXIII.

FROM DR. BLACKLOCK.

Edinburgh, 24th August, 1789.

DEAR BURNS, thy brother of my heart,

Both for thy virtues and thy art;

If art it may be call'd in thee,

Which nature's bounty, large and free,

With pleasure on thy breast diffuses,

And warms thy soul with all the Muses.

Whether to laugh with easy grace,

Thy numbers move the sage's face,

Or bid the softer passion rise,

And ruthless souls with grief surprise,

'Tis nature's voice distinctly felt,

Through thee her organ, thus to melt.

Most anxiously I wish to know,

With thee of late how matters go;

How keeps thy much-loved Jean her health?

What promises thy farm of wealth?

Whether the muse persists to smile,

And all thy anxious cares begone?

Whether bright fancy keeps alive;

And how thy darling infants thrive?

For me, with grief and sickness spent,

Since my journey homeward bent,

Spirits depress'd no more I mourn,

But vigour, life, and health return,

No more to gloomy thoughts a prey,

I sleep all night, and live all day;

By turns my book and friend enjoy,

And thus my circling hours employ.

Happy whilst yet these hours remain

If Burns could join the cheerful train,
LETTERS.

With wonted zeal, sincere and fervent, Salute once more his humble servant,

THO. BLACKLOCK.

No. LXXXV.

TO DR. BLACKLOCK.—See Poems, p. 51.

No. LXXXVI.

TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ. OF FINTRY.

9th December, 1789.

SIR,

I have a good while had a wish to trouble you with a letter, and had certainly done it ere now—but for a humiliating something that throws cold water on the resolution, as if one should say, "You have found Mr. Graham a very powerful and kind friend indeed; and that interest he is so kindly taking in your concerns, you ought, by every thing in your power to keep alive and cherish." Now though since God has thought proper to make one powerful and another helpless, the connexion of obliger and obliged is all fair; and though my being under your patronage is to me highly honourable, yet, Sir, allow me to flatter myself, that as a poet and an honest man, you first interested yourself in my welfare, and principally as such still, you permit me to approach you.

I have found the excise-business go on a great deal smoother with me than I expected: owing a good deal to the generous friendship of Mr. Mitchell, my collector, and the kind assistance of Mr. Findlay, my supervisor. I dare to be honest, and I fear no labour. Nor do I think my hurry'd life quite imitable to my correspondence with the Moses. Their visits to me, indeed, and I believe to most of their acquaintance, like the visits of good angels, are short and far between; but I meet them now and then as I jog through the hills of Nithsdale, just as I used to do on the banks of Ayr. I take the liberty to enclose you a few bagatelles, all of them the productions of my leisure thoughts in my excise rides.

If you know or have ever seen Captain Grose the antiquarian, you will enter into any humour that is in the verses on him. Perhaps you have seen them before, as I sent them to a London newspaper. Though I dare say you have none of the solemn-league-and-covenant fire, which alone so conspicuously inspired Lord George Gordon and the Kilmarnock weavers, yet I think you must have heard of Dr. M'Gill, one of the clergymen of Ayr, and his heretical book. God help him, poor man! Though he is one of the worthiest, as well as one of the ablest of the whole priesthood of the Kirk of Scotland, in every sense of that ambiguous term, yet the poor Doctor and his numerous family are in imminent danger of being thrown out to the mercy of the winter-winds. The enclosed ballad on that business, I confess, too local, but I laughed myself at some conceits in it, though I am convinced in my own conscience that there are a good many heavy stanzas in it too.

The election ballad, as you will see, alludes to the present canvas in our string of boroughs. I do not believe there will be such a hard-run match in the whole general election.*

I am too little a man to have any political attachments; I am deeply indebted to, and have the warmest* This alludes to the contest for the borough of Dumfries, between the Duke of Queensberry's interest and that of Sir James Johnstone. E.

est veneration for, individuals of both parties; but a man who has it in his power to be the father of a country, and who with a character that one cannot speak of with patience.

Sir J. J. does "what man can do;" but yet I doubt his fate.

No. LXXXVII.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Bliteland, 13th December, 1789.

Many thanks, dear Madam, for your sheerful of rhymes. Though at present I am below the veriest prosa, yet from you every thing pleases. I am groaning under the miseries of a diseased nervous system: a system, the state of which is most conductive to our happiness—or the most productive of our misery. For now more than ever I have been so ill with the nervous head ache, that I have been obliged to give up for a time my excise-books, being scarcely able to lift my head, much less to ride once a week over ten muir parishes. With me, despair is the luxuriance of health, existing in the enjoyment of existence; in a few days, perhaps a few hours, loaded with conscious painful being, counting the thirteenth pace of the lingering moments, the repressions of anguish, and refining or deuding a comforter, day follows night, and night comes after day, only to curse him with life which gives him no pleasure; and yet the awful, dark termination of that life is a something at which he recoils.

"Tell us, ye dead; will none of you in pity Disclose the secret—
What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be!—
'tis no matter:
A little time will make us learn'd as you are.

Can it be possible, that when I resign this frail, transitory being, I shall still find myself in conscious existence? When the last gasp of agony has announced that I am no more to those that knew me, and the few who loved me; when the cold, stiffened, unconscious, ghastly corse is resigned into the earth, to be the prey of unsightly reptiles, and to become in time a trodden clod, shall I be yet warm in life, seeing and seen, enjoying and enjoyed? Ye venerable sages, and holy flaminos, is their probability in your conjectures, truth in your stories, of another world beyond death; or are they all alike, baseless visions, and fabricated fables? If there is another life, it must be only for the just, the benevolent, the amiable, and the humane; what a flattering idea, then, is a world to come! Would to God I as firmly believed it, as I ardently wish it! There I should meet an aged parent, now at rest from the many buffetings of an evil world, against which he has so long and bravely struggled. There should I meet the friend, the disinterested friend of my early life; the man who rejoiced to see me, because he loved me and could serve me,—Muir! thy weaknesses, were the aberrations of human nature, but thy heart glowed with every thing generous, manly and noble; and if ever emanation from the All-good Being animated a human form, it is thine!—There should I, with speechless awe, meet thee, again recognize my lost, my ever dear Mary! whose bosom was fraught with truth, honour, constancy, and love.

My Mary, dear departed shade! Wh're is thy place of heavenly rest? Seest thou thy lover lowly laid? I hear'st thou the groans that read his breast?
LETTERS.

Jesus Christ, thou amiablest of characters! I trust thou art no imposter, and that thy revelation of blissful the existence beyond death and the grave; it is not one of the many impostions which time after time, have been palmed on credulous mankind. I trust that in their case, which was the history of the earth he blessed,' I by being yet connected together in a better world, where every tie that bound heart to heart, in this state of existence, shall be, far beyond our present conceptions, more endearing.

I am a good deal inclined to think with those who maintain, that what are called nervous affections are in fact diseases of the heart, and, in that case, I cannot think; and to you I would not venture to write any thing above an order to a cobbler. You have felt too much of the ills of life not to sympathize with a distressed wretch, who is impaired more than half of any faculties he possessed. Your goodness will excuse this distracted scrail, which the writer dare scarcely read, and which he would throw into the fire were he able to write any thing better, or indeed any thing at all.

Rumour told me something of a son of yours who was returned from the East or West-Indies. If you have gottened news of James or Anthony, it was crost in you not to let me know; as I promise you on the sincerity of a man, which is the only security of one world and anxious about another, that scarce any thing could give me so much pleasure as to hear of any good thing belitting my honoured friend.

If you have a minute's leisure, take your pen in pity to be pauvre miserable.

R. B.

No. LXXXVIII.

TO SIR JOHN SINCLAIR.

SIR,

The following circumstance has, I believe, been omitted in the statistical account transmitted to you, of the parish of Dunnecore, in Nithsdale. I beg leave to send it to you, because it is new, and may be useful. How far it is deserving of a place in your patriotic publication, you are the best judge.

To store the minds of the lower classes with useful knowledge is certainly of very great importance, both to them as individuals, and to society at large. Giving them a turn for reading and reflection, is giving them a source of innocence and laudable amusements; and besides, it raises them to a more dignified degree in the scale of rationality. Improved with this idea, a gentleman in this parish, Robert Riddell, Esq. of Glenreedel, set on foot a species of circulating library, on a plan so simple as to be practicable in any corner of the country; and so useful as to deserve the notice of every country gentleman, who thinks the improvement of that part of his own species, whom chance has thrown into the humble walks of the peasant and the artisan, a matter worthy his attention.

Mr. Riddell got a number of his own tenants, and farming neighbours, to form themselves into a society for the purpose of having a library among themselves. They entered into a legal engagement to abide by it for three years: with a saving clause or two, in case of a removal to a distance, or of death. Each member, at his entry, paid five shillings; and at each of their meetings, which were held every fourth Saturday, six pence more. With their entry money, and the credit which they took on the faith of their future funds, they laid in an tolerable stock of books, at the commence ment. What authors they were to purchase, was always decided by a majority. At every meeting, all the books, under certain fines and forfeitures, by way of penalty, were to be rented out; and at the meeting which had their choice of the volumes in rotation. He whose name stood for that night first on the list, had his choice of what volume he pleased in the collection; the second had his choice after the first; the third after the second; and so on to the last. At next meeting, he who had been first on the list at the preceding meeting was last at this; he who had been second was first; and so on through the whole three years. At the exploration of the engagement, the books were sold by auction, but only among the members themselves; and each man had a share in the common stock, in money or in books, as he chose to be a purchaser or not.

At the breaking up of this little society, which was formed under Mr. Riddell's patronage, what with bene fictions of books from him, and what with their own purchases, they had collected together upwards of one hundred and fifty volumes. It will easily be guessed, that a good deal of trash would be bought. Among the books, however, of this little library, were, Blair's Sermons, Robertson's History of Scotland, Humane History of the St.-Arts, The Speculator, Miler, Adventurer, Mirror, Lounger, Observer, Men of Feeling, Man of the World, Chrysal, Don Quixote, Joseph Andrews, &c. A peasant who can read and enjoy such books, is certainly a much superior being to his neighbour, who perhaps stalks beside his team, very little removed except in shape, from the brutes he drives.

Wishing your patriotic exertions their so much merited success, I am, Sir, your humble servant,

A PEASANT.

No. LXXXIX.

TO CHARLES SHARPE, ESQ. OF HODDOM.

Under a fictitious Signature, enclosing a ballad, 1790 or 1791.

It is true, Sir, you are a gentleman of rank and fortune, and I am a poor devil; you are a feather in the cap of society, and I am a very hobnail in his shoes; yet I have the honour to belong to the same family with you, and on that score I now address you. You will perhaps suspect that I am going to claim your affiniy with the ancient and honourable house of Kilpatrick; No, no, Sir; I cannot indeed be properly said to belong to any house, or even any province or country.

This letter is extracted from the third volume of Sir John Sinclair's Statistics, p. 598. It was enclosed to Sir John by Mr. Riddell himself, in the following letter, also printed there.

"Sir John, I enclose you a letter, written by Mr. Burns, as an addition to the account of Dunsecrope parish. It contains an account of a small library which he was so good (at my desire) as to set on foot, in the barony of Monkland, or Pratin's Carse, in this parish. As its utility has been felt, particularly among the younger class of people, I think, that if a similar plan were established in the different parishes of Scotland, it would tend greatly to the speedy improvement of the tenant ry, trades people, and work-people. Mr. Burns was so good as to take the whole charge of this small concern. He was treasurer, librarian, and censor, to this little society, who will long have a grateful sense of his public spirit and exertions for their improvement and information. I have the honour to be, Sir John,

Yours, most sincerely,

ROBERT RIDDEL."
We have gotten a set of very decent players just now. I have seen them an evening or two. David Campbell, in Ayr, wrote to me by the manager of the company, a Mr. Sutherland, who is a man of apparent worth. On New-Year day evening I gave him the following prologue,* which he spouted to his audience with applause—

I can no more.—If once I was clear of this *farm I should respire more at ease.

No. XCI.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Ellisland, 25th January, 1790.

It has been owing to unremitting hurry of business that I have not written to you, Madam, long ere now. My health is greatly better, and I now begin once more to share in satisfaction and enjoyment with the rest of my fellow-creatures.

Many thanks, my much esteemed friend, for your kind letters; but why will you make me run the risk of being contemptible and mercenary in my own eyes? Why place myself on my independent spirit, I hope it is neither poetic license, nor poetic rant; and I am so flattered with the honour you have done me, in making me your companion in friendship and friendly correspondence, that I cannot without pain, and a deep sense of mortification, be reminded of the real inequality between our situations.

Most sincerely do I rejoice with you, dear Madam, in the good news of Anthony. Not only your anxiety about his fate, but my own esteem for such a noble, warm-hearted, manly young fellow, in the little I had of his acquaintance, has interested me deeply in his fortunes.

Falconer, the unfortunate author of the Shipwreck, which you so much admire, is no more. After witnessing the dreadful catastrophe he so feelingly describes in his poem, and after weathering many hard gales of fortune, he went to the bottom with the Aurora frigate; I forget what part of Scotland had the honour of giving him birth, but he was the son of obscurity and misfortune.† He was one of those daring adventures.

* This prologue is printed in the Poems, p. 82.

† Falconer was in early life a sea-boy, to use a word of Shakespeare, on board a man-of-war, in which capacity he attracted the notice of Campbell, the author of the satire on Dr. Johnson, entitled Epigraphe, then purveyor of the ship. Campbell took him as his servant, and delighted in giving him instruction; and when Falconer afterwards acquired celebrity, boasted of him as his scholar. The Editor had this information from a surgeon of a man-of-war, in 1777, who was on board Campbell and Falconer, and who himself perished soon after by shipwreck on the coast of America.

Though the death of Falconer happened so lately as 1770 or 1771, yet in the biography prefixed by Dr. Anderson to his works, in the complete edition of the Poets of Great Britain, it is said—"Of the family, birth-place, and education of William Falconer, there are no memorials." On the authority already given, it may be mentioned, that he was a native of one of the towns on the coast of Fife: and that his parents who had suffered some misfortunes, removed to one of the sea-ports of England, where they both died soon after, of an epidemic fever, leaving poor Falconer, then a boy, forlorn and destitute. In consequence of which, he entered on board a man-of-war.
spiritus which Scotland, beyond any other country, is remarkable for producing. Little does the food moth
ter think, as she hangs delighted over the sweet little
deech at her bosom, where the poor fellow may hereaf
ter wander, and what may be his fate. I remember a
stanza in an old Scottish ballad, which notwithstanding
its rude simplicity, speaks feelingly to the heart:

"Little did my mother think,
That day she cradled me,
What land I was to travel in,
Or what death I should die!"

Old Scottish songs are, you know, a favourite study
and pursuit of mine; and now I am on that subject, I
allow to give you two stanzas of another old simple
ballad, which I am sure will please you. The catasta
rophe of the piece is a poor ruined female lamenting
her fate. She concludes with this pathetic wish:

"O that my father had ne'er on me smiled;
O that my mother had ne'er to me sung
O that my cradle had never been rock'd;
But that I had died when I was young!
O that the grave it were my bed;
My blankets were my winding sheet;
The clocks and the worms my bedfellows a;
And O we sound as I should sleep!"

I do not remember in all my reading to have met
with anything more truly the language of misery than
the explanation in the last line. Misery is like love;
to speak its language truly, the author must have felt
it.

I am every day expecting the doctor to give your
little godson* the small pox. They are rife in the
country, and I tremble for his fate. By the way I can
not help congratulating you on his looks and spirit.
Every person who sees him acknowledges him to be
the finest, handsomest child he has ever seen. I am
myself delighted with the manly swell of his little chest,
and a certain minimsure dignity in the carriage of his
head, and the glance of his fine black eye, which pro
mise the undaunted gallantry of an independent mind.

I thought I had sent you some rhymes, but time
forbids. I promise you poetry until you are tired of
it, next time I have the honour of assuring you how
true I am, &c.

FROM MR. CUNNINGHAM.

28th January, 1790.

In some instances it is reckoned indecorous to quote
any one's own words; but the value I have for
your friendship, nothing can more truly or more elegantly
express than

"Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear."

Having written to you twice without having heard from
you, I am afraid my letters have miscarried. My conjecture is only framed upon the chapter of accidents turning up against me, as it too often does, in the trivial, and, I may with truth say, the more important affairs of life; but I shall continue occasional
ly to inform you what is going on among the circle of
your friends in these parts. In these days of merri
ment, I have frequently heard your name pronounced
at the loval board—under the roof of our hospital's friend at Stenhouse-mills; there were no

* The bard's second son, Francis. E.

"Lingering moments numbered with care."

I saw your Address to the New Year, in the Dum
fries Journal. Of your productions I shall say noth
thing; but my acquaintance allege that when your
name was mentioned, many an old curiosity must
know often happens, I am the champion, the Mendoza,
against all smiling critics and narrow minded reptiles,
of whom a few on this planet do cruise.

With best compliments to your wife, and her black-
eyed sister, I remain Yours, &c.

NO. XCI.

TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.

Ellisland, 12th February, 1790.

I beg your pardon, my dear and much valued friend,
for writing to you on this very unexceptionable, unight
ly sheet—

"My poverty but not my will consents."

But to make amends, since on modish post I have
none, except one poor dwindled half sheet, I hold, which
lies in my drawer among my plebeian foolscap pages,
like the widow of a man of fashion, whom that unpo
lite sconchel, Necessity, has driven from Burgundy
and the apple, to a dish of Bebes, with the scandal
bearing help-mate of a village priest; or a glass of
whiskey-toddle, with the ruby-nailed yokel-fellow of a
foot-padding exciseman—I make a vow to enclose this
sheet full of epitaphic fragments in that which I only
scrap of gilt paper.

I am indeed your unworthy debtor for three friendly
letters. I ought to have written to you long ere now
but it is a literal fact, I have scarcely a spare moment.
It is not that I will not write to you; Miss Bornew is
not more dear to her guardian angel, nor his grace the
Duke of ******** to the powers of **** by my
friend Cunningham to me. It is not that I cannot
write to you; should you doubt it, take the following
fragment which was intended for you some time ago
and be convinced that I can antiheuristic sentiment, and
circumciseable periods, as well as any coiner of phrase
in the regions of philology.

December, 1789.

MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,

Where are you? and what are you doing? Can
you be that son of levity who takes up a friendship as
he takes up a fashion; or are you, like some other of
the worthiest fellows in the world, the victim of indol
ence, laden with fetters of ever-increasing weight?

What strange beings are we! Since we have a po
sition of conscious existence, equally capable of enjoy
ing pleasure, happiness, and rapture, or of suffering
pain, wretchedness, and misery, it is surely worthy of
an inquiry whether there be not such a thing as a sci
ence of life, whether method, economy, and fertility of
expedients, be not applicable to enjoyment; and
whether there be not a want of celerity in pleasure
which renders our little scattering of happiness still
less; and a profusion and intoxication in bliss, which
leads to satiety, disgust, and self-abhorrence. There
is not a doubt but that health, talent, character, de
cent of sentiments, &c, are important in the making of
natural blessings; and yet do we not daily see those who
enjoy many or all of these good things, contrive, not
withstanding, to be unhappy, as other men are happy.
I believe one great source of this mistake or misconduct is owing to a certain
stimulus, with us called ambition, which gaunts us up the face of nature, as we ascend other eminences, for the
indestructible curiosity of viewing an extended land
scape, but rather for the dishonest pride of looking
down on others of our fellow-creatures seemingly di
minutive in humbler stations, &c. &c.

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Saturday, 15th February 1790.

God help me I am now obliged to join

"Night to day, and Saturday to the week!"

If there be any truth in the orthodox faith of those churches, I am very much past redemption, and what is worse, **to all eternity.** I am deeply read in Boston's *Fourfold State, Mirrour on Nonconsecution,* Guthrie's *Trial of a Saving Interest,* &c.; but *there is no balm in Gilead, there is no physician there,* for me; so I shall turn Armenian, and trust to "sincere though imperfect obedience."

**Tuesday, 19th.**

Fortunately for me I was prevented from the discussion of the knotty point at which I had just made a full stop. All my fears and cares are of this world: if there is another, an honest man has nothing to fear from it. I hate a man that wishes to be a Delit; but, I fear every fair, unprejudiced inquirer must in some degree be a Sceptic. It is not that there are any very staggering arguments against the immortality of man; but like electricity, phlogiston, &c. the subject is so involved in darkness, that we want data to go upon. One thing frightens me much: that we are to live for ever, seems too good news to be true. That we are to enter a new scene of existence, where exempt from want and pain, we shall enjoy ourselves and our friends, without necessity or separation—how much should I be indebted to any one who could fully assure me that this were certain.

My time is once more expired. I will write to Mr. Cleghorn soon. God bless him and all his concerns. And may all the powers that preside over constitution and friendship, be present with all their kindlest influence, when the hearer of this, Mr. Syme, and you meet! I wish I could also make one—. I think we should be ***

Finally, brethren, farewell! Whatever things are lovely, whatsoever things are gentle, whatsoever things are kind, think on these things, and think on ROBERT BURNS.

No. XCV.

TO MR. HILL.

Ellisland, 24 March, 1790.

At a late meeting of the Munkland Friendly Society, it was resolved to augment their library by the following books, which you are to send us as soon as possible:—The Mirror, The Lounger, Man of Feeling, Man of the World, (these being of my own taste, I wish to have by the first carrier,) Knott's History of the Reformation; Roe's History of the Rebellion in 1615; any good History of the Rebellion in 1745; a Display of the Session Acts and Testimony, by Mr. Gibb; Hervey's Meditations; Beveridge's Thoughts; and another copy of Watson's Book of Divinity.

I wrote to Mr. A. Masterton three or four months ago, to pay some money he owed me into your hands, and lately wrote to you to the same purpose, but I have heard from neither one nor other of you.

In addition to the books I commissioned in my last, I want very much, An Account of the Excise Laws, or an Abridgment of all the Statutes now in force relative to the Excise, by Jellinger Symons; I want three copies of this book: if it is now to be had, cheap or dear, get it for me. An honest country neighbour of mine wants, too, *A Family Bible,* the larger the better, but second-hand, for he does not choose to give above ten shillings for the book. I want likewise for myself as you can pick them up, second-hand or cheap, copies of Goldsmith's *Dramatic Works,* Ben Jonson's, *Hudibras,* Congreve's, Wycherley's, Vanburgh's, *Cibber's,* or any Dramatic Works of the more modern Maccall, Gifford, Foote, Coleman, or Sheridan. A good copy too, of *Métastase,* in French, I much want. Any other good dramatic authors in that language I want also, but comic authors chiefly, though I should wish to have *Dorastor, Cléante,* and *Les Fourberies,* too. I am in no hurry for all, or any of these; but if you accidentally meet with them very cheap, get them for me.

And now to quit the dry walk of business, how do you do, my dear friend? and how is Mrs. Hill? I trust, if now and then not so elegantly handsome, at least as amiable, and sings as divinely as ever. My good wife, too, has a charming "wood-note wild;" how could we four—

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I am out of patience with this vile world for one thing. Mankind are by nature benevolent creatures. Except in a few soundly instances, I do not think that avarice of the good things we chance to have, is a healthy, &c. but we are placed here amid so much nakedness, and hunger, and poverty, and want, that we are under a cursed necessity of studying selfishness, in order that we may exist! Still there are, in every age, a few souls, that do not think of the poor, and the life could desist to selfishness, or even to the necessary alloy of caution and prudence. If ever I am in danger of losing my reason, it is when I contemplate myself on this side of my disposition and character. God knows I am no saint; I have a whole host of follies and sins to answer for; out if I could, and I believe I do it as far as I can; I would wipe away all tears from all eyes. Adieu!

No. XCV.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Ellisland, 13th April, 1790.

I have just now, my ever-honoured friend, enjoyed a very high luxury, in reading a paper of the Lounger. You know my national prejudice. I had often read and admired the papers of Vanbrugh, Congreve, and Goldsmith, and World: but still with a certain regret, that they were so thoroughly and entirely English. Also I have often said to my self, that all the boastcd advantages which my country possesses, despise of that kind of political inequality that can counterbalance the annihilation of her independence, and even her very name! I often repeat that couplet of my favourite poet, Goldsmith—

"States of native liberty possess'd,
Thou very poor may yet be very bless'd."

Nothing can reconcile me to the common terms, "English ambassador, English court, &c. And I am out of all patience to see that equivocal character, Englishmen, impeached by 'the Commons of England.' Tell me, my friend, is this weak prejudice? I believe in my conscience such ideas as, "my country; her independence; her honour; the illustrious names that mark the history of my native Country;" but I believe these, among your men of the world, men who in fact guide for the most part and govern our world, are looked on as so many modifications of wrongheadedness. You know the use of bawling out such terms, to rouse or lead the rabble; but for their own private use; with almost all the able statesmen that ever existed or now exist, when they talk of right and wrong; they only mean proper and improper, and their meaning of conduct, is not what they ought, but what they dare. For the truth of this I shall not ransack the history of nations, but appeal to one of the ablest men that ever lived—the celebrated Earl of Chesterfield. In fact, a man who could thoroughly control his vices.
whenever they interfered with his interests, and who could completely put on the appearance of every virtue as it suited his purposes, is, on the Stanthorpian plan, the perfection of a man to lead nations. But are great abilities, complete without a flaw, and polished without a blemish, the standard of human excellence? This is certainly the staunch opinion of man of the world. But no, virtue has cost me more honest tears than any thing I have read of late a.m. M'Kenzie has been called the Addison of the Scots; and, in my opinion, Addison would not be hurt at the comparison. If he be not Addison's exquisite humour, he is as certainly outdoes him in the tender and pathetic. His Man of Feeling, (but I am not counsel learned in the laws of criticism,) I estimate as the first performance in its kind I ever saw. From what book, moral, or even pious, will the susceptible young mind receive impressions more congenial to humanity and kindness, generosity and benevolence; in short, more of all that ennoble the soul to herself, or endears her to others—than from the simple, affecting tale of poor Harley?

Still, with all my admiration of M'Kenzie's writings, I do not know if they are the fittest reading for a young man who is about to set out, as the phrase is, to make his way into life. Do not you think, Madam, that among the few favoured of Heaven in the structure of their minds, (for such there certainly are,) there may be a purity, a tenderness, a dignity, an elegance of soul, which are of no use, nay, in some degree, absolutely disqualifying for the truly important business of making a man's way into life. If I am not much mistaken, my gallant young friend, A* *** * is very much under these disqualifications; and for the young females of a family I could mention, well they excite parental solicitude; for I, a common acquaintance, or, as my vanity will have it, a humble friend, have often trembled 'for a turn of mind which may render them eminently happy—or peculiarly miserable! I have been manufacturing some verses lately; but as I have got the most hurried season of excise-business over, I hope to have more leisure to transcribe any thing that may show how much I have the honour to be, Madam, yours, &c.

No. XCVI.

FROM MR. CUNNINGHAM.

Edinburgh, 25th May, 1793.

MY DEAR BURNS,

I am much indebted to you for your last friendly, elegant epistle, and it shall make part of the vanity of my composition, to retell you, correspondence through life. It was remarkable your introducing the name of Miss Burnet, at a time when she was in such ill health: and I am sure it will grieve your gentle heart, to hear of her being in the last stage of a consumption. Alas! that so much beauty, innocence, and virtue, should be nipped in the bud. Here was the amiable of cheerfulness—of sensibility, not of allure—ment; and her elegance of manner corresponded with the purity and elevation of her mind.

How does your friendly muse? I am sure she still retains her affection for you, and that you have many of her favours in your possession, which I have not seen. I weary much to hear from you.

I beseech you do not forget me.

I most sincerely hope all your concerns in life pros-

per, and that your coolness enjoys the blessing of good health. All your friends here are well, among whom, and not the least, is your acquaintance, Cleghorn. As for myself, I am well, as far as **** will let a man be, but with these I am happy.

When you meet with my very agreeable friend, J. Syne, give him a hearty squeeze, and bid God bless him.

Is there any probability of your being soon in Edinburgh?

No. XCVII.

TO DR. MOORE.

Dunsfries, Excise-office, 17th July, 1790.

SIR,

Coming into town this morning, to attend my duty in this office, it being collection-day, I met with a gent-

delemmon who tells me he is on his way to London; so I take the opportunity of writing to you, as franking is at present under a temporary delay. I shall have some snatch of leisure through the day, amid our horrid business and bustling, and I shall improve them as well as I can; but let my letter be as stupid as * * *, as miscellaneous as a newspaper, as short as a hungry grace before-meat, or as long as a law paper in the Douglass case; as ill-spelt as country John's 'hillet-doux, or as unmeaning a scratch as Betty Pre-Mucker's answer to it—I hope, considering circumstances, you will forgive it, and, as it will put you to no expense of postage, I shall have the less reflection about it.

I am sadly ungrateful in not returning you thanks for your most valuable present, Educo. In fact you are in some degree blameable for my neglect. You were pleased to express a wish for my opinion of the work, which so flattened me, that nothing less would serve my overweening fancy, than a formal criticism on the book. In fact, I have gravely planned a com-
parative view of you, Fielding, Richardson, and Smol-

let, in your different qualities and merits as novel-writ-

ers. This, I own, betrays my ridiculous vanity, and I may probably never bring the business to bear; but I am fond of the spirit young Eltin shows in the book of Job—'And I, said I, and will also declare my opinion.' I have quite disregarded my copy of the book with my annotations. I never take it up without at the same time taking my pencil, and marking with asterisks, parenthese, &c. wherever I meet with an original thought, a new remark on life and manners, a remarkably well turned period, or a character sketched with uncommon precision.

Though I shall hardly think of fairly writing out my 'Comparative View,' I shall certainly trouble you with my remarks, such as they are.

I have just received from my gentleman, that horrid
summons in the book of Revelation—"That time shall be no more!"

The Little collection of sonnets have some charming poetry in them. If indeed I am indebted to the fair author for the book, and not, as I rather suspect, to a celebrated author of the other sex, I should certainly have written to the lady, with my grateful acknowledgments, and my own ideas of the comparative excellence of her pieces. I would do this last not from any vanity of thinking that my remarks could be of much consequence to Mrs. Smith, but merely from my own feeling as an author, doing as I would be done by.

No. XCVIII.
TO MRS. DUNLOP.
8th Aug. 1790.

DEAR MADAM,

After a long day's toil, plague, and care, I sit down to write to you. Ask me not why I have delayed it so long? It was owing to hurry, indolence, and fifty other things in short, to any thing—but forgetfulness of la plus amiable dessein sze. By the by, you are indebted your best courtesy to me for this last compliment, as I pay it from my sincere conviction of its truth—a quality rather rare in compliments of these grimming, bowing, scraping times.

Well, I hope writing to you will ease a little my troubled soul. Surely has it been bruised to-day! A ci-devant friend of mine, and an intimate acquaintance of yours, has given my feelings a wound that I perceive will gangrene dangerously ere it cure. He has wounded my pride!

No. XCIX.
TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.
Ellistain, 8th August, 1790.

Forgive me my once dear, and ever dear friend, my seeming negligence. You cannot sit down and fancy the busy life I lead.

I laid down my goose feather to beat my brains for an apt simile, and had some thoughts of a country gaunt at a family christening: a bride on the market day before her marriage: a tavern-keeper at an election dinner: &c. &c.—but the resemblance that hits my fancy best, is that Blackguard miscreant, Satan, who roams about like a roaring lion, seeking, searching whom he may devour. However, tossed about as I am, if I choose (and who would not choose) to bind down with the crampets of attention the brazen foundation of integrity, I may rear up the superstructure of Independence, and from its daring turrets, bid defiance to the storms of fate. And is not this a "consummation devoutly to be wished?"

"Thy spirit, Independence, let me share;
Lord of the lion heart and eagle-eye!"

Thy steps I follow with my bosom bare,
Nor heed the storm that howls along the sky!

Are not these noble verses? They are the introduction of Smollet's Ode to Independence: if you have not seen the poem, I will send it to you. How wretched is the man that hangs on by the favours of the past. To shrink from every dignity of man, at the approach of a lordly piece of self-consequence, who amid all his tinsel glitter and stately haste—is but a creature, formed as thou art—and perhaps not so well formed as thou art—came into the world a pulsing infant as thou didst, and must go out of it: as all men must a naked corpse."

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No. C.
FROM DR. BLACKLOCK.
Edinburgh, 1st September, 1790.

How does my dear friend, must I languish to hear, His fortune, relations, and all that are dear! With love of the Muse you so strongly still smitten, I meant this epistle in verse to have written. But from age and infirmity indolence flows, And this, much I fear will restore me to prose. Anon to my business I wish to proceed, Dr. Anderson guides and provokes me to speed, A man of integrity, genius, and worth, Whose soon a performance intends to set forth, A work miscellaneous, extensive, and free, Which will weekly appear by the name of the Bee. Of this from himself I enclose you a plan, And hope you will give what assistance you can, Entangled with business, and haunted with care, In whom more or less human nature a pure share, Some moments of leisure the Muses will claim, A sacrifice due to amusement and fame. The Bee, which sucks honey from every gay bloom, With some rays of your genius her work may illumine,

While the flower whence her honey spontaneously flows, As fragrantly smells, and as vigorously grows.

Now with kind gratulations 'tis time to conclude, And add, your promotion is here understood; Thus free from the servile employ of excuse, Sir, We hope soon to hear you commence Supervisor; You then must at leisure, and free from control, May indulge the strong passion that reigns in your soul.

But I, feeble 1, must to nature give way, Devoted cold death's, and longevity's prey; From verses though languid my thoughts must unbend, Though still I remain your affectionate friend,

THO. BLACKLOCK.

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No. CI.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER
FROM MR. CUNNINGHAM.

Edinburgh, 14th October, 1790.

I lately received a letter from our friend B*******—what a charming fellow lost to society—born to great expectations—with superior abilities, a pure heart, and untainted morals, his fate in life has been hard indeed—still I am persuaded he is happy: not like the galley slave.

* The preceeding letter explains the feelings under which this was written. The strain of indignant injustice goes on some time longer in the style which our Bard was too apt to indulge, and of which the reader has already seen so much. E.
I saw Mr. Dunbar, put under the cover of your newspaper Mr. Wood's poem on Thomson. This poem has suggested an idea to one which you alone are capable to execute—a song adapted to each season of the year. The task is difficult, but the theme is charming; should you succeed, I will undertake to get new music worthy of the subject. What a fine field for your imagination I and who is there alive can do so many beauties from Nature and pastoral imagery as you might do by the song. Here does not exist, so far as I know a proper song for each season. We have songs on hunting, fishing, skating, and one autumnal song, \textit{Harvest at Home}. As your Muse is neither spanned nor rusty, you may mount the hill of Parnassus, and return with a sonnet in your pocket for every season. For my suggestions, if I be rude, correct me; if impertinent, chastise me; if presuming, despise me. But if you blend all my weaknesses, and pour out one grain of insincerity, then I am not thy Faithful Friend. 

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\textbf{No. CII.}

\textit{To MRS. DUNLOP.}

\textit{November, 1890.}

\textit{As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.}

Fate has long owed me a letter of good news from you, in return for the many tidings of sorrow which I have received. In this instance I most cordially obey the apologist—\textit{Rejoice with them that do rejoice,}—for me to \textit{sing} for joy, is no new thing; but to \textit{preach} for joy, I have done in the commencement of this epistle, is a pitch of extravagant rapture to which I never rose before.

I read your letter—literally jumped for joy—How could such a mercurial creature as a poet lornisply keep his seat on the receipt of the best news from his best friend? I seized my gilt-headed Waagie rod, an instrument indispensably necessary in my left hand, in the moment of inspiration and rapture; and at stride, stride—quick and quicker—out skipped I among the broomy banks of Nith, to muse over my joy by retail. To keep within the bounds of prose was impossible. Mrs. Little's is a more elegant, but not a more sincere compliment, to this little fellow, than I am, almost, poured out to him in the following verses. \textit{See Poems, p. 75—On the Birth of a Posthumous Child.}

I am much flattered by your approbation of my \textit{Tom o'Shanter}, which you express in your former letter; though, by the by, you load me in that satirical letter with accusations heavy and many: to all which I plead not guilty! Your book is, I hear, on the road to reach me. As to printing of poetry, when you prepare it for the press, you have only to spell it right, and place the capital letters properly: as to the punctuation, the printer does that himself.

I have a copy of \textit{Tom o'Shanter} ready to send you by the first opportunity: it is too heavy to send by post.

I heard of Mr. Corbet lately. He, in consequence of your recommendation, is most zealous to serve me.—Please favour me soon with an account of your good folks; if Mrs. H. is recovering, and the young gentleman doing well.

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\textbf{No. CIV.}

\textit{To MR. PETER HILL.}

\textit{17th January, 1791.}

Take these two guineas, and place them over against that, which accounts of yours! which has gagged my mouth these five or six months! I can as little write good things as apologies to a man I owe money to. O the supreme curse of making three guineas do the business of five! Not all the labours of Hercules; not all the Hebrews' three centuries of Egyptian bondage were such an insupportable business: such a ******** task! I outcry! thou half sister of death, thou consignee of hell! where shall I find force of execution equal to the amplitude of thy demerits? Oppressed by thee, the venerable ancient, grown hoary in the practice of every virtue, laden with years and wealthlessness, implores a little help to support his existence from a stony hearted son of Mann, whose sun of prosperity never knew a cloud; and is by him damned, and thenceforward by this man, the man of sentiment, whose heart glows with independence, and melts with sensibility, uly pines under the neglect, or withereth in bitterness of soul under the continuance of arrogant, unfeeling wealth. Oppressed by thee, the son of genius, whose ill starred ambition plants him at the tables of the fashionable and polite, must see in suffering silence his remark neglected, and his person despised, while shallow greatness, in his idiot attempt at wit, shall meet with contempt and applause. Nor is it only the family of worth that have reason to complain of thee, the children of folly and vice, though in common with thee the offspring of evil, smart equally under thy rod. Owing to thee, the man of unfortunate disposition and neglected education, is condemned as a fool for his dissipation, despised and shamed as a needy wretch, when his follies, as usual, bring him to want; and when his unprincipled necessities drive him to dishonourable practices, he is abhorred as a miscreant, and persifled by the justice of his country. But far otherwise is the lot of the man of family and fortune. His early follies and extravagance are spirit and fire; his consequent wants are the embarrassments of an honest fellow; and when, to remedy the matter, he has gained a legal commission to plunder distant provinces, or massacre peaceful nations, he returns, perhaps, from the field the tattered rag and bone of a man, whose lives wicked and respected, and dies a ******** and a

* Immediately after this were copied the first six stanzas of the Elegy given in p. 82 of the Poems.
But for this, perhaps, you have a good apology—you stick to the popular tale.

