

THE GHAISTS:

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KIRK-YARD ECLOGUE.

BY ROBERT FERGUSSON.

Did you not say in good ANN's day,
 And vow and did protest, Sir,
 That when HANOVER should come o'er
 We surely should be blest, Sir?

Paisley:

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*Did you not say in good ANN's day,
And vow and did protest, Sir,
That when Hanover should come o'er
We surely should be blest, Sir ?*

An auld Sang made new again.

WHARE the braid planes in dowy murmurs wave
Their antient taps out o'er the cauld clad grave,
Whare *Geordie Girdwood* *, mony a lang spun day,
Houkit for gentlest banes the humblest clay,
'Twa sheeted ghaists, fac grizly and fac wan,
'Mang lanely tombs their douff discourse began.

WATSON.

Cauld blaws the nippin north wi' angry fough,
And showers his hailstones frae the Castle Clough
O'er the Grayfriars, whare, at mirkest hour,
Bogles and spectres went to tak their tour,
Harlin' the pows and shanks to hidden cairns,
Among the hamlocks wild, and sun-burnt ferns,

* *The late Sexton.*

'But nane the night, save you and I, hae come
 Frae the dern mansions of the midnight tomb;
 Now whan the dawning's near, whan cock maun crow
 And wi' his angry bougil gai's withdraw,
 Ayont the kirk we'll flap, and there tak bield,
 While the black hours our nightly freedom yield.

HERRIOT.

I'm weel content; but binna casten down,
 Nor trow the cock wiil ca' ye hame o'er soon,
 For tho' the eastern list betakens day,
 Changing her rokely black for mantle grey,
 Nae weirlike bird our knell of parting-rings,
 Nor sheds the caller moisture frae his wings.
Nature has chang'd her course; the birds o' day
 Dofin' is silence on the bending spray,
 While owlets round the craigs at noon-tide flee,
 And bludy-bawks sit singand on the tree.
 Ah, *Caledon!* the land I yence held dear,
 Sair mane mak I for thy destruction near;
 And thou, *Edina!* anes my dear abode,
 Whan royal *Jamie* sway'd the sovereign rod,
 In thae blest days, weel did I think bestow'd
 To blaw thy poortith by wi' heaps o' gowd;
 To mak thee sonfy seem wi' mony a gift,
 And gar thy stately turrets speel the list:
 In vain did Danish Jones, wi' gimcrack pains,
 In Gothic sculpture fret the pliant stanes:
 In vain did he affix my statue here,
 Brawly to busk wi' flow'rs ilk coming year;
 My towers are sunk, my lands are barren now,
 My fame, my honour, like my flow'rs maun dow.

WATSON.

Sure *Major Weir*, or some sic warlock wight,
 Has flung beguillin' glamer o'er your fight;
 Or else some kittle cantrup thrown, I ween,
 Has bound in mirlygoes my ain twa ein,
 If ever aught frae sense cou'd be believ'd
 (And senil hae my senses been deceiv'd,)

This moment, e'er the top of Adam's tomb,
 Fu' easy can I see your chiefest dome:
 Nae corbie fleein' there, nor croupin' craws,
 Seem to forispeak the ruin of thy haws,
 But a, your towers in wonted order stand,
 Steeve as the rocks that hem our native land.

HERRIOT.

Think na I vent my weel a-day in vain,
 Kent ye the cause, ye sure wad join my mane,
 Black be the day that e'er to England's ground
 Scotland was eikit by the *Union's* bond;
 For mony a menzie of destructive ill
 The country now maun brook frae *mortmain-bills*,
 That void our test'ments, and can freely gie
 Sic will and scoup to the ordain'd trustee,
 That he may tir our stateliest riggins bare,
 Nor acres, houses, woods, nor fishins spare,
 Till he can lend the stoitering state a lift
 Wi' gowd in gowpins as a grassum gift;
 In lieu o' whilk, we maun be weel content
 To tyne the capital for three *per cent*.
 A doughty sum indeed, whan now-a-days
 They raise provisions as the flents they raise,

Yoke hard the poor, and lat the rich chiefs be,
Pamper'd at ease by ithers' industry.

Hale, interest for my fund can scantly now
Clead a' my callants backs, and flap their mou' :
How maun their weyms wi' fairest hunger slack,
'Their duds in targets flaff upo' their back,
Whan they are doom'd to keep a lasting Lent,
Starving for England's weel at *three per cent.*

WATSON.

AULD REIKIE than may blefs the gowden times,
Whan honesty and poortith baith are crimes :
She little kend, whan you and I endow'd
Our hospitals for back-gaun burghers gude,
That e'er our filler or our lands shou'd bring
A gude bien living to a back-gaun k—g.
Wha' thanks to ministry ! is grown fae wife,
He dow'na chew the bitter cud of vice ;
For gin, frae Castlehill to Netherbow,
Wad honest houses bawdy houses grow,
The crown wad never spier the price o' sin,
Nor hinder younkers to the de'il to rin ;
But gif some mortal grien for pious fame,
And leave the poor man's pray'r to sain his name,
His geer maun a' be scatter'd by the claws
O' ruthless, ravenous, and harpy laws.
Yet, shou'd I think, altho' the bill tak place,
The council winna lack fae meikle grace
As lat our heritage at wanworth gang,
Or the succeeding generations wrang
O' braw bien maintenance and wealth o' lear,
Whilk else had drappit to their children's skair :

For mony a deep, and mony a rare engyne
Hae sprung frae Herriot's wark, and sprung frae mine.

HERRIOT.

I find, my friend, that ye but little ken,
There's ei'now on the earth a fet o' men,
Wha', if they get their private pouches lin'd,
Gie na a winnellstrae for a' mankind;
They'll sell their country, flae their conscience bare,
To gar the weigh-bauk turn a single hair.
The government need only bait the line
Wi' the prevailing flee, the gowden coin;
Then our executors, and wise trustees,
Will sell them fishes in forbidden seas,
Upo' their dwining country girth in sport,
Laugh in their sleeve, and get a place at court.

WATSON.

Ere that day come, I'll 'mang our spirits pick
Some ghaist that trokes and conjures wi' *Auld Nick*,
To gar the wind wi' rougher rumbles blaw,
And weightier thuds than ever mortal saw:
Fire-flaught and hail, wi' tensfold furies fires,
Shall lay yird-laigh Edina's airy spires:
Tweed shall rin routin' down his banks out o'er,
Till Scotland's out o' reach o' England's pow'r;
Upo' the briny Borean jaws to float,
And mourn in dowy faughs her dowy lot.

HERRIOT.

Yonder's the tomb of wife *Mackenzie* fam'd,
Whase laws rebellious bigotry reclaim'd,
Freed the hail land of covenanting fools,
Wha' erst hae fash'd us wi' unnumber'd dools;

Till night we'll tak the swaird aboon our powe,
And than, whan she her ebon chariot rows,
We'll travel to the vault wi' stealing stap,
And wauk *Mackenzie* frae his quiet nap ;
Tell him our ails, that he, wi' wonted skill,
May fleg the schemers o' the *mortmain-bill*.

F I N I S.