

COLLECTION

OF

cots Proverbs,

BY

ALLAN RAMSAY,

Author of the "Gentle Shepherd." &c. &c.

*"They who wont be counsell'd cannot be help'd."*



STIRLING :

Printed and Sold by M. Randall.

COLLECTION

Scott Proverbs

WILLIAM WALKER

Author of "The Proverbs of the Bible"

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# SCOTS PROVERBS.

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- A BEGUN turn is hauf ended.  
A blate cat mak's a proud mouse.  
A blythe heart mak's a blooming look.  
A bonny bride is soon buskit.  
A borrowed len' should gae laughing hame.  
A cock's ay crouse on his ain midden-head.  
A cramm'd kyte mak's a crazy carcase.  
A daft nurse mak's a wife wean.  
A denk maiden mak's a dirty wife.  
A drink is shorter than a tale.  
A dry summer ne'er made a dear peck.  
A dumb man wins nae law.  
A burd in hand 's worth twa in the bush.  
A fool may win money, but it tak's a wife  
man to keep it.  
Ae gude turn delerves anither.  
Ae hour's cauld will suck out seven years heat.  
Ae man may lead a horse to the water, but  
twenty winna gar him drink.  
Ae man's meat 's anither man's poison.  
Ae swallow mak's nae simmer.  
Ae scabbed sheep will smit the hale herd.

4  
Ae hour in the morning 's worth twa in the  
afternoon.

A fiding mare should be weel girded.

A fool and his money is soon parted.

A fool may gi'e a wise man counsel.

A friend in court's worth a penny in purse.

A friend in need 's a friend indeed.

Aft counting keeps friends lang thegither.

After a storm comes a calm.

A fou man and a hungry horse ay mak haste  
hame.

A fou purse never lacks friends.

A rough bane maks a fou wame.

A fou wame maks a stiff back.

A black hen lays a white egg.

A gaun foot 's ay getting.

A gien horse should na be look'd i' the mouth.

A gude beginning has ay a gude ending.

A gude cow may ha'e an ill cauf.

A gude tongue 's a safe weapon.

A gude ingle maks a roomy fireside,

A gude word 's as soon said as an ill.

A gude tale is no the waur to be twice tauld.

A gude name is sooner tint than won.

A green Yule maks a fat kirk-yard.

A great cry and little woo, quoth the de'it  
when he clippet the fow.

- A greedy ee never gat a good pennyworth.  
 A hantle cry murder and are ay uppermost.  
 A houndless hunter and a gunless gunner, see  
 ay routh o' game.  
 A hungry man 's ay angry.  
 Ale-sellers should na be tale-tellers.  
 A liar should hae a good memory.  
 A light purse maks a heavy heart.  
 A's no gowd that glitters.  
 A' the truth should na be tauld.  
 A' that 's said in the kitchen should na be  
 tald in the ha'.  
 A' cats are grey in the dark.  
 A's no tint that 's in hazard.  
 A's fish that comes in the net.  
 A' Stewarts are no sib to the king.  
 A's weel that ends weel.  
 A' things are gude untry'd.  
 A man's ay crouse on his ain cause.  
 A man may spit in his loof and do little.  
 A man canna bear a' his kin on his back.  
 A man at five may be a fool at fifteen.  
 A man is weel or wae as he thinks himsel fac.  
 A mouthfu' o' meat may be a townfu' o'  
 shame.  
 A muffled cat was ne'er a good hunter.  
 An auld maion maks a good barrowman.

An auld pouk is ay skalling.

An auld dog bites sicker.

An ill shearer never gat a gude beak.

An ill lesson is soon lear'd.

An ill wife and a new kindled candle, shou'd  
hae their heads hadden down.

An ill servant never prov'd a good master.

An ounce of motherwit is worth a pound of  
clergy.

Ane may lo'e the kirk weel enough, and no  
be ay riding on the rigging o't.

A new besom soops clean.

A nod of honest men is enough.

April showers bring May flowers.

A pound of care winna pay an ounce of debt.

A ragged colt may prove a good gelding.

A rowing frane gathers nae fog.

A Scots mist will weat an Englishman to the  
skin

As lang lives the merry men as the sad.

As lang as ye serve the tod ye maun bear up  
his tail.