And now that I have got out my mind, and feel a little relieved of the weight of that debt I owed you, let me end this dissertation, and let you know that I have proved your talent for a species of composition in which but a very few of our own poets have succeeded—Goethe in his Gotterdämmerung, for instance, will eclipse Tityler's Prior and La Fontaine; for with equal wit, equal power of numbers, and equal naïveté of expression, you have a bolder, and more vigorous imagination.

I am, dear Sir, with much esteem,
Yours, &c.

No. CVI.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Ellisland, 7th February, 1791.

When I tell you, Madam, that by a fall, not from my horse, but with my horse, I have been a cripple some time, and that this is the first day my arm and hand have been able to serve me in writing, you will allow that it is too good an apology for my seemingly ungrateful silence. I am now getting better, and am able to rhyme a little, which implies some tolerable ease; as I cannot think that the most poetical genius is able to compose on the rack.

I do not remember if ever I mentioned to you my having got a short poem of a few elegant lines by Miss Burnett of Mombodco. I had the honour of being pretty well acquainted with her, and have seldom felt so much at the loss of an acquaintance, as when I heard that so amiable and accomplished a piece of Gothic works was no more. I have as yet gone no farther than the following fragment, of which please let me have your opinion. You know that elegy is a subject so much exhausted, that the most new idea on the business is not to be expected; 'tis well if we can place an old idea in a new light. How far I have succeeded as to this last, you will judge from what follows:—

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lord. Nay, worse of all, alas, for helpless woman! the needy prostitute, who hasstarved at the corner of the street waiting to earn the wages of casual prostitution, is left neglected and insulted, ridden down by the chariot-wheels of the coroneted Rip, hurrying on with the guilty agnate; she who without the same necessities to plead, rots nightly in the same guilty trade.

Well! Divines may say of it what they please, but execration is to the mind what phlebotomy is to the body; the vital sluices of both are wonderfully relieved by their respective evacuations.

CV.

FROM A. F. TITYLER, ESQ.

Edinburgh, 12th March, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Hill yesterday put into my hands a sheet of Grose's Antiquities, containing a poem of yours entitled Tum o'Shaunter, a tale. The very high pleasure I have received from the perusal of this admirable piece, I feel, demands the warmest acknowledgments. Hill tells me he is to send off a packet for you this day: I cannot resist, therefore, putting on paper what I must have told you in person, and I met with you after the recent perusal of your tale, which, that I feel I owe you a debt, which, if undischarged, would reproach me with ingratitude. I have seldom in my life tasted of higher enjoyment from any work of genius, than I have received from this composition: and I am much mistaken, if this poem alone, had you never written another syllable, would not have been sufficient to have transmitted your name down to posterity with high reputation. In the introductory part, where you paint the character of your hero, and exhibit him at the ale-houseingle, with his tippling cronies, you have delineated nature with a humour and naïveté that would do honour to Matthew Prior; but when you describe the infernal orgies of the witches' Sabbath, and the hellish scenery in which they are exhibited, you display a power of imagination that Shakespeare himself could not have exceeded. I know not that I have ever met with a picture of more horrible fancy than the following:

"Coffins stood round like open presses, That sh'd, the dead in their last dresses; And by some devilish contrivance, Each in his cold hand held a light."

But when I came to the succeeding lines, my blood ran cold within me:

"A knife, a father's throat had mangled, Whom his ain son of life be'd; The gray hairs yet stack to the head."

And here, after the two following lines, "Wi' mair o' horrible and awful," &c, the descriptive part might perhaps have been better closed, than the four lines which succeed, which, though good in themselves, yet as they derive all their merit from the satire they contain, are here rather misplaced among the circumstances of pure horror. The initiation of the young woman, is most happily described—the effect of her charms exhibited in the dance on Satan himself—the apostrophe, "Ah! little thought thy reverend graunie to—the transport of Tam, who forgets his situation, and enters completely into the spirit of the scene, are all features of high merit in this excellent composition. The only fault that it possesses, is, that the windlass is unsuited to the scene; but the excellent preparation to the interest which is excited by the descriptive and characteristic painting of the preceding parts, the preparation is fine, but the result is not adequate.

* Our bard profited by Mr. Tytler's criticisms, and expunged the four lines accordingly.
LETTERS.

I and 's would have on I was vice goodness live born while pleased Scots, Acknowledging faith the may cravingerty shall Ladyship's

whether with the, with what have by am most Token is from my measles rather Miller, Lady

godson, Ladyship only the box sacred. This

is a

more

cut

ever, that I am deeply indebted to Mr. G.-- a

of

influence, he must live and die poor; but I will indulge the flattering faith that my poetry will considerably outlive my jortery; and, without any futin attention of spirit, I can promise and affirm, that it must be no ordinary craving of the latter shall ever make me do any thing injurious to the honest fame of the former. Whatever may be my failings, for failings are a part of human nature, may they ever be those of a generous heart and an independent mind! It is no fault of mine that I was born to dependence; nor is it Mr. G.--'s highest praise that he can commend indifference; but it is his merit to bestow, not only with the kindness of a brother, but with the politeness of a gentleman; and I trust it shall be mine to receive with thankfulness, and return with undiminished gratitude.

No. CX.

FROM THE REV. G. BAIRD.

London, 8th February, 1791.

Sir,

I trouble you with this letter to inform you that I am in hopes of being able very soon to bring to the press, a new edition (long since talked of) of Michael Bruce's Poems. The profits of the edition are to go to his mother—a woman of eighty years of age—poor and helpless. The poems are to be published by subscription; and it may be possible, I think, to make out a 2s. 6d., or 3s. volume, with the assistance of a few short unpublished verses, which I have got from the mother of the poet.

But the design I have in view in writing to you, is not merely to inform you of these facts, it is to solicit the aid of your name and pen, in support of the scheme. The reputation of Bruce is already high with every reader of classical taste, and I shall be anxious to guard against tarnishing his character, by allowing any new poems to appear that may lower it. For this purpose the MSS. I am in possession of, have been submitted to the revision of some whose critical talents I can trust to, and I mean still to submit them to others.

May I beg to know, therefore, if you will take the trouble of perusing the MSS.—of giving your opinion, and suggesting what curtailments, alterations, or amendments, occur to you as advisable? And will you allow us to let it be known, that a few lines by you will be added to the volume?

I know the extent of this request. It is bold to make it. But I have this consolation, that though you see proper to refuse it, you will not blame me for having made it; you will see my apology in the motive.

May I just add, that Michael Bruce is one in whose company, from his past appearance, you would not, I am convinced, blush to be found; and as I would submit every line of his that should now be published, to your own criticism, you would be assured that nothing derogatory, either to him or you, would be admitted in that appearance he may make in future.

You have already paid an honourable tribute to kindred genius, in Ferguson; I fondly hope that the mother of Bruce will experience your patronage

I wish to have the subscription-papers circulated by the 14th of March, Bruce's birthday, which I understand some friends in Scotland talk this year of observing—at that time it will be renewed, I imagine, to place a plain homely stone, over his grave. This at least I trust you will agree to do—to furnish, in a few couplets, an inscription for it.

On these points may I solicit an answer as early as possible? a short delay might disappoint us in procuring that relief to the mother, which is the object of the whole.

You will be pleased to address for me under cover to the Duke of Athole, London.

P. S. Have you ever seen an engraving publish here some time ago, from one of your poems "O than..."
NO. CXI.

TO THE REV. G. BAIRD.

In answer to the foregoing.

Why did you, my dear Sir, write to me in such a hesitating style, on the business of poor Bruce? Don't I know, and have I not felt the many ills, the peculiar ills, that poetic flesh is heir to? You shall have your choice of all the unpublished poems I have; and had your letter had my direction so as to have reached me sooner (it only came to my hand this moment) I should have directly put you out of suspense on the subject. I only ask that some prefatory advertisement in the book, as well as the subscription-bills may bear, that the publication is solely for the benefit of Bruce's mother. I would not put it in the power of ignorance to surmise, or malice to insinuate, that I clubbed a share in the work for mercenary motives. Nor need you give me credit for any remarkable gencrosity in my part of the business. I have such a host of pecca
dilkes, failings, follies, and backslidings (any body but myself might perhaps give some of them a worse appli
cation,) that by way of some balance, however trifling, in the account, I am faint to do any good that occurs in my very limited power to a fellow-creature, just for the selfish purpose of clearing a little the vista of retro
pection.

* * *

NO. CXII.

TO DR. MOORE.

Ellisland, 27th February, 1791.

I do not know, Sir, whether you are a subscriber to Grose's Antiquities of Scotland. If you are, the enclosed poem will not be altogether new to you, Captain Grose did me the favour to send me a dozen copies of the proof sheet, of which this is one. Should you have read the piece before, still this will answer the principal end I have in view: I it will give me another opportunity of thanking you for your goodness to the rustic bard; and also of showing you, that the abilities you have been pleased to commend and patronize, and are still employed in the way you wish.

The Elégy on Captain Henderson is a tribute to the memory of a man I loved much. Poets have in this the same advantage as Roman Catholics; they can be of service to their friends after they have past that bourne where all other kindness ceases to be of any avail. Whether, after all, either the one or the other be of any real service to the dead, is, I fear, very problematical: but I am sure they are highly gratify
ing to the living: and, as a very orthodox text, I forget where in Scripture, says, 'whatever is not of faith is sin;' so say I, whatsoever is not conformable to so-ciety, and is of positive enjoyment, is of God, the giver of all good things, and ought to be received and enjoy-
ed by his creatures with thankful delight. As almost all my religious tenets originate from my heart, I am wonderfully pleased with the idea, that I can still keep up a tender intercourse with the dearly beloved friend, or see him more as a beloved mistress, who is gone to the world of spirits. The ballad on Queen Mary was begun while I was busy with Percy's Reliques of English Poetry. By the way, how much is every honest heart, which has a tincture of Caledonian prejudice, obliged to you for your zealous defence of Buchanan and Targe! 'Twas an unequivocal proof of your loyal gallantry of soul giving Targe the victory. I should have been mortified to the ground if you had not.

* * *

I have just read over, once more of many times, your Zuluco. I marked with my pencil, as I went along, everytime what struck me, and have put down above the rest; and one, or two I think, with which humble de-
ference, I am disposed to think unequal to the merits of the book. I have sometimes thought to transcribe these marked passages, or at least so much of them as to point where they are, and send them to you. Origin
ual strokes that strongly depicts the human heart, is your and Fielding's province, beyond any other novel-
list I have ever perused. Richardson indeed might per-
haps be excepted; but unhappily, his dramatica per
sonae are beings of some other world; and however they may captivate the inexperienced romantic fancy of a boy or girl, they will ever, in proportion as we have made human nature our study, dissatisfaction our riper minds.

As to my private concerns, I am going on, a mighty tax-gatherer before the Lord, and have lately had the intendment to get myself ranked on the list of Excise as a superservant. I am not yet employed as such, but in a few years I shall fall into the file of supervisorship by seniority. I have an immense loss in the death of the Earl of Glencairn, the patron from whom all my fame and good fortune took its rise. Independent of my grateful attachment to him which was indeed so strong that it pervaded my very soul, and was entwined with the thread of my existence; so soon as the prince's friends had got in, (and every dog, you know, has his day,) my getting forward in the Excise would have been an easier business than otherwise it will be. Though this was a consummation devoutly to be wished, yet, thank Heaven, I can live and rhyme as I am; and as to my boys, poor little fellows if I cannot place them on as high an elevation in life as I could wish, I shall, if I am favoured so much of the Disposer of events as to see that period, fix them on as broad and independent a basis as possible. Among the many wise adages which have been treasured up by our Scottish ances
tors, this is one of the best, Better be the head o' the commonality as the tail o' the gentry.

But I am got on a subject, which, however interest
ing to me, is of no manner of consequence to you. So I shall give you a short poem on the other page, and close this without saying how sincerely I have the honour to be yours, &c.

Written on the blank leaf of a book which I presented to a very young lady whom I had formerly charac
terized under the denomination of The Rosebud. See Poems, p. 67.

No. CXIII.

FROM DR. MOORE.

London, 26th March, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 18th of February I received only two days ago, and this day I had the pleasure of wait
ing on the Rev. Mr. Baird, at the Duke of Athole's, who had been so obliging as to transmit it to me, with the printed verses on Alton Church, the Elégy on Captain Henderson, and the Epitaph. There are many poetical beauties in the former; what I particularly admire, are the three striking similes from—

"Or like the snow-falls in the river." and the eight lines which begin with

"By this time he was cross the ford."
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so exquisitely expressive of the superstitious impressions of the country. And the twenty-two lines from "Coffins stood round like open presses." which, in my opinion, are equal to the ingredients of Shakespeare's cadaver in Macbeth.

As for the Elegy, the chief merit of it consists in the very graphical description of the objects belonging to the country in which the poet writes, and which none but a Scottish poet could have described, and none but a real poet, and a close observer of Nature could have so described.

There is something original, and to me wonderfully pleasing in the Epitaph.

I remember you once hinted before, what you repeat in your last, that you had made some remarks on Zeluco on the margin. I should be very glad to see them, and regret you did not send them before the last column of what is just published. I pray transcribe them for me: I sincerely value your opinion very highly, and pray do not suppress one of these in which you can see the sentiment or expression. Trust me it will break no squares between us—I am not akin to the bishop of Grenada. I must now mention what has been on my mind for some time: I cannot help thinking you imprudent, in scattering abroad so many copies of your verses. It is most natural to give a few to confidential friends, particularly to those who are connected with the subject, or who are perhaps themselves the subject; but this ought to be done under promise not to give other copies. Of the poem you sent me on Queen Mary, I refused every solicitation for copies, but I lately saw it in a newspaper. My motive of cautioning you on this subject, is, that I wish to engage you to collect all your published poems, not already printed; and after they have been re-considered, and polished to the utmost of your power, I would have you publish them by another subscription: in promoting of which I will exert myself with pleasure.

In your future compositions I wish you would use the modern English. You have shown your powers in Scottish sufficiently. Although in certain subjects it gives additional zest to the humour, yet it is lost to the English; and why should you write only for a part of the island, when you can command the admiration of the whole?

If you chance to write to my friend Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop, I beg to affectionately remember her to you. She must not judge of the warmth of my sentiments respecting her by the number of my letters; I hardly ever write a line but on business; and I do not know that I should have scribbled all this to you, but for the business part, that is, to instigate you to a new publication; and to tell you, that when you have a sufficient number to make a volume, you should set your friends on getting subscriptions. I wish I could have a few hours' conversation with you—I have many things to say which I cannot write. If ever I go to Scotland, I will let you know, that you may meet me at your own house, or my friend Mrs. Hamilton, or both.

Adieu, my dear, Sir, &c.

not even so much as acknowledged the receipt of it. The fact is, you yourself are to blame for it. Plattering as I was by your telling me that you wished to have my opinion of the work, the old spiritual enemy of mankind, who knows well that vanity is one of those things that most easily beset me, put it into my head to ponder over the performance with the look out of a critic, and to draw up, forsooth, a deep-learned digest of strictures, on a composition of which, in fact, until I read the book, I did not even know the first principles. I own, Sir, that, at first glance, several of your prepositional starlings me as paradoxical. That the martial clangor of a trumpet had something in it vastly more grand, heroic, and sublime, than the twingle-twangle of a Jew's-harp; that the delicate flexure of a rose twig, when the half-blown flower is heavy with the tears of the dawn, was infinitely more beautiful and elegant than the upright stub of a birch; and that from something innate and independent of all association of ideas—these I had set down as irretraceable, orthodox truths, until perusing your book shook my faith. In short, Sir, except Eulcid's Elements of Geometry, which I made a shift to unerray by my father's fire side, in the winter evenings of the first season I held the plough, I never read a book which gave me such a quantum of information, and added so much to my stock of knowledge as your "Essays on the principles of Taste." One thing, Sir, you must forgive me for mentioning as an uncommon merit in the work, I mean the language. To clothe abstract philosophy in the elegant dress of language, sounds something like a contradiction in terms; but you have convinced me that they are quite compatible.

I enclose you some poetic bagatelles of my late composition. The one in print is my first essay in the way of telling a tale.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. CXV.

Extract of a Letter
TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.

12th March, 1791.

If the foregoing piece be worth your strictures, let me have them. For my own part, a thing that I have always wished to appear in a double portion of that partial medium in which an author will ever view his own works. I believe, in general, novelty has something in it, that animates the fancy, and makes the thoughts and expressions fresh and new. But if you mention any of the sentiments which are not frequently discerned, and fomes away like other intoxication, and leaves the poor patient, as usual, with an aching heart. A striking instance of this might be observed in the revolution of many a hymenial honey-moon. But lest I sink into stupid prose, and so sacrilegiously intrude on the office of my parish priest, I shall fill up the page in my own way, and give you another song of my late composition, which will appear, perhaps, in Johnson's work, as well as the former.

You must know a beautiful Jacobite air, There'll never be peace till Jamie comes home. When political combustion ceases to be the object of princes and patriots, it then you know becomes the lawful prey of historians and poets.

If you like the air, and if the stanzas bit your fancy, you cannot imagine, my dear friend, how much you would oblige me, by a few lines of your own scintillating verse, or even a few introductory notes, of which you are in such plenty, you would give my honest effusion the "memory of joys that are past!" to the few friends whom you indulge in that pleasure. But I have scribbled on till I hear the clock has intimated the near approach of

* Here followed a copy of the Song printed in p. 22, of the Poema. "By the castle wall!" &c.
"That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane!"

So, good night to you! sound be your sleep, and delectable your dreams! _A propos_, how do you like this thought in a ballad I have just now on the tapis?

I look to the west when I go to rest,
That happy my dreams and my slumber may be;
For far in the west is he I love best,
The lad that is dear to my battle and me!

Good night, once more, and God bless you!

No. CXVI.

TO MRS. DÜNLÖP.

_Elitzeland_, 11th April, 1791.

I am once more able, my honoured friend, to return from, with my own hand, thanks for the many instances of your friendship, and particularly for your kind anxiety in this last disaster that my evil genius had in store for me. However, life is chequered—joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure. Mr. Burns made a present of a fine boy, rather stouter, but not so handsome as your godson was at his time of life. Indeed I look on your little nameless to be my chef d'œuvre in that species of manufactures. I am not so Shantly to be my standard performer in the poetical line.

'Tis true both the one and the other discover a spice of refined waggery that might, perhaps, be as well spurned: but then they also show, in my opinion, a force of genius, and a finishing polish, that I despair of ever excelling. Mrs. Burns is getting stout again, and laird as lustily about her toilet at breakfast, as a reaper from the corn ridge. That is the peculiar privilege and cleansing of our bale sprightly damsels, that are bred among the boy and behith. We cannot hope for that excess of weight, that is found in fine bees. But there is a quality which is found among the female world in the more elevated stations of life, and which is certainly far the most bewitching charm in the famous vestes of Venus. It is, indeed, such an inestimable treasure, that where it can be had in its native heavenly purity, unstained by some one or other of the many shades of affectation, and unadulterated by some one or other of the many species of caprice, I declare to Heaven, I should think it cheaply purchased at the expense of every other earthly good! But as this angelic creature is, I am afraid, extremely rare in any station and rank of life, and totally denied to such an humble one as mine: we menser mortals must put up with the next rank of female beauty—a fine a figure and face we can produce as any rank of life whatever: rustic, native grace; unaffected modesty, and unsullied purity; nature's mother wit, and the rudiments of taste; a simplicity of soul, unsuspicious of, because unacquainted with the crooked ways of selfish, interested, disingenuous world; and the dearest charm of all the rest, a yielding sweetness of disposition, and a generous warmth of heart, grateful for love on our part, and ardently glowing with a more than equal return; these, with a healthy frame, a sound, vigorous constitution, which your higher ranks can scarcely ever hope to enjoy, are the charms of lovely women in the humble walk of life.

This is the greatest effort my broken arm has yet made. Do let me hear, by first post, how _cher petit Monsieur_ comes on with his small-pox. My Almightiness goodness preserve and restore him!

No. CXVII.

TO DEAR SIR,

I am exceedingly to blame in not writing you long ago; but the truth is, that I am the misery of all human beings: and when I matriculate in the ber-

a lady's office, I intend that my supporters shall be two sloths, my crest a slow-worm, and the motto, "Dei tak the foremost!" So much by way of apology for not thanking you sooner for your kind execution of my commission.

I would have sent you the poems; but somehow or other it found its way into the public papers, where you must have seen it.

I am ever, dear Sir, yours sincerely,

ROBERT BURNS.

No. CXVIII.

TO MR. CUNNINGHAM

11th June, 1791.

Let me interest you, my dear Cunningham, in behalf of the gentleman who waits on you with this. He is a man of no great figure; but that of a capable school-master there, and is at present suffering severely under the ••••••* of one or two powerful individuals of his employers. He is accused of harshness to ••••••; that were placed under his care. Great is his gratitude to such a friend, when a booby father presents him with his booby son, and insists on lighting up the rays of science in a fellow's head whose skull is impervious and inaccessible by any other way than a positive fracture with a cudgel: a fellow whom, in fact, it savours of no impolicy to attempt making a scholar of, as he has been marked a blockhead in the book of fate, at the Almighty flat of his Creator.

The patronus of Moffat school are the ministers, magistrates, and town council of Edinburgh; and as the business comes now before them, let me beg my dearest friend to do everything in his power to serve the interests of a man of genius and worth, and a man whom I particularly respect and esteem. You know some good fellows among the magistry and council, but particularly you have more to say with a reverend gentleman, to whom you have the honour of being very nearly related, and whom this country and age have had the honour to produce. I need not name the historical chaplain, whose genius I had no doubt, with the tone of his nephew's influence, that Mr. C.... is a gentleman who will not disgrace even his patronage. I know the merits of the cause thoroughly, and say it, that my friend is falling a sacrifice to prejudiced ignorance, and ••••••*.

God help the children of dependence! Hated and persecuted by their enemies, and too often, alas! almost unexceptionably, received by their friends with disrespect and reproach, under the thin disguise of cold civility and humiliating advice. Of tobe a sturdy savage, stealing in the pride of his independence, amid the solitary wilds of his deserts; rather than in civilized life; helpless to tremble for a subsistence, precarious as the caprice of a fellow-creature! Every man has his virtues, and no man is without his failings; and curse on that privileged plain-dealing of friendship, which in the hour of my calamity, cannot reach forth the helping hand, without at the same time, pointing out those failings, and ascribing the evil deeds of the friend, who stood first will witness in my breast for themselves, and the last will give pain enough to the ingenuous mind without you. And since deviating more or less from the precept of charity and rectitude must be incident to human nature, do thou, Fortune put it in my power, always from myself, and of myself, to bear the consequences of those errors! I do not want to be in-

* Dr. Robertson was uncle to Mr. Cunningham.
LETTERS.

dependent that I may sin, but I want to be independent in my sining.

To return, in this rambling letter, to the subject I set out with, let me recommend my friend, Mr. Clarke, to your acquaintance and, if you will allow me, to his, for he will tell him the tale of our lives. Your amiable, but sometimes thoughtless conduct is not overlooked. I believe it will merit the other, long much to hear from you—Adieu!

No. CXIX.
FROM THE EARL OF BUCHAN.

Dryburgh Abbey, 17th June, 1791.

Lord Buchan has the pleasure to invite Mr. Burns to make one at the coronation of the bust of Thomson, on Edman Hill, on the 22d of September; for which day, perhaps, his muse may inspire an ode suited to the occasion. Suppose Mr. Burns should, leaving the Nith, go across the country, and meet the Tweed at the nearest point from his farm—and, wandering along the pastoral banks of Thomson's pure parent stream—catch inspiration on the devious walk, till he finds Lord Buchan sitting on the ruins of Dryburgh. There the commendator will give him a hearty welcome, and try to light his lamp at the pure flame of native genius upon the altar of Caledonian virtue. This poetical perambulation of the Tweed is a thought of the late Sir Gilbert Colquhoun of Luss, as a breathing of Lord Minto's, followed out by his accomplished grandson, the present Sir Gilbert, who having been with Lord Buchan lately, the project was renewed, and will, they hope, be executed in the manner proposed.

No. CXX.
TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.

My Lord,

Language sinks under the ardour of my feelings when I would thank your Lordship for the honour you have done me in inviting me to make one at the coronation of the bust of Thomson. In my first enthusiasm in reading the card you did me the honour to write to me, I overlooked every obstacle, and determined to go; but I fear it will not be in my power. A week or two's absence, in the very middle of my harvest, is what I much doubt I dare not venture on.

Your Lordship hints at an ode for the occasion: but who could write after Collins? I read over his verses to the memory of Thomson, and desiring to equal, I attempted, to the length of three or four stanzas, in the way of address to the shade of the bard, on crowning his bust. I shall trouble your Lordship with the unfinished copy of them, which, I am afraid, will be but a convincing proof how unequal I am to the task. However, it affords me an opportunity of approaching your Lordship, and conveying my sincere and grateful thanks for the honour to be, &c.

No. CXXI.
FROM THE SAME.

Dryburgh Abbey, 16th September, 1791.

SIR,

Your address to the shade of Thomson has been well received by the public; and though I should despise the proof of your allowing yourself to ride with you off the field of your honourable and useful profession, yet I cannot resist an impulse which I feel at this moment to suggest to your dect, Harvest Home, as an excellent subject for her grateful song, in which the peasant aspect and manners of our country might furnish an excellent portrait and a delightful scene of land, for the employment of happy moments of leisure and leisure from your more important occupations.

Your Halloween, and Saturday Night, will remain to distant posterity as interesting pictures of rural innocence and rustic patriotism in your native country, and were happily written in the dialect of the people; but Harvest Home, being suited to descriptive poetry, except the environs of our Muse, Harvest Home the description of a scene so gladdening and picturesque, with all the concomitant local position, landscape and costume; contrasting the present improvement, and happiness of the borders of the once hostile nations of Britain, with their former oppression and misery; and showing, in lively and beautiful colours, the beauties and joys of a rural life. And as the unvitiated heart is naturally disposed to overflow with gratitude in the moment of prosperity, such a subject would furnish you with an amiable opportunity of perpetuating the names of Glencairn, Miller, and your other eminent benefactors; which, from what I know of your spirit, and have seen of your poems and letters, will not deviate from the chastity of purpose that is so uniformly united to true taste and genius.

I am Sir, &c.

No. CXXII.
TO LADY E. CUNNINGHA.

MY LADY,

I would, as usual, have availed myself of the privilege your goodness has allowed me, of sending you any thing I compose in my poetical way; but as I had resolved, so soon as the shock of my irreparable loss would allow me, to pay a tribute to my late benefactor, I determined to make that the first piece I should do myself the honour of sending you. I had the wing of my fancy been equal to the arbour of my heart, the enclosed had been much more worthy your perusal; as it is, I beg leave to lay it at your Ladyship's feet. As all the world knows my obligations to the Earl of Glencairn, I would wish to show as openly that my heart, and shall ever glow with the most grateful sense and remembrance of his Lordship's goodness. The pieces I did myself the honour to send to his Lordship's memory, were not the "mocker of woes," Nor shall my gratitude perish with me! If, among my children, I shall have a son that has a heart, he shall hand it down to his child as a family honour, and a family debt, that my dearest existence owe to the noble house of Glencairn!

I was about to say, my Lady, that if you think the poem may venture to see the light, I would, in some way or other, give it to the world.*

No. CXXIII.
TO MR. AINSLIE.

MY DEAR AINSLIE,

Can you minister to a mind diseased? Can you, amid the horrors of penitence, regret, remorse, head ache, nausea, and all the rest of the —— hounds that beset a poor wretch who has been guilty of the sin of drunkenness—can you speak peace to a troubled soul?

Miserable perdu that I am! I have tried every thing that used to amuse me, but in vain: here must I sit a monument of the vengeance laid up in store for the wicked, slowly counting every check of the clock as 'tis

No. CXXIV.
FROM SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD.

Near Maybole, 16th October, 1791.

SIR,

Accept of my thanks for your favour, with the Lament on the death of my much-esteemed friend, and our worthy patron, the perusal of which pleased and delighted me much. The lines addressed to me are very flattering.

I have always thought it most natural to suppose (and a strong argument in favour of a future existence) that when we see an honourable and virtuous man labouring under bodily infirmities, and oppressed by the frowns of fortune in this world, that there was a happier state beyond the grave; where that worth and honour were to meet their just reward; and where temporal misfortunes would receive an eternal recompense. Let us cherish this hope for our departed friends, and moderate our grief for that loss we have sustained, knowing that he cannot return to us, but we may go to him.

Remember me to your wife; and with every good wish for the prosperity of you and your family, believe me at all times, Your most sincere friend,

JOHN WHITEFOORD.

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No. CXXV.
FROM A. P. TYTLER, ESQ.

Edinburgh, 29th November, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

You have much reason to blame me for neglecting till now to acknowledge the receipt of a most agreeable packet, containing The Whistle, a ballad; and The Lament, which reached me about six weeks ago in London, from whence I am just returned. Your letter was forwarded to me there from Edinburgh, where, as I observed by the date, it had lain for some days. This was an additional reason for me to have answered it immediately on receiving it; but the truth was, the bustle of business, engagements, and confusion of one kind or another, in which I found myself immersed all the time I was in London, absolutely put it out of my power. But to have done with apologies, let me now manifest my approbation of the merit, and accept of the very flattering compliment you pay me, by giving you at least a frank and candid, if it should not be a judicious, criticism on the poems you sent me.

The ballad of The Whistle's, in my opinion truly excellent. The old tradition which you have taken up is the best adapted for a Bacchanalian composition of any I ever met with, and you have done it full justice. In the first place, the strokes of wit arise naturally from the subject, and are uncommonly happy. For example,

"The bands grew the tighter the more they were wet,"
"Cynthia hinted he'd find them next mor'n."
"The" Fate said—a hero should perish in light;
"So up rose bright the usbus,—and down fell the knight."

In the next place, you are singularly happy in the discrimination of your heroes, and in giving each the sentiments and language suitable to his character. And, lastly, you have much merit in the delicacy of the pensive lyric which you have contrived to throw on each of the dramosis, no one being more appropriate to his character. The compliment to Sir Robert, the blunt soldier, is particularly fine. In short, this composition, in my opinion, does you great honour, and I see not the word or in it which I could wish to be altered.

As to the Lament, I suspect from some expressions in your letter to me that you are more doubtful with respect to the merits of this piece than of the other; and I own I think you have reason; for although it contains some beautiful stanzas, as the first, "The wind blew hollow," &c.; the fifteen, "Ye scatter'd birds!" the thirteenth, "Awake thy last sad voice," &c.; yet it appears to me familiar as a whole, and inferior to several of those you have lately published in the same strain. My principal objection lies against the plan of the piece. I think it was unnecessary and improper to put the lamentation in the mouth of a fictitious character, an aged bard. It had been much better to have lamented your patron in your own person, to have expressed your genuine feelings for the loss, and that more, for we spoke the language of nature, rather than that of fiction, on the subject. Compare this with your poem of the same title in your printed volume, which begins, O thou, pale orb! and observe what it is that gives the charm of that composition. It will be a word it speaks the language of truth and of nature. The change is, in my opinion injudicious too in this respect, that a man is not more natural a protector than a yoimg one. I have thus given you, with much freedom, my opinion of both the pieces. I should have made a very ill return to the compliment you paid me, if I had given you any other than my genuine sentiments.

It will give me great pleasure to hear from you when you find leisure; and I beg you will believe me ever dear Sir, yours, &c.

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No. CXXVI.
TO MISS DAVIES.

It is impossible, Madam, that the generous warmth and angelic purity of your youthful mind could have any idea of a tender which I unhappily must rank as the chief of sinners; I mean a turpitude of the moral powers that may be called a lechery of the imagination. Remorse rears her horrid crest, and roues all her snakes: beneath the deadly fixed eye and leaft with Indolence, their wildest ire is charmed into the torpor of a bat, slumbering deep in the rigid wall. Nolthing less, Madam, could have made me so long neglect your obliging commands. Indeed I had one apology—the bagatelle was not worth presenting. Besides, so strongly am I interested in Miss D—a fat and
LETTERS.

welfare in the serious business of life, amid its chances and changes; that to make her the subject of a silly battalion, is downright mockery of these ardent feelings; 'tis like an imperious jest to a dying friend.

Gracious Heaven! why this disparity between our wishes and our powers! Why is the most generous wish to make others blessed, impotent and ineffectual—as if the idle breeze that crosses the pathless desert? In my walk of life I have met with a few people to whom gladly I would have said—"Go happy!" I know that your hearts have been wounded by the scorn of the proud, whom accident has placed above you—or worse still, in whose hands are, perhaps, placed many of the comforts of your life. But there I ascend that rock, independence, and look justly down upon their littleness of soul. Make the worthless trembling under your indignation, and the foolish sink before your contempt; and largely impart that happiness to others which I am certain, will give yourselves so much pleasure to bestow."

Why, dear Madam, must I wake from this delightful dream? Why, amid my generous enthusiasm, must I find myself poor and powerless, incapable of wiping one tear from the eye of pity, or of aiding one comrade who befriends me?—Oh! but upon that I say is that its affairs are administered so ill! They talk of reform;—good Heaven what a reform would I make among the rowdy and erratic daughters of men! Down immediately should go fools from the high places where misbegotten chance has perked them up, and through life should they skulk, ever haunted by their native insignificance, as the holy marches accompanied by its shadow.—As for a more formidable black, the knaves, I am at a loss what to do with them;—and I a world, there should not be a knife in it.

But the hand that could give, I would liberally fill; and I would pour delight on the heart that could kindly forgive and generously love.

Still, the inequalities of life are, among men, comparatively tolerable—but there is a delicacy, a tenderness, accompanying every view in which we can place lovely Woman, that are graced and shocked at the rude, capricious distinctions of fortune. Woman is the blood royal of life; let there be slight degrees of precedence among them—but let them be all equal.—Thinking this last sentiment be right or wrong, I am not accountable; it is an original component feature of my mind.

No. CXXXVII.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Ellitsland, 17th December 1761.

Many thanks to you, Madam, for your good news respecting the little floweret and the mother-plant. I hope my poetic prayers have been heard, and will be answered up to the warmest sincerity of their fullest extent; and then Mrs. Henri will find her little dar- ling the representative of his late parent, in every thing but his abridged existence.

I have just finished the following song, which, to a lady the descendant of Wallace, and many heroes of his truly illustrious line, and herself the mother of several soldiers needs neither preface nor apology.

Scene,—A Field of Battle—Time of the Day, Evening—the wounded and dying of the victorious Army are supposed to join in the following

SONG OF DEATH.

Farewell thou fair day, thou green earth, and ye skies,
Now gay with the broad setting sun!

Farewell loves and friendships; ye dear tender ties,
Our race of existence is run!

Thou grim king of terrors, thou life's gloomy foe,
Go frighten the coward and slave;
Go, teach them to tremble, fell tyrant! but know,
No terrors hast thou to the brave

Thou strik'st the poor peasant—he sinks in the dark,
Nor saves s'en the wreck of a name;
Thou strik'st at the young hero—a glorious mark,
He falls in the blaze of his fame;

In the field of proud honour—our swords in our hands,
Our king and our country to save—
While victory shines on life's last ebbing sands—
O, who would not die with the brave?

The circumstance that gave rise to the foregoing verses, was looking over, with a musical friend, Mr. Donald's collection of Highland airs, I was struck with one, an Island of Skye tune, entitled Orion en Avoir, or, The Song of Death, to the measure of which I have adapted my stanzas. I have of late composed two or three other little pieces, which, ere you full-orbed moon, whose broad impudent face, now shines at old mother earth all night, shall have shrunk into a modest crescent, just peeping forth at dawny dawn, I shall find an hour to transcribe to you. A Dieu Je vous commande.

No. CXXXVIII.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

5th January, 1792.

You see my hurried life, Madam: I can only command starts of time; however, I am glad of one thing; since I finished the other sheet, the political blast that threatened my welfare is overblown. I have corresponded with Commissioner Graham, for the Board had made me the subject of their animadversions: and now I have the pleasure of informing you, that all is set to rights in that quarter. Now as to these informers, may the devil be let loose to—but hold! I was praying most fervently in my last sheet, and I must not so soon fall a swearing in this.

Alas! how little do the wantonly or idle officious think what mischief they do by their malicious insinuations, indiscriminate impiety, or thoughtless blab- bings! What a difference there is in intrinsic worth, candour, benevolence, generosity, kindness—in all the charities and all the virtues, between one class of human beings and another! For instance, the amiable circle I so lately mixed with in the hospitable hall of 1)—their generous hearts—their uncontaminated, dignified minds—their informed and polished understandings—what a contrast, when compared—if such comparing were not downright sacrilege—with the soul of the miscreant who can deliberately plot the destruction of an honest man that never offended him, and with a grin of satisfaction see the unfortunate being, his faithful wife and pratling innocents, turned over to beggary and ruin.

