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ROBERT FERGUSSON.

THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
ROBERT FERGUSSON

With a Memoir of the Author

AND

NOTES ILLUSTRATING LOCAL AND PERSONAL  
ALLUSIONS

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# BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

OF

ROBERT FERGUSSON.

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THE author of the following poems bears a rank in modern Scottish verse next to Burns and Ramsay. Burns acknowledged that the flame of poetry was rekindled in his bosom by reading the poems of Ramsay and Fergusson. Several of the most admired productions of the Ayrshire bard were formed on models supplied by Fergusson, whom he never loses an opportunity of speaking of with respect and regret, calling him on one occasion

———"my elder brother in misfortune,  
By far my elder brother in the muses."

It can never, moreover, be forgot that the sayer of these words proved the sincerity of his sentiments, extravagant as they may in some degree have been, by raising a monument over the remains of Fergusson.

Robert Fergusson was born in Edinburgh, October 17, 1750. His father, William Fergusson, originally of the north of Scotland, was an accountant in the service of the British Linen Company. The poet was a very weakly child, and his education was therefore irregular; yet, notwithstanding long periods of absence from his tasks, he went through a classical course at the high-school of his native city and the grammar-school of Dundee, with considerable credit. Being designed for the clerical profession, he was sent at thirteen years of age to the University of St Andrews, where, as a hursar, he studied gratuitously for four years. What progress he made in his studies has not been very clearly stated; but it was now that he first developed a turn for wit, mimicry, and practical fun, which adhered to him through

his short life, and also the seeds of his poetical talent. The porter of the university many years afterwards described him at one felicitous dash—"he was a tricky callant, but a fine laddie for a' that." Amongst other whimsicalities related of him with regard to this period of his life, it was his custom, when he received a little supply of money from home, to hang it out in a bag at his window, that all his companions might know of the singular condition he was in for a poet.

At seventeen, his father being dead, and his mother poor, he resolved to abandon thoughts of the church, to which, probably, he had never had any great liking. While hesitating what other profession to follow, he went to reside for a time with a maternal uncle named Forbes, who lived near Aberdeen. There he remained till his clothes became so much worn that his relative thought it necessary to give him a hint to return home. He withdrew indignant, and proceeding to Edinburgh on foot, fell ill on his arrival at his mother's house. The first moments of renewed health he devoted to the composition of two poems, *On the Decay of Friendship*, and *Against Repining at Fortune*, both bearing allusion to the late mortifying incident.

He was now compelled for mere bread to condescend to the humble office of a copyist of legal papers in the business room of the commissary-clerk of Edinburgh, receiving probably for his drudgery only as much as sufficed to keep soul and body together. It was in this situation that he composed the poems which have given him a name. These were published from time to time in *Huddiman's Weekly Magazine*, and soon attracted general notice. The public saw in the author of *Cauler Oysters*, *Leith Races*, and *the Rising of the Session*, a poet worthy to be named beside Ramsay, yet tranquilly allowed that poet to dole out his weary life in penury and an unworthy toil. It is melancholy to think of this amiable and ingenious young man bound for years to tasks fit for the dullest of mortals, living in abject poverty under the roof of a widowed mother, and knowing none of life's enjoyments above those derived from an occasional hour in a cellar tavern. The only change of employment he ever obtained, was a transference to the sheriff-clerk's office, there to perform the same duties, or worse. Finding, in this new situation, that he was expected also to take a share in the enforcement of writs of distress, he retreated in the course of a few months to the chambers of the commissary-clerk, where he spent the remainder of his days, excepting those marked by severe illness.

The constitution of Fergusson had always been infirm, as was sufficiently betokened by his slender unsteady frame and pale complexion. Some months after he had completed his twenty-third year, while under a medicine remarkable for its searching effects on the system, he engaged in the intemperate scenes of a county election, in the course of which he caught a severe cold. The consequences of a cold under such circumstances are usually severe upon the nervous system. In Fergusson's case they produced complete mental derangement. His insanity took a religious turn, and he became impressed with the conviction that he was a sinner given over to everlasting reprobation. For some time his mother kept him in her house, but was at length obliged, for the sake of proper attendance, to consign him to a very poor asylum, then and still existing near the city-workhouse. He had been alarmed at the idea of this step being taken, and it was necessary to convey him to the place under a false pretence. When he found himself in the dismal retreat, he broke into a yell of rage and despair, to which the other inmates replied from their separate cells. The friends who had beguiled him to the spot, departed thrilled with horror.

He was here confined for two months. By and bye, when the comparative tranquillity of his mind permitted the indulgence, he was allowed to receive visits from his mother and sister. But the benighted poet was no more to walk the ways of this world. A few days before his dissolution, his mother and sister found him lying on his straw-bed, calm and collected. The evening was chill and damp: he requested his mother to gather the bed-clothes about him and sit on his feet, for he said they were so very cold as to be almost insensible to the touch. She did as he requested, and his sister took her seat by the bed-side. He looked wistfully in his mother's face, and said, "Oh, mother, this is kind." Then addressing his sister, he said, "Might you not come frequently and sit beside me? You cannot imagine how comfortable it would be. You might fetch your seam, and sit beside me." The mother and sister answered only with tears and sighs. "What ails you?" said the dying poet; "why sorrow for me? I am very well cared for here, and want for nothing—only it is cold, very cold. You know I told you it would come to this at last. Oh, do not go yet, mother—I hope to be soon—oh, do not go yet!—do not leave me!" But the keeper motioned that the time was past, and they must depart. They never again saw Robert Fergusson in life. He was found a few mornings thereafter dead in his cell.

This event took place on the 16th of October 1774, when he was a day less than twenty-four years old. His remains were interred in the Canongate churchyard.<sup>1</sup>

Fergusson, as already said, was slender in person, and of pale complexion. His eyes were dark and brilliant, and his whole appearance, though somewhat effeminate, was pleasing. He possessed a beautiful voice, which, with his fine ear for music, enabled him to sing the melodies of his native land with delightful effect. His manners were gentle, notwithstanding his turn for waggery and practical joking; and during his brief career, though he gained many friends, he scarcely made a single enemy. His habits were convivial, according to the prevalent taste of his time and place, but do not appear to have been marked by any gross excesses. In an estimate of his poetical abilities, his English compositions may be fairly set aside, as, with scarcely an exception, they display no features calculated to arrest attention. When we look, however, to his Scottish poems, especially those of a comic and descriptive character, we find great vivacity and

<sup>1</sup> Burns, immediately after his arrival in Edinburgh, sought out the grave of Fergusson, and threw himself upon it in a transport of mournful feeling, in which probably some presentiment of his own unhappy fate was mingled. Some documents connected with his erection of a monument over the remains of the Edinburgh bard, are given by Dr Currie. The Gentleman's Magazine (November 1823) publishes another of a curious nature, namely, the account of Messrs J. and R. Burn, builders, against Robert Burns, for the expense of the monument. It was as follows:—

Mr Robert Burns

1780,

To J. and R. Burn.

|          |  |         |
|----------|--|---------|
| June 23. | 54 feet polished Craigleith stone, for a head-     |         |
|          | stone for Robert Fergusson, at 1s.,                | £2 14 0 |
|          | 10 feet 8 inches dble. base mouldings, at 1s. 6d., | 0 16 0  |
|          | 4 large cramp irons, - - - - -                     | 0 2 10  |
|          | 2 stones to set the base on, at 1s., - - -         | 0 2 0   |
|          | 320 letters on do. at 8s., - - - - -               | 1 5 8   |
|          | Lead and setting up do., - - - - -                 | 0 5 0   |
|          | Grave-digger's dues, - - - - -                     | 0 4 6   |
|          |  | <hr/>   |
|          |  | £3 10 0 |

playfulness, with a sprinkling of beautiful imagery, and a flow of language rich in choice and expressive terms, and of great smoothness. He has not certainly the fine energy of Burns, yet he has no small share of his manly sense and generous feeling. When we consider, moreover, that most of these poems were produced before their author had completed his twenty-third year, we cannot well hesitate to admit that the notice which they have obtained from his countrymen has been in the main deserved.

Ill-fated genius!—heaven-taught Fergusson!  
 What heart that feels and will not yield a tear,  
 To think life's sun did set ere well begun  
 To shed its influence on thy bright career,  
 Oh! why should truest worth and genius pine  
 Beneath the iron grasp of want and woe,  
 While titled knaves and idiot greatness shine  
 In all the splendour fortune can bestow!

BURNS.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Inscribed in a copy of *The World*, and heretofore not included in Burns's works.

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[In the present edition of Fergusson's Poems, notes have been added to elucidate local and personal allusions. These are distinguished from the poet's own notes, by being within brackets.]

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# POEMS OF ROBERT FERGUSSON.

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## POEMS IN SCOTTISH DIALECT.

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### THE KING'S BIRTH-DAY IN EDINBURGH.

Oh ! qualis hurly-burly fuit, si forte vidisses.

*Polemio-Middinia.*

I sing the day sae aften sung,  
Wi' which our lugs hae yearly rung,  
In whase loud praise the Muse has dung  
    A' kind o' print ;  
But, wow ! the limmer's fairly flung ;  
    There's naething in't.

I'm fain to think the joy's the same  
In London town as here at hame,  
Whare fouk o' ilka age and name,  
    Baith blind and cripple,  
Forgather aft, oh fie for shame !  
    To drink and tipple.

Oh Muse ! be kind, and dinna fash us  
To flee awa beyond Parnassus,  
Nor seek for Helicon to wash us,  
    That heath'nish spring ;  
Wi' Highland whisky scour our hawses,  
    And gar us sing.

Begin, then, dame! ye've drunk your fill;  
 You wouldna hae the tither gill?  
 You'll trust me, mair would do you ill,  
     And ding ye doitet:  
 'Troth, 'twould be sair against my will  
     To hae the wyte o't.

Sing, then, how on the fourth o' June<sup>1</sup>  
 Our bells screed aff a loyal tune;  
 Our ancient castle shoots at noon,  
     Wi' flag-taff buskit,  
 Frae which the sodger blades come down  
     To cock their musket.

Oh willawins! Mons Meg, for you;  
 'Twas firin' crack'd thy muckle mou;  
 What black mishanter gart ye spew  
     Baith gut and ga'!  
 I fear, they bang'd thy belly fu',  
     Against the law.<sup>2</sup>

Right seenil am I gien to bannin;  
 But, by my saul, ye was a cannon  
 Could hit a man, had he been stannin  
     In shire o' Fife,  
 Sax lang Scots miles ayont Clackmannan,  
     And tak his life.

<sup>1</sup> [The fidelity of the description in these stanzas will be acknowledged by all who remember the streets of Edinburgh on a king's birth-day previous to the year 1810, after which, from the illness of George III., the festivity greatly declined.]

<sup>2</sup> [Mons Meg is an enormous piece of artillery, of rude and antique construction, which still exists in Edinburgh Castle. It consists of longitudinal bars, hooped, and is twenty inches in the bore, the length being about eighteen feet. It is supposed to have been founded by James IV., who carried it to the siege of Norham in 1499. We learn from Fountainhall's Notes that it was burst when firing a salute to James Duke of York, on his visit to the castle, October 1680. Fergusson paints very faithfully the whimsical notions entertained by the Scottish populace respecting this tremendous engine of war.]

The hills in terror would cry out,  
 And echo to thy dinsome rout ;  
 The herds would gather in their nowt,  
     That glowr'd wi' wonder,  
 Hafflins afley'd to bide thereout  
     To hear thy thunder.

Sing, likewise, Muse ! how blue-gown bodies,  
 Like scare-crows new taen down frae woodies,  
 Come here to cast their clouted duddies,  
     And get their pay :  
 Than them what magistrate mair proud is  
     On King's birth-day !

On this great day the city-guard,<sup>2</sup>  
 In military art weel lear'd,  
 Wi' powder'd pow, and shaven beard,  
     Gang through their functions ;  
 By hostile rabble seldom spared  
     O' elarty unctions.

Oh soldiers ! for your ain dear sakes,  
 For Scotland's, *alias* Land o' Cakes,

<sup>1</sup> [The blue-gowns, or king's beadsmen, are a set of privileged beggars peculiar to Scotland. Their numbers are the same as the years of the monarch's life, and on the sovereign's birth-day they are paid from the Scottish exchequer in Edinburgh as many pence as the king is years old, besides getting a sermon from one of the king's chaplains, a new dress of blue, and a good dinner. Edie Ochiltree, in "the Antiquary," is described as a *blue-gown*.]

<sup>2</sup> [The city-guard was an armed police, which existed in Edinburgh, from (probably) the reign of James VI. till the year 1817, when it was dissolved. It was composed of somewhat more than a hundred men, in three companies, the officers being generally decayed tradesmen, and the privates invalid members of Highland regiments. Upon the whole, it was a body as much laughed at as feared. Scott, in describing them in his "Heart of Mid-Lothian," adverts to the frequent notice which poor Fergusson takes of them, which, says the novelist, might have almost entitled him to be considered their post-laureate.]

Gie not her bairns sic deadly paiks,  
 Nor be sae rude,  
 Wi' firelock or Lochaber aix,  
 As spill their bluid.

Now round and round the serpents whiz,  
 Wi' hissin' wrath and angry phiz ;  
 Sometimes they catch a gentle gizz,  
 Alack-a-day !  
 And singe, wi' hair-devouring bizz,  
 Its curls away.

Should the owner patiently keek round,  
 To view the nature o' his wound,  
 Dead pussie, draigled through the pond,  
 Taks him a lounder,  
 Which lays his honour on the ground  
 As flat's a flounder.

The Muse maun also now implore  
 Auld wives to steek ilk hole and bore ;  
 If baudrins slip but to the door,  
 I fear, I fear,  
 She'll no lang shank upon all four  
 This time o' year.

Neist day ilk hero tells his news,  
 O' crackit crowns and broken brows,  
 And deeds that here forbid the Muse  
 Her theme to swell,  
 Or time mair precious to abuse,  
 Their crimes to tell ;

She'll rather to the fields resort,  
 Where music gars the day seem short ;  
 Where doggies play and lambies sport,  
 On gowany braes ;  
 Where peerless fancy hauds her court,  
 And tunes her lays.

## THE DAFT DAYS.

[The festive days kept in Scotland at the New-year are so called, on account of the mad frolics by which they were wont to be distinguished. The days more particularly celebrated were Yule (Christmas), Hogmanay (the last day of the year), New-Year's day, and Handsel-Monday—that is, the first Monday of the year, so called from the custom of giving presents or handsets on that day.]

