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# DIRGE

ON THE

## FERRY-BOAT DISASTER,

ON

THE SPRING FAST-DAY,

WEDNESDAY, THE 5th APRIL, 1876,

BY

D. FERGUSON, SCHOOLMASTER,

*45, Huntly Street, Aberdeen.*

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'Twas bitter keen in manhood's prime,  
Or blooming age to die ;  
To sink beneath the angry flood,  
And human aid so nigh.

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The Profits resulting from the sale of this Poem are to be handed over to the Fund now being raised for the sufferers by the sad calamity on the Dee.

ABERDEEN, April, 1876.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

## P R E F A C E.

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The Author deems it proper to state for the purpose of explaining a seeming discrepancy, which at first glance appears on the face of the Poem, viz., that the Dirge was written before the bodies were found, and the Lament after they were found.

What amount of poetic excellence this little unpretentious Poem possesses does not become the Author to say. This he leaves to the impartial judgment and decision of public opinion. That it possesses some poetic excellence, however, the Author believes, otherwise he would not have ventured upon its publication at all. To deny this would be the zenith of fulsome humility. Charity has prompted its publication. The profits which may accrue from its sale are to be handed over to the Relief Fund now being formed for imparting aid to those who have suffered from the sad calamity on the Dee. The Author hopes that the knowledge of this circumstance will be the means of giving a wider and a more extended circulation to the sale of the Poem than its real poetic worth or intrinsic merits deserve.

THE AUTHOR.

## D I R G E .

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'Twas early spring, the op'ning buds  
    Bloomed sickly on the lea ;  
No mavis piped in leafy bowers,  
    Nor on the thorny tree.

Nipt by the year's unkindly blasts,  
    And cold ungenial air,  
The grass decayed on Torry lea—  
    The fields were brown and sear.

From every tree the leaves were stript,  
    Their branching boughs were bare ;  
Where flaunted late the feath'ry brood,  
    So glossy, smooth, and fair.

No warbling larks on quiv'ring wing  
    Awoke the early morn,  
When crowds of ardent youth and age  
    Across the Dee are borne,

To breathe a while the fragrant air,  
    Among the clifts of Cove,  
Or through the woods and o'er the fields,  
    With joyous step to rove.

Young maidens in the bloom of youth,  
    With graceful form and fair ;  
With artless smile and snowy hand,  
    And locks of auburn hair.

Young men, elate with vernal hopes,  
    And prospects bright and fair ;  
And women in the prime of life,  
    And reverend age were there.

An eager crowd, a mingled throng,  
Stood restless on the shore ;  
With madd'ned haste they fill the boat,  
As never filled before.

O'ercharged, it slowly moves along,  
Upon the treach'rous wave ;  
Which, lo ! engulphs the living mass,  
Relentless as the grave.

Ah ! where are now the rosy lips  
Where played perpetual smiles ;  
The sparkling eye, the furtive glance  
Of love's alluring wiles.

Where now the fair one's graceful form  
That but an hour before  
Could draw the crowd's admiring eye,  
On Dee's enamelled shore.

Where now the glossy ringlets trimmed  
With rubies from the mine ;  
Ah ! round the auburn tresses fair  
The clammy seaweeds twine.

'Neath Dee's avenging wave she lies,  
Disrobed of all her charms ;  
No more her sweet attractive smile  
Th' enraptured bosom warms.

Ah, now ! men's hearts to fear unused,  
With sudden terror quail ;  
And trembling, face to face with death,  
Their dire mishap bewail.

Plunged in the rapid flowing flood,  
What deep half-uttered sighs,  
Of men, strong men, unused to weep,  
And women's frantic cries !



Some grasped the boat with desperate hold,  
A while were thus upheld ;  
But tossed upon the rapid stream,  
In vain their fate repelled.

For soon exhaustive nature failed,  
The waters o'er them closed ;  
Now in the ocean's caverns deep  
Their bodies lie exposed.

No sister's hand will deck their grave,  
With flowers of early spring ;  
No warbling bird on summer eve  
Their requiem e'er will sing.