Your cup, my dear Madam, arrived safe. I had two worthy fellows dining with me the other day, when I was good enough to produce my whittlemaker's cup, and told them that it had been a family-piece among

* This is a little altered from the one even in p. 83, of the Poems.
the descendants of Sir William Wallace. This roused
such an enthusiasm, that they insisted on bump-
ering the punch round in it; and, by and by, never
did your great ancestor lay a Suthron more complete-
ly at rest, than for a time did your cup my two friends.
A-propos! this is the season of wishing. May God bless
you, my dear friend and bless me, the humblest
and sincerest of your friends, by granting you yet
many returns of the season! May all good things atten-
and yours wherever they are scattered over the earth!

No. CXXXIX.

TO MR. WILLIAM SMELLIE, PRINTER.

Dumfries, 221 January, 1792.

I sit down, my dear Sir, to introduce a young lady to
you, and a lady in the first rank of fashion, too. What
a task! to you—who care no more for the herd of ani-
called young ladies, than you do for the herd of ani-
called young gentlemen. To you—who despise and
detest the groanings and combinations of fashion, as
an idiot painter that seems industrious to place
staring fools and insipid minds and leave and the foreground
of his picture, while men of sense and honesty are too
often torrow in the dimmest shades Mrs. Riddle,
who will take this letter to town with her, and send it
to you, is a character that, even in a man such as
I, a naturalist and a philosopher, would be an acquisi-
tion to your acquaintance. The lady too is a votary
of the muse; and as I think myself somewhat of a
judge in my own trade, I assure you that her verses,
always correct, and often elegant, are much beyond
the common run of the ladies, of the day. She is a
great admirer of your book; and, hearing me say
that I was acquainted with you, she begged to be
known to you, as she is just going to pay her first visit to
our Caledonian capital. I told her that her best way
was, to desire her near relation, and your intimate
friend, Craigdarroch, to have you at his house while
she was there, and lest you might think of a lively West
Indian of eighteen, as girls of eighteen too often
desire to be thought of, I should take care to remove
that prejudice. To be impartial, however, in appre-
ciating the lady's merits, she has one unlucky failing,
that for which you would easily discover her as I
rather pleased with indulging in it; and a failing that
you will as easily pardon, as it is a sin which very much
besets yourself,—where she dislikes or despises, she
is apt to act as if she were more a secret of it, than where she
esteems and respects.

I will not present you with unmeaning compliments of
the season, but I will send you my warmest wishes
and most ardent prayers, that Fortune may never
throw your subsistence to the mercy of a knave, or set
your character on the judgment of a fool; but that,
upright and erect, you may walk to an honest grave,
where men of letters shall say, Here lies a man who
did honour to science! and men of worth shall say,
Here lies a man who did honour to human nature!

CXXX.

TO MR. W. NICOL.

20th February, 1792.

O thou, wisest among the wise, meridian blaze of philosophy, full moon of science, and the
ninth, tenth, and thirteenth counsellors! How infinitely is thy pedilled bearded, rattle-headed, wrong-headed round-headed slave indebted to thy supereminent goodness, that from the luminum
without thy own right-lined rectitude, thou lookest benignly down on an erring wretch, of whom the zigzag
wanderings defy all the powers of calculation, from the
simple copulation of words, down to the infinite mysteries of
flusions: May one fleaey ray of that light of wisdom
which darts from thy sensorium straight as the arrow
of heaven, and bright as the meteor of inspiration, may
be thy portion, so that I may be less unworthy of the
face and favour of that father of our political heresies,
I look up to thee, as doth a toad through the iron-
barred lucerne of a pestiferous dungeon, to the cloud-
less glory of a summer sun! Sorely sighing in bitter-
ness of soul, I say, when shall my name be the quo-
tation of the wise, and my countenance be the delight
of the godly, like the illustrious lord of Laggan's many
hills? As for him, his works are perfect; never did the
pen of calumny blur the fair page of his reputation,
the bolt of hatred fly at his dwelling.

No. CXXXI.

TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.

3d March, 1792.

Since I wrote you the last lugubrious sheet, I have
had not time to write you farther. When I say that
I have gotten a convulsion of the powers of darkness,
and the pleasures of darkness pollute the sacred flame of
thy sky-descended and heaven-bound desires; never
did the vapours of impurity stain the unclouded serene
of the heavenly symphonies. O that like thine were the
tenor of my life! like thine the tenor of my conversation
then should no friend fear for my strength, no enemy
rejoice in my weakness! then should I stand up,
and none to make me afraid. May thy play
and thy prayer be exercised for, O thou lamp of wis-
dom and mirror of morality! thy devoted slave.

* * *

† This strain of irony was excited by a letter of Mr.
Nicol, containing good advice.
era. These, however, I do not intend having on my seal. I am a bit of a herald, and shall give you, se-
cundum artem, my arms. On a field, azure, a holey bush, seeded, proper, in base; a shepherd "Gog and Mogg" beside, also proper, in chief. On a wreath of the colours, a wood-lark perching on a sprig of bay tree, proper, for crest. Two mottoes; round the top of the crest, Wood notes wild; at the bottom of the shield, in the usual place, Better a seele bush than nar
bielid. By the shepherd's pipe and crook I do not mean the nonsense of painters of Arcadia, but a Stock and
Horn, and a Club, such as you see at the head of Allan Ramsay, in Allan's quarto edition of the Gentle Shep-
herd. By the by, do you know Allan? He must be a man of very great geniality, or he is not more known?
Has he no patrons? or do "Love's cold wind and
crushing rain beat keen and heavy" on him? I once,
and but once, got a glance of that noble edition of that
noblest pastoral in the world; and dear as it was, I
mean, dear as to my pocket, I would have bought it;
but I was told that it was printed and engraved for
subscribers only. He is the only author who has hit
genuine pastoral costume. What, my dear Cunning-
ham, is there in riches, that they narrow and harden
the heart? I think, that were I as rich as the sun,
I should be as generous as the day; but as I have no
reason to imagine my soul a nobler one than any oth-
er man's, I must conclude that wealth imparts a birl-
dine quality to the possessor, at which the man in
his native poverty strenuously combated. What has led
me to this, is the idea of such merit as Mr. Allan pos-
sesses, and such riches as a nobob or government con-
tractor possesses; and why do they do so? by the
power of a league. Let wealth shelter and cherish unprotec-
ted merit, and the gratitude and celebrity of that merit
will richly repay it.

No. CXXXI
TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Annan Water Foot, 23rd August, 1792.

Do not blame me for it Madam—my own conscience,
backneyed and weather-beaten as it is, in watching
and reproving your vagaries, follies, indolence, &c. has
continued to blime and punish me sufficiently.

Do you think it possible, my dear and honoured
friend, that I could be so lost to gratitude for many fa-
vours; to esteem for much worth, and to the honest,
kind, pleasurable tie of, now old acquaintance, and I
hope and am sure of progressive, increasing friendship
—as, for a single day, not to think of—you—to ask the
Fates what they are doing and about to do with my
much-loved friend and her wide-scattered connexions,
and to beg of them to be as kind to you and yours as
they possibly can?

A propos (though how it is a propos. I have not le-
sure to explain.) Do you know that I am almost in
love with an acquaintance of yours?—Almost! I said!
— I am in love, souse! over head and ears, deep as
the most unfathomable abyss of the boundless ocean;
but the word Love, owing to the interminable
tempests of the good and the bad, the pure and the impure, in
this world, being rather an equivocal term for expressing
one's sentiments and sensations. I must do justice to the
sacred purity of my attachment. Know, then,
that the heart struck awe the distant, humble ab
person to which I refer, by a sort of a clock strike
lightning, as the result of my own imaginations, and
and listening to a Messenger of heaven, appearing in
all the unspotted purity of his celestial home, among
the coarse, polluted, far inferior sons of men, to deliver
them to the truths that make their hearts glad, and
and their imaginations soar in transport—such, so delight-
and so pure, were the emotion of my soul on meet-
ing the other day with Mr. B, young and gay at
Mr. B., with his two daughters accompanying him
by Mr. H. of G., passing through Dumfries a few
days ago, on their way to England, did me the honour
of calling on me; on which I took my horse (though
God knows I could ill spare the time,) and accompanied
them fourteen or fifteen miles, and dined and spent
the day with them. 'Twas about nine, I think, when I
left them; and, riding home, I composed the following
ballad, of which you will probably think you have
a dear bargain, as it will cost you another great of
postage. You must know that there is an old ballad
beginning with

"My bonnie Lizzie Baillie,
I'll row thee in my plaidie."

So I parodied it as follows, which is literally the first
copy, " unmanned, unann'ed!" as Hamlet says—

"O saw ye bonnie Lesley," &c.

So much for ballads. I regret that you are gone to the
country, as I am to be in Ayrshire in about a fortnight.
This world of ours, notwithstanding it has
many good things in it, yet it has ever had this curse,
that two or three people, who would be the happier
the oftener they met together, are almost without excep-
tion, always associated as they were for a fortnight or
two, which, considering the few years of a man's life,
is a very great "evil under the sun," which I do not recollect that Solomon has mentioned in his
catalogue of the vagaries of mankind; and believe that
there is a state of existence beyond the grave,
where the worthy of this life will renew their former
intimacies, with this endangering addition, that, 
we meet to part no more!"

"Tell us ye dead,
Will none of you in pity disclose the secret
What 'tis we are, and we must shortly be?"

A thousand times have I made this apostrophe to the
departed sons of men, but not one of them has ever
thought fit to answer the question. "O that some
courteous ghost would blab it out!" but it cannot be;
and I, my dear friend, must make the experiment by
ourselves, and for ourselves. However, I am con-
vinced that an unshaken faith in the doctrines of reli-
gion is not only necessary, by making us better men,
but also by making us happier men, that I shall take
every care that your little gosden, and every little
creature that shall call me father, shall be taught them.

So ends this heterogeneous letter, written at this
wild place of the world, in the intervals of my labour
of discharging a vessel of rum from Antigua.

No. CXXXIII.
TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.

Dumfries, 10th September, 1792.

No! I will not attempt an apology—Amid all my
hurry of business grinding the faces of the publican
and the sinner on the merciless wheels of the Excise;
making ballads, and then drinking, and singing them;
and, over and above all, the correcting the press-work
of two different publications, still, still I might have
stolen five minutes to dedicate to one of the first of my
friends and fellow-creatures. I might have done, as I
do at present, snatch an hour near "witching time of
night," and scrawled a page or two. I might have
congratulated my friend on his marriage, or I might
have thanked the Caledonian archeus for the honour
they have done me (though to do myself justice, I in-
tended to have done both in rhyme, else I had done
both long ere now.) Well, then, here is to your good
health! for you must know I have set a nippinken of
toddy by me, just by way of spell, to keep away the
misletoe forced Delil, or any of his subaltern imps who
may be as unnightly round.
But what shall I write to you? "The voice said, Cry! and I said, What shall I cry?"—O, thou spirit! whatever thou art, or wherever thou makest thyself visible! girls take it to be good by the eerie side of an old thorn, in the dreamy gleam through which the herd callan massa bicker in his gloamin' routs the fae! Be this a blood-crazed, raving, roving, self-menacing task by the blasing ingle, or in the solitary barn, where the re-percussions of thy iron flash half unlifright thyself as thou performest the work of twenty of the sons of men, every black-crock-srowning surnames thee to thy amule coc of substantial brose. Be thou a kelpie, haunting the ford or ferry, in the starless night, mixing thy laughing yell with the bowling of the storm and the roaring of the ocean, as thou perpends a piece of man on the foundering horse, or in the tumbling boat! Or, lastly, be thou a ghost, paying thy nocturnal visits to the hoary ruins of decayed grandeur! or performing thy mystic rites in the shadow of the time-worn church, while the moon looks, without a cloud, on the silent ghastly dwellings of the dead around thee; or taking thy stand by the bedside of the villain, or the murderer, portraying on his dreaming fancy, pictures, dreadful as the horrors of unveiled hell, and terrible as the wrath of incensed Dely! Come, thou spirit, but not in these horrid forms: come with the wilder, rattle, easy inspirations which thou bastreath round the wig of a praying advocate, or the tete of a tea-sipping gosp. sioner; come, thou spirit, and catch up the breath of the dusty-clash-maciver for ever and ever—come and assist a poor devil who is just jaded in the attempt to share half an idea among a hundred words; to fill up four quarters of pages, while he has not got one idea of ten and the tinge of recollection, information, or remark, worth putting pen to paper for.

I feel, I feel the presence of supernatural assistance! I circled in the embrace of my elbow-chair, my breast labours like the blasted Sibyl! on her three footed stool, and like her too, labours with Nonsense. Nonsense, auspicious name! Tutor, friend, and finger-post in the mystic mazes of law; the cadaverous paths of phy- sic; and particularly in the sightless soarings of School Divinity, who leaving Common Sense con- founded at his strength of pinion, Reason, dелиcious with eyeing his giddy flight, and Truth creeping back into the bottom of her well, corsing the hour that ever she offered her scorned alliance to the wizard power of Theologic Vision—raves abroad on all the winds.

"On earth, Discord! a glorious heaven above opening her doors to receive the good and the bad, the wolf and the lamb; to give and to take of the tithe of mankind! and below, an inccapeable and inexorable Hell, expanding its levithian jaws for the vast residue of mortals!!! O doctrine! comforting bread, and wine, and warmth! and the wound soul of man! Ye sons and daughters of affliction, ye pauves miser- ables, to whom day brings no pleasure, and night yields no rest, comfort! This is but one nine- hundred thousand to one, by the dooms of * * * * * that you will be damned eternally in the world to come!

But of all Nonsense, Religious Nonsense is the most nonsensical; so enough, and more than enough of it. Only, by the by, will you, or can you tell me, my dear Cunningham, when a sennzeroom of men has always a tendency to narrow and illiberate the heart? They are orderly: they may be just; nay, I have known them merciful; but still your children of earth are formed of that same blood in which thy terrible spirit snuffing putrescence, and a foot-surfing flinth— in short, with a conceived dignity that you titled * * * * * or any other of your Scottish renderings of seven centu- ries' standing, display when they accidentally mix among the many-splendred sons of mechanical life. I remember, in my plough-boy days, I could not conceive it possible that a noble lie could be beft by a dog, or a dog- man could be a knave. How ignorant are plough- boys! Nay, I have since discovered that a godly wom- an may be a * * * * * But hold! Here's I've again, this run is generous Antiliga, so a very nufi- memnus for scandal.

Apologie; How do you like, I mean really, like the married life? Ah! my friend, matrimony is quite a different thing from what your love-sick youths and sighing girls take it to be! But marriage, we are told, is appointed by God, and I shall never quarrel with any of his institutions. I am a husband of older stand- ing than you, and shall give you my ideas of the con- jugal state (en passant, you know I am no Latinist: is not conjugal derived from jugum, a yoke?) Well, then, the scale of good wifeliness I divide into ten parts: Goodness, the Good Sense, Wit, one; Per- sonal Charms, vis. a sweet face, eloquent eyes, fine limbs, graceful carriage (I would add a fine waist too, but that is soon spoilt you know,) all these, one; as for the other qualities belonging to, or attending on, a wife, such as Fortune, Connexions, Education, (I mean education extraordinary,) Family Blood, &c., divide the two remaining degrees among them as you please; only remember that all these minor properties must be expressed by fractions, for there is not any one of them in the aborsaid scale, entitled to the dig- nity of an integer.

As for the rest of my fancies and reveries—how I lately met with a situation: Good God! a heart-bewound- ed, elegant woman in the world—how I accompanied her, and her father's family fifteen miles on their journey out of pure devotion, to admire the loveliness of the works of God, in a well unequaled display of them—how, in galloping home at night, I made a ballad on her, of which these two stanzas made a part:

Thou, bonnie L— , art a queen,
Thy subjects we before thee;
Thou, bonnie L— , art divine,
The hearts o' men adore thee.

The very Deil he could na scathe
Whatever was belang thee!
He'd look into thy bonnie face,
And say, "I canna wrang thee!"

—Behold all these things are written in the chronicles of my imaginations, and shall be read by thee, my dear friend, and by thy beloved spouse, my other dear friend, at a more convenient season.

Now, to thee, and to thy beloved bosom-companion, be given the precious things brought forth by the sun, and the precious things brought forth by the moon, and the benign influences of the stars, and the workings of the powers of God, in its well unequalled display of them—how, in the sphere of life, and by the tree of life, for ever and ever! Amen !

No. CXXXIV.
TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Dumfries, 25th September, 1792.

I have this moment, my dear Madam, yours of the twenty-third. All your other kind reproaches, your news, &c. are out of my head when I read and think on Mrs. H— 's situation. Good God! a heart-bewound- ed, helpless young woman—in a strange, foreign land, and that land convulsed with every horror that can narrow the human feelings—sick—looking, longing for the interior, but finding none—a mother's feelings too—but it is too much: He who wounded (He only can) may heal him!*

I wish the farmer great joy of his new acquisition to his family. I cannot say that I give him joy of his life as a farmer. 'Tis, as a farmer pay- ing a dear, unconscious rent, a cursed life! As to a laird farming his own property; sowing his own corn

* This much lamented lady was gone to the south of France with her infant son, where she died soon after.
n hope; and reaping it, in spite of brittle weather, in gladness: knowing that none can say unto him, "what
doth thou?"—fattening his herds; shearing his flocks; rejoicing at Christmas; and begetting sons and daughters.

But the venerable, grey-haired leader of a little tribe—'tis a heavenly life!—But devil take the life of
reaping the fruits that must already be grown!

Well, your kind wishes will be gratified, as to seeing
me, when I make my Avryshire visit. I cannot leave Mrs. B—— until nine months' race is run, which
may perhaps be this or four weeks. She, too, seems
determined to make me the patriarchal leader of a
band. However, if Heaven will be so obliging as to let
me have them in proportion of three bors to one
girl, I shall be so much the more pleased. I hope, if I
am spared with them, to show a set of boys that will do
honour to my cares and name; but I am not equal to the
task of rearing girls. Besides, I am too poor: a girl
should always have a fortune. A propus; your little
godson is thriving charmingly, but is a very devil. He,
though two years younger, has completely mastered his
brother. Robert is indeed the mildest, gentlest crea-
ture I ever saw. He has a most surprising memory,
and is quite the pride of his schoolmaster.

You know how readily we get into pratle upon a
subject dear to our heart; You can excuse it. God
bless you and yours!

No. CXXXV.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Supposed to have been written on the Death of Mrs.
H—— her nighest.

I had been from home, and did not receive your let-
ter until my return the other day. What shall I say to
comfort you, my much valued, much afflicted friend?
I can but grieve with you; consolation I have none to
offer, except that which religion holds out to the chil-
dren of affliction—Children of affliction—I, how just
the expression! and like every other family, they have
matters among them, which they hear, see, and feel in
a serious, all-important manner, of which the world
has nor cause, nor care, to know my idea. The world looks
indifferently on, makes the passing remark, and pro-
cceeds to the next novel occurrence.

Alas, Madam! who would wish for many years?
What is it but to drag existence until our joys gradually
expire, and leave us in a night of misery; like the
gloom which blots out the stars one by one, from the
face of night, and leaves us without a ray of comfort in
the howling waste?

I am interrupted, and must leave off. You shall soon
hear from me again.

No. CXXXVI.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

Dumfries, 6th December, 1792.

I shall be in Avryshire, I think next week; and, if
at all possible, I shall certainly, my much esteemed friend,
have the pleasure of visiting at Dunlop House.

Alas, Madam! how sedate do we meet in this world
that we have reason to congratulate ourselves on ac-
cessions of happiness! I have not passed half the or-
dinary term of an old man's life, and yet I scarcely
look over the obituary of a newspaper, that I do not
see some names that I have known, and other ac-
quaintances, little thought to meet with till soon.
Every other instance of the mortality of our kind makes
us cast an anxious look in the dreadful abyss of uncer-
tainty, and shudder with apprehension for our own
faith. But of how different an importance are the lives

of different individuals! Nay, of what importance to
one period of the same life more than another? A few
years ago, I could have lain down in the dust, 'care-
less of the voice of the morning,' and now not a few,
and these most helpless individuals, would, on losing
me and my exertions, lose both their 'staff and
shield.' By the way, these helpless ones have lately got
a name. Mrs. B—— having given me a fine
girl since I wrote you. There is a charming passage in
Thomson's Edward and Eleonora—

'The valiant in himself, what can he suffer?
Or what need he regard his single woes?'

As I am got in the way of quotations, I shall give
you another from the same piece, peculiarly, alas! I
too peculiarly apposite, my dear Madam, to your
present frame of mind:

"Who so unworthy but may proudly deck him
With his fair-weather virtue, that ex
Glad over the summer main? the d Junst comes,
The rough winds rage aloud; when from the helm
This virtue shrinks, and in a corner lies
Lamenting—leaves! I privileged from trial,
How cheap a thing were virtue!"

I do not remember to have heard you mention
Thomson's dramma. I pick up favourite quotations,
and store them in my mind as ready armour, offensive
or defensive, and I the struggle of this turbulent ex-
istence. Of these is one, a very favourite one, from his
Alfred:

"Attach thee firmly to the virtuous deeds
And offices of life; to life itself,
With all its vain and transient joys, sit loose."

Probably I have quoted some of these to you former-
ly, as indeed when I write from the heart, I am apt
to be guilty of such repetitions. The compass of the heart,
in the musical style of expression, is much more bound-
red than that of the imagination; so the unions of the
former are extremely apt to run into one another; but
in return for the facility of its compass, its few notes
are much more sweet. I must still give you another
quotations, which I am almost sure I have given you
before, but I cannot resist the temptation. The subject
is religion—speaking of its importance to mankind,
the author says,

"Tis this, my friend, that streaks our morning
bright,
'Tis this that gilds the horror of our night,
When wealth forsakes us, and when friends are few;
When friends are faithless, or when foes pursue;
'Tis this that wards the blow, or stills the smart,
Disarms affliction, or repels his dart;
Within the breast bides purest raptures rise,
Bids smiling conscience spread her cloudless sky.

I see you are in for a double postage, so I shall e'en
scribble out 'tother sheet. We, in this country here,
have many alarms of the reforming, or rather the re-
publican spirit, of your part of the kingdom. Indeed,
we are a good deal in commotion ourselves. For me,
I am a plaintext, you know a very humble one in
deed, Heaven knows, but still so much as to gag me.
What my private sentiments are, you will find out
without an interpreter.

I have taken up the subject in another view, and the
other day, for a pretty Actress's benefit-night, I wrote
an Address, which I will give on the other page, called
'The Rights of Woman.'

I shall have the honour of receiving your criticisms in
person at Dunlop.

* See Poems, p. 83.
No. CXXXVII.
TO MISS B.***, OF YORK.

MADAM,

Among many things for which I envy those hale, long-flags before the flood, this in particular, that when they met with any body after their own heart, they had a charming long prospect of many, many happy meetings with them in after life.

Now, in this short, stormy, winter day of our fleeting existence, when you, now and then, in the Chapter of my life, make me need not recount the fairy pleasures that muse banter to counterbalance this cataclysm of evils. Bewitching poetry is like bewitching woman; she has in all ages been accused of misleading mankind from the counsels of wisdom and that path of prudence, involving them in difficulties, baiting them with poverty, branding them with infamy, and plunging them in the whirling vortex of ruin; yet where in the man but must own that all our happiness on earth is not worthy the name—that even the holy hermit's solitary prospect of paradisal bliss is but the glitter of a northern sun rising over a frozen region, compared with the many pleasures, the nameless raptures that we owe to the lovely Queen of the heart of Man!

No. CXXXIX.
TO JOIN M'MURDO, ESQ.

December, 1793.

SIR,

It is said that we take the greatest liberties with our greatest friends, and I pay myself a very high compliment in the manner in which I am going to apply the remark. I have owed you money longer than ever I owed to any man. Here is Ker's account, and here are six guineas; and now, I don't owe a shilling to man—or woman either. But for these dirty, dog-eared little pages, I had done myself the honour to have waited on you long ago. Independent of the obliging your hospitality has laid me under; the consciousness of your superiority in the rank of man and gentleman, of itself was fully so much as I could ever make head against; but to owe you money too, was more than I could face.

I think I once mentioned something of a collection of Scots songs I have some years been making; I send you a parcel of what I have got together. I could not conveniently spare them above five or six days, and five or six, I think of them will probably more than suffice you. A very few of them are my own. When you are tired of them, please leave them with Mr. Clint, of the King's Arms. There is not another copy of the collection in the world; and I should be sorry that any unforseen negligence should deprive me of what has cost me a good deal of pains.

No. CXL.
TO MRS. R.***,

_Who was to keep up a Play one evening at the Dumfries Theatre._

I am thinking to send my Address to some periodical publication, but it has not got your sanction, so pray look over it.

As to the Tuesday's play, let me beg of you, my dear Madam, to give us, The Wonder, a Woman keeps a Secret of her choice, first, and then, The Spilt Child—you will highly obliged me by so doing.

Ah! what an enviable creature you are! There now, this cursed gloomy misty-hell day, you are going to a party of choice spirits—

"To play the shades
Of frolic fancy, and incessant form,
Those rapid pictures, that assembled train—"
LETTERS.

No. CXLI.

To a Lady, in favour of a Player's Benefit.

MADAM,

You were so very good as to promise me to honour my friend with your presence on his benefit-night. That night is fixed for Friday first; I pity a most interesting one! The Way to keep him. I have the pleasure to know Mr. G. well. His merit as an actor is generally acknowledged. He has genius and worth which would do honour to patronage; he is a poor and modest man; claims which from their very silze-cold have the more forcible power on the generous heart. Alas, for pity! that from the indolence of those who have the good things of this life in their gift, too often does brazen-fronted importunity snatch that boon, the rightful due of retiring, humble want! Of all the qualities we assign to the author and director of Nature, by far the most enviable is to be able "to wipe away all tears from all eyes." What insignificant, sordid wretches are they, however chance may have loaded them with wealth, who go to their graves, to their magnificent mausoleums, with hardly the consciousness of having made one poor honest heart happy!

But I crave your pardon, Madam, I came to beg, not to preach.

No. CXLII.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER

TO MR. —

1784.

I am extremely obliged to you for your kind mention of my rustic letter, which a Start showed me. At present, my situation in life must be a great measure stationary, at least for two or three years. The statement is this—I am on the supervisors' list; and as we come on there by precedence, in two or three years I shall be at the head of that list, and be appointed of course; then, a Friend might be of service to me in getting me into a place of the kingdom which I would like. A supervisor's income varies from about a hundred and twenty to two hundred a-year; but the business is an incessant drudgery, and would be nearly a complete bar to every species of literary pursuit. The moment I am appointed supervisor in the common routine, I may be nominated on the Collector's list; and this is always a business purely of political patronage. A collectorship varies much more from better than two hundred a-year to near a thousand. They also come forward by precedence on the list, and have, besides a handsome income, a life of complete leisure. A life of literary leisure, with a decent competence, is the summit of my wishes. It would be the prudish affectation of sly philo-preference, to say that I do not need, or would not be indebted to a political friend; at the same time, Sir, I by no means lay my affairs before you thus, to hook my dependent situation on your benevolence. If, in my progress in life, an opening should occur, with the good offices of a gentleman of your public character and political consequence might bring me forward, I will petition your goodness with the same frankness and sincerity as I now do myself the honour to subscribe myself, &c.

No. CXLIII.

TO MRS. R****.

DEAR MADAM,

I meant to have called on you yester-night; but as I edged up to your box-door, the first object which greeted my view was one of those lobster-colored pup- ples sitting like another dragon, guarding the Hesperian fruit. On the conditions and capitulations you so obligingly offer. I shall certainly make my weather-beaten rustic pull a part of your box furniture on Tuesday, when we may arrange the business of the visit.

... * * *

Among the profusion of idle compliments, which insidious craft, or unmeaning folly, incessantly offer to your shrine—a shrine, how far exalted above such adoration—permit me, were it but for rarity's sake, to pay you the honest tribute of a warm heart and an independent mind; and to assure you that I am, thou most amiable and most accomplished of thy sex, with the most respectful esteem, and fervent regard, thine, &c.

No. CXLIV.

TO THE SAME.

I will wait on you my ever-valued friend, but whether in the morning I am not sure. Sunday closes a period of our cursed revenue business, and may probably keep me employed with my pen until noon. Fine employment for a poet's pen! There is a species of the human genius that I call the gin-horse class: what enviable dogs they are! Round, and round, and round they go—Mundell's ox, that drives his cotton-mill, is their exact prototype—without an idea or wish beyond their circle; fat, sleek, stupid, patient, quiet, and contented; while here I sit, altogether Novemberish, a —— melange of fretfulness and melancholy; not enough of the one to rouse me to passion, nor of the other to revive me in torpor; my soul flounching and dithering round her tenement, like a wild fitch caught amid the horrors of winter, and newly thrust into a cage. Well, I am persuaded that it was of me the learned sage prophesied, when he foretold —— "And behold on whatsoever this man doth set his heart, it shall not prosper!" If my resentment is awakened, it is sure to be where it dare not squeak; and if—

... * * *

Pray that wisdom and blee be more frequent visitors of

R. B.

No. CXLV.

TO THE SAME.

I have this moment got the song from S***, and I am sorry to see that he has spoilt it a good deal. It shall be a lesson to me how I lend him any thing again.

I have sent you Werter, truly happy to have any, the smallest opportunity of obliging you.

'Tis true, Madam, I saw you once since I was at W—— i, and that once from the very life-blood of my heart. Your reception of me was such, that a wretch meeting the eye of his judge, about to pronounce the sentence of death on him, could only have envied my feelings and situation. But I hate the theme, and never more shall write or speak on it.
One thing I shall proudly say, that I can pay Mrs. -- a higher tribute of esteem, and appreciate her amiable worth more truly, than any man whom I have seen approach her.

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No. CXLVI.

TO THE SAME.

I have often told you, my dear friend, that you had a spice of caprice in your composition, and you have as often disavowed it: even, perhaps, while your opinions were, at the moment, irrefragably proving it. Could any thing estrange me from a friend such as you? No! To-morrow I shall have the honour of waiting on you.

Farewell thou first of friends, and most accomplished of women: even with all thy little caprices.

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No. CXLVII.

TO THE SAME.

MADAM,

I return your common-place book; I have perused it with much pleasure, and would have continued my criticisms; but it seems the critic has nullified your esteeem, his strictures must lose their value.

If it is true that "offences come only from the heart," before you I am guiltless. To admire, esteem, and prize you, as the most accomplished of women, and the first of friends—if these are crimes, I am the most offending thing alive.

In a face where I used to meet the kind complacency of friendly confidence, to find cold neglect and contemptuous scorn—is a wrench that my heart can ill bear. It is, however, some kind of miserable good luck, that while de haut-en-bas rigour may depress an unfeeling wretch to the ground, it has a tendency to rouse a stubborn something in his bosom, which, though it cannot heal the wounds of his soul, is at least an upstart to blur its poignancy.

With the profoundest respect for your abilities; the most sincere esteem and ardent regard for your gentle heart and amiable manners; and the most fervent wish and prayer for your welfare, peace, and bliss, I have the honour to be, Madam, your most devoted, humble servant.

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No. CXLVIII.

TO JOIN SYME, ESQ.

You know that, among other high dignities, you have the honour to be my supreme court of critical judicature, from which there is no appeal. I enclose you a song which I composed since I saw you, and I am going to give you the history of it. Do you know, that among much that I admire in the characters and manners of those great folk whom I have now the honour to call my acquainances, the O---- family, there is nothing that claims me more than Mr. O's. unconceivable attachment to that incomparable woman. I do you, my dear Syne, meet a man who owed more to the Divine Giver of all good things than Mr. O. A fine fortune, a pleasing exterior, self evident amiable dispositions, and an ingenuous upright mind, and that informed too, much beyond the usual run of young fellows of his rank and fortune: and to all this, such a woman!—but of her I shall say nothing at all, in despair of saying anything adequate. In my song, I have endeavoured to do justice to what would be his feelings, on seeing, in the scene I have drawn, the habitations of his Lucy. As I am a good deal pleased with my performance, I in my first servour, thought of sending it to Mr. O;—but on second thoughts, perhaps what I offer as the honest incense of genuine respect, might, from the well-known character of poverty and poetry, be construed into some modification or other of that servility which my soul abhors.*

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No. CXLIX.

TO MISS

MADAM,

Nothing short of a kind of absolute necessity could have made me trouble you with this letter. Except my ardent and just esteem for your sense, taste, and worth, every sentiment arising in your breast, as I put pen to paper to you, is painfull. The scenes I have passed with the friend of my soul and his amiable connection! the wrench at my heart to think that he is gone, for ever gone from me, never more to meet in the wanderings of a weary world! and the cutting reflection of a song which I had most unadvisedly, and though most undeservedly, lost the confidence of that soul of worth, ere it took its flight!

These, Madam, are sensations of no ordinary anguish.—However, you also may be offended with some imputed improprieties of mine; sensibility you know I possess, and sincerity none will deny me.

To oppose these prejudices which have been raised against me, is not the business of this letter. Indeed it is a warfare I know not how to wage. The powers of positive vice I can in some degree calculate, and against direct malevolence I can be on my guard; but who can estimate the futility of girly caprices, or ward off the unthinking mischief of precipitate folly?

I have a favour to request of you, Madam; and of your sister Mrs. — through your means. You know that, at the wish of my late friend, I made a collection of all my tritest in verse which I had ever written. There are many of them local, some of them puerile and all of them, unfit for the public eye. As I have some little fame at stake, a fame that I trust may live when the fate of those "who watch for my halting," and the contumelious sneer of those whom accident has made my superiors, will, with themselves, be gone to the regions of oblivion; I am using now for the sake of those manuscripts. Will Mrs. — have the goodness to destroy them, or return them to me? As a pledge of friendship they were bestowed; and that circumstance indeed was all their merit. Most unhappily for me, that merit they no longer possess; and I hope that Mrs. —'s goodness, which I well know, and ever will revere, will not refuse this favour to a man whom she once held in some degree of estimation.

With the sincerest esteem, I have the honour to be, Madam, &c.

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No. CL.

TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.

25th February, 1794

Canst thou minister to a mind diseased? Canst thou speak peace and rest to a soul tossed on a sea of troubles, without one friendly star to guide her course, and showing that the next surge may overwhelm her? Canst thou give to a frame, tremblingly alive as the

* The song enclosed was that, given in Poems, page 112, beginning,

O, whar ye's in yer town?
tortures of suspense, the stability and hardihood of the rock that braves the blast? If thou canst not, do they affect thee?—these were the trials which then disturb me in my miseries with thy inquiries after me.

For these two months, I have not been able to lift a pen. Deity, constitution and frame were aborne, as if lost in despair. My eyes, which often were lighted with that indescribable tinge of deep indigence, which poisons my existence. Of late, a number of domestic vexations, and some pecuniary share in the ruin of a noble mind, and of cases of misfortune and anxiety, were yet what I could ill bear, so have irritated me, that my feelings at times could only be envied by a reproductive spirit listening to the sentence that dooms it to perdition.

Are you indeed in the language of consolation? I have exhausted in reflection every topic of comfort. A heart at ease would have been charmed with my sentiments and reasoning; but as to myself, I was like Judas Iscariot preaching the Gospel; he might melt and mould the sentiments around him, but his own kept its native incorrigibility.

Still there are two great pillars that bear us up amid the wreck of misfortune and misery. The one is composed of the different modifications of a certain noble, stubborn something in man, known by the names of courage, fortitude, magnanimity. The other is made up of those feelings and sentiments, which, however the sceptic may deny them, or the enthusiast disfigure them, yet, I am convinced, original and component parts of the human soul: those senses of the mind, if I may be allowed the expression, which connect us with, and link us to, those awful obscure realities—an all-powerful, and really beneficent; and a world to come, beyond death and the grave. The first gives the nerve of combat, while a ray of hope beams on the field; the last pours the balm of comfort into the wounds which time can never cure.

I do not remember, my dear Cunningham, that you and I ever talked on the subject of religion at all. I know some who laugh at it, as the trick of the crafty — to lead the undecided many; or as at most an uncertain obscurity, which mankind can never know anything of, and with which they are fools if they give themselves much to do. Nor would I quarrel with a man for his religion any more than I would for his want of a musical ear. I would regret that he was shut out from what, to me and to others, were such superlative sources of enjoyment. It is in this point of view, and for this reason, that I will deeply impute the misfortune of this misfortune to the will of my soul should happen to be a man of feeling, sentiment, and taste, I shall thus add largely to his enjoyments. Let me flatter myself that this sweet little fellow, who is just now running about my desk, will be a man of a melting, ardent, glowing heart; and an imagination, delighted with the painter, and rapt with the poet. Let me figure him wandering out in a sweet evening, to inhale the balmy gales, and enjoy the growing luxu- riance of the spring I himself the while in the blooming youth of life. He looks abroad on all nature, and through nature up to nature's God. His soul, born with delighting degrees, is rapt above this sublunary sphere, until he can be silent no longer, and bursts out into the glorious enthusiasm of Thomson,

"These as they change, Almighty Father, these Are but the varied God. The rolling year Is full of thee."

And so on in all the spirit and ardour of that charming bynny.

These are no ideal pleasures; they are real delights; and I ask what of the delights among the sons of men are superior, not to say equal, to them? And they have performed for you, the sign of my soul, the stamping which they have done for their own, and lays hold on them to bring herself into the presence of a witnessing, judging, and approving God.