Now mirk December's dowie face  
 Glowers owre the rigs wi' sour grimace,  
 While, through his *minimum* o' space,  
     The bleer-ee'd sun,  
 Wi' blinkin' light and stealin' pace,  
     His race doth run.

Frae naked groves nae birdie sings;  
 To shepherd's pipe nae hillock rings;  
 The breeze nae odorous flavour brings  
     Frae Borean cave;  
 And dwynin' nature droops her wings,  
     Wi' visage grave.

Mankind but scanty pleasure glean  
 Frae snawy hill or barren plain,  
 When winter, 'midst his nippin' train,  
     Wi' frozen spear,  
 Sends drift owre a' his bleak domain,  
     And guides the weir.

Auld Reikie! thou'rt the canty hole,  
 A bield for mony a cauldribe soul,  
 Wha snugly at thine ingle loll,  
     Baith warm and couth;  
 While round they gar the bicker roll,  
     To weet their mouth.

When merry Yule-day comes, I trow,  
 You'll scantlins find a hungry mou;  
 Sma' are our cares, our stamacks fu'  
     O' gusty gear,

And kickshaws, strangers to our view  
Sin' fernyear.

Ye browster wives! now busk ye braw,  
And fling your sorrows far awa;  
Then, come and gie's the tither blaw  
O' reaming ale,  
Mair precious than the Well o' Spa,  
Our hearts to heal.

Then, though at odds wi' a' the warl',  
Amang oursels we'll never quarrel;  
Though discord gie a canker'd suar!  
To spoil our glee,  
As lang's there's pith into the barrel,  
We'll drink and gree.

Fiddlers! your pins in temper fix,  
And rozet weel your fiddlesticks,  
But banish vile Italian tricks  
Frae out your quorum;  
Nor fortes wi' pianos mix—  
Gie's Tullochgorum.<sup>1</sup>

For nought can cheer the heart sae weel  
As can a canty Highland reel;  
It even vivifies the heel  
To skip and dance:  
Lifeless is he wha canna feel  
Its influence.

Let mirth abound; let social cheer  
Invest the dawnin' o' the year;  
Let blythesome innocence appear,  
To crown our joy;  
Nor envy, wi' sarcastic sneer,  
Our bliss destroy.

And thou, great god of *aqua vitæ*!  
Wha sway'st the empire o' this city—  
When fou, we're sometimes capernoity—  
Be thou prepared

<sup>1</sup> [A well known quick dancing tune.]

To hedge us frae that black banditti,  
The city guard.

---

### CAULER OYSTERS.

Happy the man, who free from care and strife,  
In silken or in leathern purse retains  
A splendid shilling. He nor hears with pain  
New oysters cried, nor sighs for cheerful ale.

PHILLIPS.

O' a' the waters that can hobble  
A fishing yole or sa'mon coble,  
And can reward the fisher's trouble,  
Or south or north,  
There's nane sae spacious and sae noble,  
As Frith o' Forth.

In her the skate and codlin sail ;  
The eel, fu' souple, wags her tail ;  
Wi' herrin', fleuk, and mackarel,  
And whitens dainty ;  
Their spindle-shanks the labeters trail,  
Wi' partans plenty.

Auld Reekie's sons blythe faces wear ;  
September's merry month is near,  
That brings in Neptune's cauler cheer,  
New oysters fresh ;  
The halesomest and nicest gear  
O' fish or flesh.

Oh ! then, we needna gie a plack  
For dand'rin mountebank or quack,  
Wha o' their drogs sae bauldly crack,  
And spread sic notions,  
As gar their feckless patients tak  
Their stinkin' potions.

Come, prie, frail man ! for if thou art sick,  
The oyster is a rare cathartic,

As ever doctor patient gart lick  
 To cure his ails ;  
 Whether you hae the head or heart ache,  
 It never fails.

Ye tipplers ! open a' your poses ;  
 Ye wha are fash'd wi' plukie noses,  
 Fling owre your craig sufficient doses ;  
 You'll thole a hunder,  
 To fleg awa your simmer roses,  
 And naething under.

When big as burns the gutters rin,  
 If ye hae catch'd a droukit skin,  
 To Luckie Middlemist's<sup>1</sup> loup in,  
 And sit fu' snug  
 Owre oysters and a dram o' gin,  
 Or haddock lug.

When auld Saunt Giles, at aught o'clock,  
 Gars merchant lowns their shopies lock,  
 There we adjourn wi' hearty fouk  
 To hirl our bodles,  
 And get wharewi' to crack our joke,  
 And clear our noddles.

When Phœbus did his winnocks steek,  
 How often at that ingle cheek  
 Did I my frosty fingers beek,  
 And prie guid fare !  
 I trow, there was nae hame to seek,  
 When stechin there.

While glaikit fools, owre rife o' cash,  
 Pamper their wames wi' fousom trash,  
 I think a chiel may gaily pass,  
 He's nae ill bodden,  
 That gusts his gab wi oyster-sauce,  
 And hen weel sodden.

At Musselbrough, and eke Newhaven,  
 The fisherwives will get top livin',

<sup>1</sup> [A famous oyster-tavern of Fergusson's time, situated in the Cowgate, where it is now crossed by the South Bridge.]



When lads gang out on Sundays' even  
 To treat their joes,  
 And take o' fat Pandores<sup>1</sup> a prieven,  
 Or mussel brose.

Then, sometimes, ere they flit their doup,  
 They'll aiblins a' their siller coup  
 For liquor clear frae cutty stoup,  
 To weet their wizen,  
 And swallow owre a dainty soup,  
 For fear they gizen.

A' ye wha canna staun sae sicker,  
 When twice you've toom'd the big-mou'd bicker,  
 Mix cauler oysters wi' your liquor,  
 And I'm your debtor,  
 If greedy priest or drouthy vicar  
 Will thole it better.

---

#### BRAID CLAITH.

Ye wha are fain to hae your name  
 Wrote i' the bonnie book o' fame,  
 Let merit nae pretension claim  
 To laurell'd wreath,  
 But hap ye weel, baith back and wame,  
 In guid braid claith.

He that some ells o' this may fa',  
 And slae-black hat on pow like snaw,  
 Bids bauld to bear the gree awa,  
 Wi' a' this graith,  
 When beinly clad wi' shell fu' braw  
 O' guid braid claith.

Waesucks for him wha has nae feck o't!  
 For he's a gowk they're sure to geek at;  
 A chiel that ne'er will be respectit  
 While he draws breath,

<sup>1</sup> [A certain favourite kind of oysters, so called from their being found near the salt-works at Prestonpans.]

Till his four quarters are bedeckit  
 Wi' guid braid claith,<sup>1</sup>

On Sabbath-days the barber spark,  
 When he has done wi' scrapin' wark,  
 Wi' siller broachie in his sark,  
     Gangs trigly, faith!  
 Or to the Meadows,<sup>2</sup> or the Park,<sup>3</sup>  
 In guid braid claith.

Weel might ye trow, to see them there,  
 That they to shave your haffits bare,  
 Or curl and sleek a pickle hair,  
     Would be right laith,  
 When pacin' wi' a gawsy air  
 In guid braid claith.

If ony mettled stirrah green  
 For favour frae a lady's een,  
 He maunna care for bein' seen  
     Before he sheath  
 His body in a scabbard clean  
 O' guid braid claith.

For, gin he come wi' coat threadbare,  
 A feg for him she winna care,

<sup>1</sup> [This verse almost appears as an echo of the following passage in *Cibber's Lives of the Poets*:—"Boyce lived obscurely at Edinburgh. His extreme carelessness about his dress was a circumstance very inappreciable to a man who lives in that city. They are such lovers of this kind of decorum, that they will admit of no infringement upon it; and were a man with more wit than Pope, and more philosophy than Newton, to appear at their market-place negligent in his apparel, he would be avoided by his acquaintances, who would rather risk his displeasure than the censure of the public, which would not fail to stigmatise them, for associating with a man seemingly poor; for they measure poverty and riches, understanding, or its opposite, by exterior appearance."]

<sup>2</sup> A promenade to the south of Edinburgh.

<sup>3</sup> The King's Park—another promenade.

But crook her bonny mou fou sair,  
 And scauld him baith :  
 Wooers should aye their travel spare,  
 Without braid claith.

Braid claith lends fouk an unco heeze ;  
 Maks mony kail-worms butterflies ;  
 Gies mony a doctor his degrees,  
 For little skaith :  
 In short, you may be what you please,  
 Wi' guid braid claith.

For tho' ye had as wise a snout on,  
 As Shakspeare or Sir Isaac Newton,  
 Your judgment fouk would hae a doubt on,  
 I'll tak my aith,  
 Till they could see ye wi' a suit on  
 O' guid braid claith.

-----

### ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF SCOTS MUSIC.

Mark it, *Cæsario* ! it is old and plain,  
 The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,  
 And the free maids that weave their thread with bones,  
 Do use to chant it.—*Shakspeare's Twelfth Night.*

On Scotia's plains, in days of yore,  
 When lads and lasses tartan wore,  
 Saft Music rang on ilka shore,  
 In hamely weed ;  
 But harmony is now no more,  
 And Music dead.

Round her the feather'd choir would wing ;  
 Sae bonnily she wont to sing,  
 And sleely wake the sleepin' string,  
 Their sang to lead,  
 Sweet as the zephyrs o' the Spring :  
 But now she's dead.

Mourn, ilka nymph, and ilka swain,  
 Ilk sunny hill and dowie glen ;  
 Let weepin' streams and naiads drain  
     Their fountain-head ;  
 Let echo swell the dolefu' strain,  
     Sin' Music's dead.

When the soft vernal breezes ca'  
 The grey-hair'd winter fogs awa,  
 Naebody then is heard to blaw,  
     Near hill or mead,  
 On chaunter, or on aiten straw,  
     Sin' Music's dead.

Nae lasses now, on simmer days,  
 Will lilt at bleachin' o' their elaes ;  
 Nae herds on Yarrow's bonny braes,  
     Or banks o' Tweed,  
 Delight to chaunt their hamely lays,  
     Sin' Music's dead.

At gloamin, now, the bagpipe's dumb,  
 When weary owsen hameward come ;  
 Sae sweetly as it wont to bum,  
     And pibrochs skreed ;  
 We never hear its warlike hum ;  
     For Music's dead.

Macgibbon's<sup>1</sup> gane ! ah, waes my heart !  
 The man in music maist expert ;  
 Wha could sweet melody impart,  
     And tune the reed,  
 Wi' sic a slee and pawky art ;  
     But now he's dead.

<sup>1</sup> [“ William Macgibbon was for many years leader of the orchestra of the Gentlemen's Concert at Edinburgh, and was thought to play the music of Correlli, Geminiani, and Handel, with great execution and judgment. His sets of Scotch tunes, with variations and basses, are well known. He composed a set of sonatas or trios for two violins and a bass, which were esteemed good.”—*William Tytler, in the Transactions of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries, vol. I.*]

Ilk carlin now may grunt and grane,  
 Ilk bonnie lassie mak great maen ;  
 Siu' he's awa, I trow, there's nane  
     Can fill his stead ;  
 The blythest sangster on the plain !  
     Alack, he's dead !

Now foreign sonnets bear the gree,  
 And crabbit, queer variety  
 O' sounds fresh sprung frae Italy ;  
     A bastard breed !  
 Unlike that saft-tongued melody,  
     Which now lies dead.

Could lavrocks, at the dawnin' day,  
 Could linties, chirmin' frae the spray,  
 Or todlin' burns, that smoothly play  
     Owre gowden bed,  
 Compare wi' " Birks o' Invermay ?"  
     But now they're dead.

Oh Scotland ! that could ance afford  
 To bang the pith o' Roman sword,  
 Wiuna your sons, wi' joint accord,  
     To battle speed,  
 And fight till Music be restored,  
     Which now lies dead !

---

### HALLOWFAIR.

At Hallowmas, when nights grow lang,  
 And starnies shine fu' clear ;  
 When fouk, the nippin' cauld to bang,  
     Their winter hap-warms wear ;  
 Near Edinbrough a fair there hauds,  
 I wat there's nane whase name is,  
 For strappin' dames and sturdy lads,  
 And cap and stoup, mair famous  
     Than it that day.

Upon the tap o' ilka lum  
 The sun began to keek,  
 And bade the trig-made maidens come  
 A sightly joe to seek  
 At Hallowfair, where browsters rare  
 Keep guid ale on the gautrees,  
 And dinna scrimp ye o' a skair  
 O' kebbucks frae their pantreys,  
 Fu' saut that day.

Here country John, in bonnet blue,  
 And eke his Sunday's claes on,  
 Rins after Meg wi' rokelay new,  
 And sappy kisses lays on :  
 She'll tauntin' say, " Ye silly coof !  
 Be o' your gab mair sparin' ;"  
 He'll tak the hint, and creish her loof  
 Wi' what will buy her fairin',  
 To chow that day.

Here chapman billies tak their stand,  
 And show their bonny wallies ;  
 Wow ! but they lie fu' gleg aff hand  
 To trick the silly fallows :  
 Heh, sirs ! what cairds and tinklers come,  
 And ne'er-do-weel horse-coupers,  
 And spae-wives, fenzying to be dumb,  
 Wi' a' siclike landloupers,  
 To thrive that day !

Here Sawny cries, frae Aberdeen,  
 " Come ye to me fa need ;  
 The brawest shanks that e'er were seen  
 I'll sell ye cheap and guid :  
 I wyt they are as pretty hose  
 As come frae weyr or leem :  
 Here, tak a rug, and show's your pose ;  
 Forseeth, my ain's but teem  
 Aud light the day."

Ye wives, as ye gang through the fair,  
 O mak your bargains hooly !

O' a' thir wylie louns beware,  
 Or, fegs! they will ye spulzie.  
 For fernyear Meg Thomson got  
 Frae thir mischievous villains,  
 A seaw'd bit o' a penny note,  
 That lost a score o' shillin's  
 To her that day.

The dinlin drums alarm our ears;  
 The serjeant screechs fu' loud,  
 "A' gentlemen and volunteers  
 That wish your country guid,  
 Come here to me, and I sall gie  
 Twa guineas and a crown;  
 A bowl o' punch, that, like the sea,  
 Will soon a lang dragoon  
 Wi' ease this day."

Without, the cuissers prance and nicker,  
 And owre the lea-rig scud;  
 In tents, the carles bend the bicker,  
 And rant and roar like wud.  
 Then there's sic yellochin and din,  
 Wi' wives and wee-anes gabblin',  
 That ane might trow they were akin  
 To a' the tongues at Babylon,  
 Confused that day.

