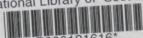




LAYS
OF
LEISURE HOURS



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LAYS

OF

LEISURE HOURS,

A COLLECTION OF

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS AND
SKETCHES.

BY

ROBERT ADAMSON,
MUIRKIRK.

With Introductory Note, by Rev. A. Wallace, D.D., Glasgow.



DUNFERMLINE:

A. ROMANES, "PRESS" OFFICE, NEW ROW.

1879.

H. L. M.

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PEDICATION.



Feeling deeply grateful to the many kind Friends who have so readily lent a hand to bring forward this little work, I would now respectfully inscribe it to them, humbly trusting that they may find in it a share of the profit and the pleasure it has afforded me.

ROBERT ADAMSON.

Muirkirk, 4th October 1879.

Introductory Note,

BY REV. A. WALLACE, D.D., GLASGOW.

During a recent visit which I paid to Muirkirk, to lecture on behalf of a benevolent object there, I took as my subject, "Our Native Wood-notes Wild," with the view of showing that not a few of Scotland's honoured sons of toil had given their burning thoughts to the world, and had written their names high up on the scroll of fame. *Apropos* of my theme, I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of the writer of this little volume, and was much pleased to have his company in the inspection of the famous Iron Work that gives employment to so many hundreds in the district. I soon learned that I could scarcely have got a better illustration of my lecture than my companion himself. It was certainly about the last place one would expect to meet a poet, amid the roar of the furnace, and the thundering noises of the rolling-mill and the steam hammer, crushing the red-hot balls like so many pieces of dough; but amid all the toil and moil, the uproar and bustle, the heat and the sweat of this fiery shrine of Vulcan, I was fortunate to fall in with a man who had not only a fine appreciation of poetry, but who had the poetic gift himself in no

small degree; and who, amid the din of the engine which is under his care, and which supplies "blast" to the furnaces, has cheered himself and others by his own native wood-notes wild. It is very gratifying to find a workman, in such a smoky region, rising into the purer atmosphere of real intellectual enjoyment, by seizing upon his leisure moments and committing to writing the thoughts that burned within during his hours of toil. Such instances are, happily, by no means rare in Scotland, and ROBERT ADAMSON is another added to the long list of those who have beautified the rough by-ways of labour with the flowers of poetic genius, or cheered their daily darg with the melody of their songs, composed at the plough, the forge, the anvil, the loom, the shoemaker's stall, or at other handicrafts that form the industrial life of busy millions.

Muirkirk, at first sight, does not seem a very fitting home for a poet, but this is only at first sight; for such a thought vanishes the moment one turns to Cairntable, and Airs Moss, and Priesthill, and other hallowed spots in the district, forever associated with the immortal memories of the Covenanters; and so, ADAMSON, like his famous predecessor HYSLOP, has sung of their glorious deeds. The engine-keeper at the Iron Works is no unworthy successor of the "muir-lan'" poet who was brought up in this district.

“Martyrland,” and “The Martyr’s Grave,” are worthy of a place beside the well-known “Cameronian’s Dream.” Many of the following lyrics might be selected for special notice, but our limited space does not admit of this; suffice it to say, that the verses addressed to the lark may be read with pleasure after those of WORDSWORTH, SHELLEY, or the “Ettrick Shepherd.”

There is a fine vein of pathos and humour in many of the pieces. “My ain wee Dod” is quite a gem—one of the best nursery rhymes we possess, and one which the poet laureate of the bairns—the author of “Wee Willie Winkie”—would have been proud to own. A healthy moral tone pervades the whole book, and it is but right to state, in a closing word, that, very much to the credit of the writer, the profits arising from its sale are to be generously devoted to the furtherance of a good cause in the locality. This itself, apart from the intrinsic merit of the book, should insure for it, as we hope it will, a large and encouraging sale. This will be very gratifying to the author himself, and to the friends of the good object, for the promotion of which these effusions of his Muse are so kindly given.

ALEXANDER WALLACE.

GLASGOW, 9th October 1879.



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Days of Leisure Hours.

A TALE OF LABOUR.

IN Life's mysterious drama, with its scenes of weal
and woe,
Through which its countless actors in succession have
to go ;

Whatever part is ours to play, in it let us excel,
And with the sunshine of the day the shades of night
dispel.

It may be ours to go and ride the rolling, mountain
wave,
And find, alas! the seaman's lot, deep in an ocean
grave—

Leaving behind the loving ones to weary and to mourn,
For dear, departed bosom joys that never shall return.

Or deep into the bowels of earth it may be ours to go,
And battle with the treacherous, way-laying, deadly
foe,

Which lurks in ambush of the thick, impenetrable
gloom,
To make the hapless miner dig forehanded his own
tomb.

But what though we must cast the coat, and bare the
brawny arm,
To pull the oar and ply the pick 'mid dangers that
alarm !
'Tis nobler far than idleness, wherever it may dwell,
To wield, like men, the weapons of life's honest
warfare well.

Then man to man, as brothers should, united let us
strive
The whirling wheels of industry more steadily to drive ;
The big forehammer over hip and shoulder let us
swing,
And hit the iron when it's hot, and make the anvil
ring.

The treddle tramp, the driver strike, and make the
shuttle fly,
Adjust the last, apply the awl, and thread the needle's
eye ;
Handle the pen, the pick, the plough, the chisel, and
the mell,
The noblest tale of human worth and dignity to tell.

To tell that what we find to do we do it with our
might,
However hard and humble it may be, if just and right,

Believing there is nothing in the rounds of honest toil
That Heaven does not look upon with an approving
smile.

To tell that for our children dear we act a parent's
part

At home and in the workshop, with an earnest,
loving heart ;

That when our labour's ended, and our weapons all
laid down,

They, in their turn, may take them up, to work and
win the crown.

To tell we serve the Master, who, for needy man,
became

A servant of the humblest grade, to bear our sin and
shame,

And honour humble labour with His hands—the truth
to tell,

That manhood's highest honour lies in doing duty well.

WHITHER BOUND ?

DEAR fellow traveller, as we push along
Amid the turmoil of life's busy throng ;
So bent on business, export, or import,
Delusive pleasure, or time-thieving sport ;
Or, may be, vice, lewd parent source of crime,
Sapping the vitals of fair manhood's prime ;
Let us, as brothers should, our kinship prove
By word and deed of kindred faith and love ;

Helping each other, 'mid the stir and strife,
To choose the stable stepping-stones of life,
And trace the guiding footprints left behind
The pioneering vanguard of mankind,
That with our footsteps we may them renew,
As these before for those behind should do,
Instead of trifling precious time away,
As if we had no programme of the play
To show the part we are by duty bound
To act, so that life's drama may redound
To the great Author's praise, the actor's bliss,
And human harmony and happiness.

The precious pages of the Word of Truth,
That guide the footsteps of unwary youth ;
The prime of manhood, and old, weary age,
Furnish the footlights of Time's busy stage,
To show the various partners in the dance,
That life's no vain invention of romance ;
But a reality of being, given
To execute the sovereign will of Heaven.
Yet many, rough-shod, tread that hallowed ground,
Heedless of whence we are, or whither bound,
As if life ended with our few short years
Of pains and pleasures, troubles, toils, and tears,
And all our aspirations were but vain
Hallucinations of a fevered brain ;
Or false affection of Satanic art,
Seducing us to hug the muffled dart
Of treachery, in guise of innocence
And truth. If life be such a base pretence,

Man is most cruelly wrong'd ; his noblest gift
Is but a treacherous device to lift
Him to the heavens, that it may further cast
Him down the hell of nothingness at last !
How cruel and unnatural to give
Him life, without an aim for which to live ;
And will and wisdom to aspire to gain
What he is destined never to attain !
If life be such a hollow, hopeless state,
Away with all the means that elevate ;
For man's chief end, alas ! must be to die,
If there's no home for him beyond the sky.
If Time's short span, through which he has to fight,
Is but the gloamin' of eternal night,
Rase to the ground our colleges and schools,
Where learning tempts so many dupes and fools
To pluck the tree of knowledge of its fruit,
For two-three transient years of mock repute,
Which ends in degradation of the brute.

Oh ! how debasing is the very thought
Of being to annihilation brought,
However well life's battle may be fought.
It robs the soul of all that dignifies,
And fits it for the mansions in the skies ;
Outrages reason, blasts all enterprise ;
Makes faith, and hope, and charity to be
Blind variations of credulity,
Which only superstitious, vulgar, vain
Enthusiasts are fit to entertain.
And yet, with all the subtlety of mind,
Its votaries strive to elevate mankind

To consciousness of being doom'd to fall
Into the dark abyss, beyond recall.
Better immediate extinction far,
With yon mysterious, headlong hurling star,
Than, like the burning pile, enlightened be
With light of such a dismal destiny.
Or it were better had we ne'er been born
With those endowments which the man adorn,
And qualify to fill a higher sphere
Of being, than a wanton puppet here,
Which, in the drama, dances, sighs, or sings,
As chance may choose to pull the leading strings ;
A pull behind the scenes to cease to be,
Ending the dark, perfidious tragedy !

What notions take possession of the mind
When drifting rudderless before the wind
Of infidelity ! With all sail spread,
Defiant of the looming rocks a-head,
It deigns compassion for the silly fools
That feign to steer by musty charts and rules ;
And asks the question, why old Nature should
Her dotage prove by sanctimonious mood,
And vain attempt to change, against her will,
The wind she loves so well her sails to fill,
And love of liberty she has to stray
Beyond the boundaries of the narrow way,
Which fit so well the pious type of mind
Peculiar to the million of mankind,
Whose powers of vision are yet overcast
With darkling shadows of the midnight past ;

And, therefore, need no field, nor racecourse wide,
For the lame hobbies they so fondly ride.

So reason thinkers, who have got more brain
Than ordinary craniums can contain ;
And who need wonder though they vault the pole
Of genius, over absolute control ?
Leaving behind the soul-bound slaves of God
To jostle other as they homeward plod
Along the narrow, soul-contracting road.
For, who can be to a sheep-track confined ?
When light of science dawns upon the mind,
And fits it for the commonwealth of thought,
That, down the ages, has so bravely fought—
Cutting the tangled meshes that enthrall,
To gain the right and liberty for all,
To trim the lamp of reason, till its light
Shall scatter to the winds contending night ;
And sink, in Lethe's wave, the shams that claim
A right to go by Truth's eternal name.

But is it so, that reason teaches man
His being's bounded by Time's narrow span ?
That after this life's fitful season's o'er,
He must return to his dark heretofore ?
Impossible ! Can mortal matter be
More precious than the breath of Deity ?
Oh ! impious thought ! the noblest gift of Heaven,
For such an end was surely never given ;
For such a prodigal expense on man
Would prove a blunder in the cosmic plan.
Yet sage philosophers will entertain
That base abortion of a bias'd brain,

Begotten by some diabolic art
Which robs its offspring of soul, head, and heart ;
And would persuade us that eternal mind
Is to this narrow sphere of thought confin'd ;
And strive, by wordy argument, to show
We came from nothing, and to nothing go.

How selfish is the reasoning of those
Who thus all aim and end of life dispose,
Their breadth and depth of science to disclose !
As well believe the glorious orb of light
Is lost when hid behind the veil of Night.
That Day, with smiling face and beaming eye,
In promising to-morrow, tells a lie.
Or, that when Nature is prostrated low,
And shrouded in her wintry sheet of snow,
No one shall loose her bands, that she may go
And put her summer garments on again,
And publish victory from hill and plain.

But man, at best, is erring, wilful, blind,
Far from the creature that he was design'd ;
Or, as the fruit bears witness of the tree,
His great Designer must imperfect be.
Throughout the realms of Nature, man alone,
'Mong all the creatures, is to evil prone ;
Daring to fritter precious time away,
Despising Him who did his ransom pay,
And scorning to be bridled by those ties
In which the welfare of his being lies ;
Conclusive evidence—convincing all
But biased minds—of his destructive fall

From innocence, and purity of life ;
Chief cause of all our misery and strife—
Vain speculations, atheistic views
(Deemed philosophical because abstruse),
And pandering passions, which imbrute the soul,
Until it feels the grave a fitting goal ;
Then, from a wish that such the end may be,
Strives to disprove its immortality.

How dark the cloud that hides the light of day,
And sets, at noon, the traveller astray !
How poor the wretch, who has no soul to save,
Nor hope of joy beyond the greedy grave !
O Sun of Righteousness, send forth thy beams,
And scatter to the winds such midnight dreams
Of deathly sleep ! Open our eyes to see,
And hearts to feel, the need we have of Thee,
That at Thy footstool we may bend the knee,
Where all who would the crown of life secure
Must stoop to drink the living waters pure.

But even now the living Word of Light,
Like morning star upon the brow of night,
Proclaims to man the dawn of perfect day,
And tells him of a new and living way,
For all, except the righteous and the wise,
Who can afford such offers to despise,
Feeling no need of Mercy's sacrifice.
'Tis no withholding of Redemption's plan,
On Heaven's part, from poor and needy man,
That few are chosen of the many called ;
No : man, alas ! so willingly enthralled,

Far rather would a servile homage give
The gods of selfishness, than seek to live
Unto the righteousness of Him who came
To seek and save the lost from sin and shame.

See proud, old Atheism, so learned and wise,
Puffed up with knowledge of earth, sea, and skies,
Yet, with it all, unfit to recognise
The Author's name inscribed upon them all,
Who marks, with care, even the sparrow's fall.
Ah ! hapless soul, how sad thy dark career,
Down to the dust, without a hope to cheer !
Nature may sing, and deck anew her breast
As she awakens from her winter's rest ;
But to the loveless, atheistic heart,
However full of science and of art,
No warming gratitude can e'er impart ;
Nor can the nobler songs, in Zion sung,
Attune the heart whose key-string is unstrung.

There Dissipation, too, with bloodshot eye,
And haggard face, on which the vices vie,
Nursing the thought, how best to gratify
The carnal appetite that holds the sway,
And leads him down Death's dark, deceitful way.
It may be he who o'er the drunkard reigns,
And drowns him in the fiery cup he drains,
Leaving his children—charitable soul—
The independence of a pauper's dole.
Or it may be the gorging gourmand, who
Has heart and mind minced up in fry or stew,

And so devours himself, that skin and bone
Is all the cannibal can call his own.
Or, lower still, it probably may be
That meanest miscreant of humanity,
Who, with pretention of some friendly aim,
Conspires to rob fair Virtue of her name.
And, like the fly that sucks the putrid sore,
Feeds on the filth the pure in mind abhor ;
And as if all were like himself, untrue,
Belies, as hypocrites, the worthy few ;
Jeers over Justice, spits in Mercy's face,
And scorns the offer of redeeming grace.

Say not, that by invincible decree,
The wrong, as well as right, is bound to be ;
Evil and good can have no common source,
And he that pleads so makes his case the worse.
Decrees of " whatsoever comes to pass"
Are not all of one executive class ;
Such as pertain to wrong, of wrong are free,
Permissive only of the thing to be.
The prodigal demands his portion due,
That his own wilful way he may pursue ;
Receives it from a loving father's hand,
Then leaves his household for a far-off land,
Where, unmolested by the light of day,
He may, in riot, revel all away.

Would it have been more wise had Heaven's decree
Made such abuse impossible to be,
By disinheriting the man of all
That made him capable to stand or fall ?

No, such an edict would have robbed the man
Of his dominion in Creation's plan ;
Reduced him to an automaton, void
Of all the attributes which are his pride,
And left this floating island of the sky
Unrepresented at the court on high,
Where He, who triumphed o'er death and the grave,
Poor, guilty, frail, humanity to save,
Now pleads, with love, the needy sinner's case,
And in his Father's house prepares a place
For the poor prodigal, who, all undone,
Feels no more worthy to be called a son ;
Yet, in the depths of sorrow, bending low,
Resolves to rise, and to his Father go,
With whom is mercy, free to all who will
Climb to the summit of the Cross-crowned hill,
With faith in Him who there bore all the cost
Justice demanded for the sinner lost.

But now, companion, we will have to part,
And with the hand I frankly give the heart,
Hoping that we may duty's path pursue
In search of what she has for us to do ;
And, be it of the hammer, pick, or melle,
Like worthy workmen, let us do it well,
More that the will of Heaven may be done
Than human fame or rank and riches won ;
Shunning the evil, holding fast the good,
Growing in faith, and love, and gratitude,
Like brothers of the noblest Brotherhood.

THE SABBATH.

FAR back the long mysterious course of ages,
 grim and grey,
 Before the misty morning hours of time had passed
 away ;
 The Sabbath was ordained a part of God's great
 moral plan,
 To magnify His glory, and promote the good of man.
 How meet that a memorial for such a work should be
 Set high upon the pedestal of God's authority,
 And that man should with gratitude perform the
 noble part
 Of crowning it with homage of a God-adoring heart.
 We need, amidst our cares and toils, to have a day in
 seven,
 That we may breathe the soul-refreshing atmosphere
 of Heaven,
 And feast upon the beauties of the flowers of holiness,
 That give the soul a foretaste of its future happiness.
 And, though 'tis well to listen to necessity's demand,
 And not, like Pharisee of old, all Sabbath labour
 brand ;
 He robs himself who seeks for wealth, or pleasure's
 luring smile,
 By desecrating Heaven's appointed " antidote of toil."
 Blest oasis of rest, and joy of fellowship divine,
 Thy spotless sun's meridian rays shall bright and
 brighter shine,

Till not a cloud is left to mar the beauty of the sky,
And thy celestial light shall be the light of every eye.

Thy living waters sweeter are to every needy child
Of God, than were old Elim's wells in Egypt's desert
wild ;

And gladly they, beneath the palms, kneel by the
well-springs pure,

The journey through the wilderness the better to endure.

O Sabbath! that thy blessings may reach earth's
remotest line ;

Ring, from the temple towers of Truth, the victories
divine

Of Him who triumphed gloriously, our guilty world
to save,

From going down into the gulph of sin, death, and
the grave !

Call labour's motley millions from the battlefields of life,
Where thousands, needful of thy rest, are dying 'mid
the strife ;

To claim the legacy of love, left by thy sovereign Lord,
That weary, heavy-laden souls may rest and be restored.

And forward press, with steady step, to gain the
promised Land,

Leaving behind fresh foot-prints on the desert's
shifting sand ;

Until they reach the river, whose dark waters still
divide,

That Israë! may safely pass o'er to the other side.

A VOICE FROM THE RANKS.

ALTHOUGH a private in the ranks of life,
 Earning his bread amid the dust and din
 Of Labour, busy giving nations wealth,
 Deny him not his due. A man, though poor—
 Begrimmed with honest labour's sweat and smoke,
 And bent beneath the burden of his yoke—
 Is none the less a man ; and justly he
 Deserves the meed of honour and respect,
 Instead of the unfriendly word and look
 He has so often quietly to brook
 From petty lords in "brief authority,"
 Who know not that the kindly word and smile
 Are as productive to the sneer and frown
 As summer sunshine is to winter's gloom.

But what about the haughtiness of man ?
 It's but a bubble on the stream of life,
 Inflated with its own significance :
 An airy, evanescent thing, blown up
 To burst into a little frothy spray,
 That, like the ripple it makes on the stream,
 Passes away, and no one mourns the loss.

The humble, honest man, however poor
 In riches that take wing and fly away,
 Has many friends of whom he may be proud,
 Whose fellow-feeling makes the heart rejoice,
 And nerves the arm to strike a firmer blow.
 With all his troubles, has he not a Burns

To fire the independence of the soul ?
A Bunyan to direct and cheer him on
Through every danger to the final goal ?
And more than all, an Elder Brother dear,
The heavy burden of his sins to bear.
With noble friends like these, in earth and heaven,
Man need not fear "man's inhumanity,"
Unless, indeed, it be that of his own ;
For is it not too true that many are
The victims of their own deceitfulness—
That mean usurper of the human breast,
Which never fails to make the man a slave,
That will not fight his manhood to maintain ?
Alas ! how many thousands rather court
The false Iscariot of the human heart,
And willingly submit to be enslaved,
And captive led to ruin's lowest depths,
That they may, for a few short years at most,
Drain pleasure's cup, forgetful of the dregs.
See how they crowd the haunts of vice and crime,
And reel and stagger down the broad highway
To gloomy workhouse, or the prison cell,
And last, a pauper's or a felon's grave !

Truly, "man's inhumanity to man,
Makes countless thousands mourn ;" but more, by far,
The subtle foe with which man robs himself,
Even of all the attributes divine
That testify his noble pedigree,
Leaving him helpless to resist the wrong
That makes the weak a football to the strong.

Oh! that we to ourselves and others were
 What we would others have to be to us,
 That peace, enthroned within the human heart,
 Might wield her olive sceptre o'er the world.

~~~~~

*A MEDLEY OF LIFE.*

---

**T**O dance for joy in the morning sun,  
 To sigh and weep ere the day is done,  
 And be forgot when the race is run—  
 Such is life.

To run with the multitude astray,  
 To lose to-morrow what we find to-day,  
 To cast the pearl for the shell away—  
 Such is life.

To see in the gilded cup no flaw,  
 To go to unquenching wells to draw,  
 To judge the crop by its bulk of straw—  
 Such is life.

To slight common sense for modish style,  
 To find in pleasure harassing toil,  
 To fret and frown when we ought to smile—  
 Such is life.

To answer "Yes" when it should be "No,"  
 To wait in port on the spring-tide's flow,  
 And long for the winds that never blow—  
 Such is life.

To cherish the charms that will betray,  
 To throw the jewel of the breast away,  
 And learn too late to repent for aye—  
     Such is life.

To give away what we ought to keep,  
 To sow what we do not like to reap,  
 To laugh and jest when we ought to weep—  
     Such is life.

To keep what we ought to give away,  
 To feed the calf that we ought to slay,  
 And be the poorer on reckoning-day—  
     Such is life.

To hope and toil with an anxious aim,  
 To gain for a day earth's wealth and fame,  
 To die and go as poor as we came—  
     Such is life.

To love, and labour, and sympathise,  
 To give the fallen a hand to rise,  
 To wipe the tears from our neighbour's eyes—  
     Let such be life.

~~~~~  
 TRUE NOBILITY.

• **I**S not the tallest forest tree
 That has most beauty in its bloom ;
 Nor does the gayest garden flower
 Emit the balmiest perfume.

The lovely lily of the vale
 Seeks modestly the quiet shade ;

Though Solomon, in all his pomp
And glory, was not so array'd.

A king, so called, may wear a crown,
And bask in smiling loyalty ;
Yet, with it all, his breast may lack
The badge of highest royalty.

A peer may own a titled name,
And boast a noble pedigree ;
Yet, with it all, his lordship may
Be void of true nobility.

And he who wears the noble badge
Of honest labour, may have none
Of that nobility bestowed
On labour, by its noblest Son.

Who, then, is noble ? Only he
Who acts a noble, manly part ;
With honest, independent mind,
Linked to an earnest, loving heart—

A heart that feels its own defects,
Yet strives to do the best it can
To serve Him, who alone can make
A sinner, a true, noble man.