As the sew fills the dirt if fours.

As the auld cock craws the young cock learns.

As weel be hang'd for a wedder as a lamb:

As ye do yoursel ye judge your neebours.

As ye maik your bed for ye maun lie down.

- A safe conscience maks a found sleep.  
 A short tree stands lang.  
 A sillerless man gangs fast thro' the market.  
 A sinking master maks aft a rising man.  
 A sorrowfu' heart 's ay dry.  
 As ye brew weel ye'll drink the better.  
 A spur in the head is worth twa in the heel.  
 At open doors dogs gae ben.  
 A tale-teller is waur than a thief.  
 A tarrowing bairn was never fat.  
 A tale never tines in the telling.  
 A thread will tye an honest man better than  
     a rape will a knave.  
 A tocherless dame fits lang at haome.  
 A twapenny cat may look at a king.  
 A wee bush is better than nae bield.  
 A wee thing feys cowards.  
 Auld men are twice bairns.  
 Auld sparrows are ill to tame:  
 A yeld sow was never good to grycet.

## B

- Bare gentry bragging beggars.  
 Be lang sick that ye may be soon hale.  
 Beggars should na be chufers.  
 Be guels, as the blind man fell'd the dog.  
 Better a bit in the morning than fast a' day.  
 Better a finger aff than ay wagging.  
 Better a toom house than an ill tenant.  
 Better auld debts than auld sairs.  
 Better sma fish than nae fish.  
 Better be envied than pitied.  
 Better be alane than in ill company.  
 Better be idle than ill employed.  
 Better be kind than cumbersome.  
 Better buy than borrow.  
 Better day the better deed.  
 Better flatter a fool than fight with him.  
 Better find iron than tine filler.  
 Better gie the slight than tak' it.  
 Better hand by a hair than draw wi' a tether.  
 Better hein at the braird than at the bottom.  
 Better kifs a knave than cast out wi' him.  
 Better keep the deil without the door th  
     drive him out o' the house.  
 Better keep weel than mak weel.  
 Better late thrive than ne'er do weel.



Better live in hope than despair.

Better my bairns seek frae me than me beg  
frae them.

Better ne'er begun than ne'er ended.

Better rue fit than rue flit.

Better the end o' a scaft than the beginning  
of a fray.

Better to haud than draw.

Better twa skaiths than zeforrew.

Better wait on the cook t han the doctor.

Better wear shoon than sheets.

Between the deil and the deep sea.

Bid a man to the roast and stick him wi' the  
spit.

Birds of a feather flock thegither.

Birth's gude but breeding's better.

Biting and scarting is Scotch fouk's wooing.

Blind men should na be judges o' colours.

Bourd na wi' Bawty lest he bite ye.

Burnt bairns dreads the fire.

Broken bread maks hale bairns.

Butter and burn'trouts are kittle meat for  
maidens.

Buy a thief frae the gallows and he'll cut  
your throat.

## C

Cadgers are ay fond o' creels.  
 Cast a bane in the deil's teeth.  
 Cats and carlines fit in the fun.  
 Could cools the love that kindles o'er her.  
 Changes are lightsome.  
 Charity begins at hame.  
 Come unca'd fit: unfair'd.  
 Comes to my hand like the bowl of a pint  
     soup.  
 Confess and be hang'd.  
 Corn him weel he'll work the better.  
 Crooked carlin, quoth the cripple till his  
     wife.  
 Cut your cloak according to your clith.

## D

Damming and laying is sure good fishing.  
 Daughters and dead fish are nae keeping:  
     ware.  
 Dawted bairns dow bear little.  
 Deal sma' and fair 2'.  
 Death and marriage break term-day.  
 Death defies the doctor.  
 Delays are dangerous.  
 Dirt bodes luck

Do as the lassies do, say no, and tak it.  
 Dows and dominees leave ay a foul house.  
 Double charges rive canons.  
 Draff's gude enough for swine.  
 Dummie winna lie.

## E

Early master soon knave.  
 Eat your fill but pouch nane.  
 Eild and poortith's fair to thole:  
 Either win the horse or tine the saddle.  
 E'ening red and morning grey, is a taiken of  
 a bonny day.  
 E'ening oats are gude morning fother.  
 Eneugh's as goods a feast.  
 Every ane crishes the fat sow's tail.  
 Every crow thinks his ain bird whitest.  
 Every deg has his day.  
 Every thing has an end and a pudding has twa.