When Phoebus ligs in Thetis' lap,  
 Auld Reekie gies them shelter,  
 Where cadgily they kiss the cap,  
 And ea't round helter-skelter.  
 Jock Bell gaed furth to play his freaks;  
 Great cause he had to rue it;  
 For frae a stark Lochaber axe<sup>1</sup>  
 He gat a clamihewit  
 Fu' sair that night.

<sup>1</sup> [An ancient weapon, somewhat like a halbert, carried by the city-guard.]

"Ohon!" quo' he, "I'd rather be  
 By sword or bagnet stickit,  
 Than hae my crown or body wi'  
 Sic deadly weapon nickit."  
 Wi' that he gat anither straik  
 Mair weighty than before,  
 That gart his feckless body ache,  
 And spew the reekin' gore  
     Fu' red that night.

He pechin on the causy lay,  
 O' kicks and cuffs weel sair'd ;  
 A Highland aith the serjeant gae,  
 "She man pe see our guard."  
 Out spak the weirlike corporal,  
 "Pring in ta drucken sot :"  
 They trail'd him ben, and, by my saul,  
 He paid his drucken groat  
     For that neist day.

Guid fouk ! as ye come frae the fair,  
 Bide yont frae this black squad ;  
 There's nae sic savages elsewhere  
 Allow'd to wear cockad'.  
 Than the strong lion's hungry maw  
 Or tusk o' Russian bear,  
 Frae their wanruly felin' paw  
 Mair cause ye hae to fear  
     Your death that day.

A wee soup drink does unco weel,  
 To haud the heart aboon ;  
 It's guid, as lang's a canny chiel  
 Can staun' steeve in his shoon.  
 But if a birkie's owre weel sair'd,  
 It gars him aften stammer  
 To ploys that bring him to the Guard,  
 And eke the Council Chaumer,  
     Wi' shame that day.



## ODE TO THE BEE.

Herds! blythesome tune your canty reeds,  
 And welcome to the gowany meads  
 The pride o' a' the insect thrang,  
 A stranger to the green sae lang.  
 Unfauld ilk buss, and ilka brier,  
 The bounties o' the gleesome year,  
 To him whose voice delights the spring;  
 Whose soughs the softest slumbers bring.

The trees in simmer cleedin' drest,  
 The hillocks in their greenest vest,  
 The brawest flowers rejoiced we see  
 Disclose their sweets, and ca' on thee,  
 Blythely to skim on wanton wing  
 Through a' the fairy haunts o' spring.

When fields hae got their dewy gift,  
 And dawnin' breaks upon the lift,  
 Then gang your ways through hight and how,  
 Seek cauler haugh or sunny knowe,  
 Or ivy craig, or burn-bank brae,  
 Where industry shall bid you gae,  
 For hiney, or for waxen store,  
 To ding sad poortith frae the door.

Could feckless creature, man, be wise,  
 The simmer o' his life to prize,  
 In winter he might fend fu' bauld,  
 His eild unkeun'd to nippin' cauld;  
 Yet they, alas! are antrin fouk  
 That laze their scape wi' winter stock.  
 Auld age maist feckly glowers right dour  
 Upon the ailings o' the poor,  
 Wha hope for nae comfortin', save  
 That dowie, dismal house, the grave.  
 Then, feeble man! be wise; tak tent  
 How industry can fetch content:  
 Behold the bees where'er they wing,  
 Or through the bonnie bowers o' spring,

Where violets or where roses blaw,  
 And siller dew-draps nightly fa',  
 Or when on open bent they're seen,  
 On heather hill or thistle green ;  
 The hincey's still as sweet that flows  
 Frae thistle cauld, or kendlin rose.

Frae this the human race may learn  
 Reflection's hincey'd draps to earn,  
 Whether they tramp life's thorny way,  
 Or through the sunny vineyard stray.

Instructive bee ! attend me still ;  
 Owre a' my labours sey your skill :  
 For thee shall hinceysuckles rise,  
 Wi' ladin' to your busy thighs,  
 And ilka shrub surround my cell,  
 Whereon ye like to hum and dwell :  
 My trees in bourachs owre my ground,  
 Shall fend ye frae ilk blast o' wind ;  
 Nor e'er shall herd, wi' ruthless spike,  
 Delve out the treasures frae your bike,  
 But in my fence be safe, and free  
 To live, and work, and sing, like me.

Like thee, by fancy wing'd, the Muse  
 Scuds ear' and heartsome owre the dewa,  
 Fu' vogie and fu' blythe to crap  
 The winsome flowers frae nature's lap,  
 Twinin' her livin' garlands there,  
 That lyart time can ne'er impair.

---

#### ON SEEING A BUTTERFLY IN THE STREET.

Daft gowk ! in macaroni dress,  
 Are ye come here to shaw your face,  
 Bowden wi' pride o' simmer gloss,  
 To cast a dash at Reekie's cross,  
 And glower at mony a twa-legged creature,  
 Flees braw by art, though worms by nature ?

Like country laird in city cleedin',  
 Ye're come to town, to lear guid breedin' ;

To bring ilk darlin' toast and fashion  
 In vogue among the flee creation,  
 That they, like buskit belles and beaux,  
 May crook their mou fu' sour at those  
 Whose weird is still to creep, alas !  
 Unnoticed, 'mang the humble grass ;  
 While you, wi' wings new buskit trim,  
 Can far frae yird and reptiles skim ;  
 Newfangle grown wi' new-got form,  
 You soar aboon your mither worm.

Kind Nature lent, but for a day,  
 Her wings, to mak ye sprush and gay ;  
 In her habiliments a while  
 Ye may your former sel beguile,  
 And ding awa' the vexin' thought  
 O' hourly dwynin' into nought,  
 By beengin' to your foppish brithers,  
 Black corbies dress'd in peacocks' feathers.  
 Like thee, they dander here and there,  
 When simmer's blinks are warm and fair,  
 And loe to snuff the healthy balm  
 When e'enin' spreads her wiugs sae calm ;  
 But when she girms and glowers sae dour  
 Frae Borean houff in angry shower,  
 Like thee, they scour frae street or field,  
 And hap them in a lyther bield ;  
 For they were never made to dree  
 The adverse gloom o' fortune's ee ;  
 Nor ever pried life's pinin' woes ;  
 Nor pu'd the prickles wi' the rose.

Poor butterfly ! thy case I mourn ;  
 To green kail-yard and fruits return,  
 How could you troke the mavis' note  
 For " Penny pies, all piping hot ?"  
 Can linties' music be compar'd  
 Wi' gruntles frae the city guard ?  
 Or can our flowers, at ten hours' bell,  
 The gowan or the spink excel ?  
 Now should our sclates wi' hailstones ring,  
 What cabbage fauld wad screen your wing ?

Say, flutterin' fairy, were't thy hap  
 To light beneath braw Nanny's cap,  
 Wad she, proud butterfly of May !  
 In pity, let you skaithless gae !  
 The furies glancin' frae her een  
 Wad rug your wings o' siller sheen,  
 That, wae for thee ! far, far outvie  
 Her Parjs artist's finest dye ;  
 Then a' your bonnie sprains wad fall,  
 And you a worm be left to crawl.

To sic mishanter rins the laird  
 Who quats his ha'-house and kail-yard ;  
 Grows politician ; scours to court,  
 Where he's the laughin'-stock and sport  
 O' ministers, wha jeer and jibe,  
 And heese his hopes wi' thought o' bribe ;  
 Till, in the end, they flae him bare,  
 Leave him to poortith and to care.  
 Their flectchin' words owre late he sees,  
 He trudges hame—repines—and dies.

Sic be their fa' wha dirk there-ben  
 In blackest business no their ain ;  
 And may they scaud their lips fu' leal,  
 That dip their spoons in ither's kail.

---

### ODE TO THE GOWDSPINK.

Frac fields where spring her sweets has blawn  
 Wi' cauler verdure owre the lawn,  
 The gowdspink comes in new attire,  
 The brawest 'mang the whistling choir,  
 That e'er the sun can clear his een,  
 Wi' glib notes sain the simmer's green.

Sure, nature herried mony a tree,  
 For sprains and bonnie spats to thee :  
 Nae mair the rainbow can impart  
 Sic glowin' ferlies o' her art,

Whose pencil wrought its freaks at will  
 On thee, the sey-piece o' her skill.  
 Nae mair, through straths in simmer dight,  
 We seek the rose to bless our sight ;  
 Or bid the bonny wa'-flowers sprout  
 On yonder ruin's lofty snout.  
 Thy shinin' garments far outstrip  
 The cherries upon Hebe's lip,  
 And fool the tints that nature chose  
 To busk and paint the crimson rose.  
 'Mang men, wae's heart ! we aften find  
 The brawest dressed want peace o' mind ;  
 While he that gangs wi' ragged coat  
 Is weel contentit wi' his lot.  
 When wand, wi' glewy birdlime set,  
 To steal far off your dautit mate,  
 Blythe wad you change your cleedin' gay  
 In lieu of lav'rock's sober grey.  
 In vain through woods you sair may ban  
 The envious treachery o' man,  
 That, wi' your gowden glister taen,  
 Still hunts you on the simmer's plain,  
 And traps you 'mang the sudden fa's  
 O' winter's dreary, dreepin' snaws.  
 Now steekit frae the gowany field,  
 Frae ilka fav'rite houff and bield ;  
 But, mergh, alas ! to disengage  
 Your bonnie buik frae fetterin' cage,  
 Your freeborn bosom beats in vain  
 For darlin' liberty again.  
 In window hung, how aft we see  
 Thee keek around at warblers free,  
 That carol soft, and sweetly sing  
 Wi' a' the blytheness o' the spring !  
 Like Tantalus they hing you here,  
 To spy the glories o' the year ;  
 And though you're at the burnie's brink,  
 They downa suffer you to drink.

Ah, Liberty ! thou bonny dame,  
 How wildly wanton is thy stream,

Round whilk the birdies a' rejoice,  
 And hail you wi' a gratefu' voice!  
 The gowdspink chatters joyous here,  
 And courts wi' gleesome sangs his peer;  
 The mavis, frae the new-bloom'd thorn,  
 Begins his lauds at ear'est morn;  
 And herd louns, loupin' owre the grass,  
 Need far less flectchin' to their lass,  
 Than paughty damsels bred at courts,  
 Wha thraw their mous, and tak the dorts:  
 But, reft of thee, fient flee we care  
 For a' that life ahint can spare.  
 The gowdspink, that sae lang has kenn'd  
 Thy happy sweets (his wonted friend),  
 Her sad confinement ill can brook  
 In some dark chamber's dowie nook,  
 Though Mary's hand his neb supplies,  
 Unkenn'd to hunger's painfu' cries,  
 Even beauty canna cheer the heart  
 Frae life, frae liberty apart:  
 For now we tyne its wonted lay,  
 Sae lightsome sweet, sae blythely gay.

Thus, Fortune aft a curse can gie,  
 To wile us far frae liberty;  
 Then tent her syren smiles wha list,  
 I'll ne'er envy your girdel's grist:  
 For when fair freedom smiles nae mair,  
 Care I for life! Shame fa' the hair!  
 A field o'ergrown wi' rankest stubble,  
 The essence of a paltry bubble!

---

### CAULER WATER.

When father Adie first pat spade in  
 The bonnie yard o' ancient Edeu,  
 His amry had nae liquor laid in  
     To fire his mou;  
 Nor did he thole his wife's upbraidin',  
     For bein' fou.

A cauler burn o' siller sheen,  
 Ran cannily out-owre the green ;  
 And when our gutcher's drouth had been  
     To bide right sair,  
 He loutit down, and drank bedeen  
     A dainty skair.

His bairns had a', before the flood,  
 A langer tack o' flesh and blood,  
 And on mair pithy shanks they stood  
     Than Noah's line,  
 Wha still hae been a feckless brood,  
     Wi' drinkin' wine.

The fuddlin' bardies, now-a-days,  
 Rin maukin-mad in Bacchus' praise ;  
 And limp and stoiter through their lays  
     Anacreontic,  
 While each his sea of wine displays  
     As big's the Pontic.

My Muse will no gang far frae hame,  
 Or scour a' airths to hound for fame ;  
 In troth, the jillet ye might blame  
     For thinkin' on't,  
 When eithly she can find the theme  
     O' *aquafont*.

This is the name that doctors use,  
 Their patients' noddles to confuse ;  
 Wi' simples clad in terms abstruse,  
     They labour still  
 In kittle words to gar you roose  
     Their want o' skill.

But we'll hae nae sic clitter-clatter ;  
 And, briefly to expound the matter,  
 It shall be ca'd guid cauler water ;  
     Than whilk, I trow,  
 Few drugs in doctors' shops are better  
     For me or you.

Though joints be stiff as ony rung,  
 Your pith wi' pain be sairly dung,

Be you in cauler water flung  
 Out-owre the lugs,  
 'Twill mak you souple, swack, and young,  
 Withouten drugs.

Though cholic or the heart-sead teaze us ;  
 Or ony inward dwaam should seize us ;  
 It masters a' sic fell diseases  
 That would ye spulzie,  
 And brings them to a canny crisis  
 Wi' little tulzie.

Were't no for it, the bonnie lasses  
 Wad glower nae mair in keekin'-glasses ;  
 And soon tyne dint o' a' the graces  
 That aft conveen  
 In gleefu' looks, and bonnie faces,  
 To catch our een.

The fairest, then, might die a maid,  
 And Cupid quit his shootin' trade ;  
 For wha, through clarty masquerade,  
 Could then discover  
 Whether the features under shade  
 Were worth a lover !

As simmer rains bring simmer flowers,  
 And leaves to clead the birken bowers,  
 Sae beauty gets by cauler showers  
 Sae rich a bloom,  
 As for estate, or heavy dowers,  
 Aft stands in room.

What maks Auld Reekie's dames sae fair !  
 It canna be the halesome air ;  
 But cauler burn, beyond compare,  
 The best o' onie,  
 That gars them a' sic graces skair,  
 And blink sae bonnie.

On Mayday, in a fairy ring,  
 We've seen them round St Anthon's spring,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [St Anthony's Well, a beautiful small spring, on Arthur's Seat, near Edinburgh. Thither it is still the practice of young Edinburgh maidens to resort on May-day.]



Frae grass the cauler dew-draps wring  
 To weet their een,  
 And water, clear as crystal spring,  
 To synd them clean.

Oh may they still pursue the way  
 To look sae feat, sae clean, sae gay!  
 Then shall their beauties glance like May;  
 And, like her, be  
 The goddess of the vocal spray,  
 The Muse and me.