**LETTERS.**

**No. CLI.**

**Suppose himself to be writing from the Dead to the Living.**

**MADAM,**

I dare say this is the first epistle you ever received from this nether world. I write you from the regions of Hell, amid the horrors of the damned. The time and manner of my leaving the earth I do not exactly know, as I took my departure in the heat of a fever of intoxication, contracted at your too hospitable institution; but, on my arrival here, I was fairly tried and sentenced to endure the purgatorial tortures of this in eternal confinement for the space of ninety-nine years, eleven months, and twenty-nine days, and all on account of the improcity of my conduct yesternight under your roof. Here am I, laid on a bed, of pitiful furs, with my aching head reclined on a pillow of ever-piercing thorn; while an infernal tormentor, wrinkled, and old, and cruel, his name I think is Recollection, with a whip of scorpions, forbids peace or rest to approach me, and keeps anguish eternally awake. Still, Madam, if I could in any measure be reinstated in the good opinion of the fair circle whom my conduct last night so much injured, I think it would be an alleviation to my torments. For this reason I trouble you with this letter. To you, Madam, I will make no apology. Your husband, who insisted on my drinking more than I chose, has no right to blame me; and the other gentlemen were partakers of my guilt. But to you, Madam, I have much to apologize. Your good opinion I valued as one of the greatest acquisi- tions I had made on earth, and I was truly a beast to forswear it. There was a Mrs——, too, a woman of fine sense, gentle and unassuming manners—do make, on my part, a miserable d—— wretch's best apology to her. A Mrs.——, a charming woman, did me the honour to be precipitated in my favour;—this makes me hope that I have not outraged her beyond all for- giveness. To all the latter ladies please present my humblest contrition for my conduct, and my petition for their gracious pardon. O, all ye powers of decen- cy and decorum! Whisper to them, that my errors, though great, were involuntary—that an intoxicated man is the vilest of beasts; that it was not my nature to be brutal to any one; that to be rude to a woman, when in my senser, was impossible with me—but—

Regret! Remorse! Shame! ye three hell-hounds! that have dogged my steps and bay at my heels, spare me! I am a wretch! Forgive the offences, and pity the perdition of, Madam, Your humble slave.

**No. CLII.**

**TO MRS. DUNLOP.**

5th December, 1785.

**MY DEAR FRIEND,**

As I am in a complete Decemberian humour, gloomy, sullen, stupid, as even the deity of Dulness herself could wish, I shall not draw out a heavy letter with a number of hollow apologies to my late silence. Only one I shall mention, because I know you will sympa- theize in it: these four months, a sweet little girl, my youngest child, has been so ill, that every day, a week or a month, threatened to terminate her existence. There had much need be many pleasures annexed to the states of husband and father, for God knows, they have many peculiarities. I cannot describe to you the anguish of sleepless hours, these ties frequently give me. I see a train of helpless little folks; me and my exertions all their stay; and on what a brittle thread does the life of
man hang! If I am nipt off at the command of Fate, even in all the vigour of manhood as I am—such things happen every day—gracious God! what would become of my little flock!—I'm here that I enrap your people of fortune! A father on his death-bed, taking an everlasting leave of his children, has indeed enough; but the man of competent fortune leaves his sons and daughters independent—and friends; while I—but I shall run distracted if I think any longer on the subject.

To leave talking of the matter so gravely, I shall sing with the old Scots ballad—

"O that I had ne'er been married
I would never had nae care:
Now I've gotten wife and bairns,
They cry crowdie I evermair.

Crowdie! ane! crowdie twice;
Crowdie! three times in a day:
An ye crowdie any mair,
Y's'll crowdie a' my meal away."

[December 24th.]

We have had a brilliant theatre here this season; only, as all other business has, it experiences a stagnation of trade from the epidemic complaint of the country, want of cash. I mention our theatre merely to lay in an occasional Address which I wrote for the benefit night of one of the actresses, and which is as follows:—

25th, Christmas Morning.

This my much-loved friend is a morning of wishes; accept mine—so heavy heaven be as they are sincere! that blessings may attend your steps, and affliction know you not! in the charming words of my favourite author, The Men of Feeling, "May the Great Spirit bear up the weight of thy gray hairs, and blunt the arrow that brings them rest!""

Now that I talk of authors, how do you like Cowper? Is not the Task a glorious poem? The religion of the Task, bating a few scraps of Calvinistic divinity, is the religion of God and Nature; the religion that exalts, that ennobles man. Were not you to send me your Zelado, in return for mine? Tell me how you like my marks and notes through the book. I would not give a farthing for a book, unless I were at liberty to blot it with my criticisms.

I have lately collected, for a friend's perusal, all my letters. I mean those which I first sketched in a rough draught, and afterwards wrote out fair. On looking over some old musty papers, which, from time to time, I had parcellled by, as trash that were scarce worth preserving, and which yet at the same time I did not care to destroy; I discovered many of these rude sketches, and have written them out, in a bound MSS. for my friend's library. As I wrote always to you the rhapsody of the moment, I cannot find a single scroll to you, except one, about the commencement of our acquaintance. If there were any possible conveyance, I would send you a perusal of my book.

No. CLIII.

TO MRS. DUNLOP, IN LONDON.

Dumfries, 20th December, 1795.

I have been prodigiously disappointed in this London journey of yours. In the first place, when your last to me reached Dumfries, I was in the country, and did not return until too late to answer your letter; in the next place, I thought you would certainly take this route, and now I know not what is become of you at all. God grant that it may find you and yours in prospering health and good spirits! Do let me hear from you the soonest possible.

As I hope to get a frank from my friend Captain Miller, I shall every leisure hour, take up the pen, and gossip away whatever comes first, prose or poetry, sermon or song. In this last article I have abandoned of late, I shall have mentioned to you a super-publication of Scottish songs which is making its appearance in your great metropolis, and where I have the honour to preside over the Scottish version as no less a personage than Peter Lindsay does over the English. I write the following for a favourite air. See the Song entitled, Lord Gregory, Poems, p. 86.

[December 20th.]

Since I began this letter, I have been appointed to act in the capacity of supervisor here: and I assure you, with the load of business, and with that business being new to me, I could scarcely have commanded ten minutes to have spoken to you, had you been in town, much less to have written you an epistle. This appointment is only temporary, and during the illness of the present incumbent; but I look forward to an early period when I shall be appointed in full form; a consummation devoutly to be wished! My political sins seem to be forgotten me.

This is the season (New-year's day is now my date) of wishing; and mine are most fervently offered up for you! May life to you be a positive blessing while it lasts for your own sake; and that it may yet be greatly prolonged, is my wish for your own sake, and for the sake of the rest of your friends! What a transient business is life! Very lately I was a boy; but t'other day I was a young man; and I already begin to feel the rigid fibre and stiffening joints of old age coming fast o'er my frame. With all my follies of youth, and, I fear, a few vices of manhood, still I congratulate myself on having had, in early days, religion strongly impressed on my mind. I have nothing to say to any one as to which sect he belongs to, or what creed he believes; but I look on the one, who is firmly persuaded of infinite Wisdom and Goodness superintending and directing every circumstance that can happen in his lot—I felicitate such a man as having a solid foundation on his mental enjoyment. I am prop and sure to stay in the hour of difficulty, trouble, and distress; and a never-failing anchor of hope, when he looks beyond the grave.

[January 12th.]

You will have seen our worthy and ingenious friend the Doctor, long ere this. I hope he is well, and beg to be remembered to him. I have just been reading over again, I dare say for the hundred and fiftieth time, his Piece of Society and Manners; and still I read it with delight. His humour is perfectly original—it is neither the humour of Addison, nor Swift, nor Sterne, nor of any body but Dr. Moore. By the by, you have deprived me of Zelado; remember that, when you are disposed to rake up the sins of my neglect from among the ashes of my laziness.

He has paid me a pretty compliment, by quoting in his last publication."

No. CLIV.

TO MRS. R****.

[20th January, 1796.]

I cannot express my gratitude to you for allowing me a longer perusal of Anacharsis. In fact I never

*Edward.
LETTERS.

met with a book that bewitched me so much; and I, as a member of the library, must warmly feel the obligation you have laid us under. Indeed to me, the obligation is stronger than to any other individual of our society; as Anacharsis is an indespensable desideratum to a son of the Muses.

The health you wished me in your morning’s card, is I think, flown from me for ever. I have not been able to leave my bed to day till about an hour ago.— These wickedly unlucky advertisements I lent (I did wrong) to a friend, and I am ill able to go in quest of him.

The Muses have not quite forsaken me. The following detached stanzas I intend to interweave in some disastrous tale of a shepherd.

No. CLV.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

31st January, 1796.

These many months you have been two packets in my debt—what sin of ignorance I have committed against so highly valued a friend I am utterly at a loss to guess. Alas! Madam! I ill can I afford, at this time, to be deprived of any of the small remnant of my pleasures. I have lately drunk deep of the cup of affliction. The autumn robbed me of my only daughter and darling child, and that at a distance too, and so rapidly, as to put it out of my power to pay the last duties to her. I had scarcely begun to recover from that shock, when I became the victim of a most severe rheumatic fever, and long the die spun doubtful; until, after many weeks of a sick bed, it seems to have turned up life, and I am beginning to crawl across my room, and once indeed have been before my own door in the street.

When pleasure fascinates the mental sight, Affliction purifies the visual ray, Religion haits the drear, the untried night, And shuts, for ever shuts, life’s doubtful day!

No. CLVI.

TO MRS. R****

Who had desired him to go to the Birth-Day Assembly on that day to show his loyalty.

4th June, 1796.

am in such miserable health as to be utterly incapable of showing my loyalty in any way. Racked as I am with rheumatisms, I meet every face with a greeting, like that of Balak to Balaam—Come, curse me Jacob; and come, defy me Israel!! So say I—come, curse me that east wind: and come, defy me the north! Would you have me in such circumstances, copy you out a love song?

I may, perhaps, see you on Saturday, but I will not be at the ball. Why should I “Man delights not me, nor woman either?” Can you supply me with the song, Let us all be unhappy together—do if you can, and oblige le pauvre miserable.

R. B.

No. CLVII.

TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.

Brow, Sea-bathing Quarters, 7th July, 1796.

MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,

I received yours here this moment, and am indeed highly flattered with the approbation of the literary circle you mention; a literary circle inferior to none in the two kingdoms. Alas! my friend, I fear the voice of the bard will soon be heard among you no more? For these eight or ten months I have been ailing, sometimes bedfast, and sometimes not; but these last three months, I have been tortured by an excruciating rheumatism, which has reduced me to near the last stage. You actually would not know me if you saw me, and by the approbation of the literary circle you mention; a literary circle inferior to none in the two kingdoms. Alas! my friend, I fear the voice of the bard will soon be heard among you no more? For these eight or ten months I have been ailing, sometimes bedfast, and sometimes not; but these last three months, I have been tortured by an excruciating rheumatism, which has reduced me to near the last stage. You actually would not know me if you saw me, and by the approbation of the literary circle you mention; a literary circle inferior to none in the two kingdoms. Alas! my friend, I fear the voice of the bard will soon be heard among you no

No. CLVIII.

TO MRS. BURNS.

Brow, Thursday.

MY DEAREST LOVE,

I delayed writing until I could tell you what effect sea-bathing was likely to produce. It would be injustice to deny that it has eased my pains, and I think, has strengthened me; but my appetite is still extremely bad. No flesh or fish can I swallow; porridge and milk are the only thing I can taste. I am very happy to hear, by Miss Jess Lewars, that you are all well. My very best and kindest compliments to her, and to all the children. I will see you on Sunday. Your affectionate husband.

R. B.

No. CLIX.

TO MRS. BURNS.

Brow, 12th July, 1796.

MADAM,

I have written you so often without receiving any answer, that I would not trouble you again, but for the circumstances in which I am. An illness which has long hung about me, in all probability will speedily send me beyond that bourne whence no traveller returns. Your friendship, with which for many years you honored me, was a friendship dearst to my soul. Your conversation, and especially your correspondence, were at once highly entertaining and instructive. With what pleasure did I use to break up the seal! The remembrance yet adds one pulse more to my poor palpitating heart. Farewell!!! R. B.

* The above is supposed to be the last production of Robert Burns, who died on the 21st of the month, nine days after he had written it. He however, was writing his last letter, and receiving a satisfactory explanation of his friend’s sience, and an assurance of the continuance of her friendship to his widow and children; an assurance that he probably never regretted.

It is probable that the greater part of her letters to him were destroyed by our Bard about the time that he had them in his hand. So did not foresee that they letters to her were to appear in print, nor conceive the disappointment that will be felt, that a few of this excellent lady’s have not been served to erudite and accurate the collection.
CORRESPONDENCE

WITH

MR. GEORGE THOMSON.

THE remaining part of this Volume, consists principally of the Correspondence between Mr. Burns and Mr. Thomson, on the subject of the beautiful Work projected and executed by the latter, the nature of which is explained in the first number of the following series. The undertaking of Mr. Thomson, is one in which the Public may be congratulated in various points of view: not merely as having collected the finest of the Scottish songs and airs of past times, but as having given occasion to a number of original songs of our bard, which equal or surpass the former efforts of the pastoral muses of Scotland, and which, if we mistake not, may be safely compared with the lyric poetry of any age or country. The letters of Mr. Burns to Mr. Thomson include the songs he presented to him, some of which appear in different stages of their progress; and these letters will be found to exhibit occasionally his notions of song-writing, and his opinions on various subjects of taste and criticism. These opinions, it will be observed, were called forth by the observations of his correspondent, Mr. Thomson; and without the letters of this gentleman, those of Burns would have often been unintelligible. He has therefore yielded to the earnest request of the Trustees of the family of the poet, to suffer them to appear in their natural order; and, independently of the illustration they give to the letters of our bard, it is not to be doubted that their intrinsic merit will ensure them a reception from the public, far beyond what Mr. Thomson's modesty would permit him to suppose. The whole of this correspondence was arranged for the press by Mr. Thomson, and has been printed with little addition or variation.

To avoid increasing the bulk of the work unnecessarily, we have in general referred the reader for the Song to the page in the Poems where it occurs; and have given the verses entire, only when they differ in some respects from the adopted set.

* This work is entitled "A Select Collection of original Scottish Airs for the Voice: to which are added Introductory and Concluding Symphonies and Accompaniments for the Piano Forte and Violin by Pleyel and Kozelich: with select and characteristic Verses, by the most admired Scottish Poets, &c."
songs; those only will be removed, which appear quite silly, or absolutely indecent. Even these shall all be examined by Mr. Burns, and if he be of opinion that any of them are deserving of the music, in each case no divorce shall take place.

Relying on the letter accompanying this, to be forgiven for the liberty I have taken in addressing you, I am, with great esteem, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

G. THOMSON.

No. II.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Dumfries, 16th September, 1792.

SIR,

I have just this moment got your letter. As the request you make will positively add to my enjoyments in complying with it, I shall enter into your undertaking with all the small portion of abilities I have, so far from the impulse of enthusiasm. Only don't hurry me: "Deil tak the hindmost," is by no means the crd de guerre of my muse. Will you, as I am inferior to none of you in enthusiastic attachment to the poetry and music of old Caledonia, and, since you request it, have cheerfully promised my mate of assistance—will you let me have a list of your airs, with the first line of the printed verses you intend for them, that I may have an opportunity of suggesting any alteration that may occur to me. You know 'tis in the way of trade, still leaving you, gentlemen, the unbounded right of publishers, to approve or reject, at your pleasure, for your own publication. 

As to any remuneration, you may think my songs either above or below price; for they shall absolutely be the one or the other. In the honest enthusiasm with which I embark in your undertaking, to talk of money, wages, fee, hire, &c. would be downright prostitution of soul! A proof of each of the songs that I compose or amend, I shall receive as a favor. In the rustic phrase of the season, "Gude speed the wark!"

I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

R. BURNS.

P. S. I have some particular reasons for wishing my interference to be known as little as possible.

As to any remuneration, you may think my songs either above or below price: for they shall absolutely be the one or the other. In the honest enthusiasm with which I embark in your undertaking, to talk of money, wages, fee, hire, &c. would be downright prostitution of soul! A proof of each of the songs that I compose or amend, I shall receive as a favor. In the rustic phrase of the season, "Gude speed the wark!"

I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

R. BURNS.

P. S. I have some particular reasons for wishing my interference to be known as little as possible.

To of being able to produce a collection highly deserving of public attention in all respects.

I agree with you in thinking English verses that have merit, very eligible, wherever new verses are necessary; because the English becomes every year more and more the language of Scotland; but if you mean that no English verse, except those by Scottish authors, ought to be a not ted, I am half inclined to differ from you. I should consider it unpardonable to sacrifice some good song in the rustic dialect, to make room for English verses; but if we can select a few excellent ones suited to the unpandiled or ill-provided airs, would it not be the very bigotry of literary patriotism to reject such, merely because the authors were born south of the Tweed? Our sweet air, My Nannie O, which in the collections is joined to the poorest stuff that Allan Ramsay ever wrote, beginning, White some for pleasure jam their health, ana sounded so finely to Dr. Percy's beautiful song, O, Nancy will thou go with me, that one would think he wrote it on purpose for the air. However, it is not at all our wish to confine you to English verses; you shall freely be allowed a sprinkling of your native tongue, as you express it, and moreover, we will patiently wait your own time. One thing only I beg, which is, that however gay and sportive the muse may be, she may always be decent. Let her not write what beauty would be well pleased to have wound that charming delicacy which forms the most precious dowry of our daughters. I do not conceive the song to be the most proper vehicle for witty and brilliant conceits; simplicity, I believe should be its prominent feature; but in some of our songs, the writers have confounded simplicity with coarseness and vulgarity; although because I am one of the other, as Mr. Beattie well observes, there is as great a difference as between a plain suit of clothes and a bundle of rags. The humorous ballad, or pathetic complaint, is best suited to our country, and more interesting, indeed, in all songs, than the most pointed wit, dazzling descriptions, and flowery fancies.

With these trite observations, I send you eleven of the songs, for which it is my wish to substitute others of your writing. I shall soon transmit the rest, and, at the same time, a prospectus of the whole collection: and you may believe we will receive any hints that you are so kind as to give for improving the work, with the greatest pleasure and thankfulness.

I remain, dear Sir, &c.

No. IV.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

Let me tell you, that you are too fastidious in your ideas of songs and ballads. I own that your criticisms are just; the songs you specify in your list have all, but one, the faults you remark in them; but who shall mend the matter? Who shall rise up and say—Go to, I will make a better? For instance, on reading over the Loa-rig, I immediately set about trying my hand on it, and, after all, I could make nothing more of it than the following, which Heaven knows is poor enough:

When o'er the hill the eastern star,
Tells bughtin time is near my jo;
And oossen frae the furrow'd field,
Return saud and down the ey O:

Down by the burn, where scented birkis
Wi' dew hanging clear, my jo,
I'll meet thee on the la-rig,
Thy ain kind dearie O.

In mirkest Glen, at midnight hour,
S İlk is, and nae man's to be found:
If thro' that glen I gae to thee,
My ain kind dearie O.

* For "scented birkis" in some copies, "birkes bula." E.
Ahbo' the night were ne'er sae wild,*
And I were ne'er sae wearie O,
I'd meet thee on the loe-ryg,
A kind dearie.

Your observation as to the aptitude of Dr. Percy's ballad to the air Nannie O, is just. It is besides, perhaps the most beautiful ballad in the English language. But let me remark to you, that, in the sentiment and style of our native airs, there is a pastoral simplicity, a something that one may call the Doric style and dialect of vocal music, to which a dash of our native tongue and manners is particularly, say peculiarly appropriate. For this reason, and, upon my honour, for this reason alone, I am of opinion (but, as I told you before, my opinion is yours, freely yours, to approve, or reject, as you please) that my ballad of Nannie O, might perhaps, do for one set of verses to the tune. Now don't let it enter into your head, that you are under any necessity of taking my verses. I have long ago made up my mind as to my own reputation in the business of authorship; and have nothing to be pleased or offended at, in your adoption or rejection of my verses. Though you should reject one half of what I give you, I shall be pleased with your adopting the other half, and shall continue to serve you with the same assiduity.

In the printed copy of my Nannie O, the name of the river is terribly pronounced. I will alter it,

"Behind you hills where Lagar flows."

Gowan is the name of the river that suits the idea of the stanza best, but Lagar is the most agreeable modulation of syllables.

I will soon give you a great many more remarks on this business; but I have just now an opportunity of conveying you this scrap, free of postage, an expense that it is ill able to pay: so, with my best compliments to honest Allan, Good be w' ye, &c.

Friday night.

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Saturday morning.

As I find I have still an hour to spare this morning before my conveyance goes away, I will give you Nannie O, at length. See Poems, p. 61.

Your remarks on Eve-bughts, Marion, are just: still it has obtained a place among our more classical Scottish songs and what with many beauties in its composition, and moral prejudices in its favour, you will not find it easy to account for. In my early years, when I was thinking of going to the West Indies, I took the following farewell of a dear girl. It is quite trilling, and has nothing of the merits of Eve-bughts; but it will fill up this page.

You must know, that all my earlier love-songs were

* In the copy transmitted to Mr. Thomson, instead of wild, was inserted wet. But in one of the manuscripts, probably written afterwards, wet was changed into wild; evidently a great improvement. The lovers might meet on the loe-ryg, "although the night were ne'er so wild," that is, although the summer wind blew, the sky lowered, and the thunder murmured; such circumstances might render their meeting still more interesting. But if the night were actually wet, why should they meet on the loe-ryg? On a wet night the imagination cannot contemplate their situation there with any complacency.—Thetis, and, after him, Hammon, has conceived a happier situation for lovers on a wet night. Probably Burns had in his mind the verse of an old Scottish Song, in which wet and weary are naturally enough conjointed.

"When my ploughman comes home at ev'n He's often wet and weary; Cast oft the wet, put on the dry, And gas to bed my deary!"

MY WIFE'S A WINsome WEE THING

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing.

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing.

I have just been looking over the Collier's bonnie Dochter; and if the following paraphrase, which I composed the other day, on a charming Ayrshire girl, Miss ——, as she passed through this place to England, will suit your taste better than the Collier Lassie, fall on and welcome.

O saw ye bonnie Lesley As she gazed o'er the border? See Poems, p. 81.

I have hitherto deferred the sublimer, more pathetic airs until more leisure, as they will take, and deserve, a greater effort. However, they are all put into your hands, as chy into the hands of the potter, to make one vessel to honour and another to dishonour. Fare well, &c.

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No. VI.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

In closing the Song on Highland Mary See Poems, p. 83.

14th November, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

I agree with you that the song, Katherine Ogie, is very poor stuff, and unworthy, altogether unworthy, of so beautiful an air. I tried to mend it, but the awkward sound Ogie recurring so often in the rhyme spoils every attempt at introducing sentiment into the
place. The foregoing song pleases myself; I think it is in my happiest manner; you will see at first glance that it suits the air. The subject of the song is one of the most interesting passages of my youthful days; and I own that I should be much flattered to see the verses set to an air, which would ensure celebrity. Perhaps, after all, ‘tis the still glowing prejudice of my heart, that throws a borrowed lustre over the merits of the composition.

I have partly taken your idea of Auld Rob Morris. I have adopted the two first verses, and am going on with the rest; which promises pretty well. I take up one or another, just as the bee of the moment buzzes in my bonnet-lug; and do you, sans ceremonie, make what use you choose of the productions. Adieu! &c.

No. VII.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, November, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

I was just going to write to you that on meeting with your Nannie O I had fallen violently in love with her. I thank you, therefore, for sending the charming rustic to me, in the dress you wish her to appear before the public. She does you great credit, and will soon be admitted into my company.

I regret that your song for the Lean-rig, is so short; the air is easy, soon sung, and very pleasing; so that, if the singer stops at the end of two stanzas, it is a pleasure lost ere it is well possessed.

Although a dash of our native tongue and manners is doubtless peculiarly congenial and appropriate to our melodies, yet I shall be able to present a considerable number of the very Flowers of English Song, well adapted to those melodies, which in England at least will be more to their taste, and still greater attention than they have procured there. But you will observe, my dear Sir, that every air shall, in the first place, have verses wholly by Scottish poets; and that those of English writers shall follow as additional songs, for the choice of the singer.

What you say of the Earle-bughts is just; I admire it and never meant to supplant it. All I requested was, that you would try your hand on some of the inferior stanzas, which are apparently no part of the original song: but this I do not urge, because the song is of sufficient length though those inferior stanzas be omitted, as they will be by the singer of taste. You must not think I except the songs to be of superior merit; that were an unreasonable expectation. I am sensible that no poet can sit down doggedly to pen verses, and succeed well at all times.

I am highly pleased with your humorous and amorous rhapsody on Bonnie Leslie r It is a thousand times better than the Collier’s Lassie. ‘The devil he could na scath thee,’ &c. is an eccentrick-and happy thought. Do you not think, however, that the names of such old heroes as Alexander, sound rather queer, unless in pompous or mere burlesque verse? Instead of the line ‘And never made another,’ I would humbly suggest, ‘And never made sic anither;’ and I would fain have you substitute some other line for ‘Return to Caledonia.’ In the last verse, because I think this alteration of the orthography, and of the sound of Caledonia, disfigures the word, and renders it Huddled into.

Of the other song, My wife’s a wiseome wee thing, I think the first eight lines very good, but I do not admire the other eight, because four of them are a bare repetition of the first verse, and two, I should say, but could make nothing better than the following: do you mend it, or, as Yorick did with the love-letter, whip it up in your own way.

O leze me on my wee thing; My bonny blythesome wee thing; Sae lang’s I hae my wee thing, I’ll think me joc divise,

Tho’ world’s care we share o’t, And may see melide mair o’t; Wi’ her I likithly hear it, And ne’er a word repine.

You perceive my dear Sir, I avail myself of the liberty which you condescend to allow me, by speaking freely what I think. Be assured, it is not my disposition to pick out the faults of any poem or picture I see; my first and chief object is to discover and be delighted with the beauty of the piece. I am to examine critically, and at leisure, what perhaps you have written in haste, I may happen to observe carelessness in the repetition of which might lead you to improve them. The wren will often see what has been overlooked by the eagle. I remain yours faithfully, &c.

P. S. Your verses upon Highland Mary are just come to hand: they breathe the genuine spirit of poetry, and, like the music, will last for ever. Such verses united to such an air, with the delicate harmony of Helyet superadded, might form a trea worthy of being presented to Apollo himself. I have heard the song, and always seem inspired when you write of her.

No. VIII.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Dumfries, 1st December, 1792.

Your alterations of my Nannie O are perfectly right. So are those of My wife’s a wiseome wee thing. Your alteration of the second stanza is a positive improvement. Now, my dear Sir, with the freedom which characterizes our correspondence, I must not, cannot, alter Bonnie Leslie. You are right, the word, ‘Alexander’ makes the line a little uncooarch, but I think the thought is pretty. Of Alexander, beyond all other heroes, it may be said in the sublime language of Scripture, that ‘he went forth conquering and to conquer.’

‘For Nature made her what she is, And never made anither.’ (Such a person as she is.)

This is in my opinion more poetical than ‘Ne’er made sic anither.’ However, it is immaterial; make it either way. ‘Caledonia;’ I agree with you, is not so good a word as could be wished, though it is sanctioned in three or four instances by Allan Ramsay; but I cannot help it. In short, that species of stanza is the most difficult that I have ever tried.

The Lean-rig is as follows. (Here the poet gives the two first stanzas, as before, p. 127, with the following in addition.)

The hunter lo’s the morning sun, To rouse the mountain deer, my joy: At noon the herder seeks the glea, Along the burn to steer, my joy: Gie me the hour o’ gloamin gray, It makes my heart say cheery O, To meet thee on the lean-rig, My ain kind deary, O.

I am interrupted.

Yours, &c.

No. IX.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Inclining Auld Robin Morris, and Duncan Gray.—See Poems, p. 85.

4th December, 1792.

The foregoing (Auld Rob Morris and Duncan Gray.) I submit, my dear Sir, to your better judgment.

* Mr. Thomson has decided on Ne’er made sic anither. E
Acquit them, or condemn them as seemeth good in your sight. Duncan Gray is that kind of light-horse galloper of an air, which precludes sentiment. The ludicrous is its ruling feature.

No. X.  

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.  

With Poothaid Cauld and Gala Water.  
See Poems, p. 86.  

January, 1783.  

Many returns of the season to you, my dear Sir.--How comes on your publication? I will these two foregoing be of any service to you? I should like to know what songs you print to each tune besides the verses to which it is set. In short, I would wish to give you my opinion on all the poetry you publish. You know it is my trade, and a man in the way of his trade, may suggest useful hints, that escape men ofiusch superior parts and endowments in their things.  

If you meet with my dear and much valued C. greet him in my name, with the compliments of the season.  

Yours, &c.

No. IX.  

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.  

Edinburgh, January 21, 1783.  

You make me happy, my dear Sir, and thousands will be happy to see the charming songs you have sent me. I think merry returns of the season to you, and may you long continue, among the sons and daughters of Caledonia, to delight them and to honour yourself.  

The four last songs with which you favoured me, viz. Auld Rob Morris, Duncan Gray, Gala Water, and Cauld Keil, are admirable. Duncan is indeed a lad of grace, and his humour will endear him to everybody.  

The distressed lover in Auld Rob, and the happy Shepherdess in Gala Water, exhibit an excellent contrast: they speak from genuine feeling, and powerfully touch the heart.  

The number of songs which I had originally in view was limited; but I now resolve to include every Scotch air and song worth singing, leaving none behind but mere gleanings, to which the publishers of omnivorous are welcome. I would rather be the editor of a collection from which nothing could be taken away, than of one to which nothing could be added. We intend presenting the subscribers with two beautiful stroke engravings: the one characteristic of the plaintive, and the other of the lively songs: and I have Mr. Beattie's promise of an essay upon the subject of our national music, if his health will permit him to write it. As a number of our songs have doubtless been called for by particular events, or by the charms of peerless dancers, there must be many curious anecdotes relating to them.  

The late Mr. Tyler, of Woodhouselee, I believe knew more of this than any body, for he joined to the pursuits of an antiquary a taste for poetry, besides being a man of "be worth," and possessing an enthusiasm for music beyond most of his contemporaries. He was quite pleased with this plan of mine, for I may say it has been solely managed by me, and we had several long conversations about it when it was in embryo. If I could simply mention the name of the heroine of each song and the incident which occasioned the verses, it would be gratifying. Pray, will you send me any information of this sort, as well with regard to your own songs, as the old ones?

To all the favourite songs of the plaintive or pastoral kind, will be joined the delicate accompaniments, &c. of I'leyed. To those of the comic and humorous class, I think accompaniments scarcely necessary; they are chiefly fitted for the conviviality of the festive board, and a tuneful voice, with a proper delivery of the words, renders them perfect. Nevertheless, to these I propose adding bass accompaniments, because then you will be either for singing, or rather for instrumental performance, when there happens to be no singer. I mean to employ our right trusty friend Mr. Clarke, to set the bass to these, which he assures me he will do con amore, and with much greater attention than he ever bestowed on any thing of the kind. But for this last class of airs I will not attempt to find more than one set of verses.

That eccentric bard, Peter Findar, has started I know not how many difficulties, about writing for the airs I sent to him, because of the peculiarity of their measure, and the trammels they impose on his flying egasus. I subjoin for your perusal the only one I have yet got from him, being for the fine sir "Lord Gregory." The Scots verses printed with that air, are taken from the middle of an old ballad, called The Loss of Lowgarrowan, which I do not admire. I have set down the air therefore as a creditor of yours. Many of the Jacobite songs are replete with wit and humour, might not the best of these be included in our volume of comic songs?

POSTSCRIPT.  

FROM THE HON. A. ERSKINE.  

Mr. Thomson has been so obliging as to give me perusal of your songs. Highland Mary is most enchantingly pathetic. I am disposed to value them, &c. as you may see from the following: 'Sheep o' lowpin o'er a limb,' is a line of itself that should make you immortal. I sometimes hear of you from my mutual friend C. who is a most excellent fellow, and possesses, above all men I know, the charm of a most obliging disposition. You kindly promised me, about a year ago, a collection of your unpublished productions, religious and amorous; I know from experience how scarce it is to copy. If you will get any trusty person in Dumfries to write them over fair, I will give Peter Hill whatever money he asks for his trouble, and I certainly shall not betray your confidence. I am your hearty admirer,  

ANDREW ERSKINE.

No. XII.  

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.  

20th January, 1783.  

I approve greatly, my dear Sir, of your plans; Dr. Beattie's essay will of itself be a treasure. On my part, I mean to draw up an appendix to the Doctor's essay, containing my stock of anecdotes, &c. of our songs. All the late Mr. Tyler's anecdotes I have by me, taken down in the course of my acquaintance with him from his own mouth. I am such an enquirer that, in the course of my several perambulations through Scotland, I made a pilgrimage to the individual spot from which every song took its rise; Lowgarrowan, and the Brave of Ballenden, excepted. So far as the locality, either from the title of the air, or the tenor of the song, could be ascertained, I have paid my devotions at the particular shrine of every Scots muse.

I do not doubt but you might make a very valuable collection of Jacobite songs; but would it give no offence? In the mean time, do not you think that some of them, particularly The Song's Tail to Geordie, as an air, with other words, might be well worth a place in your collection of lively songs?

If it were possible to procure a song of merit, it would be proper to have one set of Scots songs to every air, and that the set of words to which our notes ought to
No. XV.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

OPEN THE DOOR TO ME, OH!

With Alterations.

Oh! open the door, some pity show,
Oh! open the door to me, Oh!

See Poems, p. 57.

I do not know whether this song be really mended.

No. XVI.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

JESSE,

True hearted was he, the sad swain o' the Yarrow,
And fair are the maidens on the banks o' the Ayr;

See Poems, p. 57.

No. XVII.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, 2d April, 1793.

I will not recognize the title you give yourself, "the prince of inditement" correspondents, but if the adjective were taken away, I think the title would then fit you exactly. It gives me pleasure to find you can furnish anecdotes with respect to most of the songs; there will be a literary curiosity.

I now send you my list of the songs which I believe will be found nearly complete. I have put down the first lines of all the English songs which I propose giving in addition to the Scottish verses. If any others occur to you, better adapted to the character of the airs, pray mention them, when you favour me with your strictures upon every thing else relating to the work.

Pyeel has lately sent me a number of the songs, with his symphonies and accompaniments added to them. I wish you were here, that I might serve up some of them to you with your own verses, by way of dessert after dinner. There is so much delightful fancy in the symphonies, and such a delicate simplicity in the accompaniments—they are indeed beyond all praise.

I am very much pleased with the several last productions of your muse: your Lord Gregory, in my estimation, is more interesting than Peter's, beautiful as he is. Your verse was Willie must undergo some alterations to suit the air. Mr. Erskine and I have been coming it over; he will suggest what is necessary to make it a fit match.

* This second line was originally,

If love it may be, Oh!

* See the altered copy of Wandering Willie, p. 88 of the Poems. Several of the alterations seem to be of little importance in themselves, and were adopted, it may be presumed, for the sake of suiting the words better to the music. The Homeric epithet for the sea, dark-heaving, suggested by Mr. Erskine, is in itself more beautiful, as well perhaps as more sublime, than wild roaring, which he has retained; but as it is only applicable to a placid state of the sea, or at most to the swell left on its surface after the storm is over, it gives a picture of that element not so well adapted to the ideas of eternal separation, which the fair mourner is
The gentleman I have mentioned, whose fine taste you are no stranger to, is so well pleased both with the musical and poetic part of our work, that he has volunteered his assistance, and has already written four songs for it, which, by his own desire, I send for your perusal.

No. XVIII.

MIR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

WHEN WILD WAR'S DEADLY BLAST WAS BLAWN.

Air—"The Mill Mill O."

When wild war's deadly blast was blawn,
And gentle pace returning,
See Poems, p. 57.

MEG O' THE MILL.

Air—"O bennie lass will you lie in a barack."

O ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten,
An' ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten?
See Poems, p. 88.

No. XIX.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

7th April, 1793.

Thank you, my dear Sir, for your packet. You cannot imagine how much this business of composing for your publication has added to my enjoyments. What with my early attachment to ballads, your books, &c. ballad-making is now as completely my hobby-horse as ever fortification was uncle Toby's; so I'll even cast it away till I come to the limit of my race (God grant that I may take the right side of the winning post!) and then cheerfully looking back on the honest folks with whom I have been happy, I shall see or sing, "Sae merry as we a' has been!" and raising my last looks to the whole human race, the last words of the voice of Coils* shall be, "Good night and joy be wi' you a'!" So much for my past words: now for a few present remarks, as they have occurred at random on looking over your list.

The first lines of The last time I come o'er the moor, and several other lines in it, are beautiful; but in my opinion—pardon me revered shade of Ramsay! the song is unworthy of the divine air. I shall try to make or mend. For ever, Fortune, will thou prove, is a charming song! but Logan burn and Logan braes, are sweetly susceptible of rural imagery: I'll try that likewise, and if I succeed, the other song may class among the English ones. I remember the two last lines of a verse, in some of the old songs of Logan Water (for I know a good many different ones) which I think pretty.

"Now my dear lad maun face his fates, Far, far true me and Logan brays."

supposed to imprecate. From the original song of Hers awa Willie, Burns has borrowed nothing but the second line and part of the first. The superior excellence of this beautiful poem, will, it is hoped, justify the different editions of it which we have given.

* Burns here calls himself the Voice of Coils in imitation of Ossian, who denominates himself the Voice of Cona. 
Sae merry as we a' has been; and Good night and joy be wi' you a', are the names of two Scottish tunes.

My Patie is a lover gay, is unequal. "His mind is never muddy," is a muddy expression indeed.

"Then I'll resign and marry Pate, And syne my cockerney."

This is surely far unworthy of Ramsay, or your book. My song, Rigs of Barley, to the same tune, does not altogether please me; but if I can mend it, and thrust a few loose sentiments out of it, I will submit you a consideration to.—The last line of Patie's Mill is one of Ramsay's best songs; but there is one loose sentiment in it, which my much valued friend Mr. Scott would be pleased to strike out. I will not trouble you with the consideration.—In Sir J. Sinclair's Statistical volumes, are two claims, one, I think, from Aberdeenshire, and the other from Ayrshire, for the honour of this song. The following anecdote, which I heard from the present Sir William Cunningham, of Robertland, who had it of the late John Earl of Loudon, I can, on such authority, believe.