LESSONS OF NATURE.

WHAT beauty, wisdom, love, and power,
And gracious fitness of design,
Displayed alike in tiny flower,
And in the worlds that round us shine !

In every new-born bud of Spring,
That comes to clothe the naked tree,
And tune the heart a song to sing
Of the immortal Spring to be.

In Summer's glistening drop of dew,
That with its blessing bends the blade,
As grateful hearts delight to do,
Like lowly lily in the shade.

In Autumn's faded leaf that falls
Into the kind lap of decay ;
Whisp'ring that when the Master calls,
We too shall fade and pass away.

And even in earth's wintry shroud,
We have the "treasures of the snow ;"
And in the darkling, gloomy cloud,
The faithful promise of the bow.

O, for a clearer eye to read,
A purer heart to understand
The word of Truth's unerring creed,
Attested by the Author's hand.

That blinding mists which top the hills
Of doubt, may not spread o'er the plains,
To heap the cup of present ills,
And quench the hope of future gains.

But that, as we the older grow,
And nearer comes the gloamin' gray,
Rejoicing, we may onward go
In hope of the succeeding day.

SPRING.

SWEET, gentle Spring, we hail with gladness
 Thy brightening ray,
 Chasing cold Winter's dreary sadness
 And gloom away.

With kiss of life and love awaking
 The sleeping flowers,
 And silence of the songsters breaking,
 'Mid budding bowers.

Teaching the heart bowed down with sorrow,
 And doubt, and fear,
 Though dark to-day, a bright to-morrow
 Is drawing near.

The snowdrop, first-born child of beauty,
 Earth to thee bears,
 Has come again to lighten duty,
 And soothe our cares.

And primrose, daffodil, and daisy,
 Pure, fresh, and fair,
 In turn, too, make more light and easy
 The cross we bear.

The lark, far in the blue, is singing
 On pinion strong,
 And every wood and glen is ringing
 With sweetest song.

The streams, with rippling laughter, flowing
 Back to the main,
 The mill wheels merrily set a-going
 Their rounds again.

While gently blow the bracing breezes
 To fill our sail,
 That o'er the chafing tide that teases
 We may prevail.

And soon the cuckoo's simple measure,
 For hut and hall,
 Shall make life's cup of pain and pleasure
 Sweeter to all.

The lambs, for joy too, will be leaping
 'Mid pastures green ;
 The bees, their honey harvest reaping
 With ardour keen.

The swallow, her winged fare pursuing
 O'er lake and lea ;
 And lapwing sporting, cushat cooing
 In amorous glee.

All teaching, that each for his neighbour
 A part should play ;
 And with the love that lightens labour,
 Life's duties pay.

TO THE LARK.

HAIL ! happy laureate of Spring,
 With joy we welcome thee,
 As heavenward thou, on airy wing,
 Soar'st with the dawning day to sing
 Thy morning melody.

No cant corrupts thy simple song,
No pride thy heart betrays,
Nor selfish, vain, ambition strong,
Tempts thee thy vespers to prolong,
For man's applause and praise.

Oh ! sweetest minstrel of the sky,
Chant loud thy psalm of life,
That, like thee, we may soar on high,
Beyond the reach of mortal eye,
And all earth's din and strife.

There, high on Pisgah's holy height,
To act the noble part
Of pouring out with all our might,
As thou dost morning, noon, and night,
The homage of the heart.

And when to work below we must
Descend our part to take,
We may, like thee, in humble trust,
Beside the daisy in the dust,
A lowly dwelling make.

Sing on, sing on, thy sweetest strains,
With all thy heart's endeavour,
For, 'mid our losses and our gains,
Our panics, passions, pleasures, pains,
Thou art a joy for ever.

SUMMER TIME.

WHEN the Summer flowers are blooming,
 Pure and spotless everywhere,
 Every breath we draw perfuming
 With a balm for grief and care.

How delightful then to wander,
 With the streamlet down the glen,
 Where, 'mid Nature's gayest grandeur,
 Flit the robin and the wren.

And the blackbird, sweet and mellow,
 Pours his heart out to his love,
 As she tends her offspring callow,
 In the canopy above.

Telling us that to live single
 Is not Mother Nature's will—
 That faith, hope, and love must mingle,
 Life's grand purpose to fulfil.

That we should be up and doing,
 Husbanding our youthful prime,
 Mindful harvest is ensuing
 With the fruits of summer time.

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*HOW THE LILIES GROW.*

**I**N the humblest plot of flowers,  
 Grow the lilies pure and sweet,  
 Hallowing the passing hours,  
 As they bend low at our feet,



Saying to both high and low—  
“Consider how the lilies grow.”

Gentle, lovely, bright, and fair,  
    Veiled with modesty and grace,  
Under which are riches rare  
    For poor, needy souls to trace ;  
Yet, alas, while blessings flow,  
We care not how the lilies grow.

What a glory crowns their head,  
    Tho' they neither toil nor spin ;  
And what precious balm they shed,  
    Weary souls to soothe, and win  
To Him, who said long ago—  
“Consider how the lilies grow.”

Ages since have passed away,  
    Still these words sound in our ears,  
As if spoken but to-day,  
    To dispel our doubts and fears ;  
Let us, then, 'mid weal or woe,  
“Consider how the lilies grow.”

See them meek and lowly bow,  
    Void of all assuming airs ;  
Tho' a crown adorns their brow  
    Nobler than Victoria wears :  
Perish all vain poppy-show,  
And let the modest lilies grow.

Emblems of the spotless One,  
    Wouldst thou with us ever stay,

To remind us, as we run,  
 Of our Friend thou dost pourtray—  
 That we more and more might know  
 The way He makes the lilies grow.

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THE FOUNTAIN.

CRYSTAL fountain, ever flowing
 From the breast of mother earth,
 Purest of her gifts bestowing,
 Yet, alas! deem'd little worth.


Ever welling, ever telling,
 Providence is rich and kind,
 With a thousand blessings swelling
 Heart and soul, and strength, and mind.

On thy margin's mossy cushion
 Let me bend a willing knee,
 In youth's happy, humble fashion,
 To be kissed again by thee.

And reminded of the fountain,
 Whose life-giving waters flow
 From the rock of Zion's mountain,
 Free to all that thirst below.

That I may, with more endeavour,
 Hold on life's appointed course;
 Growing stronger, like the river,
 As it seeks its parent source.

A U T U M N.

UTUMN, bent beneath the burden
 Of another year's increase,
 Now bestows her golden guerdon
 On the arts of love and peace.
 Crowns all anxious, honest labour
 Of both man and busy bee,
 With the special promised favour
 Of peace and prosperity.
 Happy homesteads, bright and cheery,
 Stud the hill-side, holm, and plain ;
 Hearts rejoice, and never weary
 Driving home the golden grain.
 What a bustle in the stack-yard
 As the teamsters come and go ;
 Not a heart nor hand is backward
 All their vigour to bestow.
 See the buxom, smiling maiden,
 And the sturdy country swain,
 Fondly striving to unladen
 " Dick," ere " Ned" comes back again.
 Not to go beyond their neighbour,
 Nor to catch the master's eye :
 Such is just how lovers labour
 When they for each other vie.
 But the harvest home is ending,
 With its pains and pleasures dear,

Gloomy shadows are extending,
And the leaf is getting sear.

Birds are mute and heavy-hearted,
Flowers are fading fast away,
Glistening tears, for joys departed,
Trickle down the face of day.

Still, for all, there is good reason
To rejoice with gratitude ;
Ample plenty crowns the season,
Telling us that God is good.

That we have no cause to murmur,
Though earth's beauties fade and die ;
That we ought to grasp hands firmer,
Trust in God, and Death defy.

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*TO THE ROBIN.*

**N**EAR pensive bird, thy sacred song,  
So timely, shrill, and clear,  
Again reminds the weak and strong ;  
However they would life prolong,  
They cannot tarry here.

That as a leaf we all must fade,  
And from life's branches fall,  
Some in the bud, some in the blade,  
Some in the shine, some in the shade,  
When comes the final call.

Sing on, dear friend, thy parting hymn,  
 Over the dying year ;  
 'Altho' it may the eye bedim,  
 And fill the heart up to the brim,  
 'Tis good for us to hear.

The blackbird and the thrush can sing  
 When summer, glad and gay,  
 Makes all the woods and valleys ring,  
 As, arm in arm rejoicing,  
 She comes with smiling May.

And so the skylark can rejoice,  
 And wing the airy steep ;  
 But is is far the nobler choice,  
 When all is sad, to tune the voice,  
 And comfort those that weep.

Then sing, brave bird, though all alone,  
 And none to thee respond ;  
 Thy song hath a sweet undertone  
 Of hope, that cheers the weary on  
 To rest and joy beyond.

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 THE DYING YEAR.

ANOTHER year, noo sairly spent,
 Is slippin' fast awa',
 An' sune he'll hae tae tak' fareweel
 For ever wi' us a' ;
 For ever ; ah ! that waesome word,
 Mak's hearts grow grit and sair,

Wi' memories o' loving freends,
We'll meet here nevermair.

But nearer hame, where they hae gane,
We've reached another stage,
An' to the ledger o' accounts
Added another page,
Which let us read wi' canny care,
That we may understand,
Before oor auld freend gangs awa',
What balance we've in hand.

For mony ups and doons o' life
We in his day hae seen,
An' clouds o' care an' sorrows met,
Wi' sunny joys between,
Reminding us o' that bright land,
Which spreads sae far and wide,
Its fair domain o' peace and joy,
On Jordan's sunny side.

Oh! let us count our passing years,
And spend them for the best,
Wi' Him wha says—"Come unto Me
And I will give you rest;"
That when the eerie hour o' night
Bids us to tak' fareweel,
The morning sun may on us rise,
His glories to reveal.

WINTER.

THE cheering warblers of the woods,
 No longer sing their mellow lay ;
 In lonely, lifeless solitudes,
 That rang with joy but yesterday ;
 Sad Nature weeps o'er her decay.

Her eye has lost its lustre bright—
 Her cheek has lost its rosy bloom—
 Her brow, veiled with the pall of night,
 Reminds us with a darkling gloom
 That life's a journey to the tomb.

Instead of her sweet, mirthful songs,
 To lighten toil and sweeten care ;
 We've sorrow counting o'er life's wrongs,
 And dealing out to each a share,
 'Mid lamentations everywhere.

Hear what a weary, wailing noise,
 At every window, chink, and door,
 Like some sad, weeping angel's voice,
 Moaning a dirge of sorrow o'er
 The joys that will return no more.

And what a deep, heart uttering
 Is that in lonely woods we hear ;
 A murmuring and a muttering
 That claim from every heart sincere
 The tender tribute of a tear.

And listen to the murmuring sound
 Of waters flowing to the sea—

Emblem of waters more profound,
 That murmur on through time, to be
 Embosomed in eternity.

Is this the flowing tide of life,
 Erasing from the "sands of time"
 The little, shallow footprints rife
 Of those who are unfit to climb
 The lofty heights of life sublime ?

No ! these are sounds of ebbing waves,
 The moanings of the dying year ;
 Nature lamenting o'er the graves
 Of her departed children dear,
 Reminding us our home's not here.

BEAUTIFUL STAR.

BEAUTIFUL Star ! so majestic and bright,
 Shedding upon us thy silvery light,
 As onward thou dost thy mission pursue,
 Aloft in the dome of celestial blue,
 How sweet is the hope of thy morning ray,
 Dispelling the night as it ushers the day.

Onward for ever, revolving apace,
 Thou hold'st on thy way through measureless space,
 Exciting us mortals, with earth-dimmed eye,
 To peer through the mist at the whence and the why ;
 Oh ! who would not own the Hand is divine
 That made such glorious beacons to shine.

To comfort our hearts, the kind Master of Love
Hath told us there are many mansions above
In His Father's house, to which He has gone
To reign, and prepare a place for His own :
Art thou, and all the bright planets afar,
The mansions He speaks of, beautiful star ?

Or, only the royal chariots of Heaven,
With lights streaming far o'er the paths they are
driven ?

Or skylights, on purpose to give us a view
Of the glories beyond earth's canopy blue ?
Where, with loving kindred, the weary find rest,
A crown for the head, and a star for the breast.

Bright herald of day, whatever thou art,
The light of thy face enlivens the heart,
And bids us go forward, as Israel of old,
By the light of the fiery pillar, was told ;
But now, a light shines that is brighter by far
Than the fiery pillar, or eastern star.

Roll on, bright type of that glorious light,
Which scatters for ever the darkness of night,
Illumines the precious immortal soul,
And pilots the way to its blissful goal ;
Go, tell the glad tidings to worlds afar,
Of the light of " the bright and Morning Star."

THE FALLEN TREE.

UPROOTED monarch of the wood,
 How sad and melancholy
 To see thee, who hast ages stood
 Defiant, lie so lowly ;
 But yesterday thou mocked the storm
 That many ties did sever ;
 To-day thy noble, stately form
 Lies in the dust for ever !
 Oh ! fallen tree ; oh ! fallen tree,
 How true thy tale of sorrow—
 “ The loftiest to-day may be
 The lowliest to-morrow.”

No more the songster, sweet and clear,
 Will tune his pipe so cheery
 Aloft among thy boughs, to cheer
 The dowie and the weary ;
 Instead, we hear a dirge of sighs
 Amidst thy ruins dreary,
 That speaks of how the fallen lies,
 In tones that make us eerie.
 Oh ! fallen tree ; oh ! fallen tree,
 How true thy tale of sorrow—
 “ The loftiest to-day may be
 The lowliest to-morrow.”

The wintry winds may wail and rave
 Around thy head so hoary ;
 But, ah ! thy arms no more shall wave
 Their palms of summer glory.

Gone! gone the way that all must go,
 And all have gone before thee;
 Down, down, alas! how very low,
 Into the lap that bore thee.

Oh! fallen tree; oh! fallen tree,
 How true thy tale of sorrow—
 "The loftiest to-day may be
 The lowliest to-morrow."

And is it so with man, earth's brave,
 Devoted lord and lover?
 Has she at last only a grave
 His noble head to cover?
 How poor a recompense to give
 For so much homage given;
 How poor an end for which to live,
 Compared with that of Heaven.

Oh! fallen tree; oh! fallen tree,
 Reverse thy tale of sorrow—
 The lowliest to-day shall be
 The loftiest to-morrow.

BE NOT PROUD.

"He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—Luke xviii. 14.

THE giants of the forest, proud o'er their fellows
 wave
 Their arms, like conquering heroes, defiant, stern, and
 brave;

But their proud exaltation above their fellows round,
Incites the storm's anger, and casts them to the ground.

The lily of the valley, fair Flora's sweetest child,
With more than regal grandeur, is modest, meek, and
 mild,
And loves the lowly valley more than earth's gardens
 gay,
Where it may homage render to Him it doth portray.

Be not proud, tho' beauty paints thy cheek a rosy hue,
And hangs her golden ringlets around thy lily brow,
For beauty's golden ringlets soon change to sober grey,
And all her rosy pictures soon fade and pass away.

Be not proud, tho' fortune fair owns kindred ties to
 thee,
And clothes thee in her jewelled garb of richest drapery;
For all her gaudy garments, so apt to make us proud,
Must soon, alas! be laid away for lowly linen shroud.

Be not proud, tho' high aloft the giddy heights of fame,
Or seated on the towering throne of rank with titled
 name;
For every name of rank and fame that man to man has
 given,
Is mean when measured with the Name that makes us
 heirs of heaven.

Be not proud, tho' favoured with the pure celestial
 light
That streameth from the sun of suns in His meridian
 height;

The brightest sparkling star of heaven with borrowed
light doth shine,
The purest blossom of the "branch" is nourished by
the "Vine."

Be not proud : the noblest badge of true nobility
That can adorn the human breast, is meek humility ;
The noblest prince and peasant, beneath sunshine and
cloud,
Was ever meek and lowly ; oh ! why should we be
proud ?

Be proud ! when He hath told us that such shall be
abased,
While those who bow beneath the Cross shall be to
glory raised ;
Lord, let not our deceitful hearts build on earth's
shifting sand,
Instead of on Thyself, the Rock that shall for ever
stand.

THE HARDEST WORK.

HO ! ye who burrow in the earth,
Its treasures to unfold,
Which were deposited for man,
In ages back untold ;
Remember tho' ye are begrimmed,
And wet with labour's dew,
It is a harder task by far,
" To have no work to do."

And ye who tend the whirling wheels
Of busy industry,
Amid the smoke, and dust, and din
Of forge and factory ;
Remember though the brow may ache,
The cheek lose health's bright hue,
It is a harder task by far
" To have no work to do."

And ye who have the favours of
Fair fortune's sunny smile,
Be proud of your relationship
To him of honest toil ;
For to the humble scavenger,
More honour far is due,
Than to the pampered potentate
Who finds no work to do.

Ho ! every one of labour's ranks,
From pulpit to the plough,
Press onward in the march of life,
By dint of hand and brow ;
And worn and weary though ye be,
Fighting life's battle through,
Remember it is harder still
" To have no work to do."

Onward and upward persevere,
Though weary and footsore,
At yonder summit of the hill
There's rest for us in store ;
And as with quiet, steady step,
Life's journey we pursue,

Let us remember Him who had
The greatest work to do.

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*MANHOOD RIGHT.*

**W**ORKMEN, as we are all brothers,  
Toiling for an honest bite,  
Let us likewise be all brothers  
In maintaining labour's right.  
Labour's noble pedigree  
Tells us we should all unite  
To maintain its dignity,  
And our common manhood right.

Let us be a band of brothers,  
Faithful, honest, sober, bright,  
Granting heartily to others  
What we claim as just and right ;  
See, the light of day is dawning,  
Scattering the gloom of night ;  
Tyranny and servile fawning  
Cannot live amid the light.

Onward ! foremost in the van,  
Buckled for the noble fight,  
Win for every honest man  
Equal liberty and right.  
Onward brothers, all together,  
Arm'd with principle, not spite ;  
Justice is our standard bearer,  
And our God defends the right !

*BRITAIN'S BRAND.*

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**I**N these our days of virtue, vice, and crime,  
 Riches and poverty, pride and pretence,  
 One needs no magnifying eye to see  
 That there is much outward profession made  
 Which practice testifies to be untrue ;  
 Giving the more straightforward enemy,  
 Less dangerous in his avowed attack,  
 An opportunity to point with scorn,  
 And say that all religion is a sham.  
 As if the sun should be denounced for not  
 Producing fruit upon the barren tree ;  
 The light of day traduced as being false,  
 Because the darkness of the night prevails,  
 And he who acts a conscientious part  
 Pronounced the more confirmed devotee ;  
 Or probably the better hypocrite.

How many thousands, too, seem to delight  
 In casting openly life's gift away  
 Into the depths of pleasure's carnal cup !  
 To find, too late, that death is in the dregs,  
 However sweet the brimming draught may be.  
 And this in such a highly-favoured land  
 As our own little island of the sea,  
 Whose banner bears the sovereign seal of Heaven ;  
 An honour giving her the right divine  
 (Though but a speck upon the ocean's rim),  
 To lead the groping nations of the world  
 Into the paths of righteousness and truth.



But how can she that noble work perform  
With such refractory children of her own?  
Indeed, it seems she has far more to do  
At home than she can rightly overtake.  
And, if a child, when taught the way to go,  
Will not depart from it when he is old,  
She must be far from being dutiful  
To those whose weal should be her first concern;  
For, oh! with all her gospel light and heat,  
To make the flowers and stately cedars grow,  
That beautify and give a nation strength,  
How barren many of her offspring are!  
Surely they are not trained as they should be,  
Nor fed with those life-giving elements  
That make the man an ornament of life,  
However humble his allotted sphere.  
Instead of virtuous sobriety—  
The regulating balance of the mind,  
How much intemperance is to be found  
Robbing the masses of all life is worth,  
And drowning manhood in its licensed bowl.  
Alas! 'tis only what we may expect,  
Since she, our parent guardian of State  
Is mean enough to traffic in the vice,  
By hanging over every other door  
Of every town and village of the land  
A licence, stamped with her authority,  
To tempt poor human nature to indulge  
In that which fosters every vice and crime,  
And brings to thousands misery and shame.  
True, with the one hand she has taxed the trade,

As if she wished it kept within due bounds ;  
But with the other has her signboards hung  
At every corner, to facilitate  
The very thing she would by tax restrain.  
And thus, with sinister pretence to keep  
Her children sober, she fills up the cup,  
And hands it round the busy bar and board,  
Winking that all may take their will of it  
According to ability to pay.  
Nor has she any reason to complain  
Of how the hint's obeyed, for day and night  
The cry is "Fill us more," till youth and age—  
The son and sire intoxicated reel,  
And every evil multiplies apace !  
Defying every effort to arrest  
The progress of the inundating tide,  
Which threatens to submerge the mountain top,  
And swamp the ark of life ! Yet deeper still  
She sinks, to seize from ruins of the flood  
The millions of her household revenue !  
The drowning victim, giving less concern  
Than the last shilling which he casts away  
For one draught more, to quench the misery  
A sober thought revives within his breast.  
Oh, what a picture of depravity !  
A mother who hath given nations birth,  
Whose sceptre with the sun shines round the world,  
Nursing her children—the poor weaklings too—  
Upon the bottle of debauchery !  
And soiling all her royal robes of state  
By raking from the mire of vice and crime

The filthy lucre their commission gives.  
And yet she wonders why her children are  
So foolish as to take more than enough ;  
Forgetting that, as children grow in years,  
They grow in appetite, and learn to take  
More of a good thing than is good for them ;  
And all the more if it perchance be bad,  
Unless the nipple's taken from the mouth—  
A work she seems unable to perform,  
Being so tender and affectionate ;  
And having nursed so long and well, that now  
Her sucklings dare her to attempt the task.  
But, to their credit, some for very shame  
Have manfully resolved to wean themselves ;  
And by a total abstinence have shown  
How well the man may overrule the child.  
While others of a nature less extreme,  
Who never were addicted to excess,  
Take with a friend at odd times but a taste,  
To make the fire of friendship brighter burn ;  
One here and there, of modest mood perhaps,  
Taking a toothful as need may suggest.  
Yet each their own way have resolved to try  
What can be done to counteract the vice,  
Which now, in spite of all our moral means,  
Saps the foundations of society,  
And soon must bring the noble fabric down,  
Unless some remedy is found to stay  
Its ravages upon unwary youth,  
So captivated by its luring snares  
That, ere maturity of years is reached,

The man, with all his faculties divine,  
 Is robbed and ruined, drunken and debased !  
 May success, then, crown every honest aim  
 The dissipating evil to suppress ;  
 So that our children may no longer reel  
 Headlong in thousands down the drunkard's path !  
 Branding the name of which we are so proud,  
 And giving those whom we attempt to teach  
 Good cause to meet us with the hard rebuff—  
 " Go and begin with charity at home ;  
 One should be just ere he is generous."