---

### THE SITTING OF THE SESSION.

Phœbus, sair cow'd wi' simmer's hight,  
 Cowers near the yird wi' blinkin' light;<sup>1</sup>  
 Cauld shaw the haughs, nae mair bedight  
 Wi' simmer's claes,

Which heese the heart o' dowie wight  
 That through them gaes.

Weel leese me o' you, business, now;  
 For ye'll weet mony a drouthy mou,  
 That's lang a-gizzenin gane for you,  
 Withouten fill

O' dribbles frae the guid brown cow,  
 Or Highland gill.

The Court o' Session, weel wat I,  
 Pits ilk chiel's whittle i' the pie;  
 Can criesh the slaw-gaun wheels when dry,  
 Till session's done;  
 Though they'll gie mony a cheep and cry,  
 Or twalt o' June.

Ye benders a'! that dwell in joot,  
 You'll tak your liquor clean cap out;  
 Synd your mouse-webs wi' reamin' stout,  
 While ye hae cash,

<sup>1</sup> [The Court of Session was then opened for the winter term on the 12th of November.]

And gar your cares a' tak the rout,  
 And thumb ne'er fash.  
 Rob Gibb's<sup>1</sup> grey gizz, new frizzled fine,  
 Will white as ony snaw-ba' shine ;  
 Weel does he loe the lawen coin,  
 When dossied down,  
 For whisky gills, or dribs o' wine,  
 In cauld forenoon.

Bar-keepers! now at outer door,  
 Tak tent as fouk gang back and fore ;  
 The fient ane there but pays his score ;  
 Nane wins toll-free ;  
 Though ye've a cause the house before,  
 Or agent be.

Gin ony here wi' canker knocks,  
 And hasna lows'd his siller pocks,  
 Ye needna think to flectch or cox ;  
 " Come, shaw's your gear :  
 Ae scabbit yowe spills twenty flocks ;  
 Ye's no be here."

Now, at the door, they'll raise a plea ;  
 Crack on, my lads ! for flytin's free ;  
 For gin ye should tongue-tackit be,  
 The mair's the pity,  
 When scauldin butt and ben we see,  
*Pendente lite.*

The lawyers' shelves, and printers' presses,  
 Grain unco sair wi' weighty cases ;  
 The clerk in toil his pleasure places,  
 To thrive bedeen :  
 At five hours' bell scribes shaw their faces,  
 And rake their een.

<sup>1</sup> [The keeper of a tavern in the *Outer House*, as the old parliament hall of Edinburgh is denominated, to distinguish it from the *Inner House*, where the fifteen lords sat in judgment. This *Outer House*, like Westminster Hall in old times, was then partly occupied by a range of little shops.—See "*Reckiana, or Minor Antiquities of Edinburgh.*"]

The country fouk to lawyers crook—  
 “ Ah, weels-me o’ your bonny buik !  
 The benmost part o’ my kist-nook  
                   I’ll ripe for thee,  
 And willin’ ware my hindmost rook  
                   For my decree.”

But law’s a draw-well unco deep,  
 Withouten rim fouk out to keep ;  
 A donnart chiel, when drunk, may dreep  
                   Fu’ sleely in,  
 But finds the gate baith stey and steep,  
                   Ere out he win.

---

### THE RISING OF THE SESSION.

To a’ men livin’ be it kend,  
 The Session now is at an end,  
 Writers ! your finger nebs unbend,  
                   And quat the pen,  
 Till time, wi’ lyart pow, shall send  
                   Blythe June again.<sup>1</sup>

Tired o’ the law, and a’ its phrases,  
 The wily writers, rich as Cræsus,  
 Hurl frae the town in hackney chaises,  
                   For country cheer :

The powny that in spring-time grazes,  
                   Thrives a’ the year.

Ye lawyers ! bid fareweel to lies ;  
 Fareweel to diu ; fareweel to fees :  
 The cannie hours o’ rest may please,  
                   Instead o’ siller ;

Hain’d mu’ter hauds the mill at ease,  
                   And fends the miller.

Blythe they may be wha wanton play  
 In fortune’s bonnie blinkin’ ray :

<sup>1</sup> [The summer session then commenced on the 12th of June, instead of the 12th of May, as is now the case.]

Fu' weel can they ding dool away  
 Wi' comrades couthy,  
 And never dree a hungert day,  
 Or e'enin' drouthy.

Ohon the day! for him that's laid  
 In dowie poortith's cauldrie shade;  
 Aiblius owre honest for his trade,  
 He racks his wits  
 How he may get his buik weel clad,  
 And fill his guts.

The farmers' sons, as yap as sparrows,  
 Are glad, I trow, to flee the barras,  
 And whistle to the pleugh and harrows  
 At barley seed:

What writer wadna gang as far as  
 He could for bread?

After their yokin, I wat weel,  
 They'll stoo the kebbuek to the heel;  
 Eith cau the pleugh-stilts gar a chieft  
 Be unco vogie

Clean to lick aff his crowdie-meal,  
 And scart his cogie.

Now mony a fallow's dung adrift  
 To a' the blasts beneath the lift;  
 And though their stamack's aft in tift  
 In vacance time,

Yet seenil do they ken the rift  
 O' stappit wame.

Now, if a notar should be wanted,  
 You'll find *the Pillars*<sup>1</sup> gaily planted:  
 For little thing protests are granted  
 Upon a bill,

And weightiest matters coveuanted  
 For half a gill.

<sup>1</sup> [An arcade skirting the passage leading into the Parliament Close—a great haunt of low writers, as intimated in the text. The great fire of 1824 destroyed the range of buildings which were fronted by *the Pillars*.]

Naebody taks a mornin' drib  
 O' Holland gin frae Robin Gibb;  
 And, though a dram to Rob's mair sib  
     Than is his wife,  
 He maun tak time to daut his rib,  
     Till siller's rife.

This vacance is a heavy doom  
 On Indian Peter's coffee-room,<sup>1</sup>  
 For a' his china pigs are toom;  
     Nor do we see  
 In wine the sucker biskets soum,  
     As light's a flee.

But stop, my Muse! nor mak a mane;  
 Pate doesna fend on that alane;  
 He can fell twa dogs wi' ae bane,  
     While ither fouk  
 Maun rest themsels content wi' ane,  
     Nor farer troke.

Ye changehouse keepers! never grumble;  
 Though you a while your bickers whumble,  
 Be uuco patientfu' and humble,  
     Nor mak a din,  
 Though good joot binna kenn'd to rumble  
     Your wame within.

You needna grudge to draw your breath  
 For little mair than half a wraith;  
 Then, if we a' be spared frae death,  
     We'll gladly prie  
 Fresh noggins o' your reamin' graith  
     Wi' blythesome glee.

<sup>1</sup> [Peter Williamson, who, like Gibb, kept a small tavern in the Outer House. He was a somewhat notable person, having been kidnapped in his boyhood from Aberdeen, and sold to a planter in the American colonies. He lived for several years among the Indians, whose dresses and customs he afterwards exhibited before the citizens of Edinburgh. He was the first to establish a penny post and publish a street directory in the Scottish capital.]

## LEITH RACES.

In July month, ae bonny morn,  
 When nature's rokelay green  
 Was spread owre ilka rig o' corn,  
 To charm our rovin' een;  
 Glowrin' about, I saw a queen,  
 The fairest 'neath the lift;  
 Her een were o' the siller sheen,  
 Her skin like snawy drift,  
 Sae white that day.

Quo' she, " I ferly unco sair,  
 That ye should musin' gae;  
 Ye wha hae sung o' Hallowfair,  
 Her winter pranks and play;  
 When on Leith sands the racers rare  
 Wi' jockey louns are met,  
 Their orra pennies there to ware,  
 And drown themsels in debt  
 Fu' deep that day."

" And wha are ye, my winsome dear,  
 That taks the gate sae early!  
 Where do ye win, if ane may speir;  
 For I right meikle ferly,  
 That sic braw buskit laughin' lass  
 Thir bonny blinks should gie,  
 And loup, like Hebe, owre the grass,  
 As wanton, and as free  
 Frae dool this day?"

" I dwell amang the cauler springs  
 That weet the Land o' Cakes,  
 And aften tune my canty strings  
 At bridals and late wakes.  
 They ca' me MIRTH;—I ne'er was kenn'd  
 To grumble or look sour;

But blythe wad be a lift to lend,  
 If ye wad sey my power  
 And pith this day."

" A bargain be't ; and, by my fegs !  
 If ye will be my mate,  
 Wi' you I'll screw the cheery pegs ;  
 Ye shanny find me blate.  
 We'll reel and ramble through the sands,  
 And jeer wi' a' we meet :  
 Nor hip the daft and gleesom bands  
 That fill Edina's street  
 Sae thrang this day."

Ere servant-maids had wont to rise  
 To seethe the breakfast kettle,  
 Ilk dame her brawest ribbons tries,  
 To put her on her mettle,  
 Wi' wiles some silly chiel to trap  
 (And troth he's fain to get her) ;  
 But she'll craw kniefly in his crap,  
 When, wow ! he canna flit her  
 Frae hame that day.

Now, mony a scaw'd and bare-leg'd loun  
 Rise early to their wark :  
 Enough to fley a muckle town,  
 Wi' dinsome squeel and bark.  
 " Here is the true and faithfu' list  
 O' noblemen and horses ;  
 Their eild, their weight, their height, their grist,  
 That rin for plates or purses,  
 Fu' fleet this day."

To whisky plouks that brunt for ouks  
 On town-guard sodgers' faces,  
 Their barber bauld his whittle crooks,  
 And scrapes them for the races.  
 Their stumps, erst used to philabegs,  
 Are dight in spatterdashes,

Whose barken'd hides scarce feud their legs  
 Frae weat and weary plashes  
 O' dirt that day.

"Come, hafe a care," the captain cries,  
 "On guns your bagnets thraw;  
 Now mind your manual exercise,  
 And marsh down raw by raw."  
 And as they march, he'll glower about,  
 Tent a' their cuts and scars;  
 'Mang them full mony a gawsy snout  
 Has gush't in birth-day wars,  
 Wi' bluid that day.

"Her nainsel maun be carefu' now,  
 Nor maun she be mislear'd,  
 Sin' baxter lads hae scal'd a vow,  
 To skelp and clout the guard."  
 I'm sure Auld Reekie kens o' nane  
 That would be sorry at it,  
 Though they should dearly pay the kain,  
 And get their tails weel sautit,  
 And sair, thir days.

The tinkler billies i' the Bow,<sup>1</sup>  
 Are now less eident clinkin',  
 As lang's their pith or siller dow,  
 They're daffin' and they're drinkin'.  
 Bedown Leith Walk what bourrachs reel,  
 O' ilka trade aud station,  
 That gar their wives and childer feel  
 Toom wames, for their libation  
 O' drink thir days!

The browster wives thegither harl  
 A' trash that they can fa' on;  
 They rake the grunds o' ilka barrel,  
 To profit by the lawin:  
 For weel wat they, a skin leal het  
 For drinkin' needs nae hire:

<sup>1</sup> [The West Bow, a street full of white-iron smiths.]



At drumbly gear they tak nae pet ;  
 Foul water slockens fire  
 And drouth, thir days.

They say, ill ale has been the dead  
 O' mony a bierdly loon ;  
 Then dinna gape like gleds, wi' greed,  
 To sweel hale bickers down.  
 Gin Lord send mony ane the morn,  
 They'll ban fu' sair the time  
 That e'er they toutit aff the horn,  
 Which wambles through their wame  
 Wi' pain that day.

The Buchan bodies, through the beach,  
 Their bunch o' findrams<sup>1</sup> cry ;  
 And skirl out bauld, in Norlan' speech,  
 " Guid speldins ;—fa will buy ?"  
 And, by my saul, they're nae wrang gear  
 To gust a stirrah's mou ;  
 Weel staw'd wi' them, he'll never speir  
 The price o' being fu'  
 Wi' drink that day.

Now wily wights at rowly-powl,  
 And flingin' o' the dice,  
 Here break the banes o' mony a soul  
 Wi' fa's upon the ice.  
 At first, the gate seems fair and straught,  
 Sae they haud fairly till her :  
 But, wow ! in spite o' a' their maught,  
 They're rookit o' their siller  
 And gowd thir days.

Around, where'er you fling your eeu,  
 The hacks like wind are scourin' :  
 Some chaises honest fouk contain,  
 And some hae mony a —— in.  
 Wi' rose and lily, red and white,  
 They gie themusels sic fit airs,

<sup>1</sup> [Pinnan haddocks, or *speldings*, a kind of dried fish, first prepared at the village of Pinnan in Kincardineshire.]

Like Dian they will seem perfate ;  
 But it's nae gowd that glitters  
 Wi' them thir days.

The lion here, wi' open paw,  
 May cleek in mony hunder,  
 Wha geck at Scotland, and her law,  
 His wily talons under :  
 For, ken, though Jamie's laws are auld,  
 (Thanks to the wise recorder !)  
 His lion yet roars loud and bauld,  
 To haud the whigs in order,  
 Sae prime this day.

To town-guard drum o' clangour clear,  
 Baith men and steeds are raingit :  
 Some liveries red or yellow wear,  
 And some are tartan spraingit.  
 And now the red—the blue e'en now—  
 Bids fairest for the market ;  
 But ere the sport be done, I trow,  
 Their skins are gaily yarkit  
 And peel'd thir days.

Siclike in Robinhood debates,<sup>1</sup>  
 When twa chiefs hae a pingle ;  
 E'en now some coulie gets his aits,  
 And dirt wi' words they mingle ;  
 Till up louns he, wi' diction fou',  
 There's lang and dreech contestiu' ;  
 For now they're near the point in view—  
 Now ten miles frae the question  
 In hand that night.

The races owre, they hail the dules  
 Wi' drink o' a' kin-kind :  
 Great feck gae hirplin' hame like fools,  
 The cripple lead the blind.  
 May ne'er the canker o' the drink  
 Mak our bald spirits thrawart,

<sup>1</sup> [Alluding to a debating-club of that name in Edinburgh.]

'Case we get wherewitha' to wink  
 Wi' een as blue's a blawort,  
 Wi' straits thir days!

THE FARMER'S INGLE.

*Et multo imprimis hilarans convivia Baccho,  
 Ante focum, si frigus erit.—Virg. Buc.*

When gloamin' grey out-owre the welkin keeks ;  
 When Batic ca's his owsen to the byre ;  
 When Thrasher John, sair dung, his barn-door steeks,  
 And lusty lasses at the dightin' tire :  
 What bangs fu' leal the e'enin's coming cauld,  
 And gars snaw-tappit winter freeze in vain ;  
 Gars dowie mortals look baith blythe and bauld,  
 Nor fley'd wi' a' the poortith o' the plain ;  
 Begin, my Muse ! and chaunt in hamely strain.