## F

Fair exchange is nae robbery.  
 Fancy kills and fancy cures.  
 Far away fowls hae ay fair feathers.  
 Fat paunches bod lean pows.  
 Fiddlers dogs and flesh-flies come to feasts  
 unca'd.

Fine feathers mak fine birds.

Fire and water are gude servants, but bad  
masters.

First come first fair'd.

Flaes and a girning wife are waukrife bed-  
fellows.

Fools should na hae chappin'-sticks.

Fools mak feasts and wise fouk eat them ;

The wise mak jests, and fools repeat them.

For fashion's sake, as dogs gang to market.

Foul water flockens fire.

Fresh fish and poor friends grow soon ill-far'd.

Fumblers are ay fond o' weans.

## G

Gie you an inch ye'll tak an ell.

Gie the diel his due.

Glasses and lassies are bruckle ware.

God help rich fouk, the poor can beg.

God send you mair wit, and me mair filler.

Gut nae fish till ye get them.

## H

Hae gars a deaf man hear.

Hame is hame if it were ne'er fae lamely.

Hang a thief when he's young, and he'll no  
steal when he's auld.

He brings a staff to break his ain head.

He fells twa dogs wi' ae stane.

He had his finger in the pye.

He has a bee in his bannet lug.

He has nac as muckle sense as a cow can haud  
in her faulded niver.

He has need of a lang spoon that sups wi' the  
deil.

He has a slid grip that has an eel by the tail.

He kens na a B by a bull's foot.

He'll soon be a beggar that canna say Nay.

He loo'd mutton weel that licked where the  
ewe lay.

He may weel swim that has his head hadden  
up.

He never lies but when the hollin's green.

He needs maun-rin that the deil drives,

He's wife that kens whan he's weel, and can  
haud himself fae.

He's an Aberdeen's man, takes his word again.

He's like a flea in a blanket.

He's no fae daft as he lets on.

He's a wife bairn tha kens his ain father.

He's unca fou in his ain house that canna pick  
a bane in his neepour's

He's a proud horse that winna bear his ain  
prevender.

He's like a singet cat, better tean he's likely.  
 He's a worthless gudeman that's no miff'd.  
 He stumbles at a strae and louns o'er a won-  
 lyne.

He speaks like a prent-book.

He that aught the cow gangs nearest her tail,

He that buys land buys stanes, and he that  
 buys beef buys banes.

He that buys nuts buys shells, and he that  
 buys gude ale buys naething else.

He that canna mak sport should mar nane,

He that comes unca'd fits unserv'd.

He that deals in dirt has aye foul fingers.

He that's fear'd for a fart, will ne'er bide  
 thunder.

He that gies a wad gies naething.

He that has a gude cramp may thole some  
 thistles.

He that has nae filler in his purse should hae  
 silk on his tongue.

He that hides is the best at seeking,

He that has muckle ay gets mair.

He that hews aboon his head may get a speal  
 in his ee.

He that's ill to himsel will be gude to naebody.

He that laughs at his ain joke spills the sport o't,

He that sleeps wi' dogs maun rise wi' flies.

He that wad eat the kirkel maun crack the nut  
 He wad gang a mile to flit a fow.  
 He wad rake hell for a bodle.  
 His barle is waur than his bile.  
 Hungry dogs are blyth o' bursten puddings.

## I

I hae anither tow on my rock.  
 I hae a gude gun, but it's in the castle.  
 I hae mair ado than a dish to wash.  
 I hae seen mair than I hae eaten, or ye wad  
 na be there.  
 I'll ne'er keep a dog and bark mysel'.  
 I'm o'er auld a cat to draw a strae before.  
 I ne'er sat on your coat tail.  
 I ne'er lo'ed meat that craw'd in my crapin.  
 I wad be scant o' claike to sole my hose wi'  
 dockens.  
 I wadna fother ye for your muck.  
 I wadna be deav'd wi' your keckling for a'  
 your eggs.  
 I wadna mak fish o' ane and flesh o' anither.  
 I wish you readier meat than a running hare.  
 IF and AND spoil mony a gude charter.  
 If a man's gaun down the brae, ilk ane gies  
 him a jundy.  
 If it be a faut it's nae feirly.