'Twas bitter keen, in manhood's prime,  
Or blooming age to die ;  
To sink beneath the angry flood,  
And human aid so nigh.

Hard is the heart that cannot weep,  
And mourn their doom severe ;  
And cold the breast that cannot shed  
The sympathetic tear.

Such cold unfeeling hearts deserve  
The scorn of youth and age ;  
The keenest satire ever graced  
A poet's classic page.

For them let no enraptured bard  
In verse record their name ;  
When death's cold arm its arrows shoot,  
And marks them for its aim.

Let such in dark oblivion lie,  
Unwept by friend or foe ;  
Since they themselves have never felt  
For others' pain or woe.

Many a father's hope that day  
Was blasted in an hour ;  
Many a bud of promised bloom,  
By fate's unaltered power.

Perhaps some bard whose brilliant powers  
Would Maro's strain excel ;  
Embalm his country's deeds in song,  
And of its heroes tell.

Perhaps some Newton here was lost,  
On this eventful day ;  
Whose mind would trace the comet's tract,  
And heaven's orbs survey.

Perhaps a Carey, who would waft  
With self-denying toils,  
The story of redeeming love  
To earth's remotest isles.

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## THE MOTHER'S LAMENT

### O'er her Dead Daughter.

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Sweet child, thy spirit now is fled,  
Now all thy toils are o'er ;  
And Jordan's stream you now have crossed,  
To Caanan's happy shore.

Pale, pale, and wan are now thy cheeks,  
Thy brow, how cold and chill ;  
Thy limbs, how motionless and dead ;  
Thy tongue, how mute and still.

Closed, closed are now thine eyes in death,  
Which beamed with life before ;  
And oft with warm affection glanced,  
But now will glance no more.

If saints redeemed in glory know  
What men on earth pursue ;  
If they can mark our actions here,  
And here our conduct view,

Oh ! then behold the tears I shed,  
As o'er thy grave I bend ;  
And hear the deep, the bursting sighs  
My aged bosom rend.

My days and nights pass wearily,  
My happiest days are o'er ;  
For nought on earth can cheer my heart,  
Since Emma is no more.

In vain I'll mourn thy early death,  
Thy sad untimely doom ;  
In vain I'll water with my tears  
Thy still and lonely tomb.

Cold, cold is now thy silent bed,  
And lowly dost thou lie ;  
For thee I'll ever mourn and weep  
Until the day I die.

Farewell, for ever—fare-thee-well,  
My sweetest and my best ;  
No more on thee my eyes shall glance,  
Nor press thee to my breast.

The thoughts of thee shall ne'er depart  
From this sad heart of mine ;  
Until my limbs are cold in death,  
And motionless as thine.

Yes! happy child, in mental view,  
I see the happy shore,  
When we shall meet in glory yet,  
And parted be no more.

What time the dusky shades of eve,  
The valley fair enclose ;  
And sleep invites the weary world,  
To silence and repose.

When objects of diurnal care  
My thoughts no longer crave,  
I'll oft with pensive step retire  
To muse upon thy grave.

And there, by human eye unseen,  
Nor heard by human ear,  
I'll pour my sorrows o'er thy grave,  
And mourn thy doom severe.

In vain for me the vernal year,  
The woods revive again ;  
And heath-bells nod upon the wild,  
Or daisies on the plain.

In vain for me the warbling lark  
Awakes the summer morn,  
Or thrushes pipe at glide of eve  
Upon the brambly thorn.

No more shall these their wonted charms  
To me again convey ;  
In vain my eyes the valleys fair,  
And prospects wide, survey.

For nought on earth to me again  
The former joys restore ;  
Since in the grave my Emma sleeps,  
And gladdens me no more.



Our City's Sorrow :

A LAMENT.

BY

T. P. NICOLL, AUTHOR OF "ICHABOD".



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APRIL 5, 1876.

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*Well may the people wail,  
The dead are all their own.*

JAMES MACKAY, BOOKSELLER, SCHOOLHILL,  
AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.



A. KING AND CO., PRINTERS.