Frae the big stack, weel winnow't on the hill,  
 Wi' divots theeikit frae the weet and drift ;  
 Sods, peats, and heathery truffs the chimley fill,  
 And gar their thickening smeeek salute the lift.  
 The guidman, new come hame, is blythe to find,  
 When he out-owre the hallan flings his een,  
 That ilka turn is handled to his mind ;  
 That a' his housie looks sae cosh and clean ;  
 For cleanly house loes he, though e'er so mean.

Weel kens the guidwife that the pleughs require  
 A heartsome meltith, and refreshing synd  
 O' nappy liquor, owre a bleezin' fire ;  
 Sair wark and poortith downa weel be join'd.  
 Wi' butter'd bannoeks now the girdle reeks ;  
 I' the far nook the bowie briskly reams ;  
 The readied kail stands by the chimley cheeks,  
 And hands the riggin het wi' welcome streams,  
 Whilk than the daintiest kitchen nicer seems.

Frae this let gentler gabs a lesson lear :  
 Wad they to labouring lend an eident hand,

They'd rax fell strang upon the simplest fare,  
 Nor find their stamacks ever at a stand.  
 Fu' hale and healthy wad they pass the day ;  
 At night in calmest slumbers dose fu' sound ;  
 Nor doctor need their weary life to spae,  
 Nor drops their noddle and their sense confound,  
 Till death slip sleely on, and gie the hindmost wound.

On sicken food has mony a doughty deed  
 By Caledonia's ancestors been done ;  
 By this did mony a wight fu' weirlike bleed  
 In brulzies frae the dawn to set o' sun.  
 'Twas this that braced their gardies stiff and strang,  
 That bent the deadly yew in ancient days ;  
 Laid Denmark's daring sons on yird alang ;  
 Gar'd Scottish thristles bang the Roman bays ;  
 For near our coast their heads they doughtna raise.

The couthy cracks begin when supper's owre ;  
 The cheering bicker gars them glibly gash  
 O' simmer's showery blinks, and winters sour,  
 Whose floods did erst their mailin's produce hash.  
 'Bout kirk and market eke their tales gae on ;  
 How Joek woo'd Jenny here to be his bride ;  
 And there how Marion, for a bastard son,  
 Upon the cutty stool was forced to ride,  
 The wae fu' scauld o' our Mess John to bide.

The fient a cheep's amang the bairnies now,  
 For a' their anger's wi' their hunger game :  
 Aye maun the childer, wi' a fastin mou,  
 Grumble and greet, and mak an unco mane.  
 In rangles round, before the ingle's lowe,  
 Frae guidame's mouth auld warld tales they hear,  
 O' warlocks loupin' round the wirrikow ;  
 O' ghaists, that win in glen and kirk-yard drear ;  
 Whilk touzles a' their tap, and gars them shake wi' fear!

For weel she trows, that fiends and fairies be  
 Sent frae the deil to flecth us to our ill ;  
 That kye hae tint their milk wi' evil ce,  
 And corn been scowder'd on the glowin' kill.

Oh mock na this, my friends, but rather mourn,  
 Ye in life's brawest spring, wi' reason clear ;  
 Wi' eild our idle fancies a' return,  
 And dim our dolefu' days wi' bairnly fear ;  
 The mind's aye cradled when the grave is near.

Yet thrift, industrious, bides her latest days,  
 Though age her sair-dow'd front wi' runkles wave ;  
 Yet frae the russet lap the spindle plays,  
 Her e'enin' stent reels she as weel's the lave.  
 On some feast-day, the wee things busket braw,  
 Shall heeze her heart up wi' a silent joy,  
 Fu' cadgie that her head was up and saw  
 Her ain spun cleedin' on a darling oye :<sup>1</sup>  
 Careless tho' death should mak the feast her foy.

In its auld lerroch yet the deas remains,  
 Where the guidman aft streaks him at his ease ;  
 A warm and canny lean for weary banes  
 O' labourers dyolt upon the weary leas.  
 Round him will baudrons and the collie come,  
 To wag their tail, and cast a thankfu' ee  
 To him wha kindly throws them mony a crum  
 O' kebbuck whang'd, and dainty fadge, to pree ;  
 This a' the boon they crave, and a' the fee.

Frae him the lads their mornin' counsel tak—  
 What stacks he wants to thrash, what rigs to till ;  
 How big a birn maun lie on Bassie's back,  
 For meal and mu'ter to the thirlin mill.  
 Neist, the guidwife her hirelin' damsels bids  
 Glow'r through the byre, and see the hawkies bound ;  
 Tak tent, ease Crummy tak her wonted tids,  
 And ca' the laiglen's treasure on the ground ;  
 Whilk spills a kebbuck nice or yellow pound.

Then a' the house for sleep begin to grien,  
 Their joints to slack frae industry a while ;  
 The leaden god fa's heavy on their een,  
 And haffins steeks them frae their daily toil :

<sup>1</sup> Grandchild.

The cruizy, too, can only blink and bleer,  
 The reistit ingle's done the maist it dow;  
 Tacksman and cottar eke to bed maun steer,  
 Upon the cod to clear their drumly pow,  
 Till waken'd by the dawnin's ruddy glow.

Peace to the husbandman, and a' his tribe,  
 Whase care fells a' our wants frae year to year!  
 Lang may his sock and cou'ter turn the glebe,  
 And banks o' corn bend down wi' laded ear!  
 May Scotia's simniers aye look gay and green;  
 Her yellow hairsta frae scowry blasts decreed!  
 May a' her tenants sit fu' snug and bien,  
 Frae the hard grip o' ails and poortith freed—  
 And a lang lasting train o' peacefu' hours succeed!

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### THE ELECTION.<sup>1</sup>

Nunc est bibendum, et hendere Bickerum magnum;  
 Cavete town-guardum, Dougal Geddum atque Campbellum.\*

Rejoice, ye burghers! ane and a',  
 Lang look'd for's come at last;  
 Sair were your backs held to the wa',  
 Wi' poortith and wi' fast.  
 Now ye may clap your wings and craw,  
 And gaily busk ilk feather,  
 For deacon cocks hae pass'd a law,  
 To rax and weest your leather  
 Wi' drink thir days.

“Haste, Epps!” quo' John, “and bring my gizz;  
 Tak tent ye dinna't spulzie;

<sup>1</sup> [The election of magistrates for the city of Edinburgh is here the subject. The ceremony took place at Michaelmas.]

<sup>2</sup> [Dougal Ged and Campbell were officers of the town-guard, at whom the poet never loses an opportunity of jeering. This Ged was a relative, probably a brother, of the Patriek Ged who befriended Commodore Byron in his misfortunes.—See Byron's Narrative.]

Last night the barber gae't a frizz,  
 And strakit it wi' ulzie.  
 Hae done your parritch, lassie, Lizz !  
 Gie me my sark and gravat ;  
 I'ee be as braw's the deacon is,  
 When he tak's affidavit  
 O' faith the day."

" Where's Johnny gaun," cries neebour Bess,  
 " That he's sae gaily bodin,  
 Wi' new-kaimed wig, weel syndet face,  
 Silk hose for hamely hodin ?"  
 " Our Johnny's nae sma' drink, you'll guess ;  
 He's trig as ony muircock,  
 And forth to mak a deacon, lass ;  
 He downa speak to poor fouk  
 Like us the day."

The coat ben-by i' the kist-nook,  
 That's been this townioth swarmin',  
 Is brought ance mair thereout to look,  
 To fleg awa the vermin.  
 Menzies o' moths and flaes are shook,  
 And i' the floor they howder,  
 Till, in a birn, beneath the crook,  
 They're singit wi' a scowder  
 To death that day.

The canty cobbler quats his sta',  
 His roset and his lingans ;  
 His buik has dree'd a sair, sair fa',  
 Frae meals o' bread and ingans.  
 Now he's a pow o' wit and law,  
 And taunts at soles and heels ;  
 To Walker's<sup>1</sup> he can rin awa,  
 There whang his creams and jeels  
 Wi' life that day.

The lads in order tak their seat ;  
 (The deil may claw the clungest !)

<sup>1</sup> [The hotel where the entertainment took place after the election.]

They stech and connach sae the meat,  
 Their teeth mak mair than tongue haste,  
 Their claes sae cleanly tight and feat,  
 And eke their craw-black beavers,  
 Like maisters' mous hae fund the gate  
 To tassels tough wi' slavers  
 Fu' lang that day.

The dinner done—for brandy strang  
 They cry, to weet their thrapple ;  
 To gar the stamack bide the hang,  
 And wi' its ladin' grapple,  
 The grace is said—it's no owre lang—  
 The claret reams in bells.  
 Quo' deacon, " Let the toast round gang—  
 Come—Here's our Noble Sel's  
 Weel met the day !"

" Weels-me o' drink," quo' cooper Will,  
 " My barrel has been geyz'd aye,  
 And hasna gotten sic a fill,  
 Sin' fou' on Hansel-Teysday.  
 But maksna—now it's got a sweel ;  
 Ae gird I shanna cast, lad !  
 Or else I wish the horn'd deil  
 May Will wi' kittle cast dad  
 To hell the day !"

The magistrates fu' wily are,  
 Their lamps are gaily blinkin' ;  
 But they might as lieve burn elsewhere,  
 When fouk's blind fou wi' drinkin'.  
 Our deacon wadna ca' a chair—  
 The Foul ane durst him na-say !—  
 He took shanks-naig—but, fient may care !  
 He hindwards kiss'd the cawsey  
 Wi' bir that night.

Weel leese-me o' you, souter Jock !—  
 For tricks ye buit be tryin' ;  
 When grapin' for his ain bed-stock,  
 He fa's where Will's wife's lyin' :—



Will comin' hame wi' ither fouk,  
 He saw Jock there before him;  
 Wi' maister laiglen, like a brock,  
 He did wi' stink maist smoor him,  
 Fu' strang that night.

Then wi' a souple leathern whang  
 He gart them fidge and girn aye,  
 "Faith, chiel! ye's no for naething gang,  
 Gin ye maun reel my pirny."  
 Syne wi' a muckle elshin lang  
 He brogit Maggie's hurdies;  
 And, cause he thought her i' the wrang,  
 There passed nae bonnie wordies  
 'Tween them that night.

Now, had some laird his lady fand  
 In sic unseemly courses,  
 It might hae lows'd the haly band  
 Wi' law-suits and divorces:  
 But the neist day they a' shook hands,  
 And ilka crack did sowder;  
 While Meg for drink her apron pawns,  
 For a' the guidman cow'd her,  
 Whan fou last night.

Glower round the cawsey, up and down,  
 What mobbin' and what plottin'!  
 Here, politicians bribe a loun  
 Against his saul for votin'.  
 The gowd that inlakes half-a-crown,  
 Thir blades lug out to try them;  
 They pouch the gowd, nor fash the town  
 For weights and scales to weigh them  
 Exact that day.

Then deacons at the council stent  
 To get themselves presentit;  
 For towmonths twa their saul is lent,  
 For the town's guid indentit.  
 Lang's their debatin' thereanent,  
 About protests they're baultrin';

While Sandy Fife, to mak content,  
 On bells<sup>1</sup> plays "Clout the Caudron"  
 To them that day.

Ye louns! that troke in doctors' stuff,  
 You'll now hae unco slaisters;  
 When windy blaws their stamacks puff,  
 They'll need baith pills and plaisters:  
 For though, e'en now, they look right bluff,  
 Sic drinks, ere hillocks meet,  
 Will hap some deacons in a truff,  
 Inrow'd i' the lang leet<sup>2</sup>  
 O' death yon night.

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#### TO THE TRON-KIRK BELL.

Wanwordy, crazy, dinsome thing,  
 As e'er was fram'd to jow or ring!  
 What gar'd them sic in steeple hing,  
 They ken themsel;  
 But weel wat I, they couldna bring  
 Waur sounds frae hell.

What deil are ye! that I should ban;  
 You're neither kin to pat nor pan;  
 Nor ulzie pig, nor maister-can,  
 But weel may gie  
 Mair pleasure to the ear o' man  
 Than stroke o' thee.

Fleece-merchants may look bauld, I trow,  
 Sin' a' Auld Reekie's childer now  
 Maun staup their lugs wi' teats o' woo,  
 Thy sound to bang,

<sup>1</sup> [A set of music bells in St Giles's steeple.]

<sup>2</sup> [In the business of an Edinburgh municipal election, according to the old mode, a large list of eligible persons first presented by the trades, that the magistrates might shorten it, was called the *lang leet*. When abridged, it was called the *short leet*. The word is from the French *élite*, choice persons. Death's endless list is here, with happy humour, called his *lang leet*.]

And keep it frae gaun through and through  
Wi' jarrin' twang.

Your noisy tongue, there's nae abidin't;  
Like scauldin' wife's, there is nae guidin't;  
When I'm 'bout ony business eident,  
It's sair to thole;  
To deave me, then, ye tak a pride in't,  
Wi' senseless knoll.

Oh! were I provost o' the town,  
I swear by a' the powers aboon,  
I'd bring ye wi' a reesle down;  
Nor should you think  
(Sae sair I'd crack and clour your crown)  
Again to clink.

For, when I've toom'd the meikle cap,  
And fain would fa' owre in a nap,  
Troth, I could doze as sound's a tap,  
Were't no for thee,  
That gies the tither weary chap  
To wauken me.

I dreamt ae night I saw Auld Nick:  
Quo' he—"This bell o' mine's a trick,  
A wily piece o' politic,  
A cunnin' snare,  
To trap fouk in a cloven stick,  
Ere they're aware.

"As lang's my dautit bell hings there,  
A' body at the kirk will skar:  
Quo' they, if he that preaches there  
Like it can wound,  
We downa care a single hair  
For joyfu' sound."

If magistrates wi' me would 'gree  
For aye tongue-tackit should you be;  
Nor fleg wi' anti-melody  
Sic honest fouk,  
Whase lugs were never made to dree  
Thy dolefu' shock.

But far frae thee the bailies dwell,  
 Or they would scunner at your knell;  
 Gie the foul thief his riven bell,  
                   And then, I trow,  
 The byword hauds, "The deil himsel  
                   Has got his due."<sup>1</sup>

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## MUTUAL COMPLAINT OF PLAINSTANES AND CAUSEWAY,

IN THEIR MOTHER TONGUE.

Sin' Marlin<sup>2</sup> laid Auld Reekie's cawsey,  
 And made her o' his wark right saucy,  
 The spacious street and guid plainstances  
 Were never kenn'd to crack but anee;  
 Whilk happen'd on the hinder night,  
 When Fraser's<sup>3</sup> ulzie tint its light.