- If it winna sell it winna four.  
 If the deil be laird ye'll be tenant.  
 If wishes were horses beggars wad ride  
 If ye hae little gear guide it the better.  
 If ye sell your purse to your wife, gi'e her  
     your breeks to the bargain.  
 If ye win at whoring ye'll tine at naething.  
 Ill bairns ay get broken paws.  
 Ill bairns are best heard at hame.  
 Ill doers are ay ill creators.  
 Ill getting het water frae 'neath cauld ice.  
 Ill herds mak fat foxes.  
 Ill hearing maks wrang rehearsing.  
 Ill news are aft o'er true.  
 Ill payers are ay good cravers.  
 Ill won gear winna enrich the third heir.  
 It cam wi' the wind let it gae wi' the water.  
 It's an ill wind that blaws naebody gude.  
 It's an ill cause that the lawyers think shame o'.  
 It's an ill pack that's no worth the custom.  
 It's a mean mouse that has but ae hole.  
 It's a nasty bird fyles its ain nest.  
 Its a stinking praise comes out o' anes ain  
     mouth.  
 Its a sin to lie on the deil.  
 It's a shame to eat the cow and worry on the  
     tail.



- It's a sorry hen that canna scrape for ae bird.  
 It's a fair dung bairn that mayna greet.  
 It's dear coft honey that's licket aff a thorn.  
 It's fair in ha' where beards wag a'.  
 It's gude sleeping in a hale skin.  
 It's gude to be sib to filler.  
 It's gude to hae twa strings to your bow.  
 It's hard to fit in Rome and strive wi the Pope  
 It's hard for a greedy ee to hae a heal heart.  
 It's ill to bring out o' the flesh what's bred i'  
     the bane.  
 It's ill getting breeks aff a Highlandman.  
 It's ill taking corn frae geese.  
 It's ill making a siken parfe o' a fow's lug, or  
     a touting horn o' a toad's tail.  
 It's kittle shooting at corbies and clergy.  
 It's kittle to waken sleeping dogs.  
 It's lang or the deil be found dead at a dike-  
     side.  
 It's lang or like-to-die fill the kick-yard.  
 It's needles to bid a wren rin.  
 It's needles to pour water on a drown'd mouse.  
 It's nae fin to tak a gude price but in gi'eng  
     ill measure.  
 It's no tint that a friend gets.  
 It's nae laughing to girn in a woody.  
 It's nae past joking when the head's aff.

Its weel that our fauts are no written on our  
face.

Its lang or four bare legs gather heat in the  
bed

It maun be true that a' fouk lay.

It will be a feather out o' your wing.

It sets a sow weel to wear a saddle.

It was ne'er for naething that the gled whiff-  
led.

It will be a fire when it burns, quoth the tod  
when he shet on the ice.

## K

Keep your ain fish-guts to your ain sea-maws.

Keep your breath to cool your crowdie.

Kindness will creep where it canna gang.

King's cauf is worth ither fouk's corn.

Kythe in your ain colours that fouk may ken  
you.

## L

Laith to bed and laith to rise.

Lang fasting hains nae meat.

Lang-tongue'd wives gae lang wi' bairn.

Langett at fire soon finds eauld.

Law's costly, tak a pint and gree.

Law-makers should na be law-breakers.

Laugh at leisure, ye may greet e'er night.

Learn young, learn fair.

Letna the plough stand to kill a mouse.

Let a' trades live, quoth the wife when she  
burnt her besom.

Let him haud the bairn that aught the bairn.

Let him cool in the skin he het in.

Let ika sheep hang by its ain shank.

Let the horns gang wi the hide.

Let the morn come and the meat wi't.

Like praws to like, as an auld horie to a feal  
dike.

Like Scotsmen, ay wife ahint the hand.

Like hens, ye rin ay to the tap o' the heap.

Like the cat, fain fish wad ye eat, but ye are  
laith to wet your feet.

Lippen to me, but look to yoursel.

Little kend iefs cared for.

Little said's soon mended.