Allan Ramsay was residing at Loudon-castle with the then Earl, father to Earl John; and one forenoon, riding or walking out together, his Lordship and Allan got a sweet romantic passion on my lady Ramsay's father, who was called "Patie's Mill," where a bonnie lass was "teding hay, bare headed on the green." My Lord observed to Allan, that it would be a fine theme for a song. Ramsay took the hint, and lingering behind, he composed the first sketch of it, which he produced at dinner.

One day I heard Mary say, is a fine song; but for consistency sake alter the name "Adonis." Where there ever such banes published, as a purpose of marriage between Adonis and Mary? I agree with you, that my song, There's wanting but care on every hand, is much superior to Forriyth could. The original song, The Mill Mill O. though excellent, is, on account of delicacy, unsuited to a ballad; still I like the title, and think a Scottish song would suit the notes best; and let your chosen song, which is very pretty, follow, as an English set. The Banker of the Dee, is you know, literally Laneeloe, to slow time. The song is well enough, but has some false imagery in it; for in stance,

"And sweetly the nightingale sung from the tree."

In the first place, the nightingale sings in a low bush, but never from a tree; and in the second place, there was never a nightingale seen, or heard, on the banks of the Dee, or on the banks of any other river in Scotland. Nightingales are always comparativly flat. If I could hit on a stanza, equal to The small birds rejoicing, &c. I do myself honestly aver, that I think it a superior song. John Anderson my g—; the song to this tune in Johnson's Museum, is my composition, and I think it not my worst; if it suit you, take it, and welcome. Your collection of sentimental and pathetic songs, is in my opinion, very complete; but not so your comic ones. Where are Tullochongorum, Lamys o' puddin, Tubbie Fowler, and several others, which, in my humble judgment, are well worthy of preservation? There is also one sentimental song of mine in the Museum, which never was known out of the immediate neighbourhood, till I got it taken down from a country girl's singing. It is called Craigiburne Wood; and in the opinion of Mr. Clarke, is one of the sweetest Scottish songs. He is quite an enthusiastic about it; and I would take his Scottish music against the taste of most connoisseurs.

You are quite right in inserting the last five in your list, there is certainly nothing worse in the British. Soughers, I have lost my love I is to me a heavenly air—what would you think of a set of Scottish verses to it? I have supernatural talent in that direction.

* It will be found in the course of this correspondence, that the bard produced a second stanza to The Chevalier's Lament (to which he here alludes) worthy of the first. E.
LETTERS.

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made one to it a good while ago, which I think
but in its original state is not quite
a lady's song. I enclose an altered, not amended
version for you, if you choose to set the tune to it, and
let the Irish verses follow.

Mr. Erskine's songs are all pretty, but his Lone
Vale, is divine. Yours, &c.

Let me know just how you like these random hints.

No. XX.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, April, 1793.

Note to Secren, that Mr. Lett
answer Rub
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Mr.

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come o'er

the moon.

Let a poet, if he chooses, take up the idea of another,
and work it into a piece of his own; but to mangle the
works of the poor bard, whose tuneful tongue is now
mute for ever, in the dark and narrow house; by
Heaven, 'twould be sacrilege! I grant that Mr. W.'s
version is an improvement; but I know Mr. W., well,
and esteem him much; let him mend the song, as the
Highlander meuded his gun—he gave it a new stock,
a new lock, and a new barrel.

I do not by this object to leaving out improper
stanzas, where that can be done without spoiling the
whole. One stanza in The last of Patie's Mill, must
be left out: the song will be nothing worse for it.
I am not sure if we can take the same liberty with Cow-
riggs are bonnie. Perhaps it might better be left out.
Could kith in Aberdeen you must leave with me yet a while, I have
vowed to have a song to that air, on the lady whom
I attempted to celebrate in the verse Poison could
and restles line. At any rate my other song, Green
grace the rushes, will never suit. That song is current
in Scotland under the old title, and to the merry old
tune of that name, which of course would mar the pro-
gress of your song to celebrity. Your book will be
the standard of Scots songs for the future: let this idea
ever keep your judgment on the alarm.

I send a song, on a celebrated toast in this country to
suit Bonnie Dundee. I send you also a ballad to the
Mill Mill O.*

The last time I came o'er the moon, I would fain at
tempt to make a Scots song for, and let Ramsay's or
the English set. You shall hear from me soon. When
you go to London on this business, can you come by
Dumfries? I have still several Vis, Scots airs by me
which I have picked up, mostly from the singing of
country bards: They please me vastly: but your learner
was perhaps be displeased with the very facture for which I like them, I call them sim-
ple: you would pronounce them silly. Do you know a
song in Scots Hume's Lament? I have a

My song, Here awes, there awes, as amended by Mr.
Erskine, I entirely approve of, and return you.

Give me leave to criticise your taste in the only
thing in which it is in my opinion reprehensible. You
know I ought to know something of my own trade.
Of yathos, sentiment, and point, you are a complete

Mr. Thomson, it appears, did not approve of this
song, even in its altered state. It does not appear in
the correspondence; but it is probably one to be found
in his MSS. beginning,

"Yestreen I got a pint of wine,
A place where lady saw na;
Yestreen lay on this breast of mine,
The gowden locks of Ama."

It is highly characteristic of our Bard, but the strain
of sentiment does not correspond with the air to which
he proposes it should be allied. E.

† The original letter from Mr. Thomson contains
many observations on the Scottish songs, and on the
manner of adapting the words to the music, which,
it his desire, are supressed. The subsequent letter of
Mr. Burns refers to several of these observations.

‡ The reader has already seen that Burns did not
finally adopt all of Mr. Erskine's alterations. E:

judge: but there is no quality more necessary than
either, in a song, and which is the very essence of a
ballad. I mean simplicity; now, if I mistake not, this
last feature you are a little apt to sacrifice to the
foregoing.

Ramsay as every other poet, has not been always
equally happy in his piece; still I cannot approve of
taking such liberties with an author as Mr. W. pro-
poses doing with The last time I came o'er the moon.

My DEAR SIR,

I had scarcely put my last letter into the post-office,
when I took up the subject of The last time I came

The song to the tune of Bonnie Dundee, is that
given in the Poems p. 57. The ballad to the Mill Mill
O, is that beginning.

"When wild war's deadly blast was blawn."

† The song here mentioned is that given in the
Poems. p. 58. O ken ye what Meg o the Mill has got
(\n) This song is surely Mr. Burns's own writing
though he does not generally praise his own songs as
much.

Note by Mr. Thomson.

‡ The air here mentioned is that for which he wrote
the ballad of Bonnie Jean, given in p. 89 of the Poems.
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or the moor, and, ere I slept, drew the outlines of a portrait, (which, however, has been thrown away,) as I was told you, I do not in a single instance wish you, out of compliment to me, to insert any thing of mine. One hint let me give you—whatever Mr. Pleydell does, let him not alter one iota of the original scottish airs: I mean in the song department; but let our national music preserve its native features. They are, I own, frequently wild and irreducible to the more modern rules; but on that very eccentricity, perhaps, de-
grees a great part of their effect.

No. XXIII.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, 25th April, 1793.

I heartily thank you, my dear Sir, for your last two letters, and the songs which accompanied them. I am always both instructed and entertained by observations; and the frankness with which you speak out your mind, is to me highly agreeable. It is very possible I may not have the true idea of simplicity in com-
position. I confess there are several songs, of Allan Ramsay's for example, that I think silly enough, which another person, more conversant than I have been with country people, would perhaps call simple and natural. But the lowest scenes of simple nature will not please generally, if copied precisely as they are. The poet, like the painter, must select what will form an agreeable as well as a natural picture. On this subject it was easy to enlarge; but at present suffice it to say, that I consider simplicity, rightly un-
derstood, as a most essential quality in composition; and the ground-work of beauty in all the arts. I will gladly appropriate your most interesting new ballad, Where wild war's death-hymn, &c. to the Mill Mill 0, as well as the two other songs to their respective airs: but the third and fourth lines of the first verse must undergo some little alteration in order to suit the music. Pleydell does not alter a single note of the songs. That would be absurd indeed! With the airs which he introduces into the sonatas, I allow him to take such liberties as he pleases; but that has nothing to do with the songs.

P. S. I wish you would do as you proposed with your Rize of Bookley. If the loose sentiments are threatened out of it, I will find an air for it; but as to this there is no hurry.

No. XXIV.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

June, 1793.

When I tell you, my dear Sir, that a friend of mine, in whom I am much interested, has fallen a sacrifice to these cursed times, you will easily allow that it might unhinge me for doing any good among ballads. My own loss, as to pecuniary matters, is trifling; but the total ruin of a much-loved friend, is a loss indeed. I feel my own inattention to your last com-
mands.

I cannot alter the disputed lines in the Mill Mill 0, as I wish you would as defect I esteem as a positive

* See Poems, page 136.—Young Peggy.
† The lines were the third and fourth. See Poems, p. 87.

"Wi' moony a sweet babe fatherless, And moony a widow mourning."
The verses are far inferior to the foregoing, I frankly confess; but if worthy of insertion at all, they might be first in place: as every poet, who knows any thing of his art, is very fond husband to best thoughts for a concluding stroke.

O, were my love such fair,
With purple blossoms in the spring;

See Poems, p. 89.

No. XXVI.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Monday, 1st July, 1793.

I am extremely sorry, my good Sir, that any thing should happen to unbridge you. The times are terribly out of tune; and when harmony will be restored, Heaven knows.

The first book of songs, just published, will be despatched to you along with this. Let me be favored with your opinion of it frankly and freely.

I shall certainly give a place to the song you have written for the 
former's W: it; it is quite enchanting. I pray will you return the list of songs with such airs added to it as you think ought to be included. The business now rests entirely on myself, the gentlemen who originally agreed to join the speculation having requested to be off. No matter, a loser I cannot be. The superior excellence of the work will create a general demand for it as soon as it is properly known. And were the sale even slower than it promises to be, I should be somewhat compensated for my labour, by the pleasure I shall receive from the music. I cannot express how much I am obliged to you for the exquisite new songs you are sending me; but thanks, my friend, are a poor return for what you have done: as I shall be benefited by the publication, you must suffer me to enclose a small mark of my gratitude; and to repeat it afterwards when I find it convenient. Do not return it, for, by Heaven, if you do, our correspondence is at an end; and though this would be no loss to you, it would mar the publication, which under your auspices cannot fail to be respectable and interesting.

Wednesday morning.

I thank you for your delicate additional verses to the old fragment, and for your excellent song to Lagen Horse; your truly elegant one will follow, for the English singer. Your apostrophe to statesmen is admirable: but I am not sure if it is quite suitable to the supposed genteel character of the fair mourners who speaks it.

No. XXVII.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have just finished the following ballad, and, as I do think it in my best style, I send it to you. Mr. Clarke, who wrote down the air from Mrs. Burns's second-note child, is very fond of it, and has given it a celebrity, by teaching it to some young ladies of the first fashion here. If you do not like the air enough to give it a place in your collection, please return it. The song you may keep, as I remember it.

There was a lass, and she was fair,
At Kirk and market to be seen;

See Poems, p. 89.

* Five pounds.
No. XXX.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, 1st August, 1793.

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving your last two letters, and am happy to find you are quite pleased with the appearance of the first book. When you come to hear the songs sung and accompanied, you will be charmed with them.

The bonnie bracket Lassie, certainly deserves better verses, and I hope you will match her. Could I sit in Aberdeen—Let me in this our night; and several of the liveliest airs, wait the muse’s leisure: these are peculiarly worthy of her choice gifts; besides, you’ll notice that, in airs of this sort, the singer can always do greater justice to the poet, than in the slower airs of The Bush about Traquair, Lord Gregory, and the like; for in the manner the latter are frequently sung, you must be contented with the sound, without the sense. Indeed both the airs and the words are disguised by the very slow, languid, psalm-singing style in which they are too often performed, they lose animation and expression altogether; and instead of peaking to the mind, or touching the heart, they cloy upon the ear, and set us a yawning!

Your ballad, There was a lass and she was fair, is simple and beautiful, and shall undoubtedly grace my collection.

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No. XXXX.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

MY DEAR THOMSON,

I hold the pen for our friend Clarke, who at present is studying the music of the spheres at my elbow. The Georgians Stiles he thinks is rather out of tune; so until he rectify that matter, he cannot stoop to terrestrial affairs.

He sends you six of the Roudean subjects, and if more are wanted, he says you shall have them.

Confound your long stairs! S. CLARKE.

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No. XXXI.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

Your objection, my dear Sir, to the passages in my song of Logan Water, is right in one instance, but it is difficult to mend it: if I can, I will. The other passage you object to, does not appear in the same light to me.

I have tried my hand on Robin Adair, and you will probably think, with little success, but it is such a cursed, cramp out-of-the-way measure, that I despair of doing any thing better to it.

PHILLIS THE FAIR.

While larks with little wing, Fann’d the pure air, See Poems, p. 89.

So much for namby-pamby. I may, after all, try my hand on it in Scots verse. There I always find myself most at home.

I have just put the last hand to the song I meant for Could Knit in Aberdeen. If it suits you to insert it, I shall be pleased, as the heroine is a favourite of mine; if not, I shall also be pleased; because I wish, and will be glad, to see you act decidedly on the business.*

* The song herewith sent, is that in p. 51 of the Poems.

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No. XXXII.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

August, 1793.

MY GOOD SIR,

I consider it one of the most agreeable circumstances attending this publication of mine, that it has procured me so many of your much valued epistles. Pray make my acknowledgments to St. Stephen for the tunes; tell him I admit the justness of his complaint on my staircase, conveyed in his laconic postscript to your jest Despirit, which I perused more than once, without discovering exactly whether your discussion was music, astronomy, or politics: though a sagacious friend, acquainted with the convivial habits of the poet and the musician, offered me a list of two to one, you were just drowsing care together: that an empty bowl was the only thing that would deeply affect you, and the only matter you could then study how to remedy!

I shall be glad to see you give Robin Adair a Scottish dress. Peter is furnishing him with an English suit for a change, and you are well matched together. Robin’s air is excellent, though he certainly has an out of the way measure as even your Tartanish wight was plagued with. I wish you would invoke the muse for a single elegant stanza to be substituted for the concluding couplet of one of those of your first Bums Davis, so that this most exquisite song may no longer be excluded from good company.

Mr. Allan has made an inimitable drawing from your John Anderson my Jo, which I am to have engraved as a frontispiece to the humourous class of songs: you will be quite charmed with it I promise you. The old couple are seated by the fire-side. Mrs. Anderson, in great good humour, is clapping John’s shoulder’s while he smiles, and looks at her with such glee, as to show that he fully recollects the pleasant days and nights when they were first as sweet. The drawing would do honour to the pencil of Teniers.

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No. XXXIII.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

That crinkum-crankum tune Robin Adair, has run as in my head, and I succeeded so ill in my last attempt, that I have ventured in this morning’s walk, one essay more. You, my dear Sir, will remember an unfortunate part of our worthy friend C’s story, which happened about three years ago. That struck my fancy, and I endeavoured to do the idea justice as follows:

SONG.

Had I a cave on some wild distant shore, Where the winds howl to the wave’s dashing roar See Poems, p. 90.

By the way, I have met with a musical Highlander in Bredalbane’s Fencibles, which are quartered here, who assures me that he well remembers his mother’s singing Gaelic songs to both Robin Adair and Gravemurtrie. They certainly have more of the Scotch than Irish taste in them.

This man comes from the vicinity of Inverness: he could not be any intercourse with Ireland that could bring them:—except, what I shrewdly suspect to be the case, the wandering minstrels, harpers, and pipers.

* The song herewith sent, is that in p. 51 of the Poems.
LETTERS.

used to go frequently errant through the wilds both of Scotland and Ireland, and so some favours airs might be common to both. A case in point—They have lately in Ireland, published an Irish air as they say; called Oaum du delais. The fact is, in a publication of Corrig's, a great while ago, you will find the same air, called a Highland one, with a Gaelic song set to it. Its name there, I think, is Oran Gaul, and a fine air it is. Do ask honest Allan, or the Rev. Gaelic Parson about these airs!

Geordie's Byre, when sung now with expression; I have wished that it had had better poetry; that I have endeavoured to supply as follows:

Adown wending Nith I did wander,
To mark the sweet flowers as they spring.

See Poems, p. 90.

Mr. Clarke begs you to give Miss Philia a corner of your book, as she is a particular flame of his. She is a Miss P. M. sister to Bonnie Joan. They are both pupils of his. You shall hear from me the very first griet I get from my thyming mill.

No. XXXIV.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

Let me in this as night, I will consider. I am glad that you are pleased with my song, Had I a case, &c., as I liked it myself.

I walked out yesterday evening with a volume of the Museum in my hand; when turning up Allan Water, "What numbers shall the muse repeat," &c., as the words appeared to me rather unworthy of so fine an air, and recollecting that it is on your list, I sat and raved under the shade of an old horn, till I wrote one to suit the measure. I may be wrong; but I think it not in my worst style. You must know, that in Ramsay's Tea-table, where the modern song first appeared, the ancient name of the tune, Allan says, is Allan Water, or My love Annie's very bonnie. This last has certainly been a line of the original song: so I took up the idea, and as you will see, have introduced the line in its place which I presume it formerly occupied; though I likewise give you a tracing line, if it should not hit the cut of your fancy.

By Allan stream I chanced to rove,
While Phoebus sank beyond Benclachie.*

See Poems, p. 90.

Bravo I says, It is a good song. Should you think so too (not else) you can set the music to it, and let the other follow as English verses.

Autumn is my propitious season. I make more verses in it than all the year else.

God bless you!

No. XXXV.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

"A Whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad, one of your airs; I admire it much; and yesterday I set the following verset to it, Urban, whom I have met with here, begged them of me, as he admires the air much; but as I understand that he looks with rather an evil eye on your work, I did not choose to comply. However, if the song does not suit your taste, I may possibly send it him. The set of the air which I had in my eye is in Johnson's Museum.

O whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad; O whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad; F

See Poems, p. 90.

Another favourite air of mine, is, The muckin o' th' mountain, west of Strath-Allan, 5,000 feet high.

R. B.

* In some of the MSS. the four first lines run thus:

O whistle, and I'll come to thee, my jo, O whistle, and I'll come to thee, my jo, The' father and mother, and a' should say no, O whistle, and I'll come to thee, my jo. See also Letter, No. LXXVII.

No. XXXVI.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

That tune, Caudl Kull, is such a favourite of yours, that I once more roved out yesterday for a gloamin-shot at the muses: I when the muse that presides o'er the shores of Nith, or rather my old inspiring, dearest nymph, Colla, whispered me the following. I have two reasons for thinking that it was my early, sweet, simple inspirer that was by my elbow, "Smooth gliding without step," and pouring the song on my glowing fancy. In the first place, since I left Colla's native haunts, not a fragment of a poet has arisen to cheer her solitary musings, by catching inspiration from her; so I more than suspect that she has followed me hither, or at least makes me occasional visits: secondly, the last stanzas of this song I send you, is the very words that Colla taught me many years ago, and which I set to an old Scots red in Johnson's Museum.

Come, let me take thee to my breast,
And pledge we ne'er shall part;

See Poems, p. 91.

If you think the above will suit your idea of your favourite air, I shall be highly pleased. The last time I came over the moor, I cannot meddle with, as to mending it; and the musical world have been so long accustomed to Ramsay's words, that a different song, though positively superior, would not be so well received. I am not fond of choruses to songs, so I have not made one for the foregoing.

No. XXXVII.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

DAINTY DAVIE.*

Now rosy May comes in with flowers,
To deck her gay, green spreading towers;

See Poems, p. 91.

So much for Davie. The chorus, you know, is to the low part of the tune. See Clarke's set of it in the Museum.

N. B. In the Museum they have drawn out the tune to twelve lines of poetry, which is *** nonsense. Four lines of song, and four of chorus is the way.

This song, certainly beautiful, would appear to more advantage without the chorus; as is indeed the case with several other songs of our author.

† Gloamin—twilight; probably from glooming. A beautiful poetical word which ought to be adopted in England. A gloamin-shot, a twilight interview.

‡ Dainty Davie is the title of an old Scotch song, from which Burns has taken nothing but the title and the measure.
No. XXXVIII.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, 1st. Sept. 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

Since writing you last, I have received half a dozen songs with which I am delighted beyond expression. The humour and fancy of Whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad, will render it nearly as great a favourite as Dumas Gray. Come let me take thee to meet the Adorn winding Nith, and By Allan stream, &c. are full of imagination and feeling; and sweetly suit the airs for which they are intended. Had I a tune on some wild distant shore, as a striking and affecting composition. Our friend, to whose story it refers, read it with a swelling heart, I assure you. The union we are now forming, I think, can never be broken; these songs of yours will descend with the music to the latest posterity, and will be fondly cherished so long as genius, taste and sensibility exist in our island.

While the muse seems so prehistoric, I think it right to enclose a list of all the favours I have to ask of her, no fewer than twenty and three! I have overdone the pleasant Pet with as many as it is probable he will attend to: most of the remaining airs would puzzle the English poet not a little; they are of that peculiar measure and rhythm, that they must be familiar to him who writes for them.

No. XXXIX.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Sept. 1793.

You may readily trust, my dear Sir, that any exertion in my power is heartily at your service. But one thing I must hint to you; the very name of Peter Lindar is of great service to your publication, so get a verse from him now and then, though I have no objection, as well as I can, to bear the burden of the business.

You know that my pretensions to musical taste are merely a few of nature's instincts, untainted and unadorned by art. For this reason, many musical compositions, particularly where much of the merit lies in counterpoint, however they may transport and ravish the ears of you connoisseurs, affect my simple log so otherwise than as melancholy music. On the other hand, by way of amends, I am delighted with many little melodies, which the learned musician despises so jealously and insipid. I do not know whether the old air Hey tu'lie te'lie may rank among this number: but well I know that, with Fraser's hauthoy, it has often filled my eyes with tears. There is a tradi-
tion, which I have met with in many places of Scotoisland, that it was Robert Bruce's march at the battle of Bannockburn. This thought, in my solitary wanderings, warmed me to a pitch of enthusiasm on the theme of Liberty and Independence, which I threw into a kind of Scottish ode, fitted to the air, that one might suppose to be the gallant Royal Scott's address to his heroic followers on that eventful morning;* 

So may God ever defend the cause of truth and Liberty, as he did that day — amen.

P. S. I showed the air to Urbani, who was highly pleased with it, and begged me to make soft verses for it; but I had no idea of giving myself any trouble on the subject, till the accidental recollection of that glorious struggle for freedom, associated with the glowing ideas of some other struggles of the same nature, quite so ancient, routed my rhyming mains. Clarke's set of the tune, with his bass, you will find in the Museum; though I am afraid that the air is not what will entitle it to a place in your elegant selection.

No. XL.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

September, 1793.

I dare say, my dear Sir, that you will begin to think my correspondence is persecution. No matter, I can't help it: a ballad is my hobby-horse; which though otherwise a simple sort of harmless idiotical beast enough, has yet this blessed headstrong property, that when once it has fairly made off with a hapless wight, it gets so enamoured with the tingle-tingle, tinkle-gingle, of its own bills, that it is sure to run poor piglar, when once made, to wear out any useful post or post in the common race of man.

The following song I have composed for Oran Groat, the Highland air that you tell me in your last, you have resolved to give a place to in your book. I have this moment finished the song, so you have it glowing from the mint. If it suit you, well — if not, 'tis also well!

Behold the hour, the boat arrive; Thou guest, thou darling of my heart! 

See Poems, p. 91.

No. XLI.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, 5th September, 1793.

I believe it is generally allowed that the greatest modesty is the sure attendant of the greatest merit. While you are sending me verses that even Shakespeare might be proud to own, you speak of them as if they were ordinary productions. Your heroic ode is to me the noblest composition of the kind in the Scottish language. I happened to dine yesterday with a party of our friends, to whom I read it. They were all charmed with it, intreated me to find out a suitable air for it, and reproached the idea of giving it a tune so totally devoid of interest or grandeur as Hey tu'lie te'lie. Apparently your want of sentiment in the tune must arise from the ideas associated in your mind by the tradition concerning it; for I never heard any person, and I have conversed again and again, with the greatest enthusiasm for Scottish airs, I say I never heard any one speak of it as worthy of notice.

I have been running over the whole hundred airs, of which I lately sent you the list; and I think Lewis Gordon, is most happily adapted to your ode: at least with a very slight variation of the fourth line, which I shall presently submit to you. There is in Lewis Gordon more of the grand than the plaintive, particularly when it is sung with a degree of spirit which your words would oblige the singer to give it. I would have no scruple about substituting your ode in the room of Lewis Gordon, which has neither the interest, the grandeur, nor the poetry that characterizes your verses. Now the variation I have to suggest—upon the last line of each verse, the only line too short for the air, is as follows:

Verse 1st. Or to gloriosa victoria.
3d, Chains—chain, and slavery.
3d, Let him, let him turn and flee. 4th, Let him bravely follow me.
5th, But they shall, they shall be free.
6th, Let us, let us do or die!

If you connect each line with its own verse, I do not think you will find that either the sentiment or the expression loses any of its energy. The only line
which I dislike in the whole of the song is, "Welcome to your gory bed;" and another word would be preferable to welcome ! In your next I will expect to be informed whether you agree to what I have proposed. The little alterations I submit with the greatest deference.

The beauty of the verses you have made for Oran Gowel will ensure celebrity to the air.

No. XLII.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

September, 1793.

I have received your list, my dear Sir, and here go my observations on it.

Down the burn Darie. I have this moment tried an alteration, leaving out the last half of the third stanza, and the first half of the last stanza, thus:

As down the burn they took their way
And thro' the bowery dale;
His cheek to hers he a' did lay,
And love was ay the tale.

With "Mary, when shall we return,
Sic pleasure to renew?"
Quoth Mary, "Love, I like the burn,
And ye shall follow me!"

Thro' the wood Laddie—I am decidedly of opinion that both in this, and There'll never be peace till Jamie comes home, the second or high part of the tune, being a repetition of the first part an octave higher, is only for instrumental music, one would be much better omitted in singing.

Cowden knowes. Remember in your index that the song in pure English to this tune, beginning,

When summer comes the swans on Tweed,

is the production of Crawford. Robert was his Christian name.

Laddie He near me, must be by me for some time. I do not know the air; and until I am complete master of a tune, in my own singing, (such as it is,) I can never compose for it. My way is: I consider the poetic sentiment and corresponding musical expression; then choose my theme: begin one stanza, when that is composed, which is generally the most difficult part of the business. I walk out, sit down now and then, look out for objects in nature around me that are in unison and harmony with the cogitations of my fancy, and workings of my bosom: humming every now and then the air, with the verses I have framed. When I feel my muse beginning to fade, I retire to the solitary fire side of my study, and there commit my effusions to paper: swinging at intervals on the hind legs of my show chair, by way of calling forth my own critical strictures, as my pen goes on. Seriously, this, at home, is almost invariably my way.

What cursed egotism!

Gill Morice I, am for leaving out. It is a plaguy length; the air itself is never sung; and its place can

* Mr. Thomson's list of songs for his publication. In his remarks, the bard proceeds in order, and goes through the whole; but on many of them he merely signifies his approbation. All his remarks of any importance are presented to the reader.

† This alteration, Mr. Thomson has adopted (or at least intended to adopt) instead of the last stanza of the original song, which is objectionable, in point of delicacy. E.

be supplied by one or two songs for fine airs that are already composed. For example, and Roy's Wife. The first, beside its intrinsic merit, has novelty; and the last has high merit, as well as great celebrity. I have the original words of a song for the last air, in the hand-writing of the lady who composed it; and they are superior to any edition of the song which the public has yet seen.*

Hieland Laddie. The old set will please a more Scotch ear; but the new an Italianized one. There is a third, and what Osswald calls the old Highland Laddie, which pleases more than either of them. It is sometimes called Ginlen Johanie; it being the air of an old homorous tawdry song of that name. You will find it in the Museum. I have been at Crookshied, &c. I would advise you in this musical quandary, to offer up your prayers to the muse for inspiring direction: and in the mean time, waiting for this direction, bestow a libation to Bacchus; and there is not a doubt but you will sit on a judicious choice. Probation Est.

Auld Sir Simon. I must beg you to leave out, and put in its place The Quaker's Wife.

Blithe have I been over the hill, is one of the finest songs ever made in my life; and besides, is composed on a young lady, positively the most beautiful, lovely wo man in the world. As I purpose giving you the names and sentiments of all my lyrics, to do in your present order, I will hear in some future edition of your work, perhaps half a century hence, you must certainly include The biggest lass in the world in your collection.

Dainty Darie. I have heard sung, nineteen thousand nine hundred and nineteen times, and always with the chorus to the lea part of it, and nothing has surprised me so much as your opinion on this subject. If it will not suit as I proposed, we will lay two of the stanzas together, and then make the chorus follow.

Are him father. I enclose you Fraser's set of this tune when he plays it slow: in fact he makes it the language of despair. I shall here give you two stanzas in that style, merely to try if it will be any improvement. Were it possible, in singing to give it half the passion which Fraser gives it in playing, it would make an admirably pathetic song. I do not give these verses for any merit they have. I composed them at the time in which Poetic Allen's imither die, that was about the back of mid-night, and by the lead side of a bowl of punch, or pot to the lea part of it, and nothing has surprised me so much as your opinion on this subject. I have been at Crookshied, &c. I would advise you in this musical quandary, to offer up your prayers to the muse for inspiring direction: and in the mean time, waiting for this direction, bestow a libation to Bacchus; and there is not a doubt but you will sit on a judicious choice. Probation Est.

Thou hast left me ever, Jamie; thou hast left me ever,

Thou hast left me ever, Jamie; thou hast left me ever.

See Poems, p. 91.

Jockey and Jennie I would discard, and in its place would put There's no lack about the house, which has a very pleasant air, and which is positively the finest love ballad in that style in the Scottish or perhaps any other language. When the come ben she bold, this air is more beautiful than either, and in the antithetic way, would unite with a charming sentimental ballad.

Save ye my father? is one of my greatest favourites. The evening before last, I wandered out, and began a tender song; in what I think is its native style. I must premise, that the old way, and the way to give it, has expired, there being no starting note, as the fishes call it, but it burst at the mouth of the author. Every country girl sings—Save ye my father, &c.

My song is but just begun: and I should like, before I proceed, to know your opinion of it. I have sprinkled it with the Scottish dialect, but it may easily be turned into correct English.†

* This song, so much admired by our bard, will be found at the bottom of p. 144. E.

† This song begins,

"Where are the Joys I have met in the morning?" E.
Todlin hame. Urbain mentioned an idea of his, which has long been mine; that this air is highly susceptible of paths; accordingly, you will soon hear him at your concert try it to a song of mine in the Museum; Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon. One song more and I have done: Auld lang syne. The air is but mediocre; but the following song, the old song of the olden times, and which has never been in print, nor even in manuscript, until I took it down from an old man's singing, is enough to recommend any air.*

AULD LANG SYNE.

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

Now, I suppose I have tired your patience fairly. You must, after all is over, have a number of ballads, properly so called. Gilt Maries, Tronent Mair, M'rarbon's Farewell, Battle of Sheriff Muir, or We ran and they ran, (I know the author of this charming ballad, and his history,) Hardtack, Barbara Allen. (I can furnish a finer set of this tune than any that has yet appeared,) and besides, do you know that I really have the old tune to which The Cherry and the Side was sung; and which is mentioned as a well known air in Scotland's Complaint, a book published before poor Mary's days. It was then called The Banks o' Helensdale; an old poem which Plakin has brought to light. You will see all this in Tytler's history of Scottish music. The tune to a learned ear, may have no great merit; but it is a great curiosity. I have a good many original things of this kind.

No. XLIII.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMPSON.

September, 1793.

I am happy, my dear Sir, that my ode pleases you so much. Your idea of "honour's bed," is, though a beautiful, melancholy idea; so, if you please, we will let the line stand as it is. I have altered the song as follows:

BANNOCKBURN.

ROBERT BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY.

Scots, wha hae w' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has often led;

See Poems, p. 92.

N. B. I have borrowed the last stanza from the common stall edition of Wallace.

"A false usurper sinks in every foe,
And liberty returns with every blow."

A coplet worthy of Homer. Yesterday you had enough of my correspondence. The post goes, and my head aches miserably. One comfort! I suffer so much, just now, in this world, for last night's joviality, that I shall escape scot-free for it in the world to come. Amen.

No. XLIV.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

12th September, 1793.

A thousand thanks to you, my dear Sir, for your observations on the list of my songs. I am happy to find your ideas so much in union with my own, respecting the generality of the airs, as well as the verses. About some of them we differ, but there is no disputing about

* This song of the olden time is excellent. It is worthy of our bard.

hobby-horses. I shall not fail to profit by the remarks you make; and to re-consider the whole with attention.

Dainty Davie must be sung two stanzas together, and then the chorus: 'tis the proper way. I agree with you that there may be something of pathos, or tenderness at least, in the air of Fee him Falker, which you performed with feeling; but a tender cast may be given almost to any lively air, if you sing it very slowly, expressively and with serious words. I am, however, clearly and invariably for retaining the cheerful tunes joined to their own humorous verses, wherever the verses are passable. But the sweet song for Fee him Falker, which you began about the back of midnight, I will publish as an additional one. Mr. James Balfour, the king of good fellows, and the best singer of the lively Scottish ballads that ever existed, has charmed thousands of companies with Fee him Falker, and with Todlin hame also, to the old words, which never should be disunited from either of these airs--Some Bacchanals I would wish to discard. Fee, fee a' to the bride, for instance, is so coarse and vulgar, that I think it fits only to be sung in a company of drunken colliers; and Sae ye my Father appears to me both indecent and silly.

One word more with regard to your heroic ode. I think, with great deference to the poet, that a prudent general would avoid saying any thing to his soldiers which would tend to make death more frightful than it is. Gory presents a disagreeable image to the mind, and to tell him, "Welcome to your grey bed," seems rather a discouraging address, notwithstanding the alternative which follows. I have shown the song to three friends of excellent taste, and each of them objected to this line, which emboldens me to use the freedom of bringing it again under your notice. I would suggest,

"Now prepare for honour's bed,
Or for glorious victorie."
I have finished my song to Saw ye my Father! and in English, as you will see. That there is a syllable too much for the expression of the air, is true; but allow me to say, that the more dividing of a dotted croch- et into a crochet and a quaver, is not a great matter; however, in that I have no pretensions to cope in judgment with you. Of the poetry I speak with confidence; but the music is a business where I hint my ideas with the utmost diffidence.

The old verses have merit, though unequal, and are popular: my advice is, to set the air to the old words, and let mine follow as English verses. Here they are;

FAIR JENNY.
See p. 134.
Tune—Saw ye my Father.

Where are the joys I have met in the morning, That danced to the lark's early song? See Poems, p. 92.

Adieu, my dear Sir! the post goes, so I shall defer some other remarks until more leisure.

No. XLVI.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

September, 1793.

I have been turning over some volumes of songs, to find verses whose measures would suit the airs, for which you have alluded to me to find English songs.

For Midland Witty, you have, in Ramsay's Te-a-
table, an excellent song, beginning, 'Ah! why those success, and is not fitted to stand in the ranks of battle, where the lobbies of a kingdom are at issue. Of such men the conquerors of Bannockburn were not composed. Bruce's troops were inured to war, and familiar with all its sufferings and dangers. On the eve of that memorable day, their spirits were, without doubt, wound up to a pitch of enthusiasm, suited to the occasion; a pitch of enthusiasm, at which danger becomes attractive, and the most terrific forms of death are no longer terrible. Such a strain of sentiment, this heroic "welcome" may be supposed well calculated to elevate—to raise their hearts high above fear, and to nerve their arms to the utmost pitch of mortal exertion. These observations might be illustrated and supported by a reference to that martial poetry of all nations, from the spirit-stirring stratas of Tyrannus, to the war-song of General Wolfe. Mr. Thomson's observation, that "Welcome to your gory bed, is a discouraging address," seems not sufficiently considered. Perhaps, indeed, it may be admitted, that the term gory is somewhat objectionable, not on account of its presenting a frightful, but a disagreeable image to the mind. But a great poet uttering his conceptions on an interesting occasion, seeks always to present a picture that is vivid, and is uniformly disposed to sacrifice the delicacies of taste on the altar of the imagination. And it is the privilege of superior genius, by producing a new association, to elevate expressions that were originally low, and thus to triumph over the deficiencies of language. In how many instances might this be exemplified from the works of our immortal Shakes-peare?

"Who would fardels bear, To groan and weep under a weary life:— When he himself might his yokes make With a bare backkin!" were easy to enlarge, but to suggest such reflections is probably sufficient.
so much in your favour. The more original good poetry your collection contains, it certainly has so much the more merit.

SONG.

BY GAVIN TURNBULL.

O, condescend, dear charming maid,
My wretched state to view;
A tender swain to love betray'd,
And sad despair, by you.

While here, all melancholy,
Yet, urged by stern relentless fate
I love thee more and more.

I heard of love, and with disdain,
The archin's power denied;
I laughed at every lover's pain,
And mock'd them when they sigh'd.

But how my state is alter'd!
Those happy days are o'er;
For all thy unremitting hate,
I love thee more and more.

O, yield, illustrious beauty, yield,
No longer let me mourn;
And though victorious in the field,
Thy captive do not scorn.

Let generous pity warm thine
My wonted peace restore;
And, grateful, I shall bless thee still,
And love thee more and more.

The following address of Turnbull's to the Nightingale, will suit as an English song to the air, There was a lass and she was fair. By the by, Turnbull has a great many songs in MS. which I can command, if you like his manner. Possibly, as he is an old friend of mine, I may be prejudiced in his favour, but I like some of his pieces very much.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

BY G. TURNBULL.

Thou sweetest minstrel of the grove,
That ever tried the plaintive strain,
Awake thy tender tale of love,
And soothe a poor forsaken swain.

For though the muses doze to aid,
And teach him smoothly to complain,
Yet Delia, charming cruel maid,
Is deaf to her forsaken swain.