<sup>1</sup> [The Tron Church, in the High Street of Edinburgh, was built in 1647, but not completely finished till 1663. Its bell, which cost 1400 merks, or £82, 10s. 2½d., was put up in 1673. This useful, but, if we are to believe Fergusson, unpleasant servant of the public, came to an untimely end, November 16, 1824, when, the steeple having caught fire in the midst of the wide-spread conflagration which then befell the city, the bell was melted by the flames, and fell in masses upon the floor below. Many citizens of Edinburgh, from an affectionate regard for the object of Fergusson's whimsical vituperations, obtained pieces of the metal, from which they formed cups, hand-bells, and other such utensils, with commemorative inscriptions. Such was the end of this "wanwordy, crazy, dinsome thing."]

<sup>2</sup> [There is a tradition in Edinburgh, noticed by Maitland, that the High Street was first paved by a Frenchman named Marlin, from whom a wynd or alley near the Tron Church took its name, in consequence of his having been buried at the head of it under his own work. A peculiar arrangement of the stones marked the spot where Marlin was understood to lie, down to a period within the recollection of old people.]

<sup>3</sup> The contractor for the lamps.

O' Highland sentries nane were waukin'  
 To hear their cronies glibly taukin';  
 For them this wonder might hae rotten,  
 And, like night robbery, been forgotten,  
 Hadna a cadie<sup>1</sup> wi' his lantern,  
 Been gleg enough to hear them bant'rin',  
 Wha cam to me neist mornin' early,  
 To gie me tidings o' this ferly.

Ye tauntin' louns, trow this nae joke,  
 For ance the ass o' Balaam spoke,  
 Better than lawyers do, forsooth;  
 For it spak naething but the truth!  
 Whether they follow its example,  
 You'll ken best when you hear the sample.

## PLAINSTANES.

My friend! thir hunder years, and mair,  
 We've been forfoughen late and ear';  
 In sunshine and in weety weather,  
 Our thrawart lot we bure thegither.  
 I never growled, but was content  
 When ilk ane had an equal stent;  
 But now to flyte I'se e'en be bauld,  
 When I'm wi' sic a grievance thral'd.  
 How haps it, say, that mealy bakers,  
 Hair-kaimers, crieshy gizzy-makers,  
 Should a' get leave to waste their pouthers  
 Upon my beaux' and ladies' shouthers!  
 My travellers are fley'd to dead  
 Wi' creels wanchancy, heap'd wi' bread,  
 Frae whilk hing down uncanny nicksticks,  
 That aften gie the maidens sic licks,  
 As mak them blythe to screen their faces  
 Wi' hats and muckle maun bon-graces,  
 And cheat the lads that fain would see  
 The glances o' a pawky ee,  
 Or gie their loves a wily wink,  
 That erst might lend their hearts a clink!

<sup>1</sup> [Street-messengers bore this name in Edinburgh.]

Speak, was I made to dree the ladin'  
 O' Gaelic chairman's heavy treadin',  
 Wha in my tender buik bore holes  
 Wi' waefu' tackets i' the soles  
 O' brogs, whilk on my body tramp,  
 And wound like death at ilka clamp!

## CAWSEY.

Weel crackit, friend!—It aft hauds true,  
 'Bout naething fouk mak maist ado.  
 Weel ken ye, though ye doughtna tell,  
 I pay the sairist kain mysel.  
 Owre me, ilk day, big waggons rumble,  
 And a' my fabric birze and jumble.  
 Owre me the muckle horses gallop,  
 Eneugh to rug my very saul up;  
 And coachmen never trow they're sinnin',  
 While down the street their wheels are spinnin'.  
 Like thee, do I not bide the brunt  
 O' Highland chairmen's heavy dunt!  
 Yet I hae never thought o' breathing  
 Complaint, or makin' din for naething.

## PLAINSTANES.

Haud sae, and let me get a word in.  
 Your back's best fitted for the burden:  
 And I can eithly tell you why—  
 Ye're doughtier by far than I:  
 For whinstanes houkit frae the Craigs<sup>1</sup>  
 May thole the prancin' feet o' naigs,  
 Nor ever fear uncanny hotches  
 Frae clumsy carts or hackney coaches;  
 While I, a weak and feckless creature,  
 Am moulded by a safer nature.  
 Wi' mason's chisel dighted neat,  
 To gar me look baith clean and feat,  
 I scarce can bear a sairer thump  
 Than comes frae sole of shoe or pump.

<sup>1</sup> [Salisbury Craigs, near Edinburgh.]

I grant, indeed, that now and then,  
Yield to a patten's pith I maun ;  
But pattens, though they're aften plenty,  
Are aye laid down wi' feet fu' tenty ;  
And strokes frae ladies, though they're teazin',  
I freely maun avow are pleasin'.

For what use was I made, I wonder !  
It wasna tamely to chap under  
The weight o' ilka codroch chiel,  
That does my skin to targets peel.  
But if I guess aright, my trade is  
To fend frae skaith the bonnie ladies ;  
To keep the barnies free frae harms  
When airin' i' their nurses' arms ;  
To be a safe and canny bield  
For growin' youth or droopin' eild.

Tak then frae me the heavy load  
O' burden-bearers heavy shod ;  
Or, by my troth, the guid auld town sall  
Hae this affair before the Council.

## CAWSEY.

I dinna care a single jot,  
Though summon'd by a shellycoat ;  
Sae leally I'll propone defences,  
As get ye flung for my expenses.  
Your libel I'll impugn *verbatim*,  
And hae a *magnum damnum datum* :  
For though frae Arthur's-Seat I sprang,  
I am in constitution strang.  
Would it no fret the hardest stane  
Beneath the Luckenbooths to grane ?  
Though magistrates the Cross<sup>1</sup> discard,  
It maksna when they leave the guard—  
A lumbbersome and stinkin' biggin',  
That rides the sairest on my riggin'.  
Poor me ower meikle do ye blame  
For tradesmen trampin' on your wame ;

<sup>1</sup> [The market-cross had been removed in 1752. The Town-guard-house, a clumsy building in the middle of the High Street, was allowed to remain till 1768, though much more incommodious.]

Yet a' your advocates and braw fouk,  
 Come still to me 'twixt ane and twa 'clock,  
 And never yet were kenn'd to range  
 At Charlie's statue or Exchange.<sup>1</sup>  
 Then tak your beaux and macaronies ;  
 Gie me trades fouk and country Johnnies ;  
 The diel's in't gin ye dinna sign  
 Your sentiments conjunct wi' mine.

## PLAINSTANES.

Gin we twa could be as auldfarrant  
 As gar the council gie a warrant,  
 Ilk loun rebellious to tak  
 Wha walks no i' the proper track,  
 And o' three shillin's Scottish suck him,  
 Or in the water-hole sair douk him ;  
 This might assist the poor's collection,  
 And gie baith parties satisfaction.

## CAWSEY.

But first, I think, it will be good  
 To bring it to the Robinhood,<sup>2</sup>  
 Where we sall hae the question stated,  
 And keen and crabbetly debated—  
 Whether the provost and the bailies,  
 For the town's guid whase daily toil is,  
 Should listen to our joint petitions,  
 And see obtemper'd the conditions.

## PLAINSTANES.

Content am I. But east the gate is  
 The sun, wha taks his leave o' Thetis,  
 And comes to wauken honest fouk,  
 That gang to wark at sax o'clock.  
 It sets us to be dumb a while,  
 And let our words gie place to toil.

<sup>1</sup> [Two places, laid with *plainstones* for the convenience of the merchants, who, however, could never be prevailed on to take advantage of them, but held to their old haunt on the *cawsey* near the Cross.]

<sup>2</sup> A debating-society, afterwards called the Pantheon.



## A DRINK ECLOGUE.

## LANDLADY, BRANDY, AND WHISKY.

On auld worm-eaten skelf, in cellar dunk,  
 Where hearty benders synd their drouthy trunk,  
 Twa chappin bottles bang'd wi' liquor fu'—  
 Brandy the tane, the tither whisky blue—  
 Grew canker'd ; for the twa were het within,  
 And het-skinn'd fouk to flytin soon begin.  
 The Frenchman fizz'd, and first wad foot the field,  
 While paughty Scotsman scorn'd to beenge or yield.

## BRANDY.

Black be your fa', ye cottar loon mislear'd !  
 Blawn by the porters, chairmen, city guard :  
 Hae ye nae breedin', that ye cock your nose  
 Against my sweetly gusted cordial dose !  
 I've been near pawky courts, and, aften there,  
 Hae ca'd hysterics frae the dowie fair ;  
 And courtiers aft gaed greinin for my smack,  
 To gar them bauldly glower and gashly crack.  
 The priest, to bang mishanters black, and cares,  
 Has sought me in his closet for his prayers.  
 What tid then taks the fates, that they can thole  
 Thrawart to fix me i' this weary hole,  
 Sair fash'd wi' din, wi' darkness, and wi' stinks,  
 Where cheery daylight through the mirk ne'er blinks !

## WHISKY.

But ye maun be content, and maunna rue,  
 Though erst ye've bizz'd in bonnie madam's mou.  
 Wi' thoughts like thae, your heart may sairly dunt :  
 The world's now changed ; it's no like use and wont :  
 For here, wae's me ! there's nouter lord nor laird  
 Comes to get heart-scad frae their stamack skared.

Nae mair your courtier louns will shaw their face,  
 For they glower eery at a friend's disgrace.  
 But heese your heart up:—When at court you hear  
 The patriot's thrapple wat wi' reamin' beer;  
 When chairman, weary wi' his daily gain,  
 Can synd his whistle wi' the clear champaign;  
 Be hopefu', for the time will soon row round,  
 When you'll nae langer dwell beneath the ground.

## BRANDY.

Wanwordy gowk! did I sae aften shine  
 Wi' gowden glister through the crystal fine,  
 To thole your taunts, that seemil hae been seen  
 Awa frae luggie, quegh, or truncher treein;  
 Gif honour would but let, a challenge should  
 Twine ye o' Highland tongue and Highland bluid;  
 Wi' cairds like thee I scorn to file my thumb;  
 For gentle spirits gentle breedin' doom.

## WHISKY.

Truly, I think it right you get your alms;  
 Your high heart humbled amang common drams.  
 Braw days for you, when fools, newfangle fain,  
 Like ither countries better than their ain:  
 For there, ye never saw sic chancy days,  
 Sic balls, assemblies, operas, or plays.  
 Hame-owre, langsyne, you hae been blythe to pack  
 Your a' upon a sarkless sodger's back.  
 For you, thir lads, as weel-lear'd travellers tell,  
 Had sell'd their sarks, gin sarks they'd had to sell.  
 But worth gets poortith, and black burnin' shame  
 To daunt and drivel out a life at hame.  
 Alake! the byword's owre weel kenn'd throughout,  
 "Prophets at hame are held in nae repute."  
 Sae farest wi' me, though I can heat the skin,  
 And set the saul upon a merry pin;  
 Yet I am hameil; there's the sour mischance!  
 I'm no frae Turkey, Italy, or France:  
 For now, our gentles' gabs are grown sae nice,  
 At thee they tout, and never spier my price.

Witness ;—for thee they height their tenants' rent,  
 And fill their lands wi' poortith, discontent ;—  
 Gar them owre seas for cheaper mailins hunt,  
 And leave their ain as bare's the Cairn-o'-Mount.<sup>1</sup>

## BRANDY.

Though lairds tak toothfu's o' my warmin' sap,  
 This dwines not tenant's gear, nor cows their crap.  
 For love to you, there's mony a tenant gaes  
 Ill clad and barefoot owre the Highland braes ;  
 For you, nae mair the thrifty guidwife sees  
 Her lasses kirn, or birze the dainty cheese ;  
 Crummie nae mair for Jenny's hand will crune  
 Wi' milkness dreepin' frae her teats adown ;  
 For you, owre ear' the ox his fate partakes,  
 And fa's a victim to the bluidy axe.

## WHISKY.

Wha is't that gars the greedy bankers prieve  
 The maiden's tocher but the maiden's leave ?  
 By you, when spulzied o' her charmin' pose,  
 She tholes, in turn, the taunt o' cauldriife joes.  
 Wi' skelps like this, fouk sit but seenil down  
 To wather-gammon, or howtowdy brown.  
 Sair dung wi' dule, and fley'd for comin' debt,  
 They gar their mou-bits wi' their incomes met ;  
 Content enough, if they hae wherewithal  
 Scrimply to tack their body and their saul.

## BRANDY.

Frae some poor poet, owre as poor a pot,  
 Ye've lear'd to crack sae crouse, ye haveril Scot ;  
 Or burgher politician, that imbrues  
 His tongue in thee, and reads the clai kin news :  
 But, wae's heart for you ! that for aye maun dwell  
 In poet's garret or in chairman's cell,  
 While I shall yet on bien-clad tables stand,  
 Bouden wi' a' the daintiths o' the land.

<sup>1</sup> [A noted member of the Grampian range.]

## WHISKY.

Troth, I hae been, ere now, the poet's flame,  
 And hees'd his sangs to mony blythesome theme.  
 Wha was't gar'd Allie's chaunter chirm fu' clear;  
 Life to the saul, and music to the ear!  
 Nae stream but kens, and can repeat the lay  
 To shepherds streekit on the simmer brae,  
 Wha to their whistle wi' the lavrock bang,  
 To wauken flocks the rural fields amang.

## BRANDY.

But here's the browster wife, and she can tell  
 Wha's won the day, and wha should bear the bell.  
 Hae done your din, and let her judgment join  
 In final verdict 'twixt your plea and mine.

## LANDLADY.

In days o' yore, I could my livin' prize,  
 Nor fash'd wi' dolefu' gaugers or excise;  
 But, now-a-days, we're blythe to lear the thrift  
 Our heads 'boon licence and excise to lift.  
 Inlakes o' brandy we can soon supply  
 By whisky tintured wi' the saffron's dye.  
 Will ye your breedin' threep, ye mongrel loun!  
 Frae hamebred liquor dyed to colour brown?  
 So, flunky braw, when dress'd in master's claes,  
 Struts to Auld Reekie's Cross on sunny days,  
 Till some auld comrade, aiblins out o' place,  
 Near the vain upstart shaws his meagre face;  
 Bumbazed he louns frae sight, and jooks his ken.  
 Fley'd to be seen amang the tassell'd train.