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*FIRESIDE REFORM.*

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**A**FTER the labour of the day is done,  
 How blest is he who has a happy home,  
 Where love is waiting to receive the guest,  
 And bid him welcome to the couch of rest,  
 By cheery hearth, and table neatly spread  
 With honest labour's sweetly earned bread,  
 For which a heartfelt gratitude's expressed,  
 And their dependence modestly confessed.  
 The luring tavern, with its licensed power,  
 To rob the dupe of many a golden hour,  
 Is stript of all its fascinating charms  
 Where love divine the household bosom warms.  
 " Our ain fireside" is then earth's dearest spot,  
 Be it in palace or in humblest cot,  
 For there the telegraphic links of love  
 Connect it with our Father's house above.

How great a contrast is the weary wight,  
Who trudges home to find no peaceful rest,  
No kindly word, nor look, nor cheering smile  
To lighten life's harassing care and toil ;  
No hearth that's warmed with affection's glow,  
Nor altar, where the weary knee may bend,  
And earnest heart on wingéd faith ascend  
To Him who only can the blessing give,  
That makes it worth the poor man's while to live.  
Whence comes the difference ? Is it because  
That selfish man's enacted selfish laws,  
Which tend to raise the few to Mammon's crown,  
By cruel trampling of the many down ?  
Not so : in spite of all such earthly laws,  
To him there are a thousand blessings given  
Who gives obedience to the laws of Heaven.  
It is from trifling with the heavenly plan  
Of love to God and peace on earth to man ;  
Forgetting that true, manly exercise  
Of duty, is the only way to rise  
To man's estate, on which he has no claim  
Without the charter of a Christian name ;  
And whosoever would that course decide  
Must take the first step at his own fireside.

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*THE AULD FIRESIDE.*

**T**HOUGH cold is the hearth of our childhood  
home,  
'Tis nearer and dearer the farer we roam ;

Yes! go where we will, be it near or far,  
In the calm of peace, or the storm of war,  
We fondly recall with a tender care  
A thousand memories that centre there.  
The thoughtless may laugh, and the heartless chide,  
Still, dear to the heart is the auld fireside!

'Twas there the bright beams of young morning gay,  
Wove a golden wreath for the brow of day,  
And hid from our view, with a veil of light,  
The darkling shades of approaching night;  
And taught us to sing as the songsters sing  
In the jubilee of returning Spring.  
The head may be grey, still the heart has a pride  
In singing a song of the auld fireside!

'Twas there the soft hand of affection twined  
The tendrils of love around heart and mind,  
Which bound us together, and the old hearth so,  
That we yet can feel its heart-warming glow;  
And the pang we felt when, with tear-dimmed eye,  
We left it, our luck on life's ladder to try.  
Ah, cold is the heart, and of feeling void,  
That feels not the warmth of the auld fireside!

And there we were taught with a mother's love,  
And a father's care, of a home above,  
And learned the story of love divine,  
With its cross and crown, and the countersign  
To that happy land on yon sunny shore,  
Where departed friends meet to part no more.  
Oh! who can forget, whate'er may betide,  
The dear ones that circled the auld fireside!

The faithful father, the loving mother,  
 The gentle sister, the manly brother,  
 Now hither and thither asunder torn,  
 Far, far from the home of life's mirthful morn ;  
 No more to meet an unbroken band,  
 Until we meet in the Fatherland,  
 Where death nor life shall again divide  
 United friends of the auld fireside !

~~~~~

THE AULD BUFFY STUIL.

THE auld buffy stuil that stood by the ingle,
 My dear mither's ingle that blinket sae braw,
 Claims frae me a heart feelin', hamely bit jingle,
 An' fondly I'll try a bit verse noo, or twa.

It's frail an' auld-fashioned, rough, bare, and unvar-
 nished,
 Yet roond it my heart's clingin' tendrils still twine
 As ivy the ruin, for tho' its time-tarnished,
 It gies me a blink o' life's mornin' langsyne.


The bright, sunny mornin' o' memories dear,
 When gaily I rode it in fancy's wild chase ;
 Mair happy than he wi' his thousands a-year,
 Wha rides in the van o' wealth's soul-stakin' race.

It brings to my mind a' the bairnies that were
 Youth's playmates, and asks me "Whaur are they
 a' noo?"

Ah ! hither an' thither, some here an' some there,
 An' some whaur nae sorrow ere darkens the broo.

It speaks o' the dear ones that lovingly toiled,
 An' earnestly socht Heaven's blessin' for me ;
 An' tells me hoo fondly they over me smiled
 As on it they rested wi' me on the knee ;
 An' thocht on the stey, uphill journey o' life
 That the wee, toddlin' feet wad, if spared, hae to
 tread,
 When they wad be far frae its bustle an' strife,
 Reposin' in peace wi' the gowan o'erhead.
 But while it recalls the fair hey-day o' youth,
 It also reminds me o' locks growin' grey ;
 An' bids me give ear to the still voice of truth,
 Saying, " Youth and its pleasures are all fled away."
 Yes, all fled away, to return no more,
 Wi' singin', an' dancin', and frolicsome glee ;
 But while I'm on this side o' Time's misty shore,
 That auld stuil will speak o' those joys to me.
 An' tho' some may think it is silly an' weak,
 An' ithers may ca' me a crazy auld fule,
 I carena ; the heart of its fulness maun speak,
 An' waur things are there than the auld buffy stuil.

THE SPOT WHERE I WAS BORN.

 H ! lovingly, kind Nature has
 Adorned this earth of ours
 Wi' crystal springs, and flow'ry banks,
 Hills, dales, an' shady bow'rs ;

But tho' she can, wi' a' that's rare,
Her beauty-spots adorn,
She never can make me forget
The spot where I was born.

It may ha'e nae enchanting charms
To feast the tourist's e'e,
But still it aye my bosom warms
Wherever I may be ;
For, 'mid life's cares, it minds me o'
The joys o' life's May morn,
Which makes the dearest spot on earth
The spot where I was born.

Tho' mony years o' toil an' care
Sin syne ha'e come an' gone,
Weel, weel I mind the sunny braes
We played "row-rantie" on.
An' yet I feel the fragrance o'
The rowan an' the thorn
That bloomed sae bonnily aroond
The spot where I was born.

The hichts and howes are ever green,
That wi' our daffin' rang ;
The burns we catched the beardies in,
Still sing the sweetest sang ;
And yet I hear, in gloamin' grey,
The crake among the corn,
Lilting to me a sang aboot
The spot where I was born.

The laverock high in the lift,
 The mavis doon the dell,
 An' cuckoo in the avenue,
 Life's morning story tell ;
 Sae wi' the birds an' burns I'll sing,
 Tho' far asunder torn,
 For, oh ! I lo'e wi' a' my heart
 The spot where I was born !

~~~~~

*LINKS OF LIFE.*

---

**T**HE parent hearth's warm, genial glow  
 Of happy days, long, long ago,  
 May lose, 'mid winter's frost and snow,  
 Its noontide heat ;  
 But still it warms a vital part,  
 And ere it's fully quenched, the heart  
 Must cease to beat.

The loved ones, who for us did toil,  
 And weep, and joy, and hope, and smile,  
 Though lying by the churchyard pile  
 In lowly bed ;  
 Are still, to us, as ever dear,  
 And oft we water with a tear  
 The flower o'erhead.

The mirthful meetings, round the fire,  
 Of mother, daughter, son, and sire,  
 And other friends, to tune the lyre  
 Of many strings,

Are links, too, in the double chain  
Of joy and pleasure, grief and pain,  
That round us clings.

The happy haunts of youth, where we  
Made glade and glen to ring with glee,  
And climbed the tallest forest tree  
With sailor pride,  
Still warm the heart, though mountain waves—  
Memorials of ocean graves—  
Should us divide.

Our own dear fireside music sweet,  
From lisping lips, and toddling feet  
Of little fairies, whom we meet  
When day is done ;  
The keepsake lock of golden hair,  
The hidden toy, the empty chair—  
The missing one.

O, blissful links of life and love,  
'Tween hearts below and hearts above,  
Time is too short thy strength to prove,  
And value show ;  
But, by-and-bye, with Him who reigns  
Beyond earth's penalties and pains  
We'll fully know.

*WEE TEENIE.*

**S**PRING was just beginning to open the e'e  
Of the bud on the bush, and the flower on the  
lea,

And waken the laverock at day dawn to wing  
Away up to heaven, her matins to sing ;  
And a' the sweet singers of wood, hill, and plain  
To welcome the new birth of Nature again,  
When Teenie, the joy and pride of us a',  
To the Spring that's eternal, was summon'd awa'.

Alas! birds may warble their heart-stirring strains,  
To lighten the load of life's sorrows and pains,  
And flowers in perfection of beauty may bloom,  
And breathe for the weary a balmy perfume ;  
And Nature, in pity, may tender tears shed,  
As she haps with her mantle our Teenie's wee bed,  
But wi' a' her kindness there is a void still,  
A' the comforts on earth are unable to fill.

Oh! why should a blessing so precious be given,  
To be from the bosom so painfully riven ?  
Hope, born to-day to be buried to-morrow,  
With life's sweetest joys in the waters of sorrow ?  
But, oh! this is calling in question the love  
And wisdom of Him who hath called her above,  
Though hard, yet how cheering to think it is He  
Saying—"Suffer little children to come unto me."

Lord, pardon our sorrow for what Thou hast done,  
And make us rejoice, that the dear little one

Thou hast taken away from this world of pain,  
 Though a worldly loss, is a heavenly gain ;  
 And grant that the ties Thou hast seen meet to sever,  
 And the promising hopes Thou hast blasted for ever,  
 May make us more humble and mindful of Thee,  
 And full of the joys of our meeting to be.

~~~~~  
BLIGHTED BUDS.

GAIN the bud is on the tree,
 Cheering the heart of high and low,
 But there is one that questions me
 About the buds that never blow.

How that the fairest, sweetest forms
 We cherish and admire the most,
 So ill can stand the wintry storms,
 And Spring's untimely, blighting frost.

Alas ! they have so short a day,
 That long ere noon they must depart,
 Leaving a vacancy for aye
 Within the garden of the heart.

But why ! the master gardener knows
 How, when, and where to plant his flowers,
 The snowdrop amid winter snows,
 The lily amid summer showers.

And those whom we so dearly love,
 Too tender earth's rude storms to bear ;
 He, high in Eden's bowers above,
 Transplants them with a father's care.

And though they leave a void behind,
 To which they shall return no more ;
 There is a balm the wound to bind—
 “They are not lost, but gone before.”

~~~~~  
*THE IDLE TOY.*

**A**SK not why she holds so dearly  
 Such a worthless, seeming thing ;  
 Though it's but a plaything merely,  
 Memories around it cling,  
 Of a dear one now departed—  
 A fond mother's pride and joy—  
 Ah, no wonder loving-hearted  
 Parents prize an idle toy !

Though of small account to others,  
 Think of how it will recall  
 To a tender, loving mother's  
 Heart, the jewel of them all.  
 How it will of joys remind her  
 That shall never more return ;  
 Thought of which makes tears to blind her,  
 Life's consuming fires to burn.

Wafts her to the weeping willow,  
 Where the little darling sleeps  
 Soundly on the peaceful pillow,  
 Nature for the weary keeps ;  
 Stirs the deepest heart's devotion,  
 Mingles joy with grief and pain,  
 Swells the bosom with emotion,  
 And repeats life o'er again.

Life, alas! is full of crosses,  
 All its promises are vain ;  
 But, why fret? our present losses  
 Multiply our future gain.  
 Still, the fond heart of affection  
 Loss of dear ones will annoy ;  
 Mind shall have to lose reflection,  
 Ere we lose the idle toy.

~~~~~  
THE DEATH OF A DEAR FRIEND.

NOW sad for one reaching manhood's prime,
 When life's fairest charms enchant the view,
 To lay aside all the things of time,
 And bid all that's dearest on earth adieu,
 The darksome valley to journey through !
 Such was the task our departed friend
 Was called to perform, and he did it well ;
 For he leaned upon Him who delights to lend
 The light which alone can the gloom dispel,
 And strength which alone makes the weak excel.
 Contented, without either fret or frown,
 His cross of affliction he meekly bore,
 In hope that, instead of a cross, a crown
 Would be given him on the nearing shore,
 'Mid right-hand pleasures for evermore.
 Like a little child by his father led,
 The night might fall, but it could not fear ;
 'Mid the shadows dark not a tear he shed,
 To dim the light of his eye so clear,
 Save for his friends whom he loved so dear.

For them the fire of affection burned,
Unquenched by the waves of the swelling sea,
That over and over him toss'd and turn'd,
And taught him to trust in the mercy free
That stills the waters of Galilee.

“Be kind to my mother,” with a tear he said,
As he felt from her he would soon be gone ;
But with the hope, he was comforted,
Of meeting again kindred ties to own,
Where the pain of parting is unknown.

And yet I see the parting embrace,
He gave her whose heart and his own were one ;
A scene which time shall never efface,
Till the fight is fought, and the race is run,
And all that the hand has to do is done.

But, weary and worn, he longed to be
Away to his home in the Fatherland,
Where the weary rest, from all troubling free,
And sing the song of the countless band
That round the throne of Emmanuel stand.

“The Lord's my shepherd,” we heard him say,
As the waters of Jordan around him roll'd ;
And soon thereafter He took him away,
In his bosom of love, to the upper fold
Of joys that to mortals remain untold.

And now his blithe smile will no more be seen,
His cheery voice we shall no more hear.
Ah ! life here is only a breath between,
A summer smile, and an autumn tear—
The cradle that rocks us, and the bier.

MY JAMIE IS AWA'.

A LOVER'S LAMENT.

FIFE'S morning, bright and cheery,
 Wi' a' its joys, is fled,
 And left me sad and weary,
 To care and sorrow wed.
 My days are lang an' lonely,
 My nights are dark and drear,
 For I ha'e lost my only
 True loving laddie dear.

His cheek, sae meek and smiling,
 His e'e sae bonnie blue,
 Saft silken locks sae wiling,
 An' heart sae kind an' true,
 Are lying lowly yonder,
 Whaur a' ere lang shall lie,
 An' I am left to ponder
 Wi' bitter tear and sigh.

The flowers will bud and blossom,
 The birds will pair and sing,
 But to a yearning bosom
 What comfort can they bring?
 Alas! they'll only mind me
 Of us fond lovers twa,
 An' mak' the saut tears blind me—
 My Jamie is awa'.

Ah! cruel Fate; to sever
 My Jamie dear an' me;

To blast the joys for ever
 We had, an' hoped to see ;
 But soon or late, earth's treasures,
 However near and dear,
 Wi' a' their joys and pleasures
 Tak' wing an' disappear.

Yet Faith, 'mid direst sorrow,
 Keeps whispering in the ear—
 "There is a coming morrow,
 To dry up every tear—
 That rest awaits the weary,
 In yon fair sunny clime,
 Whaur lovers meet a' cheery,
 Beyond the woes o' time."

~~~~~

*AT THE GRAVE.*

**S**HE spot where the dear ones are lying,  
 Asleep in calm, peaceful repose,  
 Away from all sorrow and sighing  
 Of time, with its ebbs and its flows !

Be still, and disturb not their slumbers,  
 So peaceful, and solemnly sound ;  
 Speak softly in tenderest numbers,  
 Tread lightly the hallowed ground.

Its dust, day by day, grows the dearer,  
 As onward our journey we go ;  
 Step by step drawing nearer and nearer,  
 To rest from our labours below.

Oh! plant here the cypress and willow,  
To drop o'er the sleepers a tear;  
And set up a stone at their pillow,  
Engraven with memories dear.

And round the bed, lonely and lowly,  
Plant daisies—wee emblems of love,  
To look, with an eye pure and holy,  
Away to the mansions above.

For there, at least, one Friend is keeping  
An eye on the cold, narrow bed,  
Where the dear earthly forms are sleeping,  
And the tears of affection are shed.

The dear Friend who hath undertaken,  
So lovingly sinners to save,  
And who in the morning shall waken  
The slumbering dust of the grave.

Lord! let not the night-cloud of sorrow  
Hide from us Hope's heart-cheering ray  
Make the joy of our meeting to-morrow  
Ease the pain of our parting to-day.

That, though we have here no abiding,  
We may not lament and despond,  
But gladly go forward, confiding  
In Thee, to the Canaan beyond.

---

*NEW YEARS CHASE THE OLD AWAY.*

**L**IKE the river to the ocean—  
 Whence it comes and thither goes—  
 Time rolls on with steady motion,  
     Its grand purpose to disclose.  
 Onward, through the valley pressing  
     To the goal, without delay ;  
 And, to show how its progressing,  
     New Years chase the Old away.  
 Ever coming, ever going ;  
     Day by day, and week by week,  
 To us mortals plainly showing  
     Earth's no place a home to seek.  
 That, to gain the joys hereafter,  
     Like the years, we'll have to go  
 From the sorrow, mirth, and laughter,  
     Next door neighbours, here below.  
 Farewell, Old Year! we must sever,  
     Thou can'st not a moment stay ;  
 Each, in turn, must cross the river,  
     And one common fare must pay.  
 Welcome, New Year! to remind us  
     Of the rate at which we run,  
 Giving place to those behind us  
     In the race thou hast begun.  
 Let us keep the path of duty,  
     Run and read, work, watch, and pray,  
 Seeing more and more the beauty  
     Of the flowers that strew the way,

And, oh ! New Year, young and cheery,  
 May we, in thy gladness, be  
 Mindful of the sad and weary,  
 That they may rejoice with thee.

That the dull hearth may be brightened  
 With what spark we have to spare ;  
 And the heavy crosses lightened,  
 Which, in part, we ought to bear ;

That the bitter tear of sorrow  
 May be gently wiped away,  
 With a foretaste of that morrow—  
 Heaven's eternal New Year's Day !

---

*WORKING HOME.*

**S**TEP by step we reach the end  
 Of the longest march of life ;  
 Step by step let us ascend,  
 'Mid the bustle and the strife.  
 Day by day our hand improving  
 In the work it finds to do—  
 Sorrow soothing, thorns removing,  
 Planting flowers where thistles grew.

Word by word of kindness spoken,  
 Deed by deed of mercy done,  
 Hearts of adamant are broken,  
 Foes are vanquished, friends are won ;  
 Nights of deepest darkness brightened,  
 Pain and suffering restrained,

Burdens of the weary lightened,  
More of heaven on earth attained.

Ah ! the years are passing o'er us ;  
Life's short race will soon be run ;  
Some behind, and some before us,  
Coming, going, one by one.  
Let us as we journey homeward,  
Count the milestones by the way ;  
Work and help the weary onward,  
While we have the light of day.

~~~~~  
HOW OLD ART THOU ?

GEN. xlvii., 8.

DUR days, and weeks, and months, and years,
Are ever sounding in the ears
Of sporting youth, and bowing age,
That question of the sacred page—
“How old art thou?”

Young childhood, full of mirth and joy,
Rejoices o'er her gilded toy,
And gambols in the morning sun,
As if the dance would ne'er be done ;
But care soon clouds her sunny brow,
And gravely asks—“How old art thou?”

The hoary head, the misty eye,
The withered cheek, and deep-drawn sigh
Of tottering age, all sternly say—
“Time's on the wing, it will not stay,
How old art thou?”

Sweet Spring awakes the sleeping flower,
And busks anew the naked bower ;
Makes hill, and dale, and wood rejoice,
And sing aloud with cheerful voice ;
But something in the chorus says—
“ Oh ! man, count o'er thy few short days,
And know how old art thou !”

Fair Summer, too, with sunny smiles,
And mirthful strains his care beguiles ;
But sweetest smile and purest joy
Of earth, to man have an alloy,
For, 'mid her smiles and music's flow,
The furrow deepens on his brow,
And asks—“ How old art thou ?”

And Autumn, 'mid her withering bowers,
Bathing with tears her fading flowers,
As she broods o'er the sad decline
Of Nature, says—“ Her fate is thine.”
And as she, like a mother dear,
Reminds him that his home's not here,
And bids him live, and love, and pray,
And count the milestones by the way,
She asks—“ How old art thou ?”

And Winter drear—death's type complete,
Comes wrapt in snowy winding sheet,
To tell the tale so often told,
That's ever new, and ever old,
Of life here being but a day,
Which steals with muffled foot away,

Till setting sun, far in the west,
 Speaks of a going down to rest,
 And shades of evening dim the eye,
 And tell that night is creeping nigh.
 But dimmest eye, and darkest night,
 Retain a lingering ray of light—
 Some star that tells of morning dawn,
 When night's dark curtain shall be drawn,
 And every sleeper shall awake,
 Each his, and her "own place" to take ;
 For where the heart at evening lies,
 There in the morning it shall rise—
 Where, 'mid life's mazes, is it now ?
 How old, answer thyself, art thou ?

~~~~~

*MARTYRLAND, FROM CAIRNTABLE.*

**I**S good to climb thy rugged, heathy steeps,  
 To drink the water of the crystal springs  
 Which sparkle from thy breast, and breathe thy pure  
 Invigorating breath, which gives the cheek  
 The rosy tint of thy sweet heather bell,  
 And lifts the pilgrim to thy lofty brow  
 To gaze down on the scene of grandeur wild,  
 O'er which thou dost preside in majesty  
 Divine. Around thee stand a thousand hills,  
 Wrapt in solemnity of homage pure  
 To Him who spoke them from the womb of earth,  
 And holds them in the hollow of His hand,  
 And owns the flocks which pasture on their sides.



Far in the east old Tinto's hoary head  
Towers through the clouds, as if he vied with thee  
In reaching nearest heaven ; or, as if he  
On tiptoe stood to view these holy hills  
So dear to every loving child of God.  
Who would not leave life's bustling toil and din  
To feast upon this soul-inspiring scene ?  
See to the south, as far as eye can view,  
These hoary monarchs stand, as if on oath  
Before the bar of heaven, affirming deeds  
Of deepest dye, which stained their verdant robes,  
And painted man with shame ; declaring, too,  
The noblest works of noblest men, whose worth  
Goes far to ransom all their guilty kin—  
To wipe away the stains of their own blood,  
And prove to man man's heavenly dignity.  
But, oh ! how feeble and unfit am I  
To give expression to their eloquence.  
Each pours a tribute to the martyr brave,  
'Mid echoes of the words of truth and life,  
Poured from a Peden's or a Cameron's heart ;  
Each outstretched arm points to some lowly grave,  
Where some brave hero sleeps, and bids me mark  
The humble stone upon his noble head,  
Which testifies a world's ingratitude.  
But, like to like ; he sought not world's fame,  
Nor needs it to perpetuate his name ;  
Her monuments shall fade and pass away,  
His shall endure " eternal in the Heavens."

Wardlaw, in solemn mood, looks from the west,

And speaks of Wellwood's vale of tears and blood,  
Where dauntless men upheld the Cross, and paid  
The price of Scotland's life and liberty.