All day, with fashion's gaudy sons,
In sport she wanders o'er the plain:
Their tales approve, and still she shuns
The notes of her forsaken swain.

When evening shades obscure the sky,
And bring the solemn hours again,
Begin, sweet bird, thy melody,
And soothe a poor forsaken swain.

I shall just transcribe another of Turnbull's which would go charmingly to Louise Gordon.

LAURA.

BY G. TURNBULL.

Let me wander where I will,
By shady wood or winding rill;

Where the sweetest May-born flowers
Paint the meadows, deck the bowers;
Where the linnet's early song
Echoes sweet the woods among;
Let me wander where I will,
Laura haunts my fancy still.

If at rosy dawn I choose,
To indulge the smiling muse;
If I court some cool retreat,
To avoid the noon-tide heat;
If beneath the moon's pale ray,
Through unfrequented wilds I stray,
Let me wander where I will,
Laura haunts my fancy still.

When at night the drowsy god
Waves his sleep-compelling rod,
And to fancy's wakeful eyes
Hide celestial visions rise:
While with boundless joy I rove,
Through the fairy-land of love;
Let me wander where I will,
Laura haunts my fancy still.

The rest of your letter I shall answer at some other opportunity.

No. XLVIII.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

7th November, 1793.

MY GOOD SIR,

After so long a silence, it gave me peculiar pleasure to recognize your well-known hand; for I had begun to be apprehensive that all was not well with you. I am happy to find, however, that your silence did not proceed from that cause, and that you have got among the ballads once more.

I have to thank you for your English song to Leiger'm chass, which I think extremely good, although the colouring's warm. Your friend Mr. Turnbull's songs have, doubtless considerable merit; and as you have the command of his manuscripts, I hope you will find out some that will answer, as English songs, to the airs yet unprovided.

No. XLIX.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

December, 1793.

Tell me how you like the following verses to the tune of Jo Janet.

Husband, husband, cease your strife,
Nor longer idle rave, Sir;

See Poems, p. 93.

Wilt thou be my dearie?
When sorrow wrings thy gentle heart,
Wilt thou let me cheer thee?

See Poems, p. 110.

No. L.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, 17th April, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

Owing to the distress of our friend for the loss of his child, at the time of his receiving your admirable but
LETTERS.

melancholy letter, I had not an opportunity, till lately, of pursuing it.* How sorry I am to find Burns saying, "Cripes, thou must minister to a mind diseased" while he is delighting others from one end of the island to the other. Like the hypochondriac who went to consult a physician upon his case—Go, says the doctor, and see the famous Carlini, who keeps all Paris in good humour. Alas! Sir, replied the patient, I am that unhappiest Carlini!

Your plan for our meeting together pleases me greatly, and I trust that by some means or other it will soon take place; but your Baccanalian challenge almost frightens me, for I am a miserable weak drunker.

Allan is much gratified by your good opinion of his talents. He has just begun a sketch from your Cotter’s Saturday Night, and if it pleases himself in the design, he will probably etch or engrave it. In subjects of the pastoral and humorous kind, he is perhaps rivalled by any artist living. He falls a little in giving beauty and grace to his females, and his colouring is sombre, otherwise his paintings and drawings would be in greater request.

I like the music of the Sutor’s Doctor, and will consider whether it shall be added to the last volume; your versets to it are pretty; but your humorous English song, to suit Jo Janet, is inimitable. What think you of the air. Within a Mile of Edinburgh? It has always struck me as a modern imitation, but it is said to be Oswald’s, and is so much liked that I believe I must include it. The versets are little better than wanly panibly. Do you consider it worth a stanza or two?

No. LI.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

May, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I return you the plates, with which I am highly pleased; I would humbly propose instead of the younger knitting stockings, to put a stock and burn into his hands. A friend of mine, who is positively the ablest judge on the subject I have ever met with, though an unknown, is yet a superior artist with the Burns, is quite charmed with Allan’s manner. I got him a peep at the Gentle Shepherd, and he pronounces Allan a model original of great excellence.

For my part, I look on Mr. Allan’s choosing my favorite poem for his subject, to be one of the highest compliments I have ever received.

I am quite vexed at Pleyel’s being copied out in France, as it will put an entire stop to our work. Now, and for six or seven months, I shall be put out of song as you shall see by and by, I got an air, pretty enough, composed by Lady Elizabeth Heron, of Heron, which she calls The Banks of Cree. Cree is a beautiful pastoral stream; and as her Ladyship is a particular friend of mine, I have written the following song to it:

Banks of Cree.

Here is the glen, and here the bower;
All underneath the birchen shade.

See Poems, p. 93.

No. LII.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

July, 1794.

Is there no news yet of Pleyel? Or is your work to be at a dead stop, until the allies set our modern Orpheus and Minerva to liberty from the avalanche of democratic discords? Alas the day! and wo is me! That

* A letter to Mr. Cunningham, No. Cl. of the General Correspondence.

No. LIII.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS

Edinburgh, 10th August, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I owe you an apology for having so long delayed to acknowledge the favour of your last. I fear it will be as you say, I shall have no more songs from Pleyel till France and we are friends; but nevertheless, I am very desirous to be prepared with the poetry, and as the season approaches in which your muse of Colia visits you, I trust I shall as formerly, be frequently gratified with the result of your amorous and tender interviews.

No. LIV.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

30th August, 1794.

The last evening, as I was straying out, and thinking of, Over the hills and far away, I spun the following stanzas for it; but whether my spinning will deserve to be laid up in store, like the precious thread of the silk-worm, or brushed as the devil, like the vile manufacture of the spider, I leave, my dear sir, to your usual candid criticism. I was pleased with several lines in its first; but I own that now it appears rather a flimsy business.

This is just a hasty sketch, until I see whether it be worth a critique. We have many sailor songs, but as far as I at present recollect, they are mostly the effusions of the jovial sailor, not the wailings of his love-lorn mistress. I must here make one sweet exception—Sweet давно ждём в оконо-озере 1892. Now for the song.

ON THE SEAS AND FAR AWAY.

How can my poor heart be glad,
When absent from my sailor lad?

See Poems, p. 94.

I give you leave to abuse this song, but do it in the spirit of Christian meekness.

No. LV.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS

Edinburgh, 16th September, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

You have anticipated my opinion of On the seas and far away; I do not think it one of your very happy productions, though it certainly contains stanzas that are worthy of all acceptance.

The second is the least to my liking, particularly " Bullets, spare my only joy!" Confound the bullets! It might, perhaps, be objected to the third verse, "A starless midnight hour," that it has too much grandeur of imagery, and that greater simplicity of thought

* A portion of this letter has been left out for reasons that will easily be imagined.
would have better suited the character of a sailor's sweetheart. The tune, it must be remembered, is of the brisk, cheerful kind. Upon the whole, therefore, in my humble opinion, the song would be better adapted to the tune, if it consisted only of the first and last verses with the choruses.

No. LVI.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

September, 1794.

I shall withdraw my, O'er the seas and far away, altogether: it is unequal, and unworthy the work. Making a poem is like begetting a son; you cannot know whether you have a wise man or a fool, until you produce him to the world to try him.

For that reason I send you the offspring of my brain, abortions and all; and, as such, pray look over them, and forgive them, and burn them. I am flattered at your adopting Col. the yowes to the knows, and was owing to me that ever it saw the light. About seven years ago I was well acquainted with a worthy little fellow of a clergyman, a Mr. Dunie, who sang it charmingly; and, at my request, Mr. Clarke took it down from his singing. When I gave it to Johnson, I added some stanzas to the song and mended others, but still it will not do for you. In a weekly stroll which I took today, I tried my hand on a few pastoral lines, following up the idea of the chorus, which I would preserve. Here it is, with all its crudities and imperfections on its head.

CHORUS.

Col' the yowes to the knows,
Col' them where the heather grows.

See Poems, p. 94.

shall give you my opinion of your other newly adopted songs my first scribbling fit.

No. LVII.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

September, 1794.

Do you know a backwood Irish song called Doagh's Water-fall? The air is charming, and I have often regretted the want of decent verses to it. It is too much at least for my humble rustic muse; to expect that every effort of hers shall have merit; still I think that it is better to have mediocre verses to a favourite air, than none at all. On this principle I have all along proceeded in the Scots Musical Museum; and as that publication is at its last volume. I intend the following song to the air above-mentioned for that work.

If it does not suit you as an editor, you may be pleased to have verses to it that you can sing before ladies.

SHE SAYS SHE LOVES ME BEST OF ALL.

She fixen were her ringlets,
Her eye-brows of a darker hue,

See Poems, p. 94.

Not to compare small things with great, my taste in music is like the mighty Frederick of Russia's taste in painting: we are told that he frequently admired what the connoisseurs decried, and always without any hypocrisy confessed his admiration. I am sensible that my taste in music must be inelegant and vulgar, because people of undisputed and cultivated taste can find no merit in my works. Still, because I am cheaply pleased, is that any reason why I should deny myself that pleasure? Many of our strathspeys, ancient and modern, give me most exquisite enjoyment, and other judges would probably be showing disgust. For instance, I am just now making verses for Mrs. Emmett's Raunt, an air which puts me in raptures: and, in fact, unless I am pleased with the tune, I never can make verses to it. Here I have Clarke on my side who is a judge that I will pit against any of you. Rothiemurchie, he says, is an air both original and beautiful: and on his recommendation I have taken the first part of the tune for a chorus, and the fourth or last part for the song. I am but two stanzas deep in the work, and possibly you may think, and justly, that the poetry is as little worth your attention as the music.

I have begun anew, Let me in this age Write. Do you think that we ought to retain the old chorus? I think we must retain both the oil chorus and the first stanza of the old song. I do not altogether like the third line of the first stanza, but cannot alter it to please myself. I am just three stanzas deep in it. Would you have the demurments to be successful or otherwise? Should she "let him in," or not?

Did you not once propose The Song's Tail to Geor- die, as my favourite work? I am quite diverted with it; but I acknowledge that is no mark of its real excellence. I once set about verses for it, which I meant to be in the alternate way of a lover and his mistress chancing together. I have not the pleasure of knowing Mrs. Thomson's Christian name, and yours I am afraid is rather burlesque for sentiment, else I had meant to have made you the hero and heroine of the little piece.

How do you like the following epigram, which I wrote the other day on a lovely young girl's recovery from a fever? Doctor Maxwell was the physician who seemingly saved her from the grave; and to him I address the following.

To DR. MAXWELL,

On Miss Jessie Stoic's Recovery.

Maxwell, if merit here you crave,
That merit I deny;
You save fair Jessie from the grave?—
An angel could not die.

God grant you patience with this stupid epithet!

No. LVIII.

MR THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

I perceive the sprightly muse is now attendant upon your favourite poet, whose wood-notes wild are becoming as enchanting as ever. She says she loves me best of all, is one of the pleasantest table-songs I have seen, and henceforth shall be mine when the song is going round: I'll give Cunningham a copy; he can more profitably proclaim its merit. I am far from believing that valuing your taste for the strathspey music; on the contrary, I think it highly animating and agreeable, and that some of the strathspeys, when graced with such merit as yours, will make very pleasing songs in the same way that rough Christians are tempered and softened by lovely woman; without whom, you know, they had been brutes.

I am clear for having the Song's Tail, particularly as your proposed verses to it are so extremely promising. Stanzas are a joy; and your burlesque composition Mrs. Thomson's name (Kath- erine) is not at all poetical. Retain Jeanie therefore, and make the other Janie, or any other that sounds agrably.

* In the original, follow here two stanzas of a song beginning "Lassie, wi' the lint-white locks!"
LETTERS.

No. LX.
MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Edinburgh, 11th October, 1794.

My dear friend,

By this morning's post I have your list, and, in general, I highly approve of it. I shall, at more leisure give you a critique on the whole. Clarke goes to your own town by to-day's fly, and I wish you would call on him and take his opinion in general: you know his taste is a stick of peel of mine. The lady on whom it was made, is one of the finest women in Scotland; and in fact (entre nous) is in a manner to me, what Sterne's Eliza was to him—a mistress, or friend, or what you will, in the guileless simplicity of Hatonic love. (Now don't put any of your squinting constructions on this, or have any cliche-macher about it among our acquaintance; I assure there is little my lovely friend you are indebted for many of your best songs of mine. Do you think that the sober gait-horse routine of existence, could inspire a man with life, and love, and joy—could live with enthusiasm, or melt him with pathos, equal to the genius of your book? No! no!—Whenever I want to be more than ordinary in song; to be in some degree equal to your diviner airs, do you imagine that I fast and pray for the celestial emanation? Tout a l'entraîné! I have a generous recipe; the very one that for his own use was invented by the divinity of healing and poetry, when erst he pipped to the flocks of Minotus. I put myself in a regimen of admiring a fine woman; and in proportion to the adorability of her charms, in the proportion you are delighted with my verses. The lightning of her eye is the godhead of Parmnassa; and the witchery of her smile, the divinity of Helen!

To descend to business; if you like my idea of When she carven she babb, the following stanzas of mine, altered a little from what they were formerly when set to another air, may perhaps do instead of worse stanzas.

Saw ye my Pheley?

O, saw ye my dear, my Pheley?

O, saw ye my dear, my Pheley?

See Poems, p. 95.

Now for a few miscellaneous remarks. The Pheas (in the Museum) is my composition; the air was taken down from Mrs. Burn's voice.** It is well known in the West Country, but the old words are trash. By the by, take a look at the tune again, and tell me if you do not think it is the original from which Rosamund is composed. The second part in particular, for the first two or three bars, is exactly the old air. Struan—nailed to the comic muse—stands on my dignity and trusty and deservedly well-beloved Allan Masterton. Demonsc-Heart is not mine; I would give ten pounds it were.
LETTERS.

and came to the editor of that paper with the Newcastle post-mark on it. * Whistle o'er the love o' it mine: the music is said to be by John Bruce, a celebrated violin-player in Dunfries, about the beginning of this century. This I know, Mr. Macaulay, who was an honest man, though a redwood Highlandman, constantly claimed it; and by all the oldest musical people here, is believed, to be the author of it.

Andrew and his cutty Gun. The song to which this is set in the Museum is mine, and was composed on Miss Euphemia Murray, Lintrosse, commonly and deservedly called the Flower of Strathmore.

How long and dreary is the night! I met with some such words in a collection of songs somewhere, which I altered and enlarged: and to please you, and to suit your favourite air, I have taken a strike or two across my room, and have arranged it anew, as you will see on the other page.

SONG.
How long and dreary is the night,
When I am free my dearie!

Tell me how you like this. I differ from your idea of the expressions of the time. There is, to me, a great deal of tenderness in it. You cannot, in my opinion, dispense with a base to your addenda airs. A lady of my acquaintance, a noted performer, plays and sings at the same time so charminly, that I shall never hear to see any of her songs sent into the world, as named as Mr. What-Ifye-call-um has done in his London collection.]

These English songs grieve me to death. I have not that command of the language that I have of my native tongue. I have been at Donjon Gray, to dress it in English, but all I can do is deplorably stupid. For instance;

* The reader will be curious to see this poem, so highly praised by Burns. Here it is.

Keen blaws the wind o'er Donochhead; (1)
The snow draws nelly thro' the dale; (1)
The Gaber-lunzie tiris me sneek,
And shivering tells his wae-bu' tale:
"Cauld is the night, O let me in,
And dinna let your minstrel fa';
And dinna let his windig sheet,
Be mashing but a wraith o' snow."

"Fu' licht ninety winters lae I seen,
And piped where gow-bercs whirring flew;
And when a morn a' day I've danced, I ween
To lie which from my drone I bawed,
My Eppie waked and soon she cried,
'Get up, guidman, and let him in;
For weel ye keen the winter aight;
Was short when he began his din,'"

My Eppie's voice O wow it's sweet,
Even tho' she baw and scalks a wee;
But when it's tuned to sorrow's tale,
O, haith, it's doubly dear to me;
Come in, saud car, I'll steer my fire,
I'll make it bleeze a bountie flame;
Your bluid is thin, ye've tint the gate,
Ye should nae stray so far frae hame.

"Nae hame have I," the minstrel said,
"Sad party-strife o'erturn't my ha';
And weeping at the eve of life,
I wandered thro' a wreath o' snow."

This affecting poem is apparently incomplete. The author need not be ashamed to own himself. It is worthy of Burns, or of Macaulay. E.

(1) A mountain in the North.
Mr. Ritson.

SONG.
Let not woman o'er complain
Of inconstancy in love;
See Poems, p. 95.

Since the above. I have been out in the country, taking a dinner with a friend, where I met with the lady whom I mentioned in the second page in this oddside-and-ends of a letter. As usual I got into song: and returning home I composed the following:

THE LOVER'S MORNING SALUTE TO HIS MISTRESS.

Sleep'st thou or wake'st thou, fairest creature;
Rosy morn now lifts his eye;* See Poems, p. 95

If you honour my verses by setting the air to them, I will vamp up the old song, and make it English enough to be understood.

I enclose you a musical curiosity, an East India air, which you would swear was a Scottish one. I know the authenticity of it, as the gentleman who brought it over, is a particular acquaintance of mine. Do preserve me the copy I send you, as it is the only one I have. Clarke has set it to it, and I intend putting it into the Musical Museum. Here follow the verses I intend for it.

THE AULD MAN.

But lately seen in gladsome green,
The woods rejoiced the day.

I would be obliged to you if you would procure me a sight of Ritson's collection of English songs, which you mention in your letter. I will thank you for another information, and that as speedily as you please; whether this miserable dwarfing hotchpotch epistle has not completely tired you of my correspondence?

No. LXI.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, 21th October, 1794.

I am sensible, my dear friend, that a genuine poet can no more exist without his mistress than his meat. I wish I knew the adoration she who bright eyes and witching smiles have so often enraptured the Scottish bard! that I might drink her sweet health when the toast is going round. Craggieburnwood, must certainly be adopted into my family, since she is the object of the song: but in the name of decency I must beg a new chorus-verse from you. O to be lying beyond thee, dearie, is perhaps a consummation to be wished, but will not do for singing in the company of ladies. The songs in your last will do you lasting credit,

* From the fifth to the eleventh line of this song stood originally thus:

New to the streaming fountain,
Or up the hearty mountain,
The hart, hind, and roe, freely willily-wanton stray;
In twining hazel bowers
His lay the linnet pours,
The l'ark, &c.

† The last eight lines stood originally thus:

When fare my Choris parted,
Sad, cheerful, broken-hearted.
[sky
The night's gloomy shades, cloudy, dark, o'ercast me.
But when she charms my sight,
In pride of beauty's light;
When thro' my very heart
After blooming glories dart.
'Tis then, 'tis then, I wake to life, and joy. E.
and suit the respective airs charmingly. I am perfectly at my ease with regard to the additional airs. The idea of sending them into the world naked as they were born was ungenerous. They must all be clothed and made decent by our friend Clarke.

I find I am anticipated by the friendly Cunningham in sending you Ritson's Scottish collection. Permit me, therefore, to present you with his English collection, which you will receive by the coach. I do not find his historical essay on Scottish song interesting. Your anecdotes and miscellaneous remarks will, I am sure, be much more so. Allan has just sketched a charming design from Maggie Lauder. She is dancing with such spirit as to electrify the piper, who seems almost dancing too, while he is playing with the most exquisite glee. I am much inclined to get a score of copies, and to have it engraved in the style of Ritson's prints.

P. S. Pray what do your anecdotes say concerning Maggie Lauder? was she a real personage, and of what rank? You would surely after her if you could at Austruther town.

No. LXII

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Novemder, 1794.

Many thanks to you, my dear Sir, for your present. It is a book of the utmost importance to me. I have yesterday begun my anecdotes, &c. for your work. I intend drawing it up in the form of a letter to you, which will save me from the tedious, dull business of systematic arrangement. Indeed, as all I have to say consists of unconnected remarks, anecdotes, scraps of old songs, &c., it would be impossible to give the work a beginning, a middle, or an end, which the critics insist to be absolutely necessary in a work.* In my last I told you my objections to the song you had selected for My lodging is on the cold ground. On my visit the other day to my fair Chloris (that is the poetic name of the lovely goddess of my inspiration) she suggested an idea, which I, in my return from the visit, wrought into the following song.

My Chloris, mark how green the groves,

The primrose banks how fair;* See Poems, p. 91.

How do you like the simplicity and tenderness of this pastoral? I think it pretty well.

I like your entering so candidly and so kindly into the story of Ma Claire Donie. I assure you I was never more in earnest in my life, than in the account of that affair which I sent you in my last. Conjugal love is a passion which I deeply feel, and highly venerate; but, somehow, it does not make such a figure in poesy as that other species of the passion, Those love is liberty, and nature law.*

Musically speaking, the first is an instrument of which the gamut is scanty and confounded, but the tones inexpensively sweet; while the last has powers equal to all the intellectual modulations of the human soul. Still I am a very poet in my enthusiasm of the passion.—The welfare and happiness of the beloved object is the first and invariable sentiment that pervades my soul; and whatever pleasures I might wish for, or whatever might be the raptures they would give me, yet, if they interfere with that first principal, it is having these pleasures at a dishonest price; and justice forbids, and generously disclaims the purchase! *

Despairing of my own powers to give you variety enough in English songs, I have been turning over old collections, to pick out songs, of which the measure is somewhat similar to what I want; and, with a little alteration, so as to suit the rhythm of the air exactly, to give them you for your work. Where the songs have Litheran been but little noticed, nor have ever been set to the old tunes. A song, which, under the same first verse, you will find in Ramsay's Tea-Table Miscellany, I have cut down for an English dress to your Sinuile Darcy, as follows:

SONG.

Altered from an old English one.

It was the charming month of May,
When all the flowers were fresh and gay,

See Poems, p. 96.

You may think meanly of this, but take a look at the bombast original, and you will be surprised that I have made so much of it. I have finished my song to Ritson's march's Hunt; and you have Clarke to consult as to the set of the air for singing.

LASSIE WI' THE LINT-WHITE LOCKS.*

CHORUS.

Lassie wi' the lint-white locks,

Bonnie lassie, airdes lassie,

See Poems, p. 96.

This piece has at least the merit of being a regular pastoral: the vernal morn, the summer noon, the autumnal evening, and the winter night, are regularly rounded. If you like it, well; if not, I will insert it in the Museum.

I am out of temper that you should set so sweet, so tender a strain, as Deil tak the wares, to the foolish old verses. You talk of the silliness of Some ye my father? By heavens! the odds is gold to brass! Besides, the old song, though now pretty well modernized into the Scottish language, is originally, and in the early editions,logfile low imitation of the Scottish manner, by that genius Tom D'Urfe; so has no pretensions to be a Scottish production. There is a pretty English song by Sheridan, in the Durana, to this air, which is out of sight superior to D'Urfe's. It begins,

"When sable night each drooping plant restoring."

The air, if I understand the expression of it properly, is the very native language of simplicity, and truth, and love. I have again gone over my song to the tune as follows,]

Now for my English song to Nancy's to the greenwood, 8c.

Farewell thou stream that winding flows Around Eliza's dwelling! See Poems, p. 97.

There is an air, The Cauldston Hunt's Delight, to which I wrote a song that you will find in Johnson.

Ye banks and braes o' jannie Doon; this air, I think, might find a place among your hundred, as Least says of his knights. Do you know the history of the song?

* In some of the MSS. the last stanza of this song runs thus:

And should the bowling wind'try blast,

Disturb my lassie's midnight rest,

I'll bauld thee to my faithfu' breast,

And comfort thee my dearie O.

† See the song in its first and best dress in page 212. Our bard remarks upon it, "I could easily throw this into an English mould; but, to my taste, in the simple and tender of the pastoral song, a sprinkling of the old Scottish has an inimitable effect."

II.
Mr. James Miller, writer in your good town, a gentleman whom possibly you know, was in company with your friend Clarke; and talking of Scottish music, Miller expressed an ardent ambition to be able to compose a Scots air. Mr. Clarke, partly by way of joke, told him to keep to the black keys of the harpsichord, and to preserve some kind of rhythm; and he would infallibly compose a Scots air. Certainly it is, that, in a few days, Mr. Miller produced the rudiments of an air, which Mr. Clarke with some touches and corrections, fashioned into the tune in question. Ritson, you know, has the same story of the black keys; but this account which I have just given you, Mr. Clarke informed me of several months ago. Now to show you how difficult it is to trace the origin of our airs, I have heard it repeatedly asserted that this was an Irish air; say, I met with in his gentleman who affirmed he had heard it in Ireland among the old women; while, on the other hand, a Countess informed me, that the first person who introduced the air into this country, was a parson's lady of her acquaintance, who took down the notes from an Itinerant Piper in the Isle of Man. How difficult then to ascertain the truth respecting our poetry and music! I, myself, have lately seen a couple of ballads sung through the streets of Dumfries with my name at the head of them as the author, though it was the first time that I had ever seen them.

I thank you for admitting Croatie-burnwood; and I shall take care to furnish you with a new chorus. In the following lines, which I have just composed, I have endeavoured to give a true picture of the old verses to the air. If I can catch myself in a more than ordinary propitious moment, I shall write a new tragic-burnwood altogether. My heart is much in the theme.

I am ashamed, my dear fellow, to make the request; 'tis dunning your generosity; but in a moment, when I had forgot whether I was rich or poor, I promised Chorla a copy of my songs. It wrings my honest pride to write you this; but an ungracious request is fainly so by a tellious apology. To make you some amends, as soon as I have extracted the necessary information out of them, I will return you Ritson's volumes.

The lady is not a little proud that she is to make so distinguished a figure in your collection. and I am not a little proud that I have it in my power to please her so much. Lackey it is for your patience that my paper is done, for I am in a scribbling humour I know not when to give over.

No. LXXIII.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

31th November, 1784.

MY GOOD SIR,

Since receiving your last, I have had another interview with Mr. Clarke, and a long consultation. He thinks the Collection Hunt is more Bacchusian than amorous in its nature, and recommends it to you to match the air accordingly. Fray did it ever occur to you how peculiarly well the Scottish airs are adapted for verses in the form of a dialogue! The first part of the air is generally low, and suited for a man's voice, and the second part in many instances cannot be sung, at concert pitch, but by a female voice. A song thus performed makes an agreeable variety, but few of ours are written in this form: I wish you would think of it some of those that remain. The only one of the kind you have sent me is admirable, and will be a universal favourite.

Your verses for Rotkiumvorkie are so sweetly pastoral, and your serenade to Chloria, for Diet tak the wares, so passionately tender, that I have sung myself into raptures with them. Your song for My loy'ing is on the cold ground, is a very touching first water; and I am quite dazzled and delighted by it. Some of your Chloria I suppose have flaxen hair, from your partiality for this colour; else we differ about it; for I should sincerely conceive a woman to be a beauty, on reading that she had lint-white locks.

Fermont thou stream that winding lives, I think excellent, but it is much too serious to come after Nancy; at least it would seem an incongruity to provide the same air with merry Scottish and melancholy English verses. The more that the two sets of verses resemble each other in their general character, the better. Those you have manufactured for Dainy Davie will answer charmingly. I am happy to find you have begun the Catalogue of Scottish sisters! Perchance thou think'st how long they be, for it is impossible that any thing from your pen can be tellious. Let me beseech you not to use ceremony in telling me when you wish to present any of your friends with the songs: the ne' pair carrier will bring you three copies, and you are as welcome to twenty as to a pinch of snuff.

No. LXIV.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

14th November, 1784.

You see, my dear Sir, what a punctual correspondent I am; and I thought you would thank yourself for the tellium of my letters, as you have so flatterly me on my horsemanship with my favourite hobby, and have explained the grace of my ambling so much, that I am scarcely ever off his back. For instance, this morning, though a keen blowing frost, in my walk before breakfast, I finished my duet which you were pleased to praise so much. Whether I have uniformly succeed, I will not say; but here it is for you, though it is not an hour old.

HE.

O Philly, happy be that day
When roving through the gather'd hay,

See Poems, p. 57.

Tell me honestly how you like it; and point out whatever you think faulty.

I am much pleased with your idea of singing our songs in alternate stanzas, and regret that you did not hint it to me sooner. In those that remain, I shall have it in my eye. I remember your objections to the name Philly; but it is the common abbreviation of Philippa. Sally, the other only name that suits, has to my ear a vulgarity about it, which suits it for anything except horseman's; the legion of Scottish poetasters of the day, whom your brother editor, Mr. Ritson, ranks with me, as my coevals, have always mistaken versification and situation, for the simplicity, as much elegance from vulgarity on the one hand, as from affected point and puerile conceit on the other.

I agree with you as to the air, Croatie-burnwood, that a chorus would in some degree spoil the effect; and shall certainly have none in my projected song to it. It is not however a case in point with Rotkiumvorkie; there, as in Roy's Wife of Aldivaloch, a chorus goes, to my taste, well enough. As to the chorus going first, that is the case with Roy's Wife, as well as Rotkiumvorkie. In fact, I remember your objections to both tunes, the rhythm is so peculiar and irregular, and on that irregularity depends so much of their beauty, that we must even take them with all their wildness, and humour the verses accordingly. Leaving out the starting note, in both timeshais, I think, an effect that no regularity could counterbalance the want of.

Try

O Roy's Wife of Aldivaloch.

O Lassie' wi' the lint-white locks

and compare with,

Roy's Wife of Aldivaloch.

Lassie' wi' the lint-white locks.
LETTERS.

Does not the tameness of the prefixed syllable strike you? In the last case, with the true flavor of genius, you strike at once into the wild originality of the air; whereas in the first insipid method, it is like the grassing of the pins before the fiddle is brought into tune. This is my taste; if I am wrong, I beg pardon of the cognoscenti.

The Caledonian Hunt is so charming that it would make any subject in a song go down; but pathos is certainly its native tongue. Scottish Bacchanalia we certainly want, though few we have are excellent. For instance, Tullin Hame, is, for wit and humour an unparalleled composition; and Andrew and his caty gun, is a work of a master. By the way, are you not quite vexed to think that those men of genius, for such they certainly were, who composed our fine Scottish lyrics, should be unknown? It has given me many a heart-ache. Apropos to Bacchanalian songs in Scottish; I composed one yesterday, for an air like much—Lumps O' Pudding.

Contented wi' little, and canty wi' mair, Wheer'el I forgeth wi' sorrow and care, See Poems, p. 97.

If you do not relish this air, I will send it to Johnson.

Since yesterday's penmanship, I have framed a couple of English stanzas, by way of an English song to Roy's Wife. You will allow me that in this instance, my English corresponds in sentiment with the Scottish.

CANST THOU LEAVE ME THUS, MY KATY?

Chorus.

Canst thou leave me thus, my Katy?
Canst thou leave me thus, my Katy?

See Poems, p. 97.

* * *

To this address, in the character of a forsaken lover, s. reply was found on the part of the lady, among the MSS. of our bard, evidently in a female hand-writting; which is doubtless that referred to in p. 134, letter No. XLIV. Note. The temptation to give it to the public is irresistible; and if, in so doing, offence should be given to the fair authoress, the beauty of her verses must plead our excuse.

Tune—Roy's Wife!

Chorus.

Stay, my Willie—yet believe me, Stay, my Willie—yet believe me, For, 'till thou knowest an every pain. Wed and wrying my bosom should thou leave me.

Tell me that thou yet art true, And my wrongs shall be forgiven, And when this heart proves false to thee, I am made to cease its course in heaven. Say my Willie, &c.

But to think I was betray'd, That falsehood e'er our loves should sinner To take the flow'rs to my breast, And find the guileful serpent under! Say my Willie, &c.

Cold a hope thou'lt ever deceive, Celestial pleasures, might I choose them, I'd slight, nor seek in other spheres That heaven's I'll find within thy bosom, Say My Willie, &c.

It may amuse the reader to be told, that on this occasion the gentleman and the lady have exchanged the dialects of their respective countries. The Scottish

Well! I think this, to be done in two or three turns across my room, and with two or three inches of Irish Blackguard, is not so far amiss. You see I am determined to have my quantum of applause from somebody.

Tell my friend Allan (for I am sure that we only want the trilling circumstance of being know (to one another, to be the best friends on earth) that I much suspect he has, in his plate, mistaken the figure of the stock and horn. I have, at last, gotten one; but it is a very curious one. It is composed of the horns and the stock, which is the hinder thigh-bone of a sheep, such as you see in a mutton ham; the horn, which is a common Highland cow's horn, cut off at the smaller end, and the aperture be large enough to admit the stock to be pushed up through the horn until it be held by the thicker end of the thigh-bone; and lastly, an eaten reed exactly cut and nailed like that which you see on your shepherd boy have, when the corn stems are green and full-grown. The reed is not made fast in the bone, but is held by the lips, and plays loose in the smaller end of the stock; while the stock, with the horn hanging on its larger end, is held by the hands in playing. The stock has six or seven ventiles on the upper sides, and one back ventile, like the common flute. This is not a man from the braes of Athole, and is exactly what the shepherd wants to use in that country. However, either it is not quite properly bored in the holes, or else we have not the art of blowing it rightly; for we can make little of it. If Mr. Allan chooses I will send him a sight of mine; as I look on myself to be a kind of brother-brush with him. "Pride in Poets is rue sin;" and I will say it, that I look on Mr. Allan and Mr. Burns to be the only genuine and real painters of Scottish costume in the world.

No. I.LY

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

28th November, 1791.

I acknowledge, my dear Sir, you are not only the most pugnacious, but the most delectable correspondent I ever met with. To attempt flattering you, never entered into my head; the truth is, I look back with surprise at my impudence, in so frequently nibbling at lines and couplets of your incomparable lyrics, for which, perhaps, if you had served me right, you would have sent me to the devil. On the contrary, however, you have all along condescended to invite my criticism with so much courtesy, that it ceases to be wonderful, if I have sometimes given myself the airs of a reviewer.

Your last budget demands unqualified praise; all the songs are charming, but the diet is a chef d'oeuvre. Lumps o' Puddin: shall certainly make one of my family dishes; you have cooked it so capitalty, that it will please all palates. Do give us a few more of this cast when you find yourself in good spirits; these convivial songs are more wanted than those of the amorous kind, of which, we have great choice. Besides, one does not often meet with a singer capable of giving the proper effect to the latter, while the former are easily sung, and acceptable to every body. I participate in your regret that the authors of some of our best songs are unknown; it is provoking to every admirer of genius.

I mean to have a picture painted from your beautiful ballad, The Soldier's Return, to be engraved for one of my books; the interesting part of time appears to me, when first recognizes her ain dear Weily, "She gaz'd, she Caller'd like a rose." The three lines (Sing harp and hand are) are much more impressive on the reader's feelings; but were the bard make his address in pure English: the reply on the part of the lady, in the Scottish dialect, is, if we mistake not, by a young and beautiful Englishwoman. E.
Do not, I beseech you, return any books.

No. LXVI.
MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

December, 1794.

it is, I assure you, the pride of my heart, to do any thing to forward, or add to the value of your book; and I agree with you that the Jacobite song in the Museum, to There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame, would not so well consort with Peter Findsay's excellent love-song to that air, I have just framed for you the following:

MY NANNIE'S AWA.
Now in her green mantle blithe nature array'd,
And listensthe lambkins that chat o'er the brats.

How does this please you? As to the point of time for the expression, in your proposed print from my Soldier's Return, it must certainly be at—'tis very grand. The interesting dulity and suspense taking possession of her countenance, and the gushing fondness with a mixture of roguish playfulness in his, strike me, as things of which a master will make a great deal. In great haste, but in great truth, yours.

No. LXVII.
MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

January, 1795.

I fear for my songs; however a few may please, yet originality is a coy feature in composition, and in a multiplicity of efforts in the same style, disappear altogether. For these three thousand years, we poetic folks, have been describing the spring for instance; and as the spring continues the same, there must soon be a sameness in the imagery, &c. of these said rhyming folks.

A great critic, Alkin, on songs, says, that love and wine are the exclusive themes for song-writing. The following is on neither subject, and consequently is no song; but will be allowed, I think, to be two or three pretty good prose thoughts, inverted into rhyme.

FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT.
Is there, for honest poverty,
That hangs his head and a' that;

See Poems, p. 98.
do not give you the following song for your book, but merely by way of oine la bagatelle; for the piece is not really poetry. How will the following do for Craige-burn wood?

* Craige-burn wood is situated on the banks of the river Moffat, and about three miles distant from the

Sweet is the eve on Craige-burn,
And blithe awakes the morrow;

See Poems, p. 98.

No. LXVIII.
MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, 30th January, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,
I thank you heartily for Nannie's owa, as well as for Craige-burn, which I think a very comely pair. Your observation on the difficulty of original writing in a number of efforts, in the same style, strikes me very forcibly; and it has again and again excited my wonder to find you continually surrounding this difficulty, in the many delightful songs you have sent me. Your vise la bagatelle song, For a' that, shall undoubtedly, be included in my list.

No. LXX.
MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

February, 1795.

Here is another trial at your favorite air.
O Lassie, art thou sleeping yet?
Or art thou wakin, I would wis?

See Poems, p. 98.

No. LXXX.
MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Ecclefechan, 7th Feb. 1796.

MY DEAR THOMSON,
You cannot have any idea of the predicament in which I write to you. In the course of my duty as Subvisior (in which capacity I have acted & late) I came yestereve to this unfortunate, wicked, little village, I have gone forward, but snows of ten feet deep have impeded my progress; I have tried to "gae back the gait I cam again," but the same obstacle has shot me up within insuperable bars. To add to my misfortune since dinner, a scraper has been torturing catgut, in sounds that would have insulted the dying agonies of a sow under the hands of a butcher, and thinks himself, on that very account, exceeding good company. In fact, I have been in a dilemma, either to get drunk, to forget these miseries, or to hang myself to get rid of them; like a prudent man, (a character congenial to my every thought, word, and deed.) I of two evils, have chosen the least, and am very drunk, at your service!*

I wrote to you yesterday from Dumfries. I had not time then to tell you all I wanted to say; and heaven knows, at present I have not capacity.