## TO THE PRINCIPAL AND PROFESSORS

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREW'S, ON THEIR SUPERB  
TREAT TO DR SAMUEL JOHNSON.<sup>1</sup>

St Andrew's town may look right gawsy ;  
Nae grass will grow upon her cawsey,  
Nor wa'-flower o' a yellow dye,  
Glower dowie owre her ruins high ;  
Sin' Samy's head, weel pang'd wi' lear,  
Has seen the Alma Mater there.  
Regents ! my winsome billy boys !  
'Bout him you've made an unco noise :  
Nae doubt, for him your bells wad clink  
To find him upon Eden's<sup>2</sup> brink ;  
And a' things nicely set in order,  
Wad keep him on the Fifan border,  
I'se warrant, now, frae France and Spain  
Baith cooks and scullions, mony ane,  
Wad gar the pats and kettles tingle  
Around the college kitchen ingle,  
To fleg frae a' your craigs the roup  
Wi' reekin het and creeshy soup ;  
And snails and puddocks mony hunder  
Wad beekin' lie the hearthstane under ;  
Wi' roast and boil'd and a' kin-kind,  
To heat the body, cool the mind.

But hear, my lads ! gin I'd been there,  
How I'd hae trimm'd the bill o' fare !  
For ne'er sic surly wight as he  
Had met wi' sic respect frae me.

<sup>1</sup> [“ The professors entertained us with a very good dinner. Present : Murison, Shaw, Cooke, Hill, Haddo, Watson, Flint, Brown.”—*Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides, Sub Thursday, 19th August (1773).*]

<sup>2</sup> [A river near St Andrews.]

Mind ye what Sam, the lying loun,  
 Has in his dictionar laid down?—  
 That aits, in England, are a feast  
 To cow and horse, and sicken beast ;  
 While, in Scot's ground, this growth was common  
 To gust the gab o' man and woman.  
 Tak tent, ye regents! then, and hear  
 My list o' guidly hameil gear,  
 Sic as hae aften rax'd the wame  
 O' blyther fallows mony time :  
 Mair hardy, souple, steeve, and swank,  
 Than ever stood on Samy's shank.

*Imprimis*, then, a liaggis fat,  
 Weel tottled in a seethin' pat,  
 Wi' spice and ingans weel ca'd through,  
 Had help'd to gust the stirrah's mou,  
 And placed itsel in truncher clean  
 Before the gilpy's glowriu' een.

*Secundo*, then, a guid sheep's head,  
 Whase hide was singit, never flead,  
 And four black trotters clad wi' girsle,  
 Bedown his throat had learn'd to hirsle.  
 What think ye, neist, o' guid fat brose  
 To clag his ribs! a dainty dose!  
 And white and bluidy puddings routh,  
 To gar the doctor skirl o' drouth ;  
 When he could never hope to merit  
 A cordial glass o' reamin' claret,  
 But thraw his nose, and birze, and pegh,  
 Owre the contents o' sma' ale quegh.  
 Then let his wisdom girn and snarl  
 Owre a weel-tostit girdle farl,  
 And learn, that, maugre o' his wame,  
 Ill bairns are aye best haud at hame.

Drummond, lang syne, o' Hawthornden,  
 The wilyest and best o' men,  
 Has gien you dishes ane or mae,  
 That wad hae gar'd his grinders play,

Not to "Roast Beef,"<sup>1</sup> old England's life,  
 But to the auld "East Nook o' Fife,"<sup>2</sup>  
 Where Craillian crafts could weel hae gien  
 Skate rumples to hae clear'd his een;  
 Then, neist, when Samy's heart was faintin',  
 He'd lang'd for skate to mak him wanton.  
 Ah, willawins for Scotland now!

When she maun stap ilk birky's mou  
 Wi' eistacks, grown, as 'twere in pet,  
 In foreign land, or green-house het,  
 When cog o' brose, and cutty spoon,  
 Is a' your cottar ehilder's boon,  
 Who, through the weck, till Sunday's peal,  
 Toil for pease cods and guid lang kail.

Devall then, sirs, and never send  
 For dainties to regale a friend;  
 Or, like a torch at baith ends burnin',  
 Your house will soon grow mirk and mournin'!

What's this I hear some cynic say?<sup>3</sup>  
 Robin, ye loun! it's nae fair play;  
 Is there nae ither subject rife  
 To clap your thumb upon but Fife?  
 Gie owre, young man! you'll meet your cornin',  
 Than caption waur, or charge o' hornin'.  
 Some canker'd, surly, sour-mou'd carlin,  
 Bred near the abbey o' Dunfermline,  
 Your shouthers yet may gie a lounder,  
 And be o' verse the mal-confounder.

Come on, ye blades! but, ere ye tulzie,  
 Or hack our flesh wi' sword or gullie,  
 Ne'er shaw your teeth, nor look like stink,  
 Nor owre an empty bicker blink:  
 What weets the wizen and the wame,  
 Will mend your prose, and heal my rhyme.

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to two tunes under these titles.

<sup>2</sup> The poet alludes to a gentleman in Dunfermline, who sent him a challenge, being highly offended at the concluding reflection in the "Expedition to Fife."

## ELEGY ON JOHN HOGG,

LATE PORTER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS.

Death! what's ado? the diel-be-licket,  
 Or wi' your stang you ne'er had pricket,  
 Or our auld *Alma Mater* tricket  
     O' poor John Hogg,  
 And trail'd him ben through your mark wicket,  
     As dead's a log.

Now ilka glaiket scholar loun  
 May daunder wae wi' duddy gown;  
 Kate Kennedy<sup>1</sup> to dowie crune  
     May mourn and clink,  
 And steeples o' Saunt Andrew's town  
     To yird may sink.

Sin' Pauly Tam,<sup>2</sup> wi' canker'd snout,  
 First held the students in about,  
 To wear their clacs as black as soot  
     They ne'er had reason,  
 Till death John's haffit gae a clout,  
     Sae out o' season.

When regents met at common schools,  
 He taught auld Tam to hail the dules,  
 And eident to row right the bowls,  
     Like ony emmack;  
 He kept us a' within the rules  
     Strict academic.

Heh! wha will tell the students now  
 To meet the Pauly cheek for chow,  
 When he, like frightsome wirrikow,  
     Had went to rail,  
 And set our stamacks in a low,  
     Or we turn'd tail!

<sup>1</sup> A bell in the college steeple.

<sup>2</sup> A name given by the students to one of the members of the university.



Ah, Johnny! aften did I grumble  
 Frae cozy 'bed fu' ear' to tumble,  
 When art and part I'd been in some ill,  
     Troth, I was swear;  
 His words they brodit like a wunill,  
     Frae ear to ear.

When I had been fu' laith to rise,  
 John then begude to moralise:  
 "The tither nap, the sluggard cries,  
     And turns him round;  
 Sae spak auld Solomon the wise,  
     Divine profound!"

Nae dominie, or wise Mess John,  
 Was better lear'd in Solomon;  
 He cited proverbs, one by one,  
     Ilk vice to tame;  
 He gar'd ilk sinner sigh and groan,  
     And fear hell's flame.

"I hae nae meikle skill," quo' he,  
 "In what you ca' philosophy;  
 It tells, that baith the earth and sea  
     Rin round about;  
 Either the Bible tells a lie,  
     Or ye're a' out.

"It's i' the Psalms o' David writ,  
 That this wide world ne'er should flit,  
 But on the waters coshly sit  
     Fu' steeve and lastin':  
 And wasna he a head o' wit,  
     At sic contestin'?"

On e'enin's cauld wi' glee we'd trudge,  
 To heat our shins in Johnny's lodge;  
 The deil anc thought his bum to budge,  
     Wi' siller on us;  
 To claw het pints we'd never grudge  
     O' molationis.

Say, ye red gowns! that aften, here,  
 Hae toasted cakes to Katie's beer,  
 Gin e'er thir days hae had their peer,  
     Sae blythe, sae daft !  
 You'll ne'er again, in life's career,  
     Sit half sae saft.

Wi' haffit locks, sae smooth and sleek,  
 John look'd like ony ancient Greek ;  
 He was a Naz'rene a' the week,  
     And doughtna tell out  
 A hawbee Scots to scrape his cheek,  
     Till Sunday fell out.

For John aye loed to turn the pence ;  
 Though poortith was a great offence :  
 " What recks, though ye ken mood and tence !  
     A hungry wame  
 For gowd wad wi' them baith dispense,  
     At ony time.

" Ye ken what ails maun aye befall  
 The chiel that will be prodigal ;  
 When waisted to the very spaul  
     He turns his tusk  
 (For want o' comfort to his saul)  
     To hungry husk."

Ye royt louns! just do as he'd do :  
 For mony braw green shaw and meadow  
 He's left to cheer his dowie widow,  
     His winsome Kate,  
 That to him proved a canny she-dow,  
     Baith ear' and late.

## AN ECLOGUE

TO THE MEMORY OF DR WILKIE, LATE PROFESSOR OF  
NATURAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS.

[William Wilkie, D.D., born 1721, died 1772, enjoyed some temporary fame as a poet and wit. He was the author of an epic in the manner of Homer, entitled the *Epigoniad*, long forgotten. Fergusson had been his pupil, and probably owed some obligations to him.]

GEORDIE AND DAVIE.

GEORDIE.

Blaw saft, my reed, and kindly, to my mane ;  
Weel may ye thole a saft and dowie strain.  
Nae mair to you shall shepherds, in a ring,  
Wi' blytheness skip, or lasses lilt and sing ;  
Sic sorrow now maun sadden ilka ee,  
And ilka waefu' shepherd grieve wi' me.

DAVIE.

Wherefore begin a sad and dowie strain,  
Or banish liltin' frae the Fifan plain ?  
Though simmer's gane, and we nae langer view  
The blades o' clover wat wi' pearls o' dew ;  
Cauld winter's bleakest blasts we'll eithly cower,  
Our elden's driven, and our hairst is owre ;  
Our rucks fu' thick are stackit i' the yard ;  
For the Yule feast a sautit mart's prepared ;  
The ingle-nook supplies the simmer fields,  
And aft as mony gleefu' moments yields.  
Swith, man ! fling a' your sleepy springs awa,  
And on your canty whistle gies a blaw.  
Blytheness, I trow, maun lighten ilka ee ;  
And ilka canty callant sing like me.

GEORDIE.

Na, na ! a canty spring wad now impart  
Just threefauld sorrow to my heavy heart.

Though to the weet my ripen'd aits had fa'n,  
 Or shake-winds owre my rigs wi' pith had blawn;  
 To this I could hae said, "I carena by,"  
 Nor fund occasion now my cheeks to dry.  
 Crosses like thae, or lack o' world's gear,  
 Are naething, when we tyne a friend that's dear.  
 Ah! waes me for you, Willie! mony a day  
 Did I wi' you on yon broom-thackit brac  
 Hound aff my sheep, and let them careless gang,  
 To harken to your cheery tale or sang—  
 Sangs that for aye, on Caledonia's strand,  
 Shall sit the foremost 'mang her tunefu' band.

I dreamt, yestreen, his deadly wraith I saw  
 Gang by my een, as white's the driven snaw;  
 My collie, Ringie, youf'd and youl'd a' night,  
 Cower'd and crap near me, in an unco fright;  
 I waken'd fley'd, and shook baith lith and limb,  
 A cauldness took me, and my sight grew dim;  
 I kent that it forspak approachin' wae,  
 When my poor doggie was disturbit sae.  
 Nae sooner did the day begin to dawn,  
 Than I beyont the knowe fu' speedy ran,  
 Where I was keppit wi' the heavy tale  
 That sets ilk dowie sangster to bewail.

## DAVIE.

And wha on Fifean bents can weel refuse  
 To gie the tear o' tribute to his Muse!—  
 Fareweel ilk cheery spring, ilk canty note;  
 Be daffin and ilk idle play forgot:  
 Bring, ilka herd, the mournfu', mournfu' boughs,  
 Rosemary sad, and ever-dreary yews;  
 Thae let be steepit i' the saut, saut tear,  
 To weet wi' hallow'd draps his sacred bier,  
 Whase sangs will aye in Scotland be revered,  
 While slaw-gaun owsen turn the flowery swaird;  
 While bonnie lambies lick the dewa o' spring;  
 While gaudsmen whistle, or while birdies sing.

## GEORDIE.

'Twasna for weel-timed verse, or sangs alane,  
 He bure the bell frae ilka shepherd swain ;  
 Nature to him had gien a kindly lore,  
 Deep a' her mystic ferlies to explore :  
 For a' her secret workings he could gie  
 Reasons that wi' her principles agree.  
 Ye saw yoursel how weel his mailin thrave ;  
 Aye better faugh'd and snodit than the lave :  
 Lang had the thistles and the dockans been  
 In use to wag their taps upon the green,  
 Whare now his bonnie rigs delight the view,  
 And thrivin' hedges drink the cauler dew.<sup>1</sup>

## DAVIE.

They tell me, Geordie ! he had sic a gift,  
 That scarce a starnie blinkit frae the lift,  
 But he would some auld warld name for't find  
 As gart him keep it freshly in his mind.  
 For this, some ca'd him an uncanny wight ;  
 The clash gaed round, " he had the second sight ;"  
 A tale that never fail'd to be the pride  
 O' grannies spinnin' at the ingle-side.

## GEORDIE.

But now he's gane ; and fame, that, when alive,  
 Seenil lets ony o' her votaries thrive,  
 Will frae his shinin' name a' motes withdraw,  
 And on her loudest trump his praises blaw.  
 Lang may his sacred banes untroubled rest !  
 Lang may his truff in gowans gay be drest !  
 Scholars, and bard unheard o' yet shall come  
 And stamp memorials on his grassy tomb,  
 Which in yon ancient kirkyard shall remain,  
 Famed as the urn that hauds the Mantuan swain.

<sup>1</sup> Dr Wilkie had a farm near St Andrews, on which he made great improvements.

## E L E G Y

ON THE DEATH OF MR DAVID GREGORY, LATE PROFESSOR OF  
MATHEMATICS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS.

Now mourn, ye college masters a' !  
And frae your een a tear let fa' ;  
Famed Gregory death has taen awa,  
    Without remeid ;  
The skaith ye've met wi's nae that sma',  
    Sin' Gregory's dead.

The students, too, will miss him sair ;  
To school them weel his eident care ;  
Now they may mourn for ever mair ;  
    They hae great need ;  
They'll lip the maist feck o' their lear,  
    Sin' Gregory's dead.

He could, by Euclid, prove lang syne,  
A gangin' point composed a line.  
By numbers, too, he could divine,  
    When he did read,  
That three times three just made up nine :  
    But now he's dead.

In algebra weel skill'd he was,  
And kent fu' weel proportion's laws :  
He could mak clear baith B's and A's  
    Wi' his lang head ;  
Rin owre surd roots, but cracks or flaws :  
    But now he's dead.