Little wit is the head make muckle travel to  
the feet.

Little may an auld nag do that manna nigher.

Little dogs hae lang tails.

Live upon love, as lavracks do on leeks.

ould on the loan was ne'er a gude milk cow.

love and light winna hide

love's as warm amang cotters as courtiers.

## M

- Maidens should be mild and meek,  
 Quick to hear and slow to speak.  
 Mair hamely than welcome.  
 Maiden's tochers and ministers stipends are  
 ay less than ca'd.  
 Mair by luck than gude guiding.  
 Mair haste the waur speed, quo' the tailor to  
 the lang thread.  
 Mak the best o' a bad bargain.  
 Mak your hay when the sun shines.  
 Meally meud maids stand lang at the mill.  
 Muckle may fa' between the cup and the lip.  
 Mills and wives are ay wanting.  
 Money is welcome in a derten clout.  
 Mony a ane kisses the bairn for love o' the  
 nurse.  
 Mony excuses pishes the bed.  
 Mony cooks never made gude kail.

## N

- Nae fool like an auld fool.  
 Nae man can thrive unless his wife lets him.  
 Nae sooner up than her head's in the amry.  
 Naething's to be done in haste but gripping  
 o' flaes.

Nane but fools and knaves lay wagers:  
 Nane can play the fool fae weel as a wise man  
 Necessity has nae law.  
 Ne'er draw your durk when a dunt will do.  
 Ne'er find faut wi' my shoon unless ye pay  
     the cobler.  
 Ne'er let on, but laugh in your ain sleeve.  
 Ne'er marry a widow unless her first man was  
     hang'd.  
 Ne'er quat certainty for hope.  
 Ne'er seek a wife till ye ken what to do wi'  
     her.  
 Ne'er strive against the stream.  
 Nineteen naesays o' a maiden are ha'f a grant.

O, P, & Q.

O'er muckle o' ae thing is good for naething  
 O' twa ills choose the least.  
 Out o' debt out o' danger.  
 Pay him in his ain coin.  
 Pennyles fauls may pine in purgatory.  
 Possession is eleven points in the law.  
 Poor fouks are soon pish'd out.  
 Poets and Printers hae liberty to lie.  
 Put a coward to his mettle and he'll fight the  
     deil

Quick returns mak rich.

R

Raise nae mair deils than ye're able to lay.  
Rather spoil your joke than fine your friend.  
Raw dawds mak fat lads.  
Raw leather raxes.  
Right wrangs nae man.  
Rome was nae bigget in'ae day.

S

Sair cravers are ay ill payers.  
Satan reproving fin.  
Set a stout heart to a stay brae.  
Shame's past the shade o' your hair.  
Sharp stomachs mak short graces.  
Slaw at meat slaw at wark.  
Speak when you're spoken to.  
Speak o' the deil and he'll appear.  
Standing dubs gather dirt.  
Stown dints are sweetest.  
Strike the iron as lang as its het.

T

That's the piece a step-bairn ne'er gat.  
That winna be a mote in your marriage.  
The better day the better deed.

The cure may be aurr than the disease.

The deil's bairns hae deil's luck.

The first fufs o' a haggis is ay the bauldest.

The king's errand may come in the cadger's gate.

The langer we live we see the mae ferlies,

The mair ye greet ye'll pish the less.

The langer ye tread on a turd it ay gro ws the braider.

The master's ee maks the horse fat.

The smith's mare and the fouter's wife are ay warst shod.

The thiefer like the better sodger.

The thing that's in your wame's no in your testament.

The worth o' a thing is best kend by the want o't.

There's nane sae blind as them that winna see.

There's life in a mussel as lang as it cheeps.

They are like the gryces, if ye kittle their wame they fa' on their backs.

They that get a word o' soon rising may ly a' day.

Three can keep a secret if twa be awa'.

True blue will never stain.

Wae's the wife that want's the tongue, but  
wae's the man that has her.

Weans maun creep o'er they gang.

We canna baith sup and blaw

Welcomes the best dish in the kitchen.

What's gotten o'er the deil's back will gang  
awa un'er his belly.

When ae door steeks anither opens.

When the tod preaches, tak tent o' the lambs.

When the wame's fou, the banes wad be at rest

**F I N I S,**