Do you know an air—I am sure you must know it, village of that name, celebrated for its medicinal waters.—The woods of Craige-burn and of Dumfries, were at one time favourite haunts of our poet. It was there he met the "Lassie wi' the lint-white locks," and that he conceived several of his beautiful lyrics. E.

* The bard must have been tipsy indeed, to abuse sweet Ecclefechan at this rate. E.
LETTERS.

We'll gang nae mair to yon town? I think, in slowish time, it would make an excellent song. I am highly delighted with it; and if you should think it worthy of your attention, I have a fair dame in my eye to whom I would consecrate it.

As I am just going to bed, I wish you a good night.

No. LXXI.

MR. THOMPSON TO MR. BURNS.

25th February, 1795.

I have to thank you, my dear Sir, for two epistles, one containing Let me in this ca night; and the other from Ecclefechan, proving that drunk or sober, your "mind is never muddy." You have displayed great address in the above song. Her answer is excellent, and at the same time, takes away the indiscretion that otherwise would have attached to his entreaties. I like the song as it now stands, very much.

I had hopes you would be arrested some days at Ecclefechan, and be obliged to beguile the tedious forenoons by song-making. It will give me pleasure to receive the verses you intend for O wau ye wha's in yon town?

No. LXXII.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMPSON.

May, 1795.

ADDRESS TO THE WOODLARK.

O stay sweet warbling woodlark, stay,
Nor quit me for the trembling spray.

See Poems, p. 99.

Let me know, your very first pleasure, how you like this song.

ON CHORIS BEING ILL.

Chorus.

Long, long the night,
Heavy comes the morrow,

See Poems, p. 99.

How do you like the foregoing? The Irish air, Humours of Glen, is a great favourite of mine; and as, except the silly stuff in the Poor Soldier, there are not any decent verses for it, I have written for it as follows:

SONG.

Their groves o' sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
Where bright-beaming summers exalt the perfume;

See Poems, p. 99.

SONG.

'Twas na her bonnie blue e' was my rain;
Fair th'o' she be, that was ne'er my undoing;

See Poems, p. 99.

Let me hear from you.

No. LXXIII.

MR. THOMPSON TO MR. BURNS.

You must not think, my good Sir, that I have any intention to enhance the value of my gift, when I say, in justice to the ingenuous and worthy artist, that the design and execution of the Cotter's Saturday Night is, in my opinion, one of the happiest productions of Al- lau's pencil. I shall be grievously disappointed if you are not quite pleased with it.

The figure intended for your portrait, I think strikingly like you, as far as I can remember you pleas. This should make the piece interesting to your family every way.—Tell me whether Mrs. Burns finds you out among the figures.

I cannot express the feeling of admiration with which I have read your pathetic Address to the Woodlark, your elegant Panegyric on Catalonia, and your affecting verses on Chloris's illness. Every repeated perusal of these gives new delight. The other song to Laddie, I lie near me, though not equal to those, is very pleasing.

No. LXXXIV.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMPSON.

How cruel are the parents, Who riches only prize;

See Poems, p. 100.

SONG.

Mark yonder pomp of costly fashion, Round the wealthy, titled bride;

See Poems, p. 100.

Well! this is not amiss. You see how I answer your orders; your tailor could not be more punctual. I am just now in a high fit for poetizing, provided that the straw jacket of criticism don't care me. If you can in a post or two administer a little of the intoxicating portion of your applause, it will raise your humble servant's frenzy to any height you want. I am at this moment holding high converse with the Muses, and have not a word to throw away on such a prostrate dog as you are.

No. LXXV.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMPSON.

May, 1795.

Ten thousand thanks for your elegant present; though I am ashamed of the value of it being bestowed on a man who has not, by any means merited such an instance of kindness. I have shown it to two or three judges of the first abilities here, and they all agree with me in classing it as a first rate production. My phiz is one ken-speckle, that the very joiner's appren
tice whom Mrs. Burns employed to break up the parcel (I was out of town that day) knew it at once.—My most grateful compliments to Allan, who has hon- ored my rustic muse so much with his masterly pencil. One strange coincidence is, that the little one who is making the felonious attempt on the cat's tail, is the most striking likeness of an 11d-deedie, d-n'd wee, rumble-gairrie urchim of mine, whom, from that pro
pensity to witty wickedness, and manful mischief, which even at two o'clock, I foresaw would form the striking features of his disposition, I named Willie Nic-

coi, after a certain friend of mine, who is one of the masters of a grammar-school in a city which shall be nameless.

Give the enclosed enframp to my much-valued friend Cunningham, and tell him that on Wednesday I go to visit a friend of his, to whom his friendly partiality in speaking of me, in a manner introduced me—I mean a well-known military and literary character, Colonel Diron.
You do not tell me how you liked my two last songs. Are they condemned?

No. LXXVI.
MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

13th May, 1795.

It gives me great pleasure to find that you are so well satisfied with Mr. Allan's production. The chance resemblance of your little fellow, whose promising disposition appeared so very early, and suggested whom he should be named after, is curious enough. I am acquainted with that person, who is a prodigy of learning and genius, and a pleasant fellow, though no saint.

You really make me blush when you tell me you have not maried the drawing from me. I do not think I can ever repay you, or sufficiently esteem and respect you for the liberal and kind manner in which you have entered into the spirit of my undertaking, which could not have been perfected without you. So I beg you would not make a fool of me again, by speaking of obligation.

I like your two last songs very much, and am happy to find you are in such a high fit of composing. Long may it last! Clarke has made a fine pathetic air to Mallet's superstitious ballad of William and Margaret; and is to give it me to be enrolled among the elect.

No. LXXVII.
MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

In Whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad, the iteration of that line is tiresome to my ear. Here goes what I think is an improvement.

O whistle, and I'll come to ye, my lad,
O whistle, and I'll come to ye, my lad;
The father and mother and a' should gae mad,
Thy Jenny will venture wi' ye my lad.

In fact, a fair dame at whose shrine, I the Priest of the Nine, offer up the incense of Parnassus; a dame whom the Graces have attired in witchcraft, and whom the loves have armed with lightening, a Fair One, herself the heroine of the song, insists on the amendment: and disputes her command if you dare!

SONG.

O this is no my ain laszie,
Fair tho' the laszie be;

See Poems, p. 100.

Do you know that you have roused the torpidity of Clarke at last? He has requested me to write three or four songs for him, which he is to set to music himself. The enclosed sheet contains two songs for him, which please to present to my valued friend Cunningham.

I enclose the sheet open, both for your inspection, and that you may copy the song, O bonnie was ye rosy brier. I do not know whether I am right; but these are fair verses, and as it is probable that Clarke's newly roused celestial spark will be soon smothered in the fogs of indolence, if you like the song, it may go as Scottish verses, to the air of I wish my love were a mine; and poor Erskine's English lines may follow.

I enclose you, a For a' that and a', which was never in print; it is a much superior song to mine. I have been told that it was composed by a lady.

Now spring has clad the grove in green
And strew'd the lea wi' flowers:

See Poems, p. 100.

O bonnie was ye rosy brier
That blooms so far frae haunt o' man;


Written on the blank leaf of a copy of the last edition of my poems, presented to the lady, whom, in so many fictitious reverses of passion, but with the most ardent sentiments of real friendship, I have so often sung under the name of Chloris.

'Tis Friendship's pledge, my young, fair friend,
Nor thou the gift refuse,


Une bagatelle de l'amitié.

Coila.

No. LXXVIII.
MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Edinburgh, 3d Aug. 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

This will be delivered to you by a Dr. Brandton, who has read your works, and pants for the honour of your acquaintance. I do not know the gentleman, but his friend, who applied to me for this introduction, being an excellent young man, I have no doubt he is worthy of all accetration.

My eyes have just been gladdened, and my mind feasted, with your last packet—full of pleasant things indeed. What an imagination is yours! It is superfluous to tell you that I am delighted with all the three songs, as well as with your elegant and tender verses to Chloris.

I am sorry you should be induced to alter O whistle, and I'll come to ye, my lad, to the prosaic line, Thy Jenny well venture wi' ye, my lad. I must be permitted to say, that I do not think the latter either reads or sings so well as the former. I wish, therefore, you would, in my name petition the charming Jenny whoever she be, to let the line remain unaltered. *

I should be happy to see Mr. Clarke produce a few airs to be joined to your verses. Every body regrets his writing so very little, as every body acknowledges his ability to write well. Pray was the resolution formed coolly before dinner, or was it a midnight vow, made over a bowl of punch with the bard?

I shall not fail to give Mr. Cunningham what you have sent him.

P. S. The lady's For a' that and a', is sensible enough, but no more to be compared to yours than I to Hercules.

No. LXXIX.
MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Forlorn, my love, no comfort near,
Far, far from thee, I wander here;


How do you like the foregoing? I have written it within this hour: so much for the speed of my Pegasus, but what say you to his bottom? *

* The editor, who has heard the heroine of this song sing it herself in the very spirit of arch simplicity that it requires, thinks M. Thomson's petition unreasonable. If we mistake not this is the same lady who produced the lines to the tune of Roy's Wife, ante, p. 145.
MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Last May the braw wo'er cam down the lang gien,  
And air wi' his love did he deaw oot?  


Why, why tell thy lover,  
Eh is he never must enjoy?  

See Poems, p. 102.

Such is the peculiarity of the rhythm of this air,  
that I find it impossible to make another stanza to suit it.

I am at present quite occupied with the charming sensations of the tooth-ach, so have not a word to spare.

—

No. LXXXI.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

3d June, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your English verses to Let me in this ace night, are tender and beautiful; and your ballad to the 'Lothian Lassie,' is a masterpiece for its humour and naivete. The fragment for the Caledonian Hunt is quite suited to the original measure of the air, and, as it plagues you not, the fragment must content it. I would rather, as I said before, have had MacChonnel's words, had it so pleased the poet; but, nevertheless, for what we have received, Lord make us thankful!

—

No. LXXXII.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

5th Feb. 1796.

O Robby Burns, are ye sleeping yet?  
Or are ye waulching, I would wi?  

The pause you have made, my dear Sir, is awful! Am I never to hear from you again? I know and I lament how much you have been afflicted of late, but I trust that returning health and spirits will now enable you to resume the pen, and delight us with your musings. I have still about a dozen Scotch and Irish airs that I wish I married to immortal verse. I have several true born Thainins on the Scottish list; but they are now naturalized, and reckoned our own good subjects. Indeed we have none better. I believe you before told you that I had been much urged by some friends to publish a collection of all our favourite airs and songs in octavo, embellished with a number of etchings by our ingenious friend Allan;—what is your opinion of this?

In the original MS. the third line of the fourth verse runs, "He up the Gatecall to my black cousin Been." Mr. Thomson objected to this word, as well as to the word, Dalgarrock, in the next verse. Mr. Burns replies as follows:

"Gatecall is the name of a particular place, a kind of passage up among the Lawther hills, on the confines of this country. Dalgarrock is also the name of a romantic spot near the Nith, where are still a ruined church and burial-ground. However, I start the first line, "He up the lang loon," &c.

It is always a pity to throw out any thing that gives locality to our poet's verses. E.

———

No. LXXXIII.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

February, 1796.

Many thanks, my dear Sir, for your handsome, elegant present, to Mrs. B.——, and for my remaining vol. of P. Undar.——P—— is a delightful fellow, and a first favourite of mine. I am much pleased with your idea of publishing a collection of our songs in octavo, with etchings. I am extremely willing to lend every assistance in my power. The Irish airs I shall cheerfully undertake the task of finding verses for.

I have already, you know, equipped three with words, and the other day I strung up a kind of rhapsody to another Hibernian melody, which I admire much.

HEY FOR A LASS W' A TOCHER.

Away wi' your witchcraft o' beauty's alarms,  
The slender bit beauty you grasp in your arms  
See Poems, p. 102.

If this will do, you have now four of my Irish engagement. In my by past songs I dislike one thing; the name of Chloris—I meant as the fictitious name of a certain lady: but, on second thoughts, it is a high incongruity to have a Greek appellation to a Scottish pastoral ballad.—Of this and some things else, in my next I have more amendments to propose.—What you once mentioned of "flaxen locks" is just; they cannot enter into an elegant description of beauty. Of this also again—God bless you!

—

No. LXXXIV.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

Your Hey for a lass w' a tocher, is a most excellent song, and with you the subject is something new indeed. It is the first time I have seen you debasing the god of soft desire, into an amateur of accent and guineas.—

I am happy to find you approve of my proposed octavo edition. Allan has designed and etched about twenty plates, and I am left to have choice of them for that work. Independently of the Hogarthian humour with which they abound, they exhibit the character and costume of the Scottish peasantry with inimitable felicity. In this respect, he himself says they will far exceed the aquatinta plates he did for the Gentle Shepherd, because in the etching he sees clearly what he is doing, but not so with the aquatinta, which he could not manage to his mind.

The Dutch booms of Ostate are scarcely more characteristic and natural than the Scottish figures in those etchings.

———

No. LXXXV.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

April, 1796.

Alas, my dear Thomson, I fear it will be some time ere I tune my lyre again! "By Isabel streams I have set and went," almost ever since I wrote you last; I have only known existence by the pressure of the heavy hand of sickness and have counted time by the repercussions of pain! Rheumatism, cold and fever, have formed me a terrible combination. I close my eyes in misery, and open them without hope, I look on the vernal day, and say with poor Ferguson—

Our Feet never explained what name he would have substituted for Chloris.

Note by Mr. Thomson.
account. I have no copies of the songs I have sent you, and I have taken a fancy to review them all, and possibly may mend some of them: so, when you have complete leisure, I would thank you for either the originals or copies. I had rather be the author of five well-written songs, than of ten otherwise. I have great hopes that the genial influence of the approaching summer will set me to rights, but as yet I cannot boast of returning health. I have now reason to believe that my complaint is a flying goot—a sad business.

Let me know how Claghorn is, and remember me to him.

This should have been delivered to you a month ago. I am still very poorly, but should like much to hear from you.

No. LXXXIX.

MR. BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Burns, on the Solway Frith, 12th July, 1796.

After all my boasted independency, cursed necessity compels me to implore you for five pounds. A true * * of a haberdasher, to whom I owe an account, taking it into his head that I am dying, has conceived a process, and will infallibly put me into jah, Do, for God's sake, send me that sum, and that by return of post. Forgive me this earliness, but the horrors of a jail have made me half distracted. I do not ask all this gratuitously; for, upon returning health, I hereby promise and engage to furnish you with five pounds worth of the nearest song genius you have seen. I tried my hand on Farmerica this morning. The measure is so difficult, that it is impossible to infuse much genius into the lines; they are on the other side. Forgive, forgive me

SONG.

Chorus.

Fairest maid on Devon Banks,
Choral Devon, writing Devon,†
See Poems, p. 102.

No. XC.

MR. THOMSON TO MR. BURNS.

14th July, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

Ever since I received your melancholy letter by Mrs. Hyslop, I have been rumination in what manner I could endeavour to alleviate your sufferings. Again and again I thought of a pecuniary offer, but the recollection of one of your letters on this subject, and the fear of offending your independent spirit, checked my resolution. I think you heartily therefore for the frankness of your letter of the 12th, and with great pleasure enclose a draft for the very sum I proposed sending. Would I were Chancellor of the Exchequer for one day for your sake?

* It is needless to say that this revival Burns did not live to perform. E.

† This song, and the letter enclosing it, are written in a character that marks the very feeble state of Burns's bodily strength. Mr. Syme is of opinion that he could not have been in any danger of a jail at Dumfries, where certainly he had many firm friends; nor under any such necessity of imploring aid from Edinburgh. But about this time his reason began to be at times unsettled, and the horrors of a jail perpetually haunted his imagination. He died on the 21st of this month. E.
Pray, my good Sir, is it not possible for you to muster a volume of poetry? If too much trouble to you in the present state of your health, some literate friend might be found here, who would select and arrange from your manuscripts, and take upon himself the task of Editor. In the mean time it could be advertised to be published by subscription. Do not shun this mode of obtaining the value of your labour: remember Pope published the Idiad by subscription. Think of this, my dear Sir, and let me know what course you consider your interest and my advice. You are too well convinced of the respect and friendship I bear to impute any thing I say to an unworthy motive. Yours faithfully.

The verses to Robinson Crusoe will answer finely. I am happy to see you can still tune your lyre.

LECTERS.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER,

FROM GILBERT BURNS TO DR. CURRIE.

It may gratify curiosity to know some particulars of the history of the preceding poems, on which the celebrity of our Baird has been hitherto founded: and with this admission I send you the following letter of Gilbert Burns, the brother of our poet, and his friend and confidant from his earliest years.

Magill, 2d April, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 1st of March I received in due course, but from the hurry of the season have been hitherto hindered from answering it. I will now try to give you what satisfaction I can, in regard to the particulars you mention. I cannot pretend to be very accurate in respect to the dates of the poems, but I can assure you, except Winter a Dirge, (which was a juvenal production) The Death and Dying Words of Poor Maillie, and some of the songs, were composed before the year 1781. The circumstances of the poor sheep were pretty much as he has described them. He had partly by way of frolic, bought a ewe and two lambs from a neighbour, and she was tethered in a field adjoining the house at Lochlie. He and I were going out, with our teams, and our two younger brothers to drive for us, at mid-day, when Hugh, a very curious looking awkward boy, clad in plaiding, came to us with much anxiety in his face, with the information that the ewe had entangled herself in the tether, and was lying on her back. I went to the assistance of Huie's appearance and postures on the occasion. Poor Maillie was set to rights, and when we returned from the plough in the evening, he repeated to me her Death and Dying Words, pretty much in the way they now stand.

Among the earliest of his poems was the Epistle to Dace. Robert often composed without any regular plan. When any thing made a strong impression on his mind, so as to rouse it to poetic exertion he would give way to the impulse, and embody the thought in rhyme. If he hit on two or three stanzas to please him, he would then think of proper introductory, connecting, and concluding stanzas, hence the middle of a poem was often first produced. It was, I think, in summer 1781, when in the intervals of harder labour, he and I were wedging in the garden, (kailyard,) that he repeated to me the principal part of this epistle. I believe the first idea of Robert becoming an author was started on this occasion. I was much pleased with the epistle, and said to him, I was of opinion it would bear being printed, and that it would be well received by people of taste; that I thought it at least equal if not superior to many of Allan Ramsay's epistles; and that the merit of these, and much other Scottish and English poetry, was that the knack of the expression, but here, there was a train of interesting sentiment, and the Scottian of the lan-

guage scarcely seemed affected, but appeared to be the natural language of the poet: that, besides, there was a sort of a plan, and in two or three stanzas of the way, that there were solutions that were in store for him when he should go a-begging. Robert seemed very well pleased with my criticism, and said he would try to write it to some magazine, to know how it would take, the idea was dropped.

It was, I think, in the winter following as we were going together with carts for cold to the family fire (and I could yet point out the particular spot) that the author first mentioned to me his intention of sending a letter to the Dell. The curious idea of such an address was suggested to him by running over in his mind the many ludicrous accidents and representations we had from various quarters, of this August personage, Death and Doctor Hornbook, not published in the Kilmaronock edition, was produced early in the year 1785. The hackneyed story of the Shuttered House, for its copious display of the medical skill. As he partook of the evening from this mixture of pedantry and physic at the place where he describes his meeting with Death, one of those floating passages of which he was so fond in his letters to Dr. Moore, crossed his mind: this set him to work for the rest of the way home. These circumstances he related when he repeated the verses to me next afternoon; as I was holding the plough, and he was letting the water off the field beside me. The Epistle to John Lapraik was produced exactly on the occasion described above, and so is the first poem of his in that character. In June, 1785, he had a rocking. I believe he has omitted the word rackin in the glossary. It is a term derived from these primitive times, when the countrywomen employed it in speaking of the rocking of the cradle, or chair. This simple implement is a very portable one, and well fitted to the social lighthearted meeting in a neighbour's house, hence the phrase of going on rackin or with the rock. As the connexion the phrase had with the implement was forgotten, when the rock gave place to the spinning-wheel, the phrase came to signify a word or idea to the writer, as a man talked of going with their rocks as well as women.

It was at one of these rockings at our house when we had twelve or fifteen young people with their rocks, that Lapraik's song beginning—'When I upon thy honeycombed breast lay, and was the author. Upon this Robert wrote his first epistle to Lapraik: and his second in reply to his answer. The verses to the M was and Mountain Dove were composed on the occasions mentioned: such was the author was holding the plough: I could point out the particular spot where each was composed. Holding the plough was a favourite situation with Robert for poetic composition, and some of his best verses were produced while he was at that exercise. Several of the poems were produced for the purpose of bringing forward some favourite candidate of the author. He used to remark to me, that he could not well conceive a more mortifying picture of human life, than a man who must be secreting a design, or concocting the most tedious sentiment might be brought forward, the elegy Man was made to mourne was composed. Robert had frequently remarked to me that he thought there was something in his way of speaking very rustic. I mentioned that worship tied, used by a decent, sober head of a family, introducing family worship. To this sentiment of the author the world is indebted for the Oliver's Serenade, and the same author also composed his poem of the Poet and Shepherd, which was taken from Ferguson's Farmers' Intle. When Robert had not some pleasure in view, in which I was to be his helper, he would not think of walking together, when the weather was suitable on the Sunday afternoons (those precious breathing
time to the labouring part of the community, and en-
joyed by the labourers, and the bearing down of their number abridged. It was in one of those walks, that I first had the pleasure of hearing the author re-
present the "Cooter's Saturday Night." I do not recollect to have heard it read aloud, but I was more highly electrified. The fifth and sixth stanzas, and the eighteenth, thrilled with peculiar ecstasy through my soul. It was to me as if this treasure might never hit the taste of unlettered criticism. I should be glad to know if the enlightened mind and refined taste of Mr. Roscoe, who has borne such honourable testimony to the verse, agree with me in the creed of a gausson, in his "Hallow Fair" of Edinburgh, I believe, likewise furnished a hint of the title and plan of the "Holy-Fair." The farical scene the poet there de-
scribes was often a favorite field of his observation, and the most of the incidents he mentions had actually passed before his eyes. It is scarcely necessary to mention that the "Lancet" was composed on that unfortu-
tunate passage in his matrimonial history, which I have mentioned in my letter to Mrs. Dunlop, after the first distraction of his feelings had a little subsided. The Tale of Two Doves was composed after the reso-
nuation of publishing was nearly taken. Robert had a dog, which a woman had killed, by the strange creat-
ity of some person the night before his father's death. Robert said to me, that he should like to confer such immortality as he could bestow upon his old friend Lawrie amidst his ruin, by getting his papers together, and retouching, and printing something out of the book under the title of Stanzas to the Memory of a quadruped Friend; but this plan was given up for the Tule as it now stands. 

When my brother lived his little property near Ayr, was in the power of the landlord, to sell the land to ruin, and cattle had free liberty of pasturing in it. My father, with two or three other neighbours, joined in an application to the town council of ayr, who were surprised and pleased with the address, and ordered to be raised be subscription a sum for encasing this an-
cient cemetery with a wall; hence he came to consider it was a fitting circumstance of the grave of his father, the brother, the poet, and the other guests, mixed in it. It was a delightful family scene for our poet, then late-
y introduced to the world. His mind was roused to a poetical enthusiasm, and the stanzas, p. 151 of the Poems, were left in the room where he slept. It was to Dr. Lawrie that Dr. Blacklock's letter was addressed, which my brother, in his letter to Dr. Moore, mentions as the reason of his going to Edinburgh.

The poem is founded on a traditional story. The leading circumstances of a man riding home very late from Ayr in a stormy night, his seeing a light in Al-
low-Kirk, his having the curiosity to look in, his seeing a dance of witches, with the devil playing on the bag. This was the very subject of the repetition of the witches, which made him so far forget himself, as to cry Weel bippin', short airt /--with the melancholy catastrophe of the piece is a true story, that can be well attested by many respectable old people in that neighbourhood.

I do not at present recollect any circumstances re-
specting the other poems that could be at all interest-
ing, even some of those I have mentioned, I am afraid may appear trifling enough, but you will only make use of what appears to you of consequence.

The following poems in the first Edinburgh Edition, were often referred to Mr. Seward. Mr. Lawrie, Mr. 

Dr. Horacebe; the "Bugs of Ayre;" the "Golf;" (the poet had been with Mr. Gavin Hamilton in the mor-
ing, who said piquantly 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 

Reverend gentleman on his text was accordingly pro-
duced.) The "Ordination;" The "Address to the Ayr 

Golf;" Tam Sane's "Shley;" A Winter Night; San-
zas on the same occasion as the preceding Prayer; Verses left at a "Reagent Forth Bells;" The First 

Palm; Prayer under the Pressure of violent An-
guish; the First Six Verses of the Ninth in Palm; 

Verses to Miss Logan, with Beatrice's Poems; To a 

Lament, to a "Lament;" To a "Lament;" To a Burnet 

When Guilford Gulf; "Booth on hill side where Sin-
clar flows; Grieve grow the Ravines; Again rejoicing 

Naturae seas; The gloomy Night; No Churchman I am.

If you have never seen the first edition, it will, per-
cy, be wise to peruse the preface, the that, you may see the manner in which the poet made his first 

awe-struck approach to the bar of public judgment.

[Here followed the Preface as given in the first page of the Poems.]

I am, dear Sir,
Your most obedient humble servant,

G. LEBERT BURNS.

DR. CURRIE, Liverpool.

To this history of the poems which are contained in this volume, it may be added, that our author appears to have made little alteration in them after their origi-
nal composition, except in some few instances where circumstances had altered, or he, the editor, may, after he had attracted the notice of the public by his first edition, vary the criticisms were offered him on the pe-
cularities of his style, as well as of his sentiments; 

and some of these, which remain among his manuscript, are by parsons of great taste and judgment. Some few of these criticisms he adopted, but the far 
greater part he rejected; and, though sometimes, he 

by this means been lost in point of delicacy and correct-
ness, yet a deeper impression is left of the strength 

and originality of his genius. The firmness of our poet 

in his own powers, arising from a just confidence in his own 
Powers, may, in part, explain his tenaciousness of his 

peculiar expressions; but it may be in some degree 
accounted for also, by the circumstances under which 

the poems were composed. Burns did not, like men of 
genius born under happier auspices, retire, in the 
moment of inspiration, to the silence and solitude of 
his study and commit his verses to paper as they 

arose themselves in his mind. Fortune did not 

afford him this indulgence. It was during the toils of 
daily labour that his fancy exercised itself; the muse, as 

he himself testifies, found him at the plough. In this 

situation, it was necessary to fix his verses on his 

memory, and it was often many days, say weeks, 
after a poem was finished, before it was written down. During this time, he frequently committed the associ-
ation between the thought and the expression was con-
 pounded, and the impartiality of taste with which written 
language is reviewed and retouched after it has facel
LETTERS.

1. In The Author's earnest Cry and Prayer after the stanza beginning,

Erskine a spriglie, Norland Billie,
there appears, in his book of manuscripts, the following:

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

Sodger Hugh, is evidently the present Earl of Erskine, then Colonel Montgomery of Colasfield, and representing in parliament the county of Ayr. Why this was left out in printing does not appear. The noble earl will not be sorry to see this notice of him, familiar though it be, by a hand whose genius he admires, and whose fate he lamented.

2. In The Address to the Deil, the second stanza ran originally thus:

Lang syne in Eden's happy scene,
When strappin Adam's days was green,
And Eve was like my hummie Jean,
My dearest part,
A dancel, sweet, young, handsome queen,
Wit's gillless heart.

3. In The Elegy on poor Maillie, the stanza began:

She was nae get o' moordland tips,
Was, at first, as follows:
She was na get o' runted rams,
Wi' woo' like goats, and legs like trams;
She was the flower o' Fairlie laimis,
A famous breed;
Now Robin, greetin, claws the hams
O' Maillie dead.

It were a pity that the Fairlie laimis should lose the honor once intended them.

4. But the chief variations are found in the poems introduced for the first time, in the edition of two volumes, small octavo, published in 1732. Of the poem written in Prior's Carse Hermitage, there are several editions, and one of these has nothing in common with the printed poem but the first four lines. The poem that is published, which was his second effort on the subject, received considerable alterations in printing.

Instead of the six lines beginning,

Soye, man's true, genuine estimate,
in manuscript the following are inserted:

Soy, the criterion of their fate,
Th' important question of their state,
Is not, art thou high or low?
Did thy fortune ebb or flow?
Wert thou cottager or king?
Prince or peasant?—no such thing,

5. The Epistle to R. G. Esq. of F., that is, to R. Graham, Esq. of Fintra, also underwent considerable alterations, as may be collected from the General Correspondence. The style of poetry was new to our poet, and, though he was fitted to excel in it, it cost him more trouble than his Scottish poetry. On the contrary, Tam o' Shanter seems to have issued perfect from the author's brain. The only considerable alteration made on reflection, is the omission of four lines, which had been inserted after the poem was finished, at the end of the dreadful catalogue of the articles found on the "dusty table," and which appeared in the first edition of the poem, printed separately—they came after the line,

Which even to name would be unlauful,

and are as follows,

Three lawyers' tongues turn'd inside out,
With lies seem'd like a beggar's clout,
With priestes' hezites, black as muck,
Lay, stinking vile, in every neuk.

These lines which, independent of other objections, interrupt and destroy the emotions of terror which the preceding description had excited, were very properly left out of the printed collection, by the advice of Mr. Fraser Tytler; of which Burns seems to have paid much deference.

6. The Address to the shade of Thomson, began in the first manuscript copy in the following manner:

While cold eye'd Spring, a virgin coy,
Unfolds her verdant mantle sweet;
Or pranks the sod in frolic joy,
A carpet for her youthful feet;
While Summer blossoms, with a matron's grace,
Walks stately in the cooling shade;
And, of delighted, loves to trace
The progress of the spiky blade;
While Autumn, benefactor kind,
With age's bony lourous clod,
Surveys with self-approving mind,
Each creature on his bounty fed, &c.

By the alteration in the printed poem, it may be questioned whether the poet is much improved; the poet however has found means to introduce the shades of Dryburgh, the residence of the Earl of Buchan, at whose request these verses were written.

These observations might be extended, but what are already offered will satisfy curiosity, and there is nothing of any importance that could be added.

THE FOLLOWING LETTER

Of Burns, which contains some hints relative to the origin of his celebrated tale of "Tam o' Shanter," the Public Record Office will be found interesting to every reader of his works. There appears no reason to doubt an abode of its being genuine, though it has not been inserted in his correspondence published by Dr. Currie.

FRANCIS GROSE, ESQ. F. A. S.;

Amid the many witty stories I have heard relating to Alloway kirk, I distinctly remember only two or three.

* These four lines have been inadvertently replaced in the copy of Tam o' Shanter, published in the first volume of the "Poetry, Original and Select" of Brush and Reid of Glasgow; and to this circumstance is owing their being noticed here. As our poet deliberately rejected them, it is hoped that no future printer will insert them.

† This Letter was first published in the Conmora Literaria, 1736, and was communicated to the Editor of that work by Mr. Gilchrist of Stamm, accompanied with the following remark.
Upon a stormy night, amid whistling squalls of wind, and bitter blasts of hail; in short on such a night as the devil would choose to take the air in; a farmer or farmer's servant was plodding and plashing homeward with his plough irons on his shoulder, having been getting some repairs on them at a neighbouring smithy. His way lay by the kirk of Alloway, and being rather on the anxious look out on approaching a place so well known to be a favourite haunt of the devil and the devil's friends and emissaries, he was struck against by discovering through the horrors of the storm and stormy night, a light, which on his nearer approach plainly showed itself to proceed from, the haunted edifice. Whether he had been fortified from above on his devout supplication, as is customary with people when they suspect the immediate presence of Satan, or whether, according to another custom, he had got courageously drunk at the smithy, I will not pretend to determine; but so it was that he ventured to go up to, and say into the very kirk. As good luck would have it, his tenantry came off unpunished.

The members of the infernal junto were all out on some midnight business or other, and he saw nothing but a kind of kettle or caldron depending from the root, over the fire, simmering some heads of unchristened children, limbs of executed malefactors, &c. for the business of the night. It was in for a penny, in for a pound, with the honest ploughman: so without ceremony he unlooked the caldron from off the fire, and pouring out the damnable ingredients, inverted it on his head, and carried it fairly home, where it remained long in the family, a living evidence of the truth of the story.

Another story which I can prove to be equally authentic, was as follows:

On a market day in the town of Ayr, a farmer from Carrick, and consequently whose way laid by the very gate of Alloway kirk-yard, in order to cross the river Doan at the old bridge, which is about two or three hundred yards farther on than the said gate, had been detained by his business, till by the time he reached Alloway it was the wizard hour, between night and morning.

Though he was terrified with a blaze streaming from the kirk, yet as it is a well known fact that to turn back on these occasions is running by far the greatest risk of mischief, he prudently advanced on his road. When he had reached the gate of the kirk-yard, he was surprised and entertained, through the ribs and arches of an old Gothic window, which still faces the highway, to see a dance of witches merrily footing it round their old sooty blackguard master, who was keeping them all alive with the power of his bagpipe. The farmer stopping his horse to observe them a little, could plainly descry the faces of many old women of his acquaintance and neighbourhood. How the gentleman was dressed, tradition does not say; but the ladies were all in their smocks: and one of them happening unluckily to have a smock which was considerably too short to answer all the purposes of that piece of dress, our farmer was so tickled, that he involuntarily burst out, with a loud laugh, "Weel lappen, Miggy wi' the shortark"! and recollecting himself instantly spurred his horse to the top of his speed. I need not mention the universally known fact, that no diabolical power can pursue you beyond the middle of a running stream. Luckily it was for the poor farmer that the river Doon was so near, for notwithstanding the speed of his horse, which was a good one, against he reached the middle of the arch of the bridge, and consequently the middle of the stream, the pursuing waggish bags, were so close at his heels, that one of them actually sprung to seize him; but it was too late, nothing was on her side of the stream but the horse's tail, which immediately gave way at her infernal grasp, as if blasted by a stroke of lightning; but the farmer was beyond her reach. However, the unsightly, tailless condition of the vigorous steed was, to the last hour of the noble creature's life, an awful warning to the Carrick farmers, not to stay too late in Ayr markets.

The last relation I shall give, though equally true, is not so well identified, as the two former, with regard to the scene; but as the best authorities give it for Alloway, I shall relate it.

On a summer's evening, about the time that nature puts on her sables to mourn the expiry of the cheerful day, a shepherd boy belonging to a farmer in the immediate neighbourhood of Alloway kirk, had just folded his charge, and was returning home. As he passed the kirk in the adjoining field, he fell in with a crew of men and women who were busy pulling stems of the plant Ragwort. He observed that as each person pulled a Ragwort, he or she got astride of it, and called out, "up horse!" on which the Ragwort flew off like Pegasus, through the air with its rider. The foolish boy likewise pulled his Ragwort, and cried with the rest "up horse!" and strange to tell, away he flew with the company. The first stage at which the cavaledapo stopped was a merchant's wine cellar in Bourdeaux, where, without saying by your leave, they quaffed away at the best the cellar could afford, until the morning, foe to the imps and works of darkness, threatened to throw light on the matter, and frightened them from their carousals.

The poor shepherd lad, being equally a stranger to the scene and the liquor, heedlessly got himself drunk: and when the rest took horse, he fell asleep, and was found so next day by some of the people belonging to the merchant. Somebody that understood Scotch, asking him what he was, he said he was such-a-one's herd in Alloway, and by some means or other getting home again, he lived long to tell the world the wondrous tale.

I am, &c.

O2
APPENDIX.

No. I.—Note A. See Life, p. 3.

The importance of the national establishment of parish-schools in Scotland, will justify a short account of the legislative provisions respecting it, especially as the subject has escaped the notice of all the historians.

By an act of the king (James VIIth) and privy council of the 10th of December, 1686, it was recommended to his bishops to 'deale and treat with the heritors (land proprietors) and the inhabitants of the respective parishes in their respective dioceses, towards the fixing upon "some certain, solid, and sure course" for settling and entertaining a school in each parish. This was ratified by a statute of Charles I. (the act 1683, chap. 5.) which empowered the bishop, with the consent of the heritors of a parish, or of a majority of the inhabitants, if the heritors refused to attend the meeting, to assess every plough of land (that is, every farm in proportion to the number of ploughs upon it) with a certain sum for establishing a school. This was an ineffectual provision, as depending on the consent and pleasure of the heritors and inhabitants. Therefore a new order of things was introduced by Stat. 1660, chap. 17, which obliges the heritors and minister of each parish to meet and assess the several heritors with the requisite sum for building a school-house, and to elect a school-master, and modify a salary for him in all time to come. The salary is ordered not to be under one hundred, nor above two hundred marks, that is, in our present sterling money, not under £11 11s. 2d., nor above £12 2s. 3d., and the assessment is to be laid on the land in the same proportion as it is rated for the support of the clergy, and as it regulates the payment of the land-tax. But in case the heritors of any parish, or the majority of them, should fail to discharge this duty, then the persons forming what is called the Committee of Supply of the county (consisting of the principal landholders) or any five of them, are authorized by the statute to impose the assessment instead of them, on the representation of the presbytery in which the parish is situated. To secure the choice of a proper teacher, the right of election by the heritors, by a statute passed in 1693, chap. 22, is made subject to the review and control of the presbytery of the district, who have the examination of the person proposed committed to them, both as to his qualifications as a teacher, and as to his proper deportment in the office when settled in it. The election of the heritors is therefore only a presentation of a person for the approbation of the presbytery; who, if they find him unfit, may declare his incapacity, and thus oblige them to elect anew. So far is stated on unquestionable authority.

"The authority of A. Frazer Tyder, and David Hume, Esqrs.