And to yon whitewashed pile on dark Airmoss,  
He turns the gazer's wandering, ravished eye,  
And bids him tread that spot with reverence,  
For there the dust of noblest heroes lie.

Priesthill, so fitly named, stands in the north,  
Reminding me of noble, priestly Brown,  
Whose holy life and holier death have gained  
For him the Scottish martyr's brightest crown.

Methinks I see him and his Is'bel dear  
Kneeling together, with their little ones  
Clinging for safety round their bended knees,  
Before the bloody Graham, panting for blood  
To quench the burning thirst within his breast.

I see him, too, taking his last farewell  
Of these old hills, his wife, and children dear.  
But now he must unlock the last embrace ;  
He struggles from their arms ; he kneels to die ;  
And, oh ! how touching is the tragic scene  
Of holy love and heavenly bravery,  
Contrasted with hell's hate and cowardice.

O God, "Thy ways are in the mighty deeps ;  
Thy footsteps are unknown ;" but this we know,  
And blessed be Thy name, that all things work  
For good to them who live and die for Thee.

Farewell, ye everlasting hills, farewell !  
I must retrace my steps down to the plains,  
To take again the burden of life's pains

That slipt from me when pressing up thy steeps ;  
 And may this blissful sight of Martyrland  
 Inspire my soul with martyr's strength and will  
 To climb the steeps of Zion's holy hill,  
 Down which the burdens of its pilgrims roll  
 Into the ocean of redeeming love,  
 As they mount upward to their home above.

~~~~~  
 THE MARTYR'S GRAVE.

MOST hallowed spot, dear to the heart
 Of every loving child of God ;
 Though in the lonely wild thou art,
 A tenant dwells beneath thy sod,
 More precious than the diamond gems
 That sparkle in earth's diadems.

And yet, no monument of fame
 Marks out the spot upon the moor,
 Where with his blood he wrote a name
 That shall eternity endure :
 And so, the noblest hero brave
 Sleeps in a world-forgotten grave.

Ah, partial world ! why veil the face
 With selfishness that thou can'st see
 In other children than thy race
 The nobler nobility ?
 Go, read the record of thy shame,
 And slight no more the Martyr's name.

And ye who are of Israel's flock,
 Feeding upon her pastures green,

And drinking from the stricken Rock
 Thy faithful fathers sheltered in ;
 Go, and uphold their banner blue,
 As sons of such sires ought to do.

And show the world how to admire
 The sacred memory of the good
 Martyr of old, who quenched the fire
 Of persecution with his blood,
 And won for us the liberty
 To sit beneath our own fig tree.

Yea, let us raise, with noblest aim,
 In memory of those heroes brave,
 Memorials that will proclaim
 Our gratitude to Him who gave
 Us victory o'er death and the grave.

~~~~~  
*FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER.*

“To err is human, to forgive divine.”

**A**S the rock divideth the river,  
 In separate channels to run,  
 A word rashly spoken may sever  
 Fond hearts that before were as one.  
 But tho' words may rashly be spoken,  
 And actions unkindly be done—  
 Fair promises blighted and broken,  
 And loving friends lost that were won—  
 One true Friend will never forsake us,  
 Whoever may slight and disown ;

The darker the clouds that o'ertake us,  
His bow all the brighter is shown.

But, ah! He is often forsaken  
In the hour of sorrow severe;  
Afraid for his friends to be taken,  
We follow far off in the rear.

Still, tho' we oft fail to stand by Him,  
Seek the rear instead of the van;  
And to his foes rashly deny Him,  
Declaring "we know not the Man."

He ever is ready to own us,  
And all our just penalties pay,  
And looks with compassion upon us  
When well He might turn us away.

Oh! let us, as He has forgiven,  
Like brothers, each other forgive;  
That here and hereafter in heaven  
We all may in harmony live.

~~~~~  
"I WOULD, AND YE WOULD NOT."

SURELY there must be something far astray,
Some vital heart-string broken or unstrung,
That makes poor human nature so perverse
As to refuse the greatest gift of Heaven,
And perish by its own unwillingness
To take a hold of mercy's outstretched arm!
But will the many seeming castaways,
Made sport of by the lawless winds and waves,

And luring calms of life's soul-laden sea,
Be down the rapids of destruction hurled?
Will merey not lay hold on them, because
They are unwilling to lay hold on her?
Ah! gross presumption would it be of me
To dare to answer questions such as these.
He only who wept o'er Jerusalem
The burning tear of thwarted love divine
May answer; and methinks I hear Him now,
In tender and impassioned voice, repeat
"I would, and ye would not!" from which we learn
That man, though fallen from his first estate,
Retains that portion of his former self
Which makes him liable still to account:
Not for original offence so much,
As for denial of the Remedy
Divinely wrought for his deliverance.
But when, with all his faculties complete,
As given him to represent his race,
Man failed, and forfeited the right of life,
By breaking wilfully the sovereign law
Of his existence; is it likely now,
With will and judgment biased, to repeat
His parent's crime, that he will do the right,
And choose the better part that's offered him?
Alas! improbable; and had no more
Been done for him than cancelling the debt
Incurred by his original offence,
All would as probably have been disposed
To cast the Ransom of the soul away—
The sin of all sins the most damning, when

Committed in defiance of the truth
 Of Him who is commissioned to convince
 The world of sin, judgment, and righteousness.

~~~~~  
*DEATH AND LIFE.*

“As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

**N**OW strange that one, possessed of all the gifts  
 Of perfect man, should err so grievously,  
 As to entail upon himself, and all  
 Posterity, the awful doom of death !  
 Yet stranger far, that One should condescend  
 To stoop from highest Heaven to lowest earth,  
 And take the form of poor humanity,  
 That He, as second Adam, might undo  
 What the first Adam did ; a work of love  
 High as the Heavens, yet lower than the grave,  
 Which only God incarnate could perform,  
 Since in it was a human part to play,  
 And none to play it 'mong the sons of men.  
 For he who would the ransom undertake,  
 And rigid justice the last farthing pay,  
 Must certainly no poor insolvent be ;  
 Nor blot, nor blemish must attain his name.  
 Hence the necessity for Him who came,  
 Possessed of all the attributes required  
 To expiate the guilt of fallen man,  
 And raise him to the dignity he own'd  
 While lord of Paradise. And hence we see,  
 Altho' but darkly, through the mists of earth,

The love and mercy of our Father, God,  
 Reflected in the face of Him who is  
 The All-sufficient Saviour of the world.

~~~~~  
 "FOLLOW ME."

LORD, how prone to stray and stumble,
 Doubt and fear, and fret and grumble,
 While we should in spirit humble
 Follow Thee.

Leave us not to wander blindly,
 Teach us to obey resign'dly
 Thy command, so gentle, kindly—
 "Follow Me."

Though the path be rough and weary,
 Sometimes crooked, dark and dreary,
 It is ever bright and cheery
 Near to Thee.

In our sunny days of gladness,
 In our gloomy nights of sadness,
 Keep us from the world's blind madness,
 Near to Thee.

Give us, Lord, increasing measure
 Of Thy everlasting treasure,
 That we may with love and pleasure
 Follow Thee.

Fearless of the wave that tosses,
 Triumphant o'er gains and losses,
 Sights and slanders, cares and crosses,
 Trusting Thee.

GALILEE.

THOUGH far away, yet very near
 The Christian heart must ever be
 Those verdant hills and waters clear,
 Whose hallowed memories endear
 The grand, old land of Galilee.

For there, we know, one for us prayed
 In lonely vale and mountain high,
 And, 'mid the tempest, for us said—
 “Be of good cheer: be not afraid:
 Why are ye fearful? it is I.”

The poor he owned, the hungry fed,
 The blind eye and deaf ear unsealed;
 Revived the sick, restored the dead,
 That sad hearts might be comforted,
 And God's redeeming love revealed.

And as He stilled the stormy wave,
 And stemmed the flowing tide of tears,
 He to the needy sinner gave
 A glorious hope beyond the grave,
 To banish all his doubts and fears.

Well may the weary pilgrim long
 Such holy shrines of love to see;
 And, in his loving ardour strong,
 Enshrine with joy, in sweetest song,
 The dear, old land of Galilee.

What joy its holy hills to climb,
 And sail its lone, sequestered sea,

Whose sacred memories sublime
Shall be the glory of all time,
The love-song of eternity.

Lord ! be at all times very near us,
Amidst life's stormy, troubled sea ;
And when our cares and troubles fear us,
Oh ! let that Word direct and cheer us,
That stilled the storms of Galilee.





Humorous Pieces.





Humorous Pieces.



NEVER OWER LATE TAE DAE WEEL.

IT'S natur' tae be licht-heidit awee
In the dance o' the mornin' o' life,
An' human awee tae tak' a bit pree
O' what breeds muckle sorrow an' strife;
For, since the auld pair took a notion tae fare
At a cost which they cudna weel pay,
We, some hoo or ither, like faither an' mither,
Hae a likin' tae daunder astray.

Like ither daft fules, wi' dour-douget wills,
That wad fain hae the wrang tae be richt,
I row'd heels-ower-heid, wi' gaitherin' speed,
Doon the stey brae o' life a' my micht.
But tho' there's a law, the further we fa'
Fast an' faster we doon the hill reel;
In howes o' the hill, there's something says still,
"It is never ower late tae dae weel."

Tae better my lot, my portion I got,
Slackit bridle, an' aff in full haste

Through dub an' through mire, wi' burnin' desire,
 The sweet dainties o' fortune tae taste ;
 But frae bad tae waur, in a country afar,
 Faster roond an' roond birl'd life's wheel ;
 Yet I heard in the birr, abune a' the stir,
 " It is never ower late tae dae weel."

My portion, like snaw, sune meltit awa,
 An' ere lang I on husks had tae fare ;
 Till want made me cry, wi' a tear in my eye,
 For a morsel that mercy nicht spare.
 But tho' in the mire, a prey tae the fire
 O' remorse, which compelled me tae kneel,
 I heard something say, " Return while you may,
 " It is never ower late tae dae weel."

I turned frae the broad tae the stey, narrow road
 In the rags o' my ance finest suit ;
 A lesson tae a', that whatever we saw
 Shall produce us its ain kind o' fruit.
 But soon I got clad in the best to be had,
 After turnin' the stey brae tae speel ;
 An' learnin' the sang, that hooever far wrang,
 " It is never ower late tae dae weel."

Still, dinna forget, hooever beset,
 That there is not an hour tae delay ;
 Life's fast ebbin' tide on us winna bide,
 Sae the time tae dae weel is to-day.
 Then seek for the croon ere the sun gaes doon,
 An' the thief o' the nicht comes tae steal ;
 For mind ye, I pray, it is only to-day
 That is " never ower late tae dae weel."

MY AIN KAIL-POT.

As told me by a Friend.

SIKE ithar fules, I never thocht
 About a rainy day,
 As lang's the summer's sun o' life
 Smiled on my foolish way.
 I danced an' sang, got on the spree,
 An' meltit every groat,
 Which, nae doot, fattened ithar's than
 My ain kail-pot.

But time an' tide for nae man bide,
 E'en tho' he's on the spree,
 Except the tide o' what we ca'
 Dishonest poverty.
 An' that I learned in sic a way
 It winna be forgot,
 For, strange, 'twas frae a word about
 My ain kail-pot.

My sky at last got overcast,
 Clouds drew their dark broos doon,
 A fire was kindled in my breist,
 Anither in my croon.
 A hive o' bees bizzed in my lugs,
 A wasp stuck in my throat,
 An' waur than a'—I had at hame
 A toom kail-pot.

Sae fixt, yae day, I dauner'd ower
 To see auld Luckie Broon,

Wha keepit fuel to mend the fires
 That burned my breist an' croon,
 When, by guid luck, she preached to me
 A sermon pipin' hot ;
 An' weel I mind, the text o't was—
 “ My ain kail-pot.”

A text o' simple, hamely truth,
 As ye will a' agree ;
 But as to hoo it cam' aboot,
 I pray ye will forgi'e ;
 For what'll no be said an dune
 When in the horrors o't ?
 An' no a barley pickle for
 Oor ain kail-pot.

Somehoo I'd in my neive a crust
 That was gey hard to chow,
 An' as her kail-pot was at hand—
 I gied a dook to thow ;
 When in a lowe she bleezed, an' said,
 “ Gae hame, ye drucken sot,
 An' dook your slaver'd crust into
 Your ain kail-pot.”

That drew the veil : I saw mysel'
 As I had never seen,
 An' frae that day resolved to be
 What I had never been.
 An' as wi' shame I dauner'd hame,
 Lamentin' ower my lot,
 I vowed to buy the beef nae mair
 For her kail-pot!

I've kept my vow ; an' noo, thank God,
 I've plenty, an' to spare ;
 The headache an' the heartache's gane,
 Also, the coat threadbare.
 An' oh, my drouthy neebors, dear,
 Of this, I pray, tak' note,
 An' learn, like me, to cater for
 Your ain kail-pot.

~~~~~  
 HOO TAE 'GREE.

**T**HIS world, sae rife wi' sorrow an' strife,  
 Is hard for puir folks tae get through ;  
 But, dootless, the best way's a straicht, sober life,  
 Dividing the false frae the true.  
 An' sae, as the quietest way is the best,  
 Aye try wi' yer neebors tae 'gree ;  
 An' if ye can say nae guid o' a body,  
 Just let the puir body a-be.  
 Although he has got a bit hole in his coat,  
 Waff-like, beside yours, hale an' sleek ;  
 Remember, instead o' rivin' mair o't,  
 You rather should gie't a bit steek.  
 But ere you begin, get a glass an' keek in,  
 As yer ain may be stoorie a wee ;  
 An' if it should happen tae need a bit brush,  
 Just let the puir body's a-be.  
 We a' hae oor share o' life's troubles tae bear,  
 As through this cauld world we gang ;  
 An' often the things that we try tae repair,  
 We blindly the further set wrang.

For since the dark day woman stappit astray,  
 A' her bairns hae gane sairly agee;  
 Sae, if you're no a' the better yersel',  
 You'll better let ithers a-be.

There's mony a slip 'tween the cup an' the lip,  
 Alike in the kitchen an' ha';  
 An' aften he gets in the gutter a dip,  
 Wha thinks least o' gettin' a fa'.  
 Then look in an' oot, an' a' roond aboot,  
 Yer ain bits o' failin's tae see,  
 That when you can say nae guid o' a body,  
 You may let the body a-be.

Nae doot, yer ain craw is the whitest o' a';  
 But if you, like ithers, could see him,  
 He micht be nae liker a doo than a daw,  
 An' aiblins a pook you wad gie him.  
 At least, you micht draw a feather or twa,  
 That he a wee laicher micht flee,  
 An' no be sae often on ither folk's taps,  
 When on yer ain tap he should be.

But, losh! tae be wrang is an auld-fashioned sang,  
 An' the singin' o't may gie offence;  
 For noo, 'deed, the faster some tae the deil gang,  
 They get the mair siller an' sense;  
 Which so magnify their po'ers to descry,  
 In spite o' a mote in the e'e—  
 That even dark spots on the sun they espy—  
 Yet somehow their ain canny see!

O, let us discern what should us concern  
 Far mair than should sun, mune, or star,

There's muckle, I'm sure, that we a' need tae learn,  
 Before we spy ferlies sae far.  
 An' this is a part, guid for baith head an' heart,  
 Tae learn tae forget an' forgi'e ;  
 An' when we can say nae guid o' a body,  
 Tae let the puir body a-be.

~~~~~  
EPISTLE TO A FRIEND IN WALES.

DEAR FRIEND,

At once I honestly will own
 That I hae somewhat lazy grown,
 For, sure, it is sax months an' better
 Since I received your last kind letter ;
 An' here I am, only begun
 Tae dae what should langsyne been done.
 But, dear auld freend, ye mauna think,
 Tho' I've been sparin' o' my ink,
 An' pen an' paper, an' what not,
 That I hae you or yours forgot.
 I'm lang, I ken, ahin' my time,
 An' sae, for prose, I'll gi'e ye rhyme,
 Such as my lame Muse may indite,
 Tae try au' set the matter right.
 Atweel, I think, the shauchlin dame
 Should bear the butt-end o' the blame,
 For, really, she has sic strange notions,
 An' maks sae mony cripple motions,
 That, day an' night, I maun attend her,
 Or, ten tae ane, I wad offend her,
 An' mak' her wi' some ane or ither

Skedaddle frae me a' thegither—
 A step I wadna like tae see,
 A head-strong jade altho' she be.
 For, tho' she wears the breeks, I feel
 I like the hirplin' kimmer weel.
 In troth, there's something in her smile
 That lichtens a' my care an' toil,
 An' even in her hardest measure
 There is a hidden joy an' pleasure
 Worth mair tae me than hoarded treasure ;
 Therefore, as ye will plainly see,
 Wi' a' her fauts she's dear tae me.
 Then, shurely, ye will us excuse,
 An' no wi' ony huff refuse
 Tae gie us sune a guid lang screed,
 Which will delight oor hearts tae read.

But I maun hasten tae express,
 Wi' gratitude an' happiness,
 That we are in receipt o' health,
 Likewise a modicum o' wealth,
 Which, wi' contentment, mak's me rich,
 Like mony a cottar in a ditch,
 Who, tho' up tae the knees in glaur,
 Is healthier an' happier far
 Than he who bids him toil an' sweat,
 An' gies him labour's crumbs tae eat.
 An' why ? because earth's sweetest joys
 Hae aft the bitterest alloys,
 Of which, he who partakes the least
 Is healthiest and happiest.

But dinna think I entertain
 The notion that a' earthly gain
 Is mair an evil than a guid,
 An' should as evil be eschewed.
 Na, na, I like ower weel the "clink,"
 Sic daft like things as that tae think.
 A shillin' is a friend in need,
 An' therefore is a friend indeed ;
 An' may we a' hae plenty o' them,
 An' ken baith hoo tae sow an' grow them.
 But let us ever bear in mind
 There never was a shillin' coin'd
 Worth mair, tae tell its value proper,
 Than only twal broon bits o' copper !
 An' friends, indeed, altho' they be,
 Mair than they hae they canna gie.

It is because we estimate
 At far ower high or low a rate
 The thoosan' benefits o' life,
 That disappointments are sae rife.
 The greatest blessing e'er enjoyed,
 The greatest curse is misemployed ;
 Therefore the biggest greedy purse
 Is aft tae man the greatest curse.
 But what need I my crotchets air
 On sic a crotchetsless affair
 As that ; hoo'er we may dispute,
 We canna dae a haet withoot—
 Frae gildet throne tae glaury sheuch,
 Gie every honest man eneuch ;

But empty bags an' prison fare,
Tae him that nabs a neebor's share.

Tae gie ye some mair o' my crack
I hardly ken what next tae tak' ;
Tho' folk that's gi'en a wee tae blether
Are seldom ill-aff for a tether.
I'll hae tae gie ye mair, hooever,
Either o' ae thing or anither ;
Therefore, what e'er comes first I'll write,
Hooever tasty, stale, or trite ;
An' what tho' I should mak' hotch-potch ?
The dish is guid—forbye it's Scotch ;
An' will be tae your very taste
If I will it but rightly baste.

Altho' ye are awa' in Wales,
Far frae your native hills an' dales,
Like every genuine Scot, nae doot,
Ye've mony an anxious thocht about
The welfare o' your dear, auld mither,
Far north among her native heather.
Puir body, she's an unco cratur,
Aye strivin' wi' an anxious natur'
Tae keep her bairns a' hale an' ticht,
An' guide them in the way that's richt.
Weel may we a' rejoice thegither
Ower sic a sterlin', faithfu' mither ;
Prood o' the honour to defend her
Frae every hand that wad offend her.
Brave as oor faithers who defied
Her haughty sister, when she tried

Tae steal her croon an' tartan plaid,
An' mak' her but a servant maid.

Nae wonder, near or far awa',
Her stalwart sons an' dochters braw,
Should on her sonsy haggis dine,
An' sing her sangs o' auld langsyne,
Burnin' wi' patriotic pride,
An' fondness o' the auld fireside,
Whaur they began life's wheel tae ca',
An' dance the morn o' life awa'.

Noo, Davie lad, strive tae unfurl
Her noble banner tae the warl';
An' prove, like mony a worthy brither,
Ye're worthy o' your worthy mither.
Stick in her cap anither feather
Beside the thistle an' the heather,
An' show the Welsh hoo Scotchmen can
Perform the duties o' a man;
An' sae ye'll mak' her auld heart fain,
An' prood tae tell ye are her ain;
For she is ne'er in better fettle,
Than when her callan's prove their mettle
Tae be the real, true genuine stuff,
Weel tempered, hardy, dour, an' tough.

The news aboot Muirkirk are scarce,
An' hardly worth while tae rehearse,
Unless the auld, auld sang o' Life
An' Death, engaged in mortal strife.
Births, marriages, an' deaths are plenty,
'Mong plainest folks an' brawest gentry,

Causing alternate joy an' sorrow,
 Laughter to-day, weeping to-morrow ;
 But thus, alas! ower a' the earth
 Grief lurks behind the scenes o' mirth ;
 An' aften when the heart is proodest,
 An' heartless, hollow laughter's loodest,
 Wi' velvet foot, steps on the stage,
 'Mid thoughtless youth an' harden'd age,
 Tae bid us live as we wad dee,
 Wi' kind compassion in her e'e.

But thoughtless Mirth seeks tae beguile
 Wi' giddy dance, sly wink, an' smile,
 An' wanton sang, which seems tae say,
 " Be jolly, boys, while ye may—
 Man is not here tae weep an' sigh ;
 Eat, drink, an' merry be to-day,
 To-morrow we are doomed tae dee."
 But what need I sing that auld sang,
 Which has been sung sae weel an' lang ?
 Weel, man's sae ready tae gi'e ear,
 Tae every vulgar jest an' jeer—
 Tae eat an' drink, an' real an' rave,
 Ah! headlang tae the very grave ;
 Deaf as the deid tae Wisdom's voice,
 That bids him weep as weel's rejoice—
 I canny but pour some effusion
 Upon the wicked wild delusion,
 Advancing noo wi' measur'd stride,
 Alang wi' fortune's siller tide,
 At sic a rate, I must confess,
 Mair than enough is worse than less,

At least for fules; an' oh! how plenty,
 Some seventeen in every twenty,
 Like grushy, growin' weeds that would
 Upon the tender flower intrude,
 But for the stern law o' correction,
 That keeps the lawless in subjection.

Since I hae mentioned flower an' weed,
 My notion, noo, is tae proceed
 Into my little garden plot,
 Tae tell ye what I there hae got;
 For weel I ken, ye like tae hear
 About the lovely beauties dear,
 That tae the prince an' peasant smile,
 Unconscious o' distinction's wile—
 Beauties, benevolent, divine,
 That taught us brotherhood langsyne,
 An' eas'd the care that life annoys,
 By breathing Nature's sweetest joys.

I've fancy fuchsias, trig an' tight,
 Single, double, dark, an' light,
 Gold an' silver edged geraniums,
 Ageratum, mexicanums,
 Plain an' spotted calceolaries,
 Starry, staring cineraries,
 Genista fragrans—scented broom,
 Statice profusa in full bloom;
 A cactus wi' a thoosand teeth,
 An' echeveria, an' a heath;
 Scarlet lichins, gentiana,
 Also Napoleon lantana,

An' lovely frog-moothed antirrhinums,
 Phloxes, lupins, stocks, delphinums,
 Dahlias, an' gladioli too,
 Profuse in mony a lovely hue,
 An' rose an' lily, pink an' pansy,
 Mint an' rue, an' thyme an' tansy ;
 Likewise a myrtle, glossy green,
 Whose sweetest beauties are unseen,
 Which, like the greatest gifts o' Heaven,
 If never sought, are never given—
 A plant o' ancient pedigree,
 Modest, yet full o' dignity ;
 A type o' man o' far mair worth,
 Than croon'd coxcomb o' hothouse birth.
 My ferns, tae, tho' not yet big,
 Are coxy things, baith trim an' trig,
 An' aye remind me when I tend them
 Hoo kind it was o' you to send them ;
 For which, at length, my dear, auld freend,
 I in return this posy send,
 An' till I'm fit tae pay ye better,
 Alloo me tae remain your debtor.

An', noo, I'll draw tae a conclusion,
 No tae be guilty o' intrusion ;
 For lang, I fear, before this time
 Ye're wearied o' my jinglin' rhyme,
 Which, at the best, is but a dabble
 O' bleerie milk an' water twaddle,
 Unfit for ony tender stamack
 That ne'er dissolved a mashlom bannock.

But common gabs are no sae nice
 About their pickle an' their spice ;
 An' wi' a ready appetite
 Can relish ony wholesome bite
 Or soup—mair worth than dishes rare
 On which nice gabbit bodies fare.
 An' sae, my freend, tho' sooth the Tweed,
 Whaur folks on dainty dishes feed,
 I howp this hamely dish o' mine
 Ye will accept for auld langsyne,
 An' tae it ample justice gie,
 A Doric crowdie tho' it be.