Weel versed was he in architecture,  
And kent the nature o' the sector ;  
Upon baith globes he weel could lecture,  
    And gar's tak heed ;  
O' geometry he was the Hector :  
    But now he's dead.

Sae weel's he'd fley the students a',  
When they were skelpin' at the ba' ;

They took leg-bail, and ran awa'  
 Wi' pith and speed :  
 We winna get a sport sae braw,  
 Sin' Gregory's dead.

Great 'casion hae we a' to weep,  
 And cleed our skins in mournin' decp,  
 For Gregory death will fairly keep,  
 To tak his nap :  
 He'll till the resurrection sleep,  
 As sound's a tap.

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## AN ECLOGUE.

WILLIE AND SANDIE.

'Twas e'enin' when the spreckled gowdspink sang ;  
 When new-fa'en dew in blobs o' crystal hang ;  
 Then Will and Sandie thought they'd wrought eneugh,  
 And lows'd their sair-toil'd owsen frae the pleugh.  
 Before they ca'd their beasts unto the town,  
 The lads, to draw their breath, e'en sat them down :  
 To the stiff sturdy aik they lean their backs,  
 While honest Sandie thus begins the cracks.

SANDIE.

Ance I could hear the lavrock's shrill-tuned throat,  
 And listen to the clatterin' gowdspink's note :  
 Ance I could whistle cantily as they,  
 To owsen, as they till'd my ruggit clay :  
 But now, I would as lieve maist lend my lugs  
 To tuneless puddocks croakin' i' the bogs.  
 I sigh at hame ; a-field I'm dowie too ;  
 To sowf a tune I'll never crook my mou.

WILLIE.

Foul fa' me ! if your bridal hadna been  
 Nae langer bygane than sin' Halloween,  
 I could hae tell't you, but a warlock's art,  
 That some daft lightlyin quean had stown your heart :

Our beasties here will tak their e'enin' pluck ;  
 And now, sin' Jock's gane hame the byres to muck,  
 Fain would I houp my friend will be inclined  
 To gie me a' the secrets o' his mind :  
 Heh, Sandie, lad ! what dool's come owre ye now,  
 That you to whistle ne'er will crook your mou !

SANDIE.

Ah, Willie, Willie ! I may date my wae  
 Frae what betid me on my bridal day ;  
 Sair may I rue the hour in which our hands  
 Were knit thegither in the haly bands :  
 Sin' that I thrive sae ill, in troth, I fancy,  
 Some fiend or fairy, no sae very chancy,  
 Has driven me, by pawky wiles uncommon,  
 To wed this flytin' fury o' a woman.

WILLIE.

Ah, Sandie ! aften hae I heard you tell,  
 Among the lassies a' she bure the bell ;  
 And say, the modest glauces o' her een  
 Far dang the brightest beauties o' the green :  
 You ca'd her aye sae innocent, sae young,  
 I thought she kenn'd na how to use her tongue.

SANDIE.

Before I married her, I'll tak my aith,  
 Her tongue was never louder than her breath ;  
 But now it's turn'd sae souple and sae bauld,  
 That Job himsel could scarcely thole the scauld.

WILLIE.

Let her yelp on ; be you as calm's a mouse,  
 Nor let your whisht be heard into the house :  
 Do what she can, or be as loud's she please,  
 Ne'er mind her flytes, but set your heart at ease :  
 Sit down and blaw your pipe, nor fash your thumb,  
 And there's my hand, she'll tire, and soon sing dumb,  
 Sooner should winter's cauld confine the sea,  
 And let the sma'est o' our burns rin free ;



Sooner at Yule-day shall the birk be drest,  
 Or birds in sapless busses big their nest;  
 Before a tonguey woman's noisy plea  
 Should ever be a cause to daunt me.

## SANDIE.

Weel could I this abide; but, oh! I fear  
 I'll soon be twin'd o' a' my warldly gear.  
 My kirnstaff now stands gizzen'd at the door;  
 My cheese-rack toom, that ne'er was toom before;  
 My kye may now rin rowtin' to the hill,  
 And on the naked yird their milkness spill:  
 She seenil lays her hand upon a turn;  
 Neglects the kebbuck, and forgets the kirn.  
 I vow, my hair-mould milk would poison dogs,  
 As it stands lapper'd i' the dirty cogs.

Before the seed, I sell'd my ferra cow,  
 And wi' the profit coft a stane o' woo';  
 I thought, by priggin', that she might hae spun  
 A plaidie, light, to screen me frae the sun:  
 But though the siller's scant, the cleedin' dear,  
 She hasna ca'd about a wheel the year.  
 Last ouk but ane I was frae hame a day,  
 Buying a threave or twa o' beddin' strae:  
 O' ilka thing the woman had her will;  
 Had fouth o' meal to bake, and hens to kill:  
 But hyne awa to Edinbrough scour'd sho  
 To get a makin' o' her fav'rite tea;  
 And 'cause I leftna her the weary clink,  
 She pawn'd the very trunchers frae my bink.

## WILLIE.

Her tea! ah, wae betide sic costly gear,  
 Or them that ever wad the price o't spier!  
 Sin' my auld gutcher first the warld knew,  
 Fouk hadna fund the Indies whare it grew.  
 I mind mysel, it's no sae lang sin' syne,  
 When auntie Marion did her stamack tyne,  
 That Davs, our gard'ner, cam frae Applebog,  
 And gae her tea to tak by way o' drog.

## SANDIE.

When ilka herd for cauld his fingers rubs,  
 And cakes o' ice are seen upon the dubs ;  
 At mornin', when frae pleugh or fauld I come,  
 I'll see a braw reck rising frae my lum,  
 And aiblins think to get a rantin' bleeze,  
 To fley the frost awa, and toast my taes ;  
 But when I shoot my nose in, ten to ane  
 If I weelfar'dly see my ain hearthstane.  
 She round the ingle wi' her gimmers sits,  
 Crammin' their gebbies wi' her nicest bits ;  
 While the guidman, out-by, maun fill his crap  
 Frae the milk coggie or the parritch cap.

## WILLIE.

Sandie ! if this were ony common plea,  
 I should the lealest o' my counsel gie ;  
 But mak or meddle betwixt man and wife  
 Is what I never did in a' my life.  
 It's wearin' on now to the tail o' May,  
 And just between the bear-seed and the hay ;  
 As lang's an orra mornin' can be spared,  
 Stap your ways east the haugh, and tell the laird :  
 For he's a man weel versed in a' the laws ;  
 Kens baith their outs and ins, their cracks and flaws ;  
 And aye right gleg, when things are out o' joint,  
 At settlin' o' a nice or kittle point.  
 But yonder's Jock ; he'll ca' your owsen hame,  
 And tak thir tidings to your thrawart dame,  
 That ye're awa ae peacefu' meal to prie,  
 And tak your supper, kail, or sow'ns, wi' me.

## THE GHAISTS,

## A KIRK-YARD ECOLOGUE.

Did you not say, in good Anne's-day,  
 And vow, and did protest, sir,  
 That when Hanover should come over,  
 We surely should be blest, sir?—  
*An auld sang made new again.*

Where the braid planes in dowie murmurs wave  
 Their ancient taps out-owre the cauld-clad grave,  
 Where Geordie Girdwood, mony a lang spun day,  
 Houkit for gentles' banes the humblest clay,  
 Twa sheeted ghaists,<sup>1</sup> sae grisly and sae wan,  
 'Mang lanely tombs their douff discourse began.

## WATSON.

Cauld blaws the nippin' north wi' angry sough,  
 And showers his hailstanes frae the castle cleugh  
 Owre the Greyfriars,<sup>2</sup> where, at mirkest hour,  
 Bogles and spectres went to tak their tour,  
 Harlin' the pows and shanks to hidden cairns,  
 Amang the hemlocks wild and sun-burnt ferns;  
 But nane the night, save you and I, hae come  
 Frae the drear mansions o' the midnight tomb.  
 Now when the dawnin's near, when cock maun crow,  
 And wi' his angry bougil gar's withdraw,  
 Ayont the kirk we'll stap, and there tak bield,  
 While the black hours our nightly freedom yield.

## HERIOT.

I'm weel content: but binna cassen down,  
 Nor trow the cock will ca' ye hame owre soon;

<sup>1</sup> [The interlocutors are George Heriot and George Watson, the founders of two well-known institutions in Edinburgh for the support and education of the sons of decayed citizens. These institutions, or hospitals, are closely adjacent to the church-yard.]

<sup>2</sup> [The Greyfriars churchyard, in Edinburgh.]

For, though the eastern lift betokens day,  
 Changing her rokelay black for mantle grey,  
 Nae weirlike bird our knell of parting rings,  
 Nor sheds the cauler moisture frae his wings.  
 Nature has changed her course; the birds o' day  
 Dozin' in silence on the bending spray,  
 While owlets round the craigs at noontide flee,  
 And bluidy hawks sit singin' on the tree.  
 Ah, Caledon! the land I ance held dear,  
 Sair mane mak I for thy destruction near;  
 And thou, Edina! ance my dear abode,  
 When 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 sonsy seem wi' mony a gift,  
 And gar thy stately turrets speel the lift.  
 In vain did Danish Jones, wi' gimgrack pains,  
 In Gothic sculpture fret the pliant stanes;<sup>1</sup>  
 In vain did he affix my statue here,  
 Brawly to busk wi' flowers ilk coming year—  
 My towers are sunk; my lands are barren now;  
 My fame, my honour, like my flowers maun dow.

## WATSON.

Sure, Major Weir, or some sic warlock wight,  
 Has flung beguillin' glamour owre your sight;  
 Or else some kittle cantrip thrown, I ween,  
 Has bound in mirlygoes my ain twa een:  
 If ever aught frae sense could be believed  
 (And scenil hae my senses been deceived),  
 This moment owre the tap o' Adam's tomb,<sup>2</sup>  
 Fu' easy can I see your chiefest dome.  
 Nae corbie fleedin' there, nor croupin craws,  
 Seem to forspeak the ruin o' thy ha's;

<sup>1</sup> [Heriot's Hospital is said to have been designed by Inigo Jones.]

<sup>2</sup> [A conspicuous mausoleum belonging to the family of William Adam of Maryborough, architect, father of the celebrated Robert and James Adam, builders of the Adelphi.]

But a' your towers in wonted order staud,  
Steeve as the rocks that hem our native land.

## HERIOT.

Thinkna I vent my well-a-day in vain ;  
Kenn'd ye the cause, ye sure wad join my manc.  
Black be the day, that ere to England's ground  
Scotland was eikit by the Union's bond !  
For mony a menzie of destructive ills  
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 riggings bare,  
Nor acres, houses, wood, nor fishings spare,  
Till he can lend the stoiterin' state a lift,  
Wi' gowd in goupins, 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, when now-a-days  
They raise provisions as the stents they raise ;  
Yoke hard the poor, and let the rich chiels be  
Pamper'd at ease by ithers' industry.

Hale interest for my fund can scanty now  
Cleed a' my callants' backs, and stap their mou.  
How maun their wames wi' sairest hunger slack ;  
Their duds in targets flaff upon their back ;  
When they are doom'd to keep a lastin' lent,  
Starvin' for England's weel at *three per cent*!

## WATSON.

Auld Reekie, then, may bless the gowden times,  
When honesty and poortith baith are crimes.  
She little kenn'd, when you and I endow'd  
Our hospitals for back-gaun burghers' guid,  
That e'er our siller or our lands should bring  
A guid bien livin' to a back-gaun king ;  
Wha, thanks to ministry l is grown sae wise,  
He downa chew the bitter cud o' vice :  
For if frae Castlehill to Netherbow,  
Wad honest houses bawdyhouses grow,

The crown wad never speir the price o' sin,  
 Nor hinder younkers to the deil to rin;  
 But if some mortal grein for pious fame,  
 And leave the poor man's prayer to sain his name,  
 His gear maun a' be scatter'd by the claws  
 O' ruthless, ravenous, and harpy laws.  
 Yet should I think, although the bill tak place,  
 The council winna lack sae meikle grace  
 As let 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 engine  
 Hae sprung frae Heriot's Wark, and sprung frae mine.

## HERIOT.

I find, my friend, that ye but little ken,  
 There's e'en now on the earth a set o' men,  
 Wha, if they get their private pouches lined,  
 Gienna a windle-strae for a' mankind.  
 They'll sell their country, flae their conscience bare,  
 To gaur the weigh-bank turn a single hair.  
 The government need only bait the line  
 Wi' the prevailin' flie—the gowden coin!  
 Then our executors and wise trustees  
 Will sell them fishes in forbidden seas:  
 Upon their dwinin' country girn 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;  
 Fireflaught and hail, wi' tenfauld fury's fires,  
 Shall lay yird-laigh Edina's airy spires:  
 Twiced shall rin rowtin' down his banks out-owre,  
 Till Scotland's out o' reach o' England's power,  
 Upon the briny Borean jaws to float,  
 And mourn in dowie soughs her dowie lot.

## HERIOT.

Yonder's the tomb o' wise Mackenzie<sup>1</sup> famed,  
 Whase laws rebellious bigotry reclaim'd ;  
 Free'd the hale land o' covenantin' fools,  
 Wha erst hae fash'd us wi' unnumber'd dools.  
 Till night we'll tak the swaird aboon our paws,  
 And then, whan she her ebon chariot rows,  
 We'll travel to the vau't wi' stealin' stap,  
 And wauk Mackenzie frae his quiet nap ;  
 Tell him our ails, that he, wi' wanted skill,  
 May fleg the schemers o' the mortmain bill.

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## EPISTLE TO MR ROBERT FERGUSSON.

Is Allan risen frae the dead,  
 Wha aft has tuned the aiten reed,  
 And by the Muses was decreed  
     To grace the thistle ?  
 Na—Fergusson's come in his stead,  
     To blaw the whistle.

In troth, my callant ! I'm sae fain  
 To read your sonsy, canty strain ;  
 You write sic easy style, and plain,  
     And words sae bonnie ;  
 Nae southron loun dare you disdain,  
     Or cry, " Fye on ye !"

Whae'er has at Auld Reekie been,  
 And king's birth-days' exploits hae seen,  
 Maun own that ye hae gien a keen  
     And true description ;  
 Nor say, ye've at Parnassus been  
     To form a fiction.

<sup>1</sup> [Another conspicuous mausoleum in the Greyfriars church-yard—the burial-place of Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, king's advocate or public prosecutor in the persecuting reigns of Charles II. and James II.]

Hale be your heart, ye canty chield !  
 May ye ne'er want a guid warm bield,  
 And sic guid cakes as