The legal salary of the school-master was not inconsiderable at the time it was fixed; but by the decrease in the value of money, it is now nearly inadequate. Besides the certain sum it is painful to observe, that the landholders of Scotland resisted the humble application of the school-masters to the legislature for its increase, a few years ago. The number of parishes in Scotland is 377; and if we allow the salary of a school-master in each to be on an average, seven pounds sterling, the amount of the legal provision will be 6,159 sterling. If we suppose the wages paid by the scholars to amount to twice the sum, which is probably beyond the truth, the total of the expenses among 1,526,612 persons, (the whole population of Scotland,) of this most important establishment, will be 15,117. But on this, as well as on other subjects respecting Scotland, accurate information may soon be expected from Sir John Sinclair’s Analysis of his Statistics, which will complete the immortal monument he has reared to his patriotism.

The benefit arising in Scotland from the instruction of the poor, was soon felt; and by an act of the British parliament, 4 Geo. I. Chap. 6, it is enacted, 'that of the moneys arising from the sale of the Scottish estates forfeited in the rebellion of 1715, 2000l. sterling shall be converted into a capital stock, the interest of which shall be laid out in erecting and maintaining schools in the Highlands. The Society for propagating Christian Knowledge, incorporated in 1769, have applied a large part of their fund for the same purpose. By their report, 1st May, 1795, the annual sum employed by them, in supporting their schools in the Highlands and Islands, was 3913l. 19s. 10d., in which are taught the English language, reading and writing, and the principles of religion. The schools of the society are additional to the legal schools, which from the great extent of many of the Highland parishes, were found insufficient. Besides these established schools, the lower classes of people in Scotland, where the parishes are large, often combine together, and establish private schools of their own, at one of which it was that Burns received the principal part of his education. So convinced indeed are the poor people of Scotland, by experience, of the benefit of instruction, to their children, that, though they may often find it difficult to feed and clothe them, some kind of school instruction they almost always procure them.

The influence of the school-establishment of Scotland on the peasantry of that country, seems to have decided by experience a question of legislation of the utmost importance—whether a system of national instruction for the poor be favourable to morals and good government. In the year 1828, Fletcher of Saltoun declared as follows: ‘There are at this day in Scotland, two hundred thousand people begging from door
APPENDIX, No. I

to door. And though the number of them be perhaps double in the towns, the number of the present great distress, (a famine then prevailed,) yet in this year there have been about one hundred thousand of those vagabonds, who have lived without any regard to their profession to the laws of the country, or even to those of God and Nature; fathers inceasingly accompanying with their own daughters, the son with the mother, and the brother with the sister." He goes on to say that no magistrate ever could discover that they had ever been baptiz'd, or in what way one in a hundred went out of the world. He accuses them as frutestrated by the inability of the laws to apprehend "In years of plenty they say, "many thousands of men meet together in the mountains, where they feast and riot for days; and at country weddings, markets, fairs, and other public occasions, they are to be seen both men and women, perpetually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting together." This enlightened statesman, of whom it is said by a contemporary "that he would lose his life readily to save his country, and would not do a base thing to serve it," thought the evil so great that he proposed as a remedy, the revival of domestic slavery, according to the practice of his adored republics in the classic ages! A better remedy has been found, which in the silent lapse of a century has proved effectual. The statute of 1838, the noble legacy of the Scottish Parliament to their country, began soon after this to operate; and happily, as the minds of the poor received instruction, it proved a blessing to the manufacturers of industry, and new fields of action to their view.

At the present day there is perhaps no country in Europe, in which, in proportion to its population, so small a number of crimes fall under the chastisement of the criminal law, as Scotland. We have the best assurance in that assertion, that on an average of thirty years, preceding the year 1797, the executions in that division of the island did not amount to six annually; and onequarter-sessions for the town of Manchester only, where ten executions have been inflicted on the plantations, than all the judges of Scotland usually do in the space of a year. It might appear invitations to attempt a calculation of the many thousand individuals in Manchester and its vicinity who can neither read nor write. A majority of those who can suffer the punishment of death for their crimes in every part of England are, it is believed, in this miserable state of ignorance.

There is now a legal provision for parentage schools, or rather for a school in each of the different townships into which the country is divided, in several of the northern states of North America. They are, however, but a partial provision, according to the rules on the subject, by which they were established in the last century, probably about the same time as in Scotland, and by the same religious sect. In the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland, the peasantry have the advantage of similar schools, though established and endowed in a different manner. This is also the case in certain districts in England, particularly, in the northern parts of Yorkshire and of Lancashire, and in the counties of Westmoreland and Cumberland.

A law, providing for the instruction of the poor, was passed by the Parliament of Ireland; but the fund was diverted from its purpose, and the measure was entirely frustrated. Prof. Polder.

The similarity of character between the Swiss and the Scotch, and between the Scotch and the people of New England, can scarcely be overlooked. That it arises in a great measure from the similarity of their institutions for instruction, cannot be questioned. It is no doubt increased by physical causes. With superior degree of success of each of these various post

Political Works of Andrew Fletcher, octavo London, 1757, 141.


Note B. See p. 3.

It has been supposed that Scotland is less populous, and less improved on account of this emigrations; but such conclusions are doubtful, if not wholly fallacious. The principle of population acts in no country to the full extent of its power; marriage is everywhere repressed in some degree by the necessity of supporting a family; but the difficulty of supporting a family; and this obstacle is greatest in long-settled communities. The emigration is a part of a process of settlement; the marriage of the rest, by producing a relative increase in the means of subsistence. The arguments of Adam Smith, for a free export of corn, are perhaps applicable with less exception to Scotland than to any country in Europe; and the greater the cultivation of the soil, the better the cultivation of the mind.

No. C. See p. 6.

In the punishment of this offence the Church employed the hand of the civil power. During the reign of James the Sixth (James the First of England,) criminal connexion between unmarried persons was made the subject of a particular statute, (Hume's History of Scotland, Vol. ii. p. 284,) which, from its rigor, was never much enforced, and which has long fallen into disuse. When in the middle of the last century, the Parliament succeeded in the overthrow of the monarchy in both divisions of the island, fornication was a crime against which they directed their utmost zeal. It was made punishable with the severest of penalties, (Carmichael, vol. iv. chap. 4. No. 11.) Happily this sanguinary statute was swept away along with the other acts of the Commonwealth, but the Constitution of Charles i. to whose time the penalties must have been peculiarly abhorrent. And after the Revolution, when several salutary acts passed during the suspension of the monarchical power, were re-adopted by the Scottish Parliament, par.
ticularly that for the establishment of parish schools, the statute punishing fornication with death, was suffer-
ed to sleep in the grave of the stern fanatic who had given it birth.

Note D. See p. 6.

The legitimation of children, by subsequent marriage became the Roman law under the Christian emperors. It was the common law of modern Europe, and has been established in Scotland from a very remote period. Thus a child born a bastard, if his parents afterwards marry, enjoys all the privileges of seniority over his brothers and sisters born in wedlock. In the Parlia-

tion of Merton, in the reign of Henry III. The English clergy made a vigorous attempt to introduce this ar-

disco into the law of England, and I was on this occasion that the Baron men the noted answer, since so often appealed to; Quod notum legis Anglice mutare

que hac usque usitate sent approbatur. With regard to what constitutes a marriage, the law of Scotland, as explained, p. 6, differs from the Roman law, which re-

quired the ceremony to be performed in facie ecclesiae.

No. II.

Note A. See p. 12.

It may interest some persons to peruse the first po-

etical production of Lord Burt, and it is therefore ex-

tracted from a kind of common-place book, which he

seems to have begun in his twentieth year; and which he

entitled, "Observations, Hints, Songs, Scraps of Poetry, &c. by Robert Burness, a man who had little art

in making money, and still less in keeping it; but

was, however, a man of some sense, a great deal of

honesty and unbounded good will to every creature,

bro- nal or irrational. As he was but little indebted to a

scholastic education, and bred at a plough-tail, his per-

formances must be strongly tinted with his unpolish-

ed rustic way of life; but as I believe they are really

his own, it may be some entertainment to a curious ob-

server of human nature, to see how a ploughman thinks

and feels under the pressure of love, ambition, anxiety,

grief, with the like cares and passions, which however

diversified by the modes and manners of life, operate

pretty much alike, I believe, in all the species."—

"Pleasing when youth is long expired to trace,

The forms our pencil or our pen design'd,

Such was our youthful air, and shape, and face,

Such the soft image of the youthful mind."—

Stenstone.

This MS. book, to which our poet prefixed this ac-

count of himself, and of his intention in preparing it, con-

tains several of his earlier poems, some as they were

printed, and others in their embryo state. The

song alluded to is that beginning,

O once I love'd a bonnie lass,

Ay, and I love her still.

See Poems, p. 73.

It must be confessed that this song gives no indica-

tion of the future genius of Burns; but he himself

seems to have been fond of it, probably from the recol-

lections it excited.

Note B. See p. 15.

At the time that our poet took the resolution of be-

coming wise, he procured a little book of blank paper,

with the purpose (expressed on the first page) of mak-

ing farming memorandums upon it. These farming

memorandums are curious enough; many of them

have been written with a pencil, and are now obliterated,

or at least illegible. A considerable number are how-

ever legible, and a specimen may gratify the rea-

der. It must be premised, that the poet kept the book

by him several years— that he wrote upon it, here and

there, with the utmost irregularity, and that on the

same page are notations very distant from each other

as to time and place.

EXTEMPORE. April, 1782.

O why the deuce should I repine,

And be an ill boreder; &c.

See Poems, p. 15.

FRAGMENT. Tune,— Donald Blue.

O leave novels, ye Manchline belles,

Ye're safer at your spinning wheel;

See Poems, p. 141.

For he's far aboon Dunkel the night

Mann whith the stick and a' that.

Mem. To get for Mr. Johnson these two songs:

Molly, Molly, my dear honey.—'Tis the cock and the

hen, the deer in her den; &c.

Ah! Claris! Sir Peter Halket, of Pittferran, the

author.—Note, he married her—the heiress of Pittferran.

Colonel George Crawford, the author of Down the

burn Deep.

Pinkly-house, by J. Mitchell.

My apron Deary! and Amynos, by Sir G. Elliot.

Willie was a weant man, Was made on Walkin

shaw, of Walkinsthaw, near Paisley.

I 'loe na a laddie but one, Mr. Chunze.
The bonnie was thing—beautiful—Lundie's Dream—

very beautiful.

He tillit and she tillit—asser bien.

Armstrong's Farewell—fine.

The author of the Highland Queen was a Mr. Mc-

Iver, Pursuer of the Solbey.

Fife an' at the lant about it, R. Forsungus.
The author of The bush aboon Traquair, was a Dr.

Stewart.

Polewart on the Green, composed by Captain John

Drummond McGregor of Bobochale.

Mem. To inquire if Mrs. Cochbru was the author

of I have seen the smiling, &c.

* * *

The above may serve as a specimen. All the notes

on farming are obliterated.

Note C. See pages 29, 31.

Rules and Regulations to be observed in the Buchanan

Club.

1st. The club shall meet at Tarbolton every fourth

Monday night, when a question on any subject shall

be proposed, disputed points of religion, only excepted,

in the manner hereafter directed; which question is

to be debated in the club, each member taking what

ever side he thinks proper.

2d. When the club is met, the president, or, if fail-

ing, some one of the members, till he come, shall take

his seat; then the other members shall seat them

selves; those who are for one side of the question, or

the president's right hand; and those who are for the

other side, on his left; which of them shall have the

right hand is to be determined by the president.

The president and all of the members being present, shall

have power to transact any ordinary part of the socie-

ty's business.

3d. The club met and seated, the president shall

read the question out of the club's book of records,

(which book is always to be kept by the president,) then

the two members nearest the president shall cast

lots who of them shall speak first, and according as
APPENDIX, No. 2.

the lot shall determine, the member nearest the president on that side shall deliver his opinion, and the member nearest on the other side shall reply to him; then the second member on the side that spoke first; then the second member on the side that spoke second; and so on to the end of the company, but if there be fewer members on one side than the other, when all the members of the east side have spoken according to their places, any of them, as they please among themselves, may reply to the remaining members of the opposite side: when both sides have spoken, the president shall give his opinion, after which they may go over it a second or more times, and so continue the question.

4th. The club shall then proceed to the choice of a question for the subject of next night's meeting. The president shall first propose one, and any other member who chooses may propose more questions; and whatever one of them is most agreeable to the majority of members, shall be the subject of debate next night.

5th. The club shall, lastly, elect a new president for the next meeting: the president shall first name one, then any of the club may name another, and whoever of them has the majority of votes shall be duly elected; allowing the president the first vote, and the casting vote in case of a tie; but none after a general toast to mistresses of the club, they shall dismiss.

6th. There shall be no private conversation carried on during the time of debate, nor shall any member interrupt another while he is speaking, under the penalty of a reprimand from the president for the first fault, doubling his penalty for the second, trebling it for the third, and so on in proportion for every other fault, provided always, however, that any member may speak at any time after leave asked, and given by the club, (of which constitution Mr. Telford is a native,) and in the verbatim general employment by our poet himself. Its object is to recommend to him other subject of a serious nature, similar to that of the Cotter's Saturday Night; and the reader will find that the advice is happily enforced by example. It would have given the editor pleasure to have inserted the whole of this poem, which he hopes will soon see the light; he is happy to have obtained, in the mean time, his friend Mr. Telford's permission to insert the following extracts:

* * * * *

Pursue, O Burns! thy happy style
"Those manner-painting strains," that while
They bear me northward, moan a mile,
Recall the days,
When tender joys, with playful smile,
Bless'd my young ways.

I see my fond companions rise,
I join the happy village joys.
I see our green hills touch the skies.
And through the woods.
I hear the river's rushing noise,
And see its roaring floods.

No distant Swiss with warmer glow,
E'er heard his native music flow.
Nor could his wishes stronger grow,
Than still have mine,
When up this ancient mount! I go,
With sooth of thine.

O happy Bard! thy gen'rous fame
Was given to raise thy country's fame:
For this thy charming numbers came—
Thy matchless lays; Then sing, and save her virtuous name,
To last days.

But many a theme awaits thy muse,
Fine as thy Cotter's sacred views,
In such as with thy country's cause,
With holy air; And sing the course the pious choose,
With all thy care.

How with religious awe impressed,
They open lay the guileless breast,
And youth and age with tears distress'd,
All due prepare,
The symbols of eternal rest
Devout to share;‡

How down like lamb withdrawing hill,
Successive crowds the valleys fill;
While pure religious converse still
Beguiles the way,
And gives a cast to youthful will,
To suit the day.

* The banks of Leith, in Dumfries-shire, are here alluded to.
‡ A beautiful little mount, which stands immediately before, or rather forms a part of Shrewsbury castle, a seat of Sir William Pulteney, baronet.
§ The Sacramento, generally administered in the country parishes of Scotland in the open air. E.
APPENDIX, No. 3.

How placed along the softened board,
Their hoary branches spread below;
His voice with peace and blessing stored,
Sent from above;
And faith, and hope, and joy afforded,
And boundless love.

O'er this, with warm aethereal glow,
Celestial beings praised low;
And whisper'd heard the holy vow,
'Mid grateful tears;
And mark amid such scenes below,
Their future powers.

O mark the awful solemn scene!
When hoary winter clothes the plain,
Along the snowy hills is seen
Approaching slow;
In mourning weeds, the village train,
In silent woe.

Some much respected brother's hier
(By turns the plou's task they share)
With heavy hearts they forward bear
Along the path,
Where neighbours saw in dusty air;
The light of death.

And when they pass the rocky bow,
Where binwood bushes o'er them bow,
And move around the rising knowe,
Where far away
The kirk-yard trees are seen to grow,
By th' waterbrae.

Assembled round the narrow grave,
While o'er them wintry tempests rave,
In the cold wind their gray locks wave,
As low they lay
Their brother's body 'mongst the love
Of parent clay.

Expressive looks from each declare
The griefs within, their bosoms bear;
One holy bow devout they share,
Then home return,
And think o'er all the virtues fair
Of him they mourn.

Say bow by early lessons taught,
(Truth's pleasing air is willing caught)
Congenial to th' untaught thought,
Thee, the shepherd boy
Who tends his flocks on lonely height,
Feels holy joy.

Is taught on earth so lovely known,
On sabbath morn and far alone,
His guileless soul all naked shown
Before his God—
Such pray'r's must welcome reach the throne,
And bless'd abode.

O tell! with what a heart felt joy,
The parent eyes the virtuous boy;
And all his constant, kind employ,
Is how to give
The best of heart he can employ
As means to live.

The parish-school, its curious site,
The master who can clear indite,
And lead him on to count and write,
Dole and thy care
Nor pass the ploughman's school at night
Without a share.

* A Scotch funeral. E.

Nor yet the tenuous candid lad,
Who o'er theingle hings his head,
And begs of neighbours books to read
From hence arise
Thy country's sons, who far are spread,
Faith banish and wise.

The bonnie lasses, as they spin,
Perhaps with Allan's song begin,
How Tay and Tweed smooth flowing rin
Through flowery bowes;
Where Shepherd lads their sweethearts win
With earnest vows.

Or may he, Burns, thy thrilling page
May a' their virtuous thoughts engage,
While playful youth and placid age
In concert join,
To bless the bard, who, gay or sage,
Improves the mind.

Long may their harmless, simple ways,
Nature's own pure emotions raise;
May still the dear romantic blaze
Of purest love,
Their bosoms warm to latest days,
And ay improve.

May still each fond attachment glow,
O'er woods o'er streams, o'er hills of snow,
May rugged rocks still dearer grow;
And may their souls
Even love the warlock gles which through
The tempest howls.

To eternize such themes as these,
And all their happy manners seize,
Will every virtuous bosom please;
And high in fame
To future times will justly raise
Thy patriot name.

While all the venal tribes decay,
That bask in flattery's bloating ray—
The noiseous vermin of a day
Thy works shall gain
O'er every mind a boundless away,
A lasting reign.

When winter binds the harden'd plains,
Around each heart, the hoary awains
Still teach the rising youth thy strains
And anxious say,
Our blessing with our sons remains.
And Burns's Lay!

No. III.

(First inserted in the Second Edition.)

The editor has particular pleasure in presenting to the public the following letter, to the due understanding of which a few previous observations are necessary.

The Biographer of Burns was naturally desirous of hearing the opinion of the friend and brother of the poet, on the manner in which he had executed his task, before a second edition should be committed to the press. He had the satisfaction of receiving this opinion, in a letter dated the 18th of August, approving of the Life in very obliging terms, and offering one or two trivial corrections as to names and dates chiefly, which are made in this edition. One or two observations were offered of a different kind. In the 356th page of the first volume, first edition, a quotation is made from the pastoral song, Ettrick Banks, and an explanation given of the phrase "mony feck," which occurs in this quotation. Supposing the sense to be complete after "mony," the editor had considered " feck" a rustick oath which confirmed the assertion. The words were therefore separated by a com-
APPENDIX, No. 3.

ma. Mr. Burns considered this an error. "Feck," he said, "is borrowed from the Scotch Scots, and means 'mony feck,' to mean simply, very many. The editor in yielding to this authority, expressed some hesitation, and hinted that the phrase 'mony feck' was unfamiliar to him, or at least very deformed this beautiful song." His reply to this observation makes the first clause of the following letter.

In the same communication he informed me, that the Minories and the Lounies were pronounced by him to the Conversation Club of Mauchline, and that he had thought of giving me his sentiments on the remarks I had made respecting the fitness of such works for such societies. The observations of a man on such a subject, the Editor conceived, would be received with particular interest by the public; and, having pressed me earnestly for them, they will be found in the following letter. Of the value of this communication, delicacy towards his very respectable correspondent prevents him from expressing his opinion. The original letter is in the hands of Messrs. Caddell and Devine.

**Dinning, Dumfries-shire, 23th Oct. 1800.**

DEAR SIR,

Yours of the 17th inst. came to my hand yesterday, and I sit down this afternoon to write you in return: but when I shall be able to finish all I wish to say to you, I cannot tell. I am at present engaged in a complete respecting Feck. There is no doubt, that if you take two English words which appear synonymous to mony feck, and judge by the rules of English construction, it will appear a barbarism. I believe if you take this mode of translating from any language, the effect will frequently be the same. But if you take the words, mony feck, I have, as I have stated it, the same meaning with the words, very many, (and such license every translator must be allowed, especially when he translates from a simple dialect, which has never been subjected to rules, and where the precise meaning of words is of consequence not minutely attended to,) it will be well enough. One thing I am certain of, that ours is the sense universal in the country, and I believe no Scotsman, who has lived contented at home, pleased with the simple manners, the simple melodies, and the simple dialect of his native country, unvindicated by foreign intercourse, "whose soul proud science never taught to stray," ever discovered barbarism in the song of Etrick Banks.

The story you have heard of the gable of my father's house falling down, is simply as follows: - "When my father built his clay biggin," he put in two stone jambs, one on each side of a lintel, called a clay chimney in his clay gable. The consequence was, that as the gable subsided, the jambs, remaining firm, threw it off its centre; and, one very stormy morning, when my brother was nine or ten days old, a little before daylight a part of the gable fell out; and the rest appeared so shattered, that my mother, with the young poet, had to be carried through the storm to a neighbour's house, where they remained a week till their own dwelling was adjusted. That you may not think too meanly of this house, or my father's taste in building, by supposing the poet's description in The Tain (which is entirely a fancy picture) applicable to it, allow me to take notice to you, that the house consisted of a kitchen in one end, and a room in the other end, a chimney; that my father had constructed a concealed bed in the kitchen, with a

*The correction made by Gilbert Burns has also been suggested by a reader in the Monthly Magazine, and the signature of Alloway, who, for taking this trouble, and for mentioning the author of the poem of Donnachadh deserves the Editor's thanks.

* The Editor had heard a report that the poet was born in the midst of a storm which blew down a part of the house. E

small closet at the end, of the same materials with the house; and, when alltogether cast over, outside and in, with a roof and chimney, established "as no family of the same rank, in the present improved style of living, would think themselves ill-lodged in. I am glad your Editor, in passing, that although the 'Cotter,' in the September Night, is an eject copy of my father in his manners, his family-devotion, and exhortations, yet the other parts of the description do not seem to bear testimony of such a sentiment: even that service out among the neighbours round." Instead of our depositing our "sair worm penny fee" with our parents, our father laboured hard, and lived with the most rigid economy that he might be able to keep his children at home, thereby having an opportunity of watching the progress of our young minds and forming in them earlier habits of industry and economy; and from this motive alone did he engage in farming, the source of all his difficulties and distresses.

When I threatened you in my last with a long letter on the subject of the books I recommended to the Mauchline Club, and the effects of refinement of taste on the minds of the classes of men, I meant merely, that I wished to write you on that subject with a view that, in some future communication to the public, you might take up the subject more at large; that, by means of your influence, you might, according to the ability of power and influence might be fixed on it. I had little expectation, however, that I should overcome my indolence, and the difficulty of arranging my thoughts so far as to put my thoughts in correct order, before I had finished my harvest, having a call from Mr. Ewart,* with a message from you, pressing me to the performance of this task, I thought it no longer at liberty to decline it, and resolved to set about it with my first leisure. I will now, therefore, endeavour to lay before you what has occurred to my mind on a subject where people capable of observing and of placing their remarks in a proper point of view, have seldom an opportunity of making their remarks on real life. In doing this, I may perhaps be led sometimes to write more in the manner of a person communicating information to you which you did not know before, and at other times more in the style of egotism, than I would choose to do to any person, in whose company, and even personal good will, I had less confidence.

There are two several lines of study that open to every man as he enter's life: the one, the general science of life, of duty and of happiness; the other, the particular arts of his employment or situation in society, and the several branches of knowledge there will be. This is certain, that as nothing can be more disgraceful than ignorance in the way of one's own profession; and whatever a man's speculative knowledge may be, if he is ill-informed, there, he can neither be a useful nor a respectable member of society. It is nevertheless true, that the proper study of mankind is man: to consider what duties are incumbent on him as a rational creature, and a member of society; how he may increase or secure his happiness: and how he may prevent or soften the many miseries incident to human life. I think the pursuit of happiness is too frequently confounded with the endeavour after the acquisition of wealth. I do not wish to be considered as an idle declaimer against riches, which, after all that can be said against them, is not altogether destitute of its advantages, nor as objects of importance; and poverty will be felt as a sore evil, after all the fine things that can be said of its advantages. This is certainly true, that a great proportion of the miseries of life arise from the want of economy and a prudent attention to money, on the ill-directed or intemperate pursuit of it. But I am afraid, that we may be deluded by the name of comfort, independence, and the pleasure of doing good to others, yet I am of opinion, that they may be, and frequently are, purchased at a price which can not be made up in the pursuit, which the acquisition cannot compensate. I remember hearing my

* The Editor's friend, Mr. Peter Ewart, of Manchester.
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worthy teacher, Mr. Murdoch, relate an anecdote to my father, which I think sets this matter in the light in which you wish to view it, and in which I at least tend to promote this way of thinking in me. When Mr. Mur- doch left Alloway, he went to teach and reside in the family of the Ross's, at whose house his first school was opened. A neighbour coming on a visit, in the course of conver-
sation, asked the father how he meant to dispose of his son. The father replied that he had not determined. The neighbour then said that he would give them all the education and send them abroad, without (perhaps) having a precise idea where. The father objected, that many young men lost themselves in foreign establishments; and the neighbour, True, re-
plied the visitor, but as you have a number of sons, it will be strange if some one of them does not live and make a fortune.

Let any person who has the feelings of a father, comment on this story; but though few will avow, even to themselves, that such views govern their con-
duct, yet do we not daily see people shipping off their sons, (and who would do so by their daughters also, if there were any demand for them,) that they may be rich or perish!

The education of the lower classes is seldom con-
sidered in any other point of view than as the means of raising them from that station to which they were born, and of making a fortune. I am ignorant of the Nay, and of the part which they act in this, in any thing to begin with; and cannot calculate, with any degree of exactness, the difficulties to be surmount-
ed, the mortifications to be suffered, and the degrada-
tion of character to be submitted to, in leading one's self to be the minister of other people's vices. or in the practice of rapine, fraud, oppression, or dissimulation, in which, perhaps, but not only in these, one's self attained, it may be questioned whether happiness be much increased by the change. When I have seen a fortunate adventurer of the lower ranks of life returned from the East or West indies, with all the honours of a vulgar mind accustomed to be served by slaves, assuming a character which, from the early habits of life, he is ill-fitted to support, displaying magnificence which raises the envy of some, and the contempt of others, claiming an equality with the great, which they are unwilling to allow; only piling at the prece-
dence of the hereditary gentry;蔑nushed by the pol-
ished insolence of some of the unworthy part of them; seeking pleasure in the society of men who can conde-
scent to fatter him, and listen to his absurdity for the sake of pleasing him; I am still inclined to conclude, that his brother, or companion, who, by a diligent application to the labours of agriculture, or some useful mechanical employment, and the careful husbanding of his gains, might have risen in his station, is a much happier, and, in the eyes of a person who can take an enlarged view of mankind, a much more respectable man.

But the votaries of wealth may be considered as a great number of candidates striving for a few prizes; and whatever addition the successful may make to their happiness or happiness, the disappointed will al-
ways have more to suffer, I am afraid, than those who abide contented in the station to which they were born. I wish, therefore, the education of the lower classes to be promoted and directed to their improve-
ment as men, as the means of increasing their virtue, and opening them to new and dignified sources of pleasure and happiness. I have heard some people object to the education of the lower classes of men, as rendering them less useful, by abstracting them from their business, and inculcating in them vanities, as rendering them saucy to their superiors, impatient of their con-
dition, and turbulent subjects; whilst you, with more burthen and trouble, in their way, do not raise with your education to the knowledge of the more cultivated part of mankind, induced by that sort of education and read-
ing I recommend, should render the evils of their situa-
tion insupportable to them, I wish to examine the weight of each of these objections, beginning with the one you have mentioned.

I do not mean to controvert your criticism of my favourite books, the Mirror and Lounger, although I

understand there are people who think themselves

so do you also, and I think the acquisition of knowledge, except what is connected with human

life and conduct, or the particular business of his em-

ployment, does not appear to me to be the finest pur-

suit for a passant. I would say with the post,

"How empty learning, and how vain is art

Save when it guides the life, and mends the heart."

There seems to be a considerable latitude in the use of the word taste. I understand it to be the percep-
tion and relish of beauty, order, or any thing, the con-
templation of which gives pleasure and delight to the

mind. I suppose in this sense you wish it to be understood. If I am right, the taste which these books are calculated to cultivate is the taste for fine writing, which many of the papers tend to im-
prove and to gratify; I think is proper, consistent, and becoming in human character and conduct, as al-

most every paper relates to these subjects.

I am sorry I have not these books by me, that I might point out some instances. In memory two, one the beautiful story of La Roch, where, beside the pleasure one derives from a beautiful simple story, told in McKenzie's happiest manner, the mind is led to consider the nature of that kind of reflection which is derived in deep affliction, from habitual devotion and trust in Almighty God. The other, the story of gen-

eral—he, when the reader is led to have a high respect for the good, weak, wealthy, and wretched

appearance, the common forms and vanities of life, for the sake of doing justice in a case which was out of the reach of human laws.

Allow me then to remark, that if the morality of these books is subordinate to the cultivation of taste,

that, that refinement of mind and delicacy of sentiment which they are intended to give, arc the strongest guard and surest foundation of morality and virtue,—Other moralists guard, as it were, the over-

weight of the good by every manner of sinecures; these are calculated to make every deviation from rectitude and propriety of conduct, painful to the mind,

"Whose temper'd powers,

Refine at length, and every passion wears,

A chafer, milder, more attractive mein."

I readily grant you, that the refinement of mind which I contend for, increases our sensibility to the evils of life! but what station of life is without its evils! There seems to be no such thing as perfect happiness in the world. Mankind are as liable in their life and situation to the pain which we derive from taste, before we can properly appreciate it in the case before us. I appre-
hend that on a minute examination it will appear, that that evils pass to the lower ranks of life, derive their power to wound us, more from the suggestions of false pride, and "contagion of luxury, weak and vile," than the refinement of our taste. It was a favourite remark of my brother's, that there was no part of the constitution of our nature, to which we were more indelit, than that by which Custom makes things agreeable (a copy Mr. Murdoch used to set us to write,) and there is little labour which custom will not make easy to a man in health; if he is not ashamed of his employment, or does not begin to compare his situation with any other, it may seem going about their ease.

But the man of enlarged mind feels the respect due to him as a man: he has learned that no employment is dishonourable in itself; that while he performs it he does so with a good heart. If he be dis-
placed him, he is as great a king in the eyes of Him whom he principally desire to please: for the man of taste, who is constantly obliged to labour, most of necessity, in religious, if you teach him only to re-

son, you may make him an atheist, a demagogue, or any vile thing; but if you teach him to feel, his feel-

ings can only find their propinquity and release, rest, and restoration. He knows that those people who are to appearance at ease, are not without
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there are advantages, and that even to itself is not des-

0 A mortal that live here by toll,

Cease to repine, and grudge thy hard estate!

That like an emmott thou must ever moil,

In great abundance of good things.

And, certes, there is for it reason great

Although sometimes it makes thee weep and wail,

And curse thy star, and early drogge, and late;

Which yet is that emmott is.

Loose life, unurly passions, and diseases pale!

And, while he repeats the words, the grateful recoil-
tion comes across his mind, how often has he derived
inefableness from the sweet song of "Nature's
darling child." I can say, from my own experience,
that there is no sort of farm-labour inconsistent with
the most refined and pleasureable state of the mind
that I am acquainted with, thrashing alone excepted.
That, indeed, I have always considered as indispens-
able drudgery, and think the ingenious mechanic who
invented the threshing machine, ought to have a statute
among the benefactors of his country, and should be
placed in the next line to the abstract men who introduced
the culture of potatoes into this island.

Perhaps the thing of most importance in the educa-
tion of the common people, is, to prevent the intrusion
of artificial wants. I bless the memory of my worthy
father, who, from every experience of his mind, and my
habits of life, which I can approve of;

and for none more than the pains he took to impress
my mind with the sentiment, that nothing was more
unworthy the character of a man, than that his happi-
ness should in the least depend on what he should eat
or drink. So early did he impress my mind with this,
that although I was as fond of sweetmeats as children
generally are, yet I seldom laid out any of the in-
fluence which relations or neighbours gave me at fairs,
in the purchase of them; and if I did ever mouthful
I could not partake of it excepted with the most
miserable me; and to this hour, I never indulge in the use
of any delicacy, but I feel a considerable degree of self-
embrace and alarm for the deglutation of the human
character. Such a habit of thinking I consider as of
great consequence, both to the virtue and happiness
of men in the lower ranks of life. And thus, Sir,
I am of opinion, that if their minds are early impressed
with the power of the dignity of restraint, and the
love of independence and of industry, economy and
temperance, as the most obvious means of making
them useful and effectual citizens in the state, with
out any danger of becoming more unhappy in their
situation or discontented with it. Nor do I think there
is any danger of their becoming less useful. There
are some hours every day that the most constant la-
bourer is neither at work nor asleep. These hours are
either appropriated to amusement or to sloth. If a
taste for employing these hours in reading were culti-
vated, I do not suppose that the return to labour
would be more difficult. Every one will allow, that
the attachment to idle amusements, or even to sloth,
has power to destroy men, and render them incapable
of proper business, as the attachment to books; while
the one dissipates the mind, and the other tends to
increase its powers of self-government.

To those who are afraid that the improvement of
the minds of the common people might be dangerous
to the state, or the established order of society, I would
remark, that turbulence and commotion are certainly
very inimical to the feelings of a refined mind. Let
the matter be what it may, it must be observed,
that of what description are mobs and insurrections composed? Are they not universal-
ly owing to the want of enlargement and improvement of the mind? The mind is taken
up with nothing but the mere character of a man, one reollects the characters of those who formed the
calmer and more deliberate associations, which lately
gave so much alarm to the government of this country.

I suppose few of the common people who were to be
found in such societies, had the education and turn of
mind I have been endeavouring to recommend. Allow
me to suggest one reason for endeavouring to enlighten
the minds of the common people. Their morals have
hitherto been guarded by a sort of dim religious awe,
which from a variety of causes, seems wearing off. I
think the alteration in this respect considerible, in the
shock of the American war, and I have already given
my opinion of the effects of refinement of mind on
moralis and virtues. Whenever vulgar minds begin to
shake at the dogmas of the religion in which they have
been educated, the progress is quick and imme-
diate to downright infidelity: and nothing but refine-
ment of mind can enable them to distinguish between
the real and the pretended relations of the deities
which men have been perpetually connecting it with.
In addition to what has already been done for the
education of the common people of this country, in
the establishment of parish schools, I wish to see the sali-
aries augmented in some proportion to the present ex-
 pense of living, and the earnings of people of similar
rank, endowments and usefulness in society; and I
hope that the liberality of the present age will be no
longer disgraced by refusing, to so useful a class of
men, such encouragement as may make parish schools
worth the keeping. I expect also, that the magistrates
of the several counties will be more prompt in the due
duties of that office. In filling up the vacancies, I
would have more attention paid to the candidate's
capacity, as well as his character. The laudable
desire and passion of propriety and propriety;
the understanding thoroughly, and
having a high reliash for the beauties of English authors,
both in poetry and prose; to that good sense and
knowledge of human nature which would enable him
to acquire some influence on the minds and affections
of his scholars, to the general worth of his character,
and the correct manners and conversation, and his
proficiency in the knowledge of Latin and Greek.
I would then have a sort of high English class establish-
ed, not only for the purpose of teaching the pupils to
read, but to cultivate a graceful and agreeable manner
that might make them fond of reading, but to make them under-
stand what they read, and discover the beauties of the
author, in composition and sentiment. I would have
established in every parish, a small circulating library,
consisting of the books which the young people had
read extracts from in the collections they had read at
school, and any other books well calculated to refine
the mind, improve the moral feelings, recommend
the practice of virtue, and communicate such knowledge
as might he useful and suitable to the labouring class-
ese. I would also have a schoolmistress educated as a
librarian, and in recommending books to his young
friends, formerly his pupils, and letting in the light of
them upon their young minds, he should have the as-
sistance of a schoolmaster; only he must be so
wise that he become general, the low delights of the public house,
and other scenes of riot and depravity, would be con-
templated with disgust; and the whole state of the world,
wealth, and every virtue which taste and independence of
mind could recommend, would prevail and flourish.
Thus possessed of a virtuous and enlightened populace,
with high delight, I should consider my native country
as the head of all the nations of the earth, ancient or
modern.

Thus, Sir, have I executed my threat to the fullest
extent, in regard to the length of my letter. If I had
not presumed on doing it more to my liking, I should
not have been able, as I have done, but not come to
attempt it anew; nor, if I would, am I certain that I
should succeed any better. I have learned to have
less confidence in my capacity of writing on such
subjects.

I am much obliged by your kind inquiries about my
situation and prospects. I am much pleased with the
thoughts that you may think me worthy of your notice,
and I always value the labour you have taken to
assess it. I receive great encouragement likewise in
building, enclosing, and other conveniences, from my
landlord, Mr. G. S. Monteith, whose general charac-
ter, as I have often said, is beyond praise. I am
highly pleased with. But the land is in such a state as
to require a considerable immediate outlay of money
in the purchase of manure, the grubbing of
crush-wood, removing of stones, &c., which twelve years' struggle with a farm of a cold ungrateful soil has but ill prepared me for. If I can get these things done, however, to my mind, I think there is next to a certainty that in five or six years I shall be in a hopeful way of attaining a situation which I think as eligible for happiness as any one I know; for I have always been of opinion, that if a man bred to the habits of a farming life, who possesses a farm of good soil, on such terms as enables him easily to pay all demands, is not happy, he ought to look somewhere else than to his situation for the causes of his uneasiness.

I beg you will present my most respectful compliments to Mrs. Currie, and remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Roscoe, and Mr. Roscoe, junior, whose kind attentions to me, when in Liverpool, I shall never forget.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient, and

Much obliged, humble Servant,

GILBERT BURNS.

To James Currie, M. D. F. R. S.

Liverpool.

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