~~~~~  
*LOMOND GOLD.*

**S**OME stories rowe frae mooth tae mooth,  
 Wi' muckle clash an' din,  
 An' grow till only raxin' gabs  
 Are fit tae tak' them in.  
 An' weel I mind o' yin langsyne,  
 The folk o' Fife were told,  
 Which sent them up the Lomond Hills,  
 In scores tae gather gold.  
 Frae Torryburn far in the wast,  
 East tae the very Neuk,  
 Ilk toon an' clachan hither sent  
 Some chield tae try his luck.  
 Wi' picks an' mattocks, spades an' shules,  
 An' pocks tae haud the treasure,  
 They hastened for the golden shrine  
 O' wealth, wi' hope an' pleasure.

An' sae I took the gaet mysel',  
    Wi' twa three cronies dear ;  
But far mair for the scouth an' fun  
    Than fortune's glancin' gear.  
For what's sae dear tae sportin' youth  
    As liberty tae rammle  
Amang the braes, tae pu' the slaes,  
    The blae-blibe, an' the bramble ?  
On by Benarty's woody hichts,  
    An' Leven's famous shore,  
Whaur Mary, Scotland's bonnie Queen,  
    Landed in days o' yore.  
An' up the Lomond's grassy steeps,  
    Amang the sheep an' kine,  
Which glower'd tae see sic fules on tramp  
    Tae Ophir's golden mine.  
An' weel they nicht ! but up we press'd,  
    Somewhat in Indian file,  
Nursing, at times, a thocht aboot  
    Oor portion o' the spoil ;  
For tho' it wasna oor intent  
    Tae get oor goupins fu' ;  
Oor thochts, nae doot, were tinged awae  
    Wi' Mammon's yellow hue.  
Sae up an' up, ower dykes an' drains,  
    We sprachled, stap by stap ;  
Until, at length, wi' weary shanks,  
    We reached houp's towrie tap.  
But there we got a sair begouk,  
    No very nice tae thole,

For, whisht! the golden mine was but  
 An auld caum-quarry hole.

An' what the folks were ca'in' gold  
 Was only brimstane stour,  
 Which, frae that day, gae tae mankind  
 The smeeky sulphur cure.

An', losh! it hadna weel been smelt,  
 When, wi' a bringe, it hurled  
 Us doon among the whinns again,  
 Tae warsle wi' the warld.

An' auld Experience thocht fit  
 Tae preach at oor expense,  
 That folk should never hae mair gear  
 Than what they hae o' sense ;  
 That if oor fauts we never saw,  
 We never wad be wise ;  
 An', if we never had a fa',  
 What need had we tae rise ?

" Write that," quo' he, " in biggest text,  
 An' didna sorry be,  
 Tho' disappointment cast ye doon,  
 That ye yersel's micht see.  
 Arise! an climb life's Alpine hichts  
 Wi' nobler aim an' will ;  
 There, gold is found o' far mair worth,  
 Than that o' Lomond Hill."

Such was the leëson that we got,  
 An' noo, I maun confess,  
 A truer sermon ne'er was read  
 Frae poopit, or frae press ;

An' should it gie the readers o't  
 Ae thocht the mair o' sense,  
 Tae climb so as they winna fa',  
 I'll ne'er grudge my expense.

~~~~~

THE WEE WORDIE "NO."

SIN days o' sic learnin' tae read, write, an' speak,
 In German an' French, Latin, Hebrew, an'
 Greek,

It's a black-burnin' shame, baith for auld an' for
 young,

Tae mak' sic a bootch o' oor auld mither-tongue;
 For tho' we can jabber in German an' French,
 An' ither strange tongues, thirst o' lip-lore tae quench,
 Wi' a' oor glib-gab, there are few high or low,
 When brocht tae the test ken the way tae say "No."

Atweel, noo-a-days, soond is set up for sense,
 An' bids fair tae rival pounds, shillin's, an' pence;
 For if we're unable a trumpet tae blaw,
 We're reckoned worth little or naething ava.
 But gie us the gift o' a glib, soople tongue,
 Tae wag in the wind o' a strong, leather lung,
 We then will be fit for the poopit, although
 We ken neither, hoo, when, nor whaur tae say "No."


We're like tae be deaved tae, wi' revellin' din,
 O' great swellin' floods foamin' ower craigie linn,
 From which mists arise that bamboozle the brain,
 An' mak' e'en the sanest o' mortals insane.

Yet what need we lecture, an' hector, or preach,
 The best way is quietly oor neebor tae teach,
 That never a drap ower a craigie wad flow,
 If folk wad mak' use o' the wee wordie "No."

An' what silly fondness for glitter an' glare,
 Tho' it be but o' false Abyssinian ware,
 Big gogglin' buttons, in raws up an' doon,
 Or some fal-de-ral tooried high on the croon,
 As if a' without, an' naething within
 Could add tae oor welfare below or abune ;
 An' what can it add, but mair clearly to show,
 The genuine worth o' the wee wordie "No."


But noo I will leave ye tae judge for yersel',
 For what mair about the wee thing need I tell,
 Than that it's mair worth in the battle o' life
 For young man an' maiden, an' husband an' wife,
 Than a' the fleegaries o' fashion genteel
 Devised by the master o' arts—the auld Deil—
 An', as we are told, even he, the arch foe,
 Is forced tae retreat by the wee wordie "No."

~~~~~  
 LOOK BEFORE YOU LOUP.

 LET us ever keep in mind,  
 As thro' this world we gang,  
 That there is only ae richt road,  
 Among a thoosand wrang.  
 That as we tug the trams o' toil,  
 Tae get a bite an' soup,  
 We aye may wale oor steps wi' care,  
 An' look before we loup.

Nae doot, when gaun against the stream,  
 We've mony jows tae jook,  
 That gie us unco little time  
 Tae either think or look.  
 But, be that as it may, I'm shure  
 It wad save mony a coup,  
 If we wad keep oor best fit first,  
 An' look before we loup.  
 Far better gang a bit about  
 The slippy, stumlin' stanes,  
 Than ower them ram-stam, heidlang fa',  
 An' break a body's banes.  
 For, even wi' a lang ram-race,  
 We may hae little houp  
 O' lichtin' on oor feet, unless  
 We look before we loup.  
 There's danger whaur we dinna think,  
 Dumb dogs that winna bark,  
 Sae let us never try oor luck  
 At loupin' in the dark.  
 For if we will, nae doot, we shall  
 Get dumpie on the dowp,  
 Tae teach us at oor ain expense  
 Tae look before we loup,

~~~~~  
 A MUIRLAN' RHYME.


 OR lang, muirlan'toon, lying straucht east an' wast,
 Exposed on a' sides tae the brunt o' the blast,
 Is said tae hae nine months o' cauld, winter weather,
 An' three months o' a' the sorts jumbled thegither,

An' that it stands richt on the opposite side
 O' the globe, tae whaur Adam first buckled his bride,
 For there they had Summer's blithe smile a' the year—
 The very reverse o' the thing we hae here.
 Ae day, wi' a smirk o' a smile on its cheek,
 Mak's workin' fock strip tae the sark an' the breek;
 Sends the mavis tae sing on the tapmost twig high,
 An' the laverock tae warble aloft in the sky;
 Ilk birdie supposin', wi' heart fu' o' glee,
 That Summer is come by the glint o' her e'e;
 But neist day brings back the auld hech-howe again—
 Cauld, batterin' blasts o' hail, snaw, sleet, or rain—
 That mak' bird an' body sae pookit an' oorie,
 That gladly in ony bit bield we wad coorie,
 An' skoog twa three minutes tae keep oor duds dry
 If the cauld, clatty clutch o' a blast wad blaw by.
 But, dear me! it aften pelts sax weeks on end,
 An', therefore, we never ken when it 'll mend;
 Sae drookit an' draigled we waggle awa',
 Attemptin' at times a bit kick at the ba',
 While strivin' tae keep, in the bustle an' strife,
 Oor poother aye dry for the battle o' life.
 But, losh! siccan weather wad maistly defy
 Auld Noah tae keep that commodity dry;
 An' hoo the sweet gingerbread bodies genteel
 Escape dissolution, I canna reveal;
 Indeed, hoo sic tender, sweet, sensitive stuff
 Can be sae dissolvent, yet hardy enough
 The law o' cohesion tae richtly maintain
 Wi' ae day o' drooth for some sax days o' rain,
 Wad puzzle a limb o' the law tae explain.


But tho' contradiction seem pairt o' their natures,
 I canna but say they are kind bits o' cr'atures,
 An' help weel awa' wi' the cares an' the crosses
 Sae rife in this life 'mang the muirs an' the mosses.
 An' tho' they hae mony a puzzle aboot them,
 I here will confess we wad fare waur without them ;
 For wi' the confection o' love in the heart,
 A sweet tae the bitterest cup they impart,
 Without which, I fear, we wad stick in the mud,
 Or, seaward, be carried awa' wi' the flood.

Sic weather, nae doot, tries the temper gey sair,
 As daily it adds tae oor burden o' care ;
 But tho' Nature pours doon her buckets upon us,
 As if the dame wad ategither disown us,
 We aft get a blink o' her bonny blue e'e,
 In which her love for us we plainly can see.
 An' tho' ye wad think she whiles tries tae annoy,
 In truth, it is only that we may enjoy
 Her blessings the better, for ower mony fair'ns
 Aye mak' us forget we're John Tamson's puir bairns.
 Indeed, as it is, I'm afraid some already
 Forget that auld John was their father, puir body,
 At least, when they meet a puir sister or brither,
 At kirk or at market, it matters nae whither,
 They gang by without either word, nod, or smile,
 As if recognition their credit wad spoil.
 But lest fock may think I'm ill-aff for a job,
 That auld human failin' I'll nae further probe ;
 We're a' a wee blin' oor ain blunders tae see,
 An' something within me says, " Let it a-be."

A passing allusion, however, may throw
 A straw on the waters their current tae show,
 An' aiblins may be tae the thochtless a guide
 Tae keep them frae soomin alang wi' the tide,
 Or mountin' the horses that beggars wad ride,
 Tae be run awa wi', an' haud by the mane,
 Like Gilpin, the fashion's blue ribbon tae gain.
 But maybe I've said raither mair than enough,
 An' paintet a picture, I doot, a wee rough,
 Yet, when ye are wantin' tae frichten the craws,
 There's nae use in buskin' a bogle wi' brows.
 A body's the better o' gettin' a sicht
 Sometimes o' himsel', tho' it gies him a fricht,
 An', therefore, I howp it will gie nae offence,
 But that its bit lesson o' plain, common sense
 May help tae remind us, through foul an' fair weather,
 Hoo near oor relation is tae ane anither ;
 An' that, tho' we should on the tide o' time rise,
 It's no in the riggin' oor duty maist lies,
 But doon upon deck, by the compass an' helm,
 Lest some sudden blast may oor wherry o'erwhelm.

~~~~~

*A NICHT'S DISCUSSION.*


 E nicht, no very lang sinsyne,  
 I had the privilege tae dine  
 Wi' Davie Dykes an' Peter Plain,  
 Twa near relations o' my ain,  
 Wha are by rich an' puir respeckit,  
 Altho', of coorse, gey sair negleckit  
 By fortune's senseless, pampered bairns,  
 Wha seem tae think the man that earns

His bite o' bread by sweat o' brow  
 A sinner o' a darker hue—  
 Sae very common, vulgar, vile,  
 Unfit for ocht but "leave tae toil"  
 For those, by some law in creation,  
 Exalted tae a higher station.  
 They think, tae, shilpit, silly things,  
 Sic trumpery as finger-rings,  
 Alberts, locketts, bracelets, brooches,  
 Silks an' satins, gigs an' coaches,  
 An' a' the gewgaws that adorn,  
 Are proofs that they are higher born.

But Davie an' his Uncle Pate  
 Ken better hoo tae estimate  
 The worth o' a' sic gilded trash  
 On which fules spend sae muckle cash ;  
 Forgetting that a peacock pride  
 But shows the thing it tries tae hide,  
 An' that the fineness o' the skin  
 Is no a proof o' worth within.  
 An' weel they ken it's human natur',  
 Especially wi' the weaker creatur',  
 Tae mak' a leaf o' ony tree,  
 A patch tae hide infirmity ;  
 An' as tae a' her tinsel show,  
 Chignon aboon an' fur below,  
 They only prove, an' mak' mair plain,  
 Her fa' an' wish tae rise again.

My twa kind freends, I here may tell,  
 Are workin' folks jist like mysel' ;

Ane is as braw a strappin' herd  
 As e'er laup sheuch or cross't a foord,  
 Or gathered, 'mang the bloomin' heather,  
 His bleating yowes an' lambs thegither.  
 Wi' crook in hand, an' tartan plaid  
 Hung owre his manly shouthers braid,  
 An' faithfu' collie at his side,  
 Waitin' a biddin' tae "gae wide;"  
 He mak's a body fain tae see 'im,  
 An' prood tae hae acquaintance wi' 'im;  
 I'm shure nae Scotchman wad forget  
 Tae sing wi' him "Auld Scotland yet."

The ither is a weaver chiel,  
 Whose purse is licht, but heart is leal;  
 An earnest, honest, independent  
 Freend o' every just amendment  
 In either Kirk or State affairs,  
 Sae very needfu' o' repairs.  
 Hame or abroad he's ever ready  
 Tae draw a bow wi' ony body,  
 That wad by ony partial law  
 Gie grace tae ane an' no tae a';  
 As if puir bodies didna heir  
 O' common richts a common share.  
 Weaver, hooever, tho' he be,  
 He's no sae blind as canna see,  
 That puirest folk hae greatest need  
 Tae moderate thocht, word, an' deed;  
 But as he can his ain tale tell,  
 Ye'll better listen tae himsel'.



An' Davie—wha, at times that nicht,  
 Put in a word tae keep him richt.  
 “I fear,” quo he, “the way we're whurled  
 An' whummeled roond wi' this auld world  
 Heels doon the a'e time, up the ither—  
 Folk's heads are turnin' a' thegither.  
 Atweel, they are sae licht an' giddy,  
 They're rinnin' races tae the wuddie ;  
 An' if ane disna gallop wi' them,  
 It is a sorry sicht tae see them  
 Gang scamperin' by, as if afraid  
 Some auld acquaintance micht be made,  
 That wad a gazin' world remind  
 Hoo shadows cast themselves behind ;  
 Obscure the present wi' the past,  
 An' pride's ambition overcast.  
 Shame fa' the fule, wha e'er he be,  
 That wad deny his pedigree  
 Tae ape a mock gentility,  
 Forgetting that the humblest birth  
 Was that which honour'd maist this earth.”

“A' that,” said Davie, “may be true,  
 Yet, let us gi'e the deil his due ;  
 An' no, like spitefu' gossips mean,  
 Judge folk frae what they may hae been.  
 Altho' nae lood salutin' horn  
 Was blawn that mornin' I was born  
 (Except, amid life's common bustle,  
 A squech or twa on Natur's whustle)—  
 A mither's welcome, far mair worth,

Awaited my approach tae earth ;  
 An' tho' 'twas in a shepherd's cot,  
 Awa' among the hills, I'm not  
 A single hair the less worth o't ;  
 Yet, whether clash-bags bless or ban,  
 It's present worth that mak's the man."

" True, true," said Pate, " but bear in mind  
 It's possible tae be ower kind,  
 Baith tae yersel' an' ither folk,  
 An' thereby stinkin' pride provoke.  
 If ye had been whaur I hae been,  
 An' seen the things that I hae seen,  
 I'm shure ye never wad hae laid  
 Ocht tae my charge for what I've said.  
 You say—an' I believe it's true—  
 'The deil himsel' should get his due ;'  
 But, Davie lad, we maun tak' care  
 An' no gie saunt or sinner mair ;  
 For, ever sin' the day we fell,  
 Ilk ane thinks plenty o' himsel',  
 An' needs nae licht tae let him see  
 The mote that's in his neebor's e'e,  
 Tho' in his ain a beam may be.  
 Far better speak a'e word tae hummle,  
 Than ten tae lift folk up tae tummle ;  
 An' bear in mind, the sugar'd puff  
 Is waur than either kick or cuff.  
 Ye maunna think I am inclined  
 Tae harbour malice in my mind,  
 Altho' I say cluds o' the past

Their shadows back upon us cast.  
We need the shade as weel's the shine,  
'The rough as weel's the smooth an' fine,  
Tae tell us—let us no forget,  
That soon the sun o' life will set,  
An' leave us in the gloamin' gray—  
That hour night mak's retreatin' day  
A captive, till triumphant morn,  
On golden pinions swiftly born,  
The pow'rs o' darkness puts to flight  
For ever, wi' eternal light.  
Awa' amang the hichts an' howes,  
Attendin' tae your rams an' yowes,  
An' friskin', innocent wee lambs,  
'Maa, maain' for their lovin' dams ;  
While speckl'd muirfowls quack an' berr,  
An' cushats woin' in the fir,  
An' music o' the wimplin' rill,  
Your heart wi' Nature's gladness fill ;  
It's hardly possible ye can  
Ken half the vanities o' man—  
Hoo fond we are o' airy things,  
That flirt aboot on siller wings,  
Deceivin' us, as butterflees  
Deceive the bairns they sport an' please ;  
An' few the sad mistak' fin' oot  
Until its raither late, I doot ;  
For ance the stane begins tae rowe,  
It seldom halts till in the howe,  
Doon at the bottom o' the brae  
It hurls doon fast and faster frae."



“Nae doot,” said Davie, “weavers see  
Far mair than muirlan’ herds like me,  
Surrounded aye wi’ Nature pure,  
Far frae a’ worldly din an’ stour,  
An’ wofu’ vice an’ vanity  
O’ selfish, prood humanity.  
But tho’ I herd the fleecy flocks,  
Loup hags, wade burns, speil braes an’ rocks,  
Cheered by the hearty-happy strains  
O’ Natur’ tae her country swains,  
Far frae the city’s endless din,  
Its wealth, its misery, an’ sin ;  
I hae some notion o’ the strife  
Engendered by the grades o’ life—  
Hoo ilka ane preys on the ither,  
Withoot a single qualm or swither ;  
An’ he that’s up tae fleechin’ best  
Is praised for being cleverest.  
Ane o’ the surest ways, I troo,  
That fleecers bag sae muckle woo,  
An’ send sae mony naked sheep  
Athort the hills their bite tae seek.  
But I suppose that is their lot,  
An’ man an’ sheep’s the better o’t ;  
Hooever, Pate, as ye ken best,  
Speak oot, an’ tell us a’ the rest.”

“Deed, Davie, I begin tae see  
Ye ken auld Adam’s weel as me,  
An’ that the auld specks I look through  
An’ yours are maistly o’ a hue ;

Therefore we needna rave an' clatter  
A great deal mair about the matter.  
But by the action on the brain  
O' that strange law, few can explain,  
Which mak's the mole-hill seem a mountain,  
The sma'est rill the biggest fountain ;  
Or else, in its inverted style,  
Mak's the noblest things look mean an' vile,  
I fear there is between us twa  
Some room tae differ efter a'.  
I ken o'or sugar's mixt wi' sand,  
By vilest villain's cruel hand ;  
An' tea's made up wi' mony a leaf,  
That gi'e the weary nae relief ;  
Oor very floor, meal, milk, an' butter,  
Are mixt wi' dirt—a shame tae utter ;  
In maistly every cup we drain,  
There's less a blessin' than a bane ;  
An' maistly every bite we eat,  
An' every steek for back or feet,  
Has a percentage o' deception,  
That mocks at justice an' detection—  
Increases Mammon's sordid gains,  
By multiplyin' human pains ;  
An' sae degrades man's goodly name,  
By robbin' him o' every aim  
Except the ane for makin' cash,  
Which, weighed wi' worth, is only trash.  
But yet, for a', it's wrang tae say  
We a' on ane anither prey,  
As if we were a hungry pack  
O' hounds upon ilk ither's track.

For a' the heartless rakes an' knaves,  
An' fops, an' fules, an' self-bound slaves;  
Thank God, there's mony an honest man  
Strivin' the very best he can  
Tae make a single talent twa,  
An' chase the ills o' life awa'.  
But, ah! I fear they are but few  
Beside the mony that pursue  
Life's journey doon the broadest gauge,  
And harden, raither than assuage,  
The troubles an' the trials that make  
The hardest head an' heart tae ache.

“ Let us, my friends, be o' the true,  
Obedient, honest, sober few,  
Wha humbly strive tae climb the brae  
O' life, whatever ithers dae ;  
An' let us aye dae what we can  
Tae help oor neebor fellow-man ;  
For, oh ! puir human natur's proon  
Tae tumble, an' gang hurlin' doon,  
Like waters rowin' ower a linn,  
As tae their parent source they rin.  
An' a' her bairns, sae like hersel',  
In word an' deed the auld tale tell,  
That proves she's brocht shame an' disgrace  
On every member o' her race.  
But if ane proves mair than anither  
The sad mishap o' oor auld mither,  
I'm sure it's yon conceitit ass  
That for a thorough-bred wad pass,

By geck o' heid, an' wag o' tail,  
 That far behind the hurdies trail;  
 Or some bit gildit belt or buckle  
 That mak's the wearer fidge an' chuckle;  
 Or fancy, fine rigwiddie chain,  
 Tho' no a bawbee o'ts his ain,  
 Detraction's nasty mouth tae gag,  
 An' prove he is a thorough nag;  
 Yet harness cuddies hoo ye may,  
 They're aye discovered by their bray,  
 Or by their length o' tail an' lugs,  
 Which winna hide, nae mair than dug's.

"But, maybe, they are no tae blame  
 In tryin' sae tae change their name,  
 It is sae common noo-a-days  
 Wi' folk that wad their standard raise;  
 'Deed some, I fear, like Simon, would  
 Bribe heaven wi' siller if they could,  
 Just as they buy in Kirk an' State  
 The honour o' the upper seat,  
 While humble worth seeks aft in vain  
 The lowest sittin' tae obtain.  
 Tae tell the truth, sin' time began,  
 Wealth's been the standard o' the man;  
 The source o' honour, power, an' rank,  
 In kirk an' market, board an' bank;  
 An' that's the way folk's sic an' itch  
 Tae scrape an' scramble tae get rich—  
 If no in fact, at least in name,  
 By cost o' heid, back, briest, an' wame;

Thinkin', nae doot, thereby tae pass  
For members o' some upper class ;  
An' feared tae gie a glint behind  
Tae what nicht dae them guid tae mind.  
For, tho' it's shabby tae upcast  
Folk's fauts an' failins o' the past,  
It's richt ilk ane should keep in view  
His ain, altho' o' darkest hue ;  
That as we ower life's waters glide,  
Rejoicin' wi' fair wind an' tide,  
We may oor ain true colours show,  
Baith fore an' aft, tae freen' an' foe,  
An' ne'er unfurl ower muckle sail,  
Nor for the want o' ballast fail.  
Like true men, let us, day by day,  
Steer by the chart that points the way  
O' safety ower life's troubled sea,  
Tae whaur we a' wad like tae be.  
An' should the mists o' earth surroond,  
'Then carefully the waters soond,  
An' gie a wide berth tae the coast  
On which sae mony lives are lost.

“ I nicht enlaarge, an' say far mair,  
On mony anither ugly sair  
That preys on body, soul, an' mind,  
An' a' the beauties o' mankind ;  
But, haith, it is nae fancy job  
Sic nasty festerin' sairs tae probe ;  
Forbye, a finger points me hame,  
An' tells me o' a dochty dame,

Wha, if I dinna cut my stick,  
 May hae wi' me a craw tae pick.  
 An' Davie has a lang dark road,  
 Across the muir tae his abode,  
 Whaur, at the blinkin' ingle cheek,  
 Ane sits alane, at thrifty steek,  
 Anxious a weel kenn'd step tae hear,  
 Tae banish a' her doot an' fear.  
 Sae, Davie, ye maun through the heather,  
 Fearless o' a' ye may forgether,  
 Let it be spunkie, ghaist, or witch,  
 Black moss hag, rock, scaur, dyke, or ditch,  
 Tae mak' yer Nancy glad an' cheery,  
 Far in yer muirlan' sheilin' dreary.  
 An' I'll awa straight doon the gaet,  
 Tae get a word or twa frae Kate."

Sae ilk ane shook hands wi' the ither,  
 An pairtit—houpin' no for ever.

~~~~~  
THE COTTAR'S SONG.

FAIR-FACED, fickle fortune may mak' it my lot
 Tac live in a wee, reekie, rash-theekit cot,
 An' eat o' her crumbs for the sweat o' my broo,
 As she deals oot her dauds tae her ain-favoured few.
 But tho' she thus treat me I'll never repine,
 As lang as a strong, brawny arm is mine ;
 A faint heart will ne'er gain a lady that's fair,
 Sae I'll tak' a' she'll gi'e me, an' strive tae get mair.
 Yet never will I seek tae pree her sweet mou',
 As some o' her court-the-purse fond lovers do ;

It's no her big purse I'm in love wi' ava,
For it aft robs the briest tho' it mak's the back braw.

Let her gi'e me the true, honest hirelin's just share,
As my broo pays the price, an' I'll never ask mair ;
But, oh ! she is backward that sma' share tae gi'e,
An' cares nae for Nannie, the bairnies, nor me.

Sair, sair is the pang when the wee bodies greet,
As they toddle about wi' their wee, hackit feet ;
Unfed an' unclad, like their mither an' me,
An' aye seekin' something we haena tae gi'e.

Ah, fortune ! why gi'e us a coat that's threed-bare,
A cauldriife hearthstane, an' a mean, scrimpit fare ;
When the sweat o' my broo rears the corn an' the wine,
That a' your prood sons an' gay dochters may dine ?

I'm sure, in the great Book o' Truth it is said,
"That man by the sweat o' his face should eat bread,
That the muzzle's a thing that shouldna be worn
By oxen that willingly tread oot the corn."

But what need a puir, kintra cottar complain,
An' seek for the thing that would seem no his ain ?
Contentment—the richest crown jewel o' the lot—
Is oftenest found in the lowliest cot.

DAME FORTUNE AND HER STEPBAIRNS.

SOME sages say that Fortune gi'es,
Impartially tae a',
Some golden opportunity
Tae kick her golden ba',

An' that, if we don't kick it then,
Her credit tae attain,
She'll never bowl anither ba',
For us tae kick again.

But let the Dame be what she may,
I wad her free o' that,
For she's far readier tae bowl,
Than what we are tae bat,
For ane wha tak's her at her word,
Hoo' mony idly sit,
An' never try tae lift a bat
The finest ba' tae hit?

An' yet, wi' what I needna name,
They look at her askance,
An' talk as if they were stepbairns,
Wha never got a chance.
An' blame the Dame for bein' prood,
Camsteerie, an' untrue,
Because she frowns upon the feck,
An' smiles upon the few.

But wha need wonder though she should
At times against us thraw,
When, truth tae speak, the mair she gi'es,
The mair we throw awa' ;
An' winna listen tae the sang,
Though sung by lark an' thrush,
Which says—" A birdie in the han'
Is worth twa in the bush !"

Nae doot, she has some jockey tricks,
Else hoo could beggars ride,

An' titled fules drive tandem doon
 The Broadway, side by side ?
 But blind is he wha winna see,
 Their driving tae the de'il
 Is proof we should by diligence
 The tree o' success speil.

Yes! let us quit ourselves like men,
 Amid sunshine an' storm,
 Ilk feeling prood tae act that part
 Nae other can perform.
 Then fewer frowns we'll hae tae bide,
 Mair smiles experience ;
 For, mark, the Dame's nae ither than
 Handmaid tae Providence.

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 THE TWA WARLOCKS.

**W**HEN gloomy winter drives ower hill an' plain  
 The peltin' hail, an' drenchin' sleet an' rain,  
 Hoo sweet tae form the happy circle wide  
 Aroond the bleezin' ingle's clean fireside !  
 Tae help the lang dark nicht tae slip alang,  
 Wi' funny story, or some auld Scotch sang,  
 That mak's the heart the coward's deed tae spurn,  
 An' a' the inner fires o' life tae burn,  
 An' weld us in a glowe o' happiness  
 That glibest tongue's unable tae express.

Thus roond a dear, auld hearth, yae nicht langsyne,  
 Whaur I for garlan's strang the gowans fine,  
 A circle o' blythe lads an' lasses sat,  
 Beguilin' time wi' sang an' cheery chat,

When in cam' Jean M'Nab an' Tibbie Train,  
 Drookit an' draigled wi' the wind an' rain,  
 Declarin' that we a' should thankfu' feel  
 For haen sic a bein an' cosie beil  
 On sic a nicht, when fock at hame should bide  
 Tae coort the comforts o' their ain fireside.  
 But, like the dugs, they werna thrang at hame,  
 An' thankit guid, that they were neither lame  
 Nor lazy, though they micht be growin' auld  
 Like ither folk, an' noo, no jist sae bauld  
 Tae face the storm, or dance upon the green,  
 As when they were sweet, rosy seventeen.  
 But while they had a helm o' life tae steer,  
 They would keep freendship wi' auld neebors dear,  
 An' jist had come tae spend an hour or twa  
 Tae help a dreary winter's nicht awa.  
 An' weel I mind, for a' the storm's lood din,  
 Their stories made the wheels o' time tae spin  
 An hour sae quickly, that the youngsters a'  
 Thocht "Wagatty" had fairly run awa.

"I mind as weel as it had been yestreen,  
 Though sax an' twenty simmers syne," quo' Jean,  
 "I was engaged, oor Jenny's bairns tae keep—  
 Tae free her hand, an' let her oot tae reap  
 For twa three weeks in hairst—for women then  
 Kenn'd what it was tae work as weel's the men;  
 Thro' hay an' hairst, thay had tae fecht an' sweat,  
 An' yet, they hardly could get ends tae meet.  
 But noo-a-days, they get sic pays tae scatter,  
 Feint haet they dae, but gang about an' clatter,  
 Blessin' or blastin' cither ane or ither,

Or turnin' inside oot their auld guidmither.  
Jist let them flirt, an' flyte for mair tae spend,  
An' never speak about a dud tae mend.  
Weel, hairst began, an' Jenny took the field,  
As brave's a sodger her new blade tae wield,  
An' left me wi' an anxious heart behind,  
Her hoose, twa pigs, an' three wee bairns tae mind,  
A task, mair than eneugh for ony queen  
That only had a dozen simmers seen.  
But, at my age, although I say't mysel',  
I was a handy kimmer, sharp, an' snell,  
An' widna seen the tawpies in my road,  
That noo-a-days, like peacocks, flaunt abroad.  
The best, hooever, will sometimes be beat,  
An' aften has the sourest leek tae eat,  
As by experience we a' had learned  
Ere Jenny had her harvest-fee half earned.  
When liltin' by the cradle side yae day,  
Wha' slipit in, but sleeky Gibby Gray,  
In han' a cudgel like a cadger's rung,  
An' ower his shouther a meal-wallet hung,  
Which he—deil's emissary—made me fill  
Oot o' the girdel, sair against my will ;  
After yae handfu', he would hae anither,  
Until its neck would hardly draw thegither,  
An' aye he said, ' Ye mauna tell yer mither ;  
The pickle meal, I'm sure, 'll ne'er be mis't,  
An' for yer kindness, ye'll no gang unblest.'  
Wi' that, the pawky rascal hobbled oot,  
Rejoicin' ower his bold exploit, nae doot,  
An' glad was I tae see him at the door,

For sic a fricht I never gat before,  
Nor ha'e sin' syne ; but haith, had that been a',  
The damage dune atweel wad been but sma',  
An' hardly worth a word o' prose or rhyme,  
Altho' that made it nane the less a crime.  
The plisky spread like spunky, far an' wide,  
An' soon was crack for a' the kintra side ;  
Ilk ane declared that they wad mak' him rue  
The day he made me cram his wallet fu' ;  
The thievish vagabond wad never pree  
Anither bite or soup they had tae gie.  
Like ither fock, my mither heard the news,  
Which did, nae doot, her temper sairly roose,  
An', like the rest, she vowed what she wad learn  
The vagabond for meddlin' wi' her bairn.  
An' weel-a-wat, she hadna lang tae wait  
Upon a chance, her friend tae edicate ;  
For roon he cam', mair pious than before,  
Saying he was ' an auld man o' fourscore,  
'Twas better far tae gie than tae receive,  
The hand's aye fu' that does the puir relieve.'  
' May be,' quo she, ' ye twa-faced hypocrite,  
Yer' nocht but a deceivin', leein' cheat ;  
Some ither place, I wat, ye'll get yer fairin'  
For meddlin' wi' my puir bit helpless bairn.  
I like wi' honest poverty tae share  
What little comfort I may hae tae spare,  
But for a mean, dishonest rake like you,  
A guid coo-hidin' is the only due.  
Gae frae my door ; I'll never help ye mair,  
An' wi' Auld Horny, may ye nae waur fare.'

'Guidwife,' quo he, 'ye shouldna craw sae croose,  
 An' gie auld age an' frailty sic abuse,  
 Ye dinna ken, but ye may hae tae beg  
 A bite o' meat, before ye cruick the leg.  
 But maybe I can craw as weel as you,  
 An' by the powers aboon, I'll mak' ye rue  
 A thoosan' times for every word ye've said,  
 Ere four-an-twenty hours gang ower yer head.'  
 An' in a rage he stampit, spat, an' blew,  
 An' wi' his stick upon the floor he drew  
 Three magic strokes, an' tae the door he ran  
 Mong clouds o' meal, an' mony a fearfu' ban,  
 Mair like an evil speerit than a man.  
 An' waes-me, twenty-four hours hadna fled  
 When crummie in the byre was gotten dead,  
 Withoot a scratch, or ony trace tae tell  
 Hoo sic a sad calamity befell.  
 I'll say nae mair, but frae that waeful day,  
 The meal was plenty for auld Gibby Gray."

"Hech, sirce!" quo Tibbie, "that brings tae my  
 mind

A story I may tell o' that same kind,  
 About a cratur', fock ca'd Nickie Ben,  
 That gaed aboot in search o' pans tae men'—  
 A sort o' tinker, gaberlunzie bodie,  
 Attendit by a carlin' an' a cuddy.  
 Like Gibby, Nickie was declared tae be  
 Ower pack wi' ane whase name I needna gie,  
 An' therefore gat at ilka hoose a share  
 O' mony things that puir folk ill could spare,

An' they that scoff'd at warlock, witch, and ghaist,  
Was aye the readiest tae gi'e him maist ;  
Even the bauldest hardly dared tae say  
Tae ane or ither o' the family, ' Nay.'  
Aweel, yae day, the pawkie, gang'rel loon,  
Cam' wi' his friends tae a sma' kintra toon,  
Some twa-three miles alang frae whaur the douce  
Queen Marg'ret sleeps beside King Robert Bruce,  
An' there began his craft, frae hoose tae hoose ;  
But ere he had gaen far, he met a chiel  
Wha wad that day ha'e fochen wi' the deil—  
Ane rough Rab Roryson, a smith tae trade,  
A towsie, hardy-bardy, rattlin' blade,  
Mair sae that day, for he had got a drappie  
O' Lucky Lowrie's spirit-roosing nappie—  
An' haith, he brocht Auld Nickie tae the scratch,  
An' proved himsel' tae be mair than his match,  
In sic a way that nicht convince a nation,  
That, wi' his namesake, Ben, had bluid relation.  
Rab, strippit tae the apron, breeks, an' sark,  
Was in the smiddy, owerhip at his wark,  
Makin' the jaups o' iron flee aboot,  
While streams o' sweat frae every pore ran oot ;  
An' as the rafters dirled an' stiddy rang,  
Swelling the chorus o' Rab's canty sang,  
Wha but Auld Nickie slyly steppit in,  
Fearless o' hissin' spark or deavin' din,  
But never spak' until the heat was past,  
An' iron back into the fire was cast,  
When oot he drew an auld black cutty pipe,  
An' mang his tatter-bags began tae rype

An' fum'le, as he muttered tae himsel'  
Something that Rab demanded him tae tell,  
An' no tae think that ony grunt or grum'le,  
Or leein' moligrant that he nicht mum'le,  
Wad ever for a moment fash his noddle,  
Or mak' him gi'e the mair a bite or boddle.  
'Weel, weel,' quo' he, 'ye needna fash yer noddle,  
I'm seeking frae ye neither bite nor boddle,  
Nor need I care a spittle o' my mou',  
For ony braggin' burn-the-wind like you.  
Ye maybe think, as I'm auld an' frail,  
Ye've nocht tae fear, but tho' yer young an' hale,  
I'll warran' ye'll no mak' fun sae cheap o' me,  
Ayont three-score and ten altho' I be.'  
Burning wi' rage, Rab swore a fearfu' aith,  
An' minding that bluid drawn aboon the breath,  
Frae witch or warlock, took awa' their pooer,  
Resolved withoot delay tae try the cure.  
Sae wi' a bringe he laup oot o'er the stiddy,  
An' by the neck wi' yae hand held the body,  
While wi' the ither, three times quickly drew  
A roosty nail along his wized broo,  
Which made the crimson tide o' life tae rin  
Doon o'er the puir auld cratur's haffits thin.  
'Tak' that,' says Rab, 'ye auld limb o' the deevil,  
An' learn for time tae come tae be mair ceevil ;  
Ye lang ha'e been tae decent folk a pest,  
But noo ye may awa' an' try yer best,  
An' mind ye'll no practese yer tricks on me,  
A braggin' burn-the-wind altho' I be.'  
Withoot a word, puir Nickie slippit oot,

Wi' branded broo, and vengefu' heart, nae doot,  
 But feckless as a wean his wrath tae spend;  
 An' there, nae doot, his warlockship did end,  
 For frae that day the cratur' ne'er was seen  
 In ither shape as he before had been,  
 Gi'en the poacher aft a temptin' shot,  
 Syne o'er the rigs, unscathed, awa' wad trot.  
 The kirn, frae that day ne'er refused its butter,  
 The hens at midnight ne'er were heard tae flutter,  
 Kind hawkie answered tae the milkmaid's hail,  
 An' aye was ready for the milkin' pail;  
 An' Rab was praised, an' ca'd an' awfu' chiel,  
 A match for ony warlock, witch, or deil,  
 But haverin' bodies wadna cared tae tell  
 That Rab had some o' Nickie in himsel'.  
 Sae ends my tale, an' as it's gettin' late,  
 We'll hae tae say 'guid nicht,' an' tak' the gaet."

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CREEP AFORE YOU GANG.

"THE mair we hurry," it is said,
 "The less shall be oor speed,
 The fu'er fortune fills the purse
 The mair will be oor greed."
 Yet helter-skelter mony drive,
 Like Jehu, richt or wrang,
 An' ram-stam ride ower better bairns
 That creep afore they gang.

An' tho' it's said, "the race is not
 Tae those wha swiftest rin,

Nor is the battle tae the strong
Wha by their strength wad win."
By strength o' arm, an' speed o' fit,
They *will* misfortune bang,
Until she cowps them in the sheuch,
Tae creep afore they gang.

See hoo the gawkies flit an' flirt,
Fair fortune's smile tae gain,
Ne'er thinking, for a rainy day,
They should a ha'penny hain.
My sang! they'll in the gutter get
A clarty cloit ere lang,
For Nature learns her biggest bairns
Tae creep afore they gang.

An' hear the men o' micht that blaw
Sae lood the tootin' horn,
As if, like it, withoot a flaw,
Nor had an ill tae mourn.
As shure as fate, they'll, sune or late,
Be forced tae sing my sang,
Lamentin' that they didna creep
Afore they tried tae gang.

Sae let us a', baith big an' sma',
Tak' tent, an' mindfu' be,
That bairns should never tak' the fit
Afore they tak' the knee.
For rough's the road we ha'e tae plod,
An' mony a pech an' pang
It wad us save, if help we'd crave,
An' creep afore we gang.

MY AIN WEE DOD.

FOR a' the sangs that hae been sung
 'Boot lads an' lasses, wives an' weans,
 Hoo stoons o' love the heart hae stung,
 An' driven fock tae daft-like daein's,
 I yet will sing anither sang,
 In oor auld mither's Doric broad,
 An' for the ower-come o't I'll tak'
 My ain wee Dod,
 My ain wee Dod;
 For 'mang them a' there's nane sae braw's
 My ain wee Dod.

Up in thè mornin' like a lark,
 Before the e'e o' day is clear,
 He rises cheery tae his wark,
 An' sets the hoose a' in a steer;
 He caresna for a steek o' claes,
 For sark-alane he tak's the road,
 Which proves there's neither sin nor shame
 In oor wee Dod,
 In oor wee Dod;
 As sweet an' pure as ony flower
 Is oor wee Dod.

But yet, he is a steerin' loon,
 Frae morn tae nicht he's in a fyke;
 His match is no in a' the toon—
 The rum'lin', tum'lin', little tyke.

He paidles oot, an' paidles in,
 Nae mither's hauns cu'd keep him snod,
 But better that than something waur,
 My ain wee Dod,
 My ain wee Dod ;
 Sae may ye rin lang oot an' in,
 My ain we Dod.

At ilka yokin' o' the pleugh,
 Aye show yersel' tae be a man ;
 An' strive, my laddie, tae get through
 A' dirty dubs as weel's ye can ;
 An' tho' at antrin' times ye fa',
 An' get yer taes an' fingers trod,
 Bang up again, yer girr tae ca',
 My ain wee Dod,
 My ain wee Dod ;
 The biggest bairn has need tae learn
 My ain wee Dod.

For there is mony a hidden trap,
 Wee toddlin' bairnies' feet tae trip,
 An' mony stanes their taes tae nap,
 An' nettles their wee hauns tae nip.
 Sae, O ! wi' a' my heart I houp
 Ye'll get baith hauns an' feetie shod
 Wi' mits an' shune that ne'er gae dune,
 My ain wee Dod,
 My ain wee Dod ;
 That ye may rin life's race, an' win,
 My ain wee Dod.

O O R N E L L.

M' weary toil an' cankerin' care
 That tae the lot o' mortals fa',
 Misfortune's measur'd oot my share,
 An' wi' a hat has croon'd them a';
 A hat that wad a headache gi'e
 Tae ony chiel' as weel's mysel';
 Yet, day an' nicht, I'm forced tae wear't—
 Tae please oor Nell!

But tho' she mak's me wear the hat,
 She strips my hurdies o' the breeks;
 An' if I daur tae draw them on,
 Her neive she in a moment steeks,
 An' opens sic a mouth—ah, me!
 Tae ease my grief, I'm forced tae tell,
 It tak's baith breek an' petticoat
 Tae please oor Nell!

An', even wi' them baith, there is
 A something in the very tone
 O' every word she speaks tae me,
 That says—I'd better be alone.
 Frae early morn tae late at e'en
 Her tongue gangs clatt'rin' like a bell—
 'Twad beat the patience o' auld Job
 Tae thole oor Nell!

The bairnies tae, puir bits o' things,
 Wad creep into a mouse's hole,
 If e'er she gies her face a thraw,
 Or stamps the floor wi' shauchel'd sole;

An' weel they may, for, weel-a-wat,
 Their mither is a nipper snell—
 There's no ane in a thoosan' fit
 Tae match oor Nell!

She's countless whigmaleeries hung
 A' roond the four wa's o' the hoose,
 An' tho' it's but a jumpin'-jack,
 It seems tae her o' greatest use ;
 For if I may but pu' its tail,
 Dear pity me ! she gies a yell
 As if she was—I'll no say what—
 'Twad roose oor Nell!

She's aye, at least, a pair o' swine,
 Up to the cluits in glaury sty ;
 An', losh, wi' ae thing an' anither,
 They keep the hale hoose in a fry ;
 For tae the elbows in a mess,
 Aneuch tae ding doon bees wi' smell,
 On ony day in a' the week—
 Ye'll catch oor Nell!

But since the bawbees grew sae rife,
 An' gae puir fock sic pick an' wale ;
 Like every other clipper, she
 Is far mair gi'en tae spreadin' sail.
 An' when she wad her anchor weigh,
 I'm shure ye ne'er heard sic a gell,
 If there's a want o' buntin' braw'—
 Tae deck oor Nell!

Yet, after a', I'll tak' her pairt,
 For tho' she kicks up mony a spree,
 She's no ane o' the drouthy jads
 That tipple at the "barley bree."
 An' tho' she has a thoosan' fauts,
 What langer need I on them dwell?
 We've a' deal we'd better want—
 As weel's oor Nell!

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O O R R A B.

"**D**RIVE on the cart, the wife's the warst,"  
 Is noo sung east an' west;  
 Altho', if folk wad sing the truth,  
 The wife's by faur the best.  
 Drive on at ony speed ye like,  
 In either cart or cab,  
 The man's the warst; at least I'm shure,  
 The warst's oor Rab.

Nae doot, he wins my bite o' bread  
 By honest sweat o' broo;  
 But, my sang! neither bite nor soup  
 I get mair than my due.  
 An' as for bits o' duds, I'm shure  
 There's no a draiglin' drab  
 But mak's me blush, the tale they tell  
 About oor Rab.

I canna thole tae see the jauds  
 Whusk by wi' quicken'd stap,

In silks, repps, and merinoes fine,  
 Hung roond wi' flounce an' flap ;  
 While I maun wear a lingle-tail  
 O' some bit wincey wab,  
 Which proves, what vexes me tae tell  
 About oor Rab.

But truth's the saut o' soul an' mind,  
 An' mortal body, too ;  
 He therefore canna be the waur  
 O' kennin' what is true.  
 Sae I've resolved, altho' it cost  
 Me mony a sigh an' sab,  
 Tae slip a bound or twa tae try  
 An' catch oor Rab.

Aweel, ye ken, ane Kate M'Clash,  
 Wha hates the spleeny spite  
 O' snakes, that crawl ahint the back,  
 A body's heels tae bite,  
 Cam' in ae nicht, an' says—" Losh, Tib !  
 D'ye ken what Kirst M'Nab  
 Was tellin' me the ither nicht  
 About your Rab ?"

" Deed no," quo I ; " Aweel," quo she,  
 " She says—but never leet—  
 That baith you an' the bairns are grudged  
 Yer very pick o' meat.  
 An' that the shabby way ye're clad  
 Fills every gossip's gab  
 Wi' something I think shame tae tell  
 About your Rab.

"An' mair than that, yer neist-door freend,  
 Ye think sae muckle o',  
 Is less a freend, tak' my word for't,  
 Than what she is a foe;  
 For, 'tween us twa, I've heard her say,  
 'She never ken'd a grab  
 For siller in this sinfu' world  
 Tae match your Rab.'"

"Weel, Kate," quo I, "it's true aneuch  
 His haund's no jist sae slack  
 As theirs, wha carry a' they hae  
 About upon their back.  
 But, mark ye, a' we hae's oor ain,  
 Sae let the gossips blab,  
 An' never mind the fibs they tell  
 About oor Rab.

"The heart's the pairt that mak's the man,  
 An' no the costly coat,  
 Altho', I think we a' shu'd cut  
 Accordin' tae oor lot;  
 An' noo, tae cut my story short,  
 Gae wa' tae Kirst M'Nab's;  
 She's maybe ither sairs tae lick  
 Forbye oor Rab's."

O, what a blessin' it wad be  
 Tae man an' woman kind,  
 If we could see oorsels, an' learn  
 Oor ain affairs tae mind;



An' no drive on at sic a rate  
 Doon life's broad road haund-hab,  
 Forgettin' we hae a' oor fauts,  
 As weel's puir Rab.

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MAN AN' MOOSE.

WHEE moosie, I ha'e catch't ye noo,
 An' what I should dae wi' ye
 Is mair than I can richtly tell;
 But as ye are sae like mysel',
 I think I will forgi'e ye.

For tho' ye ha'e at my expense.
 Ta'en mony a hearty dinner,
 Since I ha'e fairly judged the case,
 Truth tells me tae my very face,
 I'm faur the biggest sinner.

An' as enough an' mair is cast
 Into the human happer,
 Tae serve the wants o' man an' moose,
 I think he shouldna craw sae croose,
 Wha is the biggest pauper.

Ye've jist as guid a richt tae live
 As him, tho' but a beastie,
 An' ill aff wad he be for wark
 Wha wad deprive ye o' the spark
 That's burnin' in yer breistie.

Sae, my wee freend, I'll let ye gang,
 Nae mair I houp tae trap ye,

But mind ye, baudrons is aboot,
 Watchin' a chance yer lugs tae cloot,
 An' ten tae ane she'll snap ye.

For dearly pussy likes tae dine
 Upon a little squeaker,
 An sae tae live ye'll ha'e tae strive,
 For that the fittest may survive,
 The stronger waur the weaker.

Nor only is the cat an' moose
 At war wi' ane anither ;
 It is the law o' life ower a'
 Tae send the weakest tae the wa',
 E'en tho' it be a brither.

The very lord o' life himsel'
 Delights tae plot an' plunder,
 An' wage war tae the very knife
 Upon the fatal field o' strife,
 Tae keep his fellow under.

Sae rin for life, yet dinna mak',
 Like mony fules, a jest o't,
 Tho' it's a battle at the best,
 As wisest sages ha'e confess'd,
 It's best tae mak' the best o't.

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 STORIES O' THE AULD FOLKS.

**T**HE fireside stories o' the past  
 We've heard the auld folks tell,  
 Tae wile awa' the langsome nights  
 O' winter, drear an' snell,

Are dear tae us, sae noo an' then,  
We tell them ower again,  
Wi' feelings o' emotion, mixt  
Wi' pleasure, pride, an' pain.

An' noo' I'll tell a tale about  
Auld grandey an' my grannie,  
Wha were like ither folks langsyne,  
Whiles fashed wi' things uncanny ;  
Such as the hearin' o' strange soonds,  
Whaur naething could be seen,  
An' sometimes seein' unco sights,  
Whaur naething should ha'e been.

Douce, honest folks, they're noo awa'  
Frae a' the doots an' fears,  
An' toils an' troubles that we meet  
Gaun doon the vale of years.  
Ah! sleepin' soondly, side by side,  
Below the willow tree,  
On one lone pillow "at the fit"  
O' life's stey, whinny brae.

Auld granny was ane o' the dames  
Whase cheery smiles adorn  
The face wi' that sweet loveliness  
Eve borrows frae fair morn,  
Wha strive wi' anxious heart an' hand  
Tae keep things trig an' braw,  
An' gaiter a' the fragments up  
Tae keep the wolf awa .

The wages were sae sma' langsyne,  
An' meal sae very scanty,  
Puir folk had mony a shift tae mak',  
That wasna very canty.  
For when the girnelt is far doon,  
The coal neuk maistly empty,  
We will be a' the waur bestead,  
Unless we are gey tentie.

Sae grannie's coal-knowe bein' bare,  
Her fire spent tae an ember,  
Ae fickle, frownin' afternune  
O' dreary dark December,  
She took a daunner tae the wuds,  
I'se warrant no very vogie,  
In search o' something that wad burn,  
Tho' but a withered scroggie,

That she might ha'e a blink tae warm  
An' mak' the fireside cheery,  
An' help awa' a lang forenicht  
O' winter, dreich an' drearie;  
An' that she might ha'e something het,  
Tho' only but a steerie,  
For John, when he cam' hame at e'en,  
Cauld, clatty, wat, an' weary.

Weel, sticks she gat eneuch an' mair,  
An' hame she was returnin',  
Rejoicin' ower her timely luck  
O' twa-three nicht's guid burnin',

When some unearthly thing began  
Jist at her heels tae scartle,  
Which wad made ony flesh an' bluid  
As weel as her's tae startle.

She wheeled about, but naething saw,  
For fricht, nae doot, wad blind her,  
Yet, let her gang, or rin, or wheel,  
It keepit aye behind her.  
The harder she laid doon her feet,  
It jist the looder scartit ;  
It haltit when she made a halt,  
An' startit when she startit.

Wha could it be but Sootie's sel',  
Some pawkie pliskie playin',  
Sae hame she hurried a' her pith—  
Nae doot, for mercy prayin' ;  
For, tho' he lang ere noo had tried  
His crafty tricks tae fear her,  
He never had the cheek before  
Tae come sae very near her.

Puir body, ere she managed hame,  
The sweat like rain was fa'in',  
An' whaur she wasna seen ye nicht  
Ha'e heard her bellows blawin' ;  
An' jist a jiffy frae her door,  
Forfochen sair an' weary,  
She missed a stap, an' wi' a thresh,  
Gaed tummlin' tapsalteerie.

This fairly put the headsheaf on,  
 For clean awa' she fentit,  
 An' John cam' hame jist at the time,  
 An' maistly gaed dementit.  
 But wi' his tender love an' care,  
 Her wrangs were sune a' richtit,  
 For tho' she gat a gey bit cloit,  
 She was less hurt than frichtit.

Wi' hand upraised, the auld chap vowed,  
 Altho' a wee thing eerie,  
 He wadna bow a hoch that nicht  
 Ere he had solved the query.  
 An' guess ye what it was?—alas!  
 Hoo great is human failin'—  
 'Twas but a wizen'd heather birn  
 Her auld goon-tail was trailin'.

---

*GRANDEY'S STORY.*

John was ane o' the sturdie chaps  
 That measure weel conclusions,  
 An' try at times tae knock a nieve  
 Thro' falsehood's dark delusions.  
 A pillar o' the Kirk an' State,  
 Holding the anchor cable  
 O' wisdom, richteousness, an' truth,  
 Which keeps the fabric stable.

Wi' mair than ordinary sicht,  
 I reckon he was giftit,  
 An' didna care tae credit ocht  
 That wasna richtly siftit.

A' unco sights an' soonds, he thocht,  
Were maist imagination,  
The fruits o' want o' fortitude  
Tae seek an explanation.

In a' the eerie hoors o' nicht,  
That ghaists an' goblins jauntit,  
He ower an' ower again had past  
The lanely spots they hauntit ;  
An' tho' at times he heard an' saw  
Far mair than what he wantit,  
He found a fair inquiry aye  
Some satisfaction grantit.

But steppin' hame ae nicht gey late,  
A short cut for the nearest,  
He learned the lesson, hoo we may  
Buy cheap an' pay the dearest ;  
For, if we will the by-gaet tak',  
We maun loup dykes an' ditches,  
An' needna be surprised tae see  
The warlocks an' the witches.

Sae loupin' ower an auld fale-dyke,  
Whaur hunnars had been frichtit,  
Right on the very riggin' o't  
Twa fearfu' forms he sichtit,  
Which now an' then wad beck an' boo,  
An' wave their arms sae queerly,  
That a' the fleys he ever gat,  
Naue tried him sae severely.

He likit weel tae gi'e sic things  
A truthfu' plain exposure ;  
But here the danger micht be great  
In seekin' a disclosure.  
Hoo mony had for sic a thing  
Been borne ower sea an' river,  
An' forc'd tae swear a fearfu' oath  
That made them rue for ever.

But yet he screwed his courage up,  
Resolved tae mak' inspection,  
An' wi' an earnest, honest heart,  
Requested Heaven's protection.  
He ne'er had wranged his fellow man,  
Witch, warlock, deil, nor fairy,  
An' what had he tae fear for a'  
The deevil's legions airy ?

"Hallo !" he cried ; but a' he heard  
Was echo's imitation,  
An' something like twa whisp'rin' tongues  
In secret conversation.  
Again he gae anither shout,  
That thro' the wud's resoundit,  
An' made the maukin cock her lugs,  
An' leave her lair confoundit.

But yet, for a', the wierdly forms  
Nae answer ever rendered ;  
An' sae a word o' guid advice  
He plainly tae them tendered.



“ My freends,” quo’ he, “ ye needna think  
Your midnight pranks ’ll fear me ;  
For weel I ken ye’re no that deaf  
But that ye brawly hear me.

“ An’ dinna think ye’ll mak’ a fule  
O’ me on this occasion ;  
Or that I’ll finch a single inch  
Withoot some information.  
Sae tak’ advice ere it’s ower late,  
An’ dinna be unceevil ;  
Or by the pooers o’ poother, I  
Will test ye, man or deevil.”

But here the Queen o’ Nicht began  
Tae keek oot ower his shoother,  
Which was o’ far mair worth tae John  
Than a’ his puffs o’ poother ;  
For, in a blink, the hale affair  
She proved a rank delusion,  
An’ handed John the rule o’ truth  
Tae measure the conclusion :

Which, tae explain, I needna fash  
Tae lengthen my narration—  
Twa brume-cowes waggin’ wi’ the wind  
Gae ample explanation ;  
An’ taught the lesson, tho’ we be  
Wi’ midnight darkness blindet,  
We aye should grapple for the truth  
Until, like John, we find it.

*TIBBIE PAGAN.\**

**B**Y Garpal's moorland murmuring stream, whaur  
 heath an' bracken grow,  
 The ruins o' an auld hoose lie, which sheltered lang  
 ago  
 A tenant worthy o' a lilt frae ony bardie's lute,  
 Whom I am fain tae sing a sang o' twa three verse  
 aboot.

They ca'd her Tibbie Pagan; an' auld gossip says the  
 dame  
 Had ither things aboot her far mair pagan than her  
 name,  
 Such as a fractious temper, an' a rantin' - tantin'  
 tongue,  
 As never was before between twa mortal haffits hung.

A birslin' drooth, which a' the springs o' Garpal  
 wadna slake,  
 Aye ruggin' at its root, made mony a head an' heart  
 tae ache;  
 For a' that wadna len' a hau' tae droon the burnin'  
 oot,  
 Some lickin' lowe was sure tae gi'e their ringin' lugs  
 a cloot.

---

\* Tibbie Pagan, author of "Ca' the Yewes tae the Knowes," and other less known ditties, lived in the vicinity of Muirkirk some forty or fifty years ago. She is still remembered by the old folks, and spoken of as being an "unco body."

But best o' folks at times, we ken, require a gowf or  
twa,  
In case, like fules that flee ower high, they may ower  
croosely craw,  
An' wi' their cacklin' din forget that—no tae tell a  
fib—  
They've far mair o' the fauts than gifts o' puir auld  
sister Tib.

Nae doot, like ither sinners, she gaed aften far astray,  
An', like her native wilds, was clad in Nature's  
hodden-grey;  
But, if we would judge wisely, let us ever bear in  
mind,  
The sweetest kernel's aften found within the roughest  
rind.

An' sae in spite o' a' the ills that lie at Tibbie's door,  
We've but tae crack the nut tae find a kernel in the  
core;  
A heart that, wi' the lowe o' love, expanded in the  
briest,  
An' bare mankind, in pangs o' joys, "the laddie she  
lo'ed best."

The laddie wi' the crook an' plaid, wha kindly ca'd  
his yewes,  
Like ither faithfu' shepherds, whaur the pasture  
greenest growes;  
An' rowed the helpless lammie in his plaid, the blast  
tae shiel',  
An' tak' it in his bosom lame tae some bit cosie biel'.

Nae wonder that he kindled in her briest a spark  
     divine,  
 That wad for mony years tae come a twinklin' starrie  
     shine  
 Among the lamps that licht the arch we a' are passin'  
     through,  
 Tae whaur a' wrangs are richtet, an' ilk ane receives  
     her due.  
 Oh! may that sunny blink o' life puir Tibbie's left  
     behind  
 Mak' up for a' her failin's, an' forgetfu' folks remind  
 That as the sunbeam has its motes, so has the clearest  
     e'e,  
 An' a' that wish tae be forgi'en should learn tae forgie.  
 An' may we a', like Tibbie, write upon the "sands o'  
     time,"  
 A lesson tae posterity, in either prose or rhyme,  
 Which will, like hers, add tae the stock o' human worth  
     a part  
 O' that which lichtens toil an' care, an' cheers the  
     drooping heart.

~~~~~

MY FIRST RIDE ON THE RAIL.

DANGSYNE, ere I had weel begun
 The trying race o' life tae run,
 Like ither birkies fu' o' fun
 An' fond o' play,
 The task o' duty whiles tae shun
 I ran astray.

An' noo, when I look back an' see
 Youth's mirthfu' days, nae mair tae be,
 Something unbidden fills my e'e
 Up tae the brim,
 But, ah ! the e'e o' memory
 It cannae dim.

I see ilk happy, smilin' face
 That wi' me took part in the chase,
 An' tho' of age I noo can trace
 A herald grey,
 It seems as if oor pranks took place
 But yesterday.

An' as they tae my memory rise,
 Recalling youth's unclouded skies,
 Ilk ane wi' a' its vigour vies
 Tae set me doon,
 Its youthfu' version tae revise
 Tae a new tune.

But ane mair urgent than the rest,
 Claiming tae be considered best,
 The matter has so strongly pressed
 Frae time tae time,
 That noo I'll ha'e, at least, tae dress't
 In muslin' rhyme.

Sae, as I ha'e already said,
 Wi' ither loons I aften strayed,
 Breekit abune the knee tae wade,
 Or jump the burn ;
 An' mak' the gushel deep an' braid,
 An' dook in turn.

Or roam the wood in eager quest
 Tae find the witchy pyat's nest,
 Aye built on tallest tree, tae test
 Wha e'er nicht try
 Her brood o' witchlins tae molest,
 Sae near the sky.

But steerin' laddies a' are fain
 Some cup o' new delight tae drain;
 Nor will the auldest gab disdain
 Tae tak' a pree,
 For sune the auld thing ower again
 Gets wersh awee.

Sae bent, ae day, on pastures new
 That in the distance loomed in view,
 I slyly frae the pirley drew
 My hale estate,
 An' wi' the freends o' dusky hue
 I took the gaet.

An' as Cullaloe hills I cross'd,
 Bound for the lang toon east the coast,
 That o' its length o' links can boast,
 An' "Wealth o' Nations,"
 An' mony a braw bark ocean-toss'd,
 Wi' dear relations,

I thocht that I was nae sma' drink,
 For aye I heard the coppers clink,
 An' that sklate, skeelie, pen, an' ink
 Were no for me,
 Ready an' willin', soom or sink,
 Tae gang tae sea.

Sic norries nursin' in my croon,
 I steered on for the lang, lauk toon,
 A toozie, bashfu', berfit loon,
 A ship tae tak',
 That I micht sail the world roon'
 Ere I cam' back ;

As rich, of coorse, as ony Jew,
 Wi' curly cap an' jacket blue,
 A jolly seaman, brave an' true,
 Lang yarns tae spin
 About what Jack has tae come through
 His name tae win.

But a' sic airy castles fine
 Are built withoot the plummet line,
 An' tae oorsels sae sair incline
 They quickly fa',
 At least, alas ! 'twas sae wi' mine,
 If no wi' a'.

For when, at length, the port appeared
 Tae which sae hopefully I steered,
 Its ships had a' their moorings cleared
 An' sailed awa,
 An' twa-three herrin' smacks besmear'd
 Were a' I saw.

Sae left behind gey sair forlorn,
 Of a' my expectation shorn,
 I thocht tho' man was made tae mourn
 He shouldna cry,
 That a' misfortune should be borne
 Aye manfully.

For tho' "best schemes o' mice an' men
 Gang aften sair agee," ye ken
 We maunna, like the coward hen,
 An' frichtet flee,
 But, like true heroes, we should then
 The braver be.

Yet heroes will reverses meét,
 An' sometimes hae tae own defeat,
 An' show their valour in retreat,
 Their strength tae rally,
 Again tae mak, when mair complete,
 Anither sally.

Brocht tae the test amends tae mak',
 That matters nichtna look sae black,
 I sune resolved tae change my tack,
 An' spread full sail,
 An' hae for ance a heezie back
 Along the rail.

Sae, keekin' at the ferlies queer,
 I tae the owerland route drew near,
 Countin' my coppers wi' a fear
 I nicht ha'e less
 Than wad a decent passage clear
 By the "Express!"

For, losh! ye ken, withoot a joke,
 I thocht that nane but shabby folk,
 That cared for neither stour nor smoke,
 Paid lowest fare,
 An' sae, my poverty tae cloak,
 I wad gi'e mair.

A bit o' silly, senseless pride
 As common as the world's wide,
 But what can puir folk dae but ride
 The naigs they hae?
 They aye, at least, can strut an' stride
 Gaun doon the brae.

An' sae, ye see, I mounted mine,
 Saddled wi' dandy cushion fine,
 But doon a rather steep incline
 The shaltie ran,
 An' landed me, withoot a coin,
 Whaur I began.

But ill's the wind that disna blaw
 Mair o' the cauff than corn awa',
 An' fell, atweel, maun be his fa'
 Wha never tries
 A lesson frae his sairs tae draw,
 Again tae rise.

An' noo, my truant tale tae end,
 I houp ye'll aye the richt defend,
 An' when ye ha'e a wrang tae mend,
 Aye trim yer sail;
 But pirley-pennies never spend
 Upon the rail.

~~~~~  
 MY FIRST HAIRST FEE.

**W**HA disna like tae think about  
 The youthfu' day that he  
 First left the auld fireside behind  
 Tae win his first hairst fee?

An' what heart is sae icy cauld,  
An' hard it winna thaw  
Wi' sunny blinks o' auld langsyne,  
That gi'e us whiles a ca'?

Ah! weel I mind the day I left  
The happy auld hearthstane,  
Whaur I began, like a wee man,  
Tae toddle a' my lane  
Between the cozy chimlie cheeks,  
Whaur sat the parent pair,  
Watching my first steps in life's march  
Wi' mingled joy an' care.

I think I see me settin' oot,  
Wi' heart baith wae an' warm,  
A wee rough tyke, in cloutit breeks,  
Wi' bundle 'neath my arm.  
I think I hear the kindly word  
O' her wha did convoy  
Me doon the burn-side, whaur I  
Had shared in mony a ploy.

An' yet I see the tender tear  
That gathered in her e'e,  
An' hoo she tried tae hide it, as  
She took fareweel o' me;  
An' tell't me aye tae dae the richt,  
Whaever micht dae wrang;  
An' tho' but a wee laddie, yet  
I'd be a man ere lang.

Sae left alane tae face the warld,  
The spurs I wear tae win,  
I marched alang, straight for the field,  
The battle tae begin.  
But what my first engagement was,  
Ye needna try tae guess,  
Until I, in a verse or twa,  
The nature o't express.

For workin' folk in bygane days  
Were geylies hard bestead,  
An' mony hard shifts had tae mak'  
For scanty buird an' bed.  
The mither an' the maiden had  
Tae breek the petticoat,  
An' tak' the field ilk hairst, tae try  
An' mak' a better o't.

Leavin' the bairns in charge o' some  
Wee glaikit lass or loon,  
That could far better jump the rope,  
Or spin the peerie roon'.  
An' fitter for the schule, by far,  
Their A B C's tae learn ;  
But what had puir folk no tae dae  
An' honest crust tae earn ?

Noo ye can guess what was my first  
Engagement wi' the warld ;  
An' as ye may be wonderin' hoo  
My colours I unfurled,

I'll tell ye, so that ye may judge  
Frae strong positions stormed,  
Hoo bravely, an' wi' what success  
The duty I performed.

Weel, a wee sodger new set out  
On march, an' ither twa  
Drum-majors, big in Natur's bent  
Their ain drum-sticks tae ca',  
Were my chief charge, and shure eneugh,  
As ye will a' agree,  
It was a job unfitted for  
A raw recruit like me.

Astride upon my back I had  
Tae tak' the droothy brat  
Tae Nature's fountain twice a-day,  
Tae get his whussle wat.  
An' losh! ilk mither that we met  
He seemed the mair tae thirst,  
For aye he lood an' looder play'd  
The tune he learned first.

An' dinna wonder, tho' at times,  
As we were wauchlin' thither,  
We sang the sang we learned first,  
In concert a'thegither;  
For sic a burden on ane's back,  
An' ane in ilka haund,  
Is mair than common flesh an' bluid,  
Hooever steeve, can staund.

But yet I persever'd, an' learn'd  
 My load tae better thole ;  
 For it grew licht as we drew near  
 Hope's sweet refreshin' goal,  
 Whaur mirth an' happiness displaced  
 Oor dolefu' sang o' sorrow,  
 An' tell't us that the dullest day  
 Has aye the brightest morrow.

That morrow, an' the "maiden" came  
 Wi' ilk ane's hard won fee,  
 An', wi' a "rantin' kirn," it filled  
 Ilk reaper's heart wi' glee ;  
 An' in their joy my heart rejoiced  
 Tae think the hairst was dune,  
 An' for my fee had got—tak' note—  
 A brent new pair o' shune.

Noo, that's the way, in spite o' a'  
 The ills I had tae dree,  
 I showed my colours tae the warld,  
 An' won my first hairst fee.  
 An' 'mid the pleasure an' the pain,  
 The dazzle an' the din  
 O' life, may a' as bravely strive  
 The last hairst fee tae win.

~~~~~  
 ROSABELLE.

THE lovely rose and lily fair,
 And sweet forget-me-not,
 As freely shed their fragrance rare
 In humble cottage plot,

As in the palace garden gay,
Where Art's designing hand
Tempt's simple Nature to array
In fancy garments grand.

And so beneath the cottage roof—
Though it be one of straw—
We have the same conclusive proof
Of one impartial law.
There blooming maidens, blythe and gay,
And stalwart sons abide—
A nation's very strength and stay,
Its health, its wealth, and pride.

Of such was charming Rosabelle,
The flower of Fernydale,
Whose queenly worth and beauty well
Adorn a simple tale ;
Simple, yet more, I must confess,
Than "prentice hand" can tell ;
A master only could express
The charms of Rosabelle.

For oh ! she was as fair a queen
As ever wore a crown ;
Trim as the daisy on the green,
Even in the cutty-gown
An' homespun drugget petticoat,
That thrifty damsels wear,
Who seek not to disguise the lot
That's fallen to their share.

The lily pure bloom'd on her brow,
Heart's ease smiled in her eye ;
Her cheek was radiant with the glow
Of morn in eastern sky ;
Her lips were as the ruby fine,
Her teeth were pearls strung ;
And, like the clusters of the vine,
Her silken tresses hung.

But these are only fading flowers
That blossom for a day ;
Then, like life's sunny morning hours,
For ever pass away.
Unlike the roses of the mind,
The lilies of the heart—
The worth and wisdom of mankind,
That never can depart.

Thus favoured, Rosa, frank and free,
And blithe as blooming May,
Spreading her mantle o'er the lea,
Its beauty to display.
Like fairest Helena of old,
Kindled in many a breast,
Love, hope, anxiety untold,
Deferred and unredressed.

And hard the smitten suitors vied
To win her gentle heart,
But every time the game they tried
The deeper went the dart ;

And not a shade of progress made
In capturing the prize,
However well their schemes were laid
The artless to entice.

Each wondered how it was that she
Refused so fine a match,
And lived so independently
Beneath a roof of thatch—
Sharing the weary cares of life
With her old widow mother,
Rather than be the cherished wife
Of either one or other.

But, truth to tell, they sought to gain
What was gained long before,
By one who was far o'er the main
Upon a foreign shore,
In quest of that wherewith to claim
And make his Rose his bride,
And give to her a worthy name,
With pleasure and with pride.

So, faithful to the vow they made
At parting, she remained ;
And oft, with loving fervour, prayed
He, too, might be sustained
To scorn the artful wink and wile
That would entice the heart
From acting, in a manly style,
A faithful, manly part.

That in the battle-field of life
He might a hero be,
Gaining amid the stir and strife
Deserving victory ;
Returning soon, all safe and sound,
Across the watery deep,
With honourable success crown'd,
His plighted word to keep.

But ah ! her Harry tarried long,
Far on the prairie wild,
And rumour, with her cruel tongue,
Declared she was beguiled ;
While disappointed rivals said,
With mean revenge and spite,
She would in her own coin be paid,
If she was served aright.

Adversity's advancing tide,
Now rolled its waters high ;
Old friendship took "the other side,"
To pass the victim by.
Care, doubt, and fear perplexed by day,
Wild, wandering dreams by night ;
Despair at times eclipsed the ray
Of Hope's consoling light.

Thus in the depths one evening she
And her old ailing mother,
Along with want and misery,
Sat mingling tears together—

The mother for the daughter dear,
Whose heart was o'er the wave ;
The daughter for the mother near
The portals of the grave.

When, suddenly, a gentle knock
Intruding on the ear,
The painful, solemn silence broke,
And check'd the flowing tear.
No answer ready to the call,
The door latch rose and fell,
And lo ! a stranger, stout and tall,
Stood in the lowly cell.

“ Pardon,” the strange intruder said,
“ My rude unwary way,
I would the matron and the maid
Due honour ever pay.
Allow a friend to sympathise,
And weep with those that weep,
To soothe the bitter tears and sighs
Of sorrow's fountain deep.”

“ You're welcome, sir,” the maid replied,
“ For friends in need are few,
Even those on whom we most relied
Appear to be untrue ;
Yet there is consolation dear
In being true to them—
A solace even in the tear
No antidote may stem.”

“ Yes, there is one that will it stay,”
 The feeling guest rejoined ;
 “ One who will all thy cares allay,
 Thy wounded heart upbind.
 I've tarried long, alas ! too long
 Beyond the rolling sea ;
 Forgive ! my dearest Rose, the wrong
 That I have done to thee.”

One searching glance, and to his arms
 The blushing maiden flew ;
 Fair as the rose, with all its charms,
 When bathed in morning dew.
 He clasped her to his manly breast,
 That with emotion burned ;
 She cried, “ Our wrongs are all redressed,
 My Harry is returned !”

~~~~~

*MENIE AN' ME.*

**T**HU' timmer's the stick I whiles roond my heid  
 swing,

Tae gi'e carkin' care, the auld carle, a ding,  
 I sing a bit sang whiles that pleases mysel',  
 Just like the wee warblers that lilt doon the dell ;  
 An' noo, like the birdies, I feel my heart fain,  
 Tae sing a bit canty wee sang o' its ain ;  
 Sae whisht, an' I'll try, tho' I'm timmer a wee,  
 Tae sing ye a sang about Menie an' me.

But listen or no, as ye like, tae my sang,  
 I'll sing in my joy as I journey along,

For, like the wee laverock aloft on the wing,  
It's only for joy and gladness I sing.

An' weel may it be, for a happier pair  
Ne'er helpit ilk ither their burdens tae bear ;  
The smile o' the cheek an' the tear o' the e'e,  
Are lovingly shared wi' my Menie an' me.

Weel may the cauld bachelor bodies repine,  
An' fidge fain tae ha'e a wee wifie like mine ;  
But, oh ! may nae cauld loveless loon ever share  
The love o' a genty wee wifie sae rare.

For roses in dreary December shall bloom,  
An' load winter breezes wi' simmer perfume,  
Ere twa sae ill-matched wi' ilk ither will be  
As canty an' cosy as Menie an' me.


As dainty an' douce as the primrose o' May,  
She lichtens my labour, an' shortens my day ;  
An' meets me at e'en wi' a heart-beaming smile,  
That nerves me anew for anither day's toil.

An' tho' there are losses an' crosses tae bear,  
An' mony denials an' dangers tae dare,  
The help's aye at haund that the world canny gi'e,  
Nor ever can tak' frae my Menie an' me.

Tho' years, near a score, we hae journeyed thegither,  
We're aye coortin' yet, fond an' fonder o' ither ;  
An' cleekin' the closer the further we gang,  
We ne'er think the journey is lanely or lang.

But, ah ! day is passing wi' Time's rapid flicht,  
Which tells us tae hasten as lang's we hae licht ;  
Sae come a' thegither, ere nicht steeks the e'e,  
An' briest the brae bravely wi' Menie an' me.

## WEE DAVIE.

EE Davie, wi' his rosy cheeks,  
Sparkling e'en an' curly pow,  
Hose an' knickerbocker breeks,  
Is a dainty man, I trow.

Sportive as the little lammie,  
Friskin' fu' o' Nature's fun ;  
Dancin' fondly roond its mammy  
'Mid the smilin', simmer sun.

No a care nor grief tae wrinkle  
His wee silken, sunny broo ;  
Nor tae dim the starry twinkle  
O' his e'en, sae bonny blue.

Yet a moment never idle,  
Rampin', trampin' up an' doon ;  
Heedless o' baith bit an' bridle—  
Little, lauchin', lordie loon.

There he's on the poker ridin'  
Races but-an'-ben the hoose ;  
Noo into a corner hidin',  
Mim as ony little moose.

Keepin' his wee sisy seekin'  
Lang an' weary, high an' low,  
Till the little roggie, keekin'  
Roond the corner, cries " keek-bo."

What a tirrorivee o' laughin',  
Strivin' the last " tig" tae gi'e !—  
Dinna flyte ; their dinsome daffin'  
Sweetest music is tae me.

Let the bairnie's hae the blessin'  
 O' rejoicin' while they may ;  
 Sune enough they'll learn the lesson  
 That life is nae bairnie's play.

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*BE KIND TO WEE BIRDIES.*

---

**A**T last, after mony a hanker an' swither,  
 I've gathered my wanderin' chickens thegither ;  
 For, tho' a wee raw, an' no very weel feathered,  
 Birds sune flee an' leave us, unless they are tethered.

The loss tae the world, I ken, wad be sma',  
 Altho' my hale covey were a' flown awa' ;  
 But even a sparrow we shou!dna despise,  
 Altho' it's unfitted for takin' the skies,

An' singin' a sang tae please sensitive ears  
 Fit only for music o' loftiest spheres ;  
 For, tae ears less polished, its hearty bit chatter  
 May seem no tae be such unmusical matter.

The great master singer that soars in the sky,  
 Until he is hiddden tae baith ear an' eye,  
 Surpasses, nae doot, the wee wagtail an' sparrow  
 As far as the Megget's by Ettrick an' Yarrow.

But tho' on the wing they are weakly awee,  
 An' therefore a step or twa doon in degree,  
 I'm sure that's nae reason they should be shot doon  
 By ony pat poacher, or gamekeeper loon.

Altho' not inspired wi' a measure sublime,  
Ilk ane, as it can, sings its ain bit o' rhyme ;  
Withoot which the heart-stirring, musical treat  
Of Nature's grand concert wad be incomplete,

At least, it wad only gi'e joy tae the few,  
Endowed wi' the power o' wing, tae pursue  
The heaven-soaring strains o' the masters o' song  
That warble sae far ower the heads o' the throng.

Then gi'e the wee birdies o' lowlier flight—  
The sparrow, the sheelfa, the wagtail, an' yite—  
A heartier welcome when on us they ca',  
The ties o' affection the closer tae draw.

The wee crumb o' comfort we may hae tae spare,  
Is a' they seek frae us tae lichten their care ;  
An' wha wad refuse a bit millin' tae gi'e  
A cravin' wee crawpin' frae hunger tae free ?

O, dinna forget we are a' daddie's bairns,  
Tho' far mair than ithers ye hae o' life's fairins ;  
The great are dependent, far mair than the sma',  
On Him wha tak's note o' the wee sparrow's fa'.







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Sonnets.

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## Sonnets.

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### *"CONSIDER THE LILIES."*

**N**OW sad would be this world of care and toil,  
Without thy pure, impartial, cheering smile,  
And soothing breath that mingles with the breeze,  
The burning brow, and sickly heart to ease.  
The more we look upon thy lovely face,  
The more we love thee, and delight to trace  
What little of thy beauty human eye  
Is able through its films to descry.  
O, that we had a clearer eye to see  
The heavenly grandeur that's bestowed on thee ;  
That man, however great in pomp and power,  
Might see himself eclipsed in every flower,  
And give the glory due to Him whose care  
Has strewed our paths with gems of love so rare.

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### *SORROW.*

**T**HIS not to make us murmur and despond,  
That wintry clouds of sorrow veil the view,  
But to remind us of the sunny blue  
Of the eternal summer skies beyond ;  
To deeper write, with iron pen, the bond

Of brotherhood, that binds us all to do  
 Something to help a weaker brother through,  
 That none, however poor, may be disown'd.  
 So grief and gladness follow each in turn,  
 As night succeeds the day, and day the night ;  
 That we may o'er each other's sorrow mourn,  
 And in each other's gladness take delight—  
 Making the fires of friendship brighter burn,  
 And heart to heart the closer to unite.

~~~~~  
DIVISION IN THE RANKS.

I.

HOW sad to see, in this fair day of grace,
 The grades of rank estranging man and man ;
 As if, because the rear's behind the van,
 We may not all be of one common race !
 Is this vain, alienating pride of place
 To go on widening the gulf between,
 What it misnames, the noble and the mean,
 Until of brotherhood there's not a trace ?
 If so, it may be well to count the cost,
 And learn who will the worse or better be ;
 What will be gained, or what more will be lost
 When bursts the flame of smouldering enmity ;
 And in the burning mass all ties are tossed
 By the rude hand of lawless anarchy !

II.

If not, then let the rider hasten down,
 And with the footman calmly reason o'er
 The means required to heal the rankling sore

O'er which they at each other fume and frown ;
 And let each with the healing waters drown
 The envious jealousy, and pride of heart,
 Now searing rapidly the nobler part,
 That feels no shame a neighbour poor to own ;
 E'en tho' by wayside he may wounded lie,
 And priest, and Levite, on the other side,
 With look of contempt, proudly pass him by,
 As if to make the wound more deep and wide,
 And rend apart the common, kindred tie
 That links the lowliest with the Most High.

~~~~~  
 W A R.

*(Suggested by the policy of our Government in the Eastern Question.)*

**R**EAD scourge of earth ! how long wilt thou  
 delay  
 The hanging of the trumpet in the hall,  
 No more thy mighty hosts to battle call,  
 Equipped in all thy glittering array,  
 Their thousands, in most deadly hate, to slay ?  
 How long will men, called Christians, destroy  
 Each other, when, were they but to employ  
 What they profess, they might prevent the fray ?  
 And what of nineteen centuries' advance,  
 When prejudice and passion still may rule ;  
 And, like the duelist—vainglorious fool—  
 Seek wrongs to right by brandishing the lance ;  
 As if the empty, blustering, braggart's breath,  
 Would stay the opening of the dance of death ?

*SELFISHNESS.*

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**W**HO is not sensible that he has got  
 More than enough of that commodity,  
 Has oft a magnifying eye to see  
 In others what, but for a blinding mote,  
 He would see in himself; so mark him down,  
 For, doubtless, he has got more than the share  
 Of him who feels he has a part to spare,  
 And is not backward the defect to own.  
 For, as things are by opposites defined,  
 Pure selfishness must of itself be blind.

~~~~~

WORLD'S WEALTH.

MAN'S a poor man now
 Without his weight in gold,
 Tho' something crowns his brow
 More worth a thousand-fold.
 Shrewd, calculating, cold,
 Men to each other bow;
 For man's a poor man now,
 Without his weight in gold.

Nor does it matter how
 He may of it get hold;
 Be it by broken vow,
 Or truth and candour sold.
 Ah! man's a poor man now
 Without his weight in gold!

TO SINCERITY.

SINCERITY, good guardian of the heart,
 Be to thy sacred duty ever true ;
 Let not hypocrisy's deceitful art
 The noble citadel of life subdue.
 Altho' in thy own uniform arrayed,
 And has the watchword printed on his tongue,
 'Tis all a false, mechanical parade
 From some mean motive of deception sprung.
 Trust not the traitor, tho' with luring kiss
 He would fidelity of friendship show ;
 'Tis more satanic than the viper's hiss,
 Which honestly proclaims a deadly foe.
 He is the same arch enemy of old
 Who, as a friend, the Friend of Sinners sold !

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 •  
*BURNS.*

*(On the Unveiling of his Statue in Glasgow, 25th January 1877.)*

**W**HY memory, great gifted son of fame,  
 Enshrined so deeply in the Scottish heart,  
 Is cherished with a love no work of art  
 Can e'er express ; nor does the noble name,  
 Which we are all so justly proud to claim,  
 Need moulded bronze, or sculptured marble fine,  
 To give it immortality divine.  
 Still, in this money-making age, 'tis well  
 To give posterity some outward sign  
 That we can yet admire the tuneful Nine ;

And love, like them, with men of worth to dwell,  
 Though they but hold the plough or wield the mell,  
 Like him, the humble tiller of the ground,  
 In whom we have our ploughman laureate found.

~~~~~

DAVID LIVINGSTONE.

NONE more, alas ! of Nature's noble men—
 The foremost hero in the glorious van
 Of truth and freedom to down-trodden man—
 Has crossed the Rubicon of mortal ken.
 The noble part he played, and played so well,
 The coming ages will delight to tell,
 With all the graphic power of tongue and pen ;
 And with the sable race he died to free,
 The "good white man" shall live in word and deed,
 And be rewarded honour's highest meed
 Within the bosom of posterity.
 Oh, Britain ! royal mistress of the sea,
 Well mayest thou be proud of such a son
 As faithful, fearless David Livingstone.
 It is such jewels that adorn thy crown,
 And o'er the world thy sovereign sceptre spread,
 Heaping unnumbered blessings on thy head,
 With laurels of unperishing renown.
 We fondly hoped he would return again,
 To tell us of the dark, benighted land
 For which he spent long years of toil and pain,
 Beset with enemies on every hand.
 But, ah ! the grand, old man has passed away,

And never was a race more nobly run,
 Fight better fought, or prize more surely won ;
 And poor humanity has lost to-day
 A friend, so noble, and, alas ! so rare,
 A world of care and sorrow ill can spare.

DRUMCLOG.

WHO is not proud to tread the sacred sod,
 That drank the blood which bought him
 liberty

To sit in peace beneath his own fig-tree,
 And worship with the vicegerent of God ?
 None but some scion of the barbarous brood
 That heated sevenfold the furnace fires
 In which the spirit of our noble sires,
 Unsinged, the fiery elements withstood ;
 Defying Persecution's burning brand,
 The racking engine, and the drowning wave ;
 And, worse than all, the cruel Claver's hand,
 Steeped in the heart's blood of the martyr brave.
 Ah, ruthless race, Drumclog shall ever be
 An Aceldama of thy infamy !

DUNFERMLINE ABBEY.

WLD pile of grandeur ! solemn, sad, and hoary,
 Bearing the burden of a thousand years,
 Of which thou tellest us the old, old story
 Of life's contending passions, smiles, and tears.

Well may'st thou brood o'er thy departed glory,
 And point, with pride, to those of noblest name—
 The Bruce of Bannockburn's battle gory,
 Who fits so well thy highest niche of fame.
 And Margaret, of peerless, saintly beauty,
 Whose shade still lingers, where she loved so well
 To bow with Malcolm, at thy shrine of duty,
 Her vows to pay, and all her griefs to tell.
 How sad to see thy royal ruins crumbling—
 To the unsparing "tooth of time" a prey!
 Each stone engraven with the truth so humbling,
 Of how all earthly glory fades away!

H O M E.

SWEET home!—earth's dearest and most hallowed spot,
 In princely palace, or in lowly cot,
 Has nobler lessons to enrich the heart
 Than hall of science, or sanctum of art.
 And teachers abler to imbue the soul
 With beauties of life's high and holy end,
 Than all the schools of learning we attend,
 O'er which the hot tides of contention roll.
 Go where we will, sweet home is ever dear
 To every heart worthy the human breast;
 We leave it with an unaffected tear,
 And there, at last, would take our final rest.
 The very name, when it is fitly given,
 Has music in it sweet as that of heaven.

T I M E.

TIME streams that from the breast of ocean rise,
 To weave the curtain drapery of the skies,
 And the green mantle of the hill and plain,
 As to its bosom they return again,
 Time, from eternity, rolls on its course
 To be embosomed in its parent source.
 And, as it hastens fast and faster by,
 How richly it doth all our wants supply !
 And, as it measures out life's chequered span
 Into so many days, and months, and years
 Of cheering smiles, and chastening sighs and tears,
 How brightly bends the bow of hope o'er man,
 Inviting him its promises to scan,
 And banish all his faithless doubts and fears !

SPRING AND SUMMER FLOWERS.

THE flowers of friendship seek no summer sun
 The beauty of their blossoms to disclose,
 But, like the snowdrop amid winter snows,
 Smile sweetest to the lowly, needy one,
 Whom the tall-growing sunflower-beauties shun,
 Enamoured with the grandeur of the rose,
 And the sweet odours it has to dispose,
 As of their own they seemingly have none.
 Though promising the most they give the least
 To sweeten life's surrounding atmosphere,

And soften the bleak winds that, from the east,
Bring to the brightest eye a blinding tear
Of disappointment, in the hope to see
The joys, alas ! that never were to be.

MY GLEANINGS.

SUCH are the gleanings of a few short years
In which I've spent my noon of manhood's
prime,
And in return, for such a precious time,
How very poor the harvest reaped appears !
At most, a stunted stock of partially ripened ears,
As might be looked for in a moorland clime,
May here and there be found, whitened with rime
That ripens less the green crop than it sears.
Yet, should a random grain be now and then,
Found for the threshing of the crop of straw,
Which will at all defray the thresher's cost,
And be of smallest benefit to men,
I will rejoice, and consolation draw
From having saved that much from being lost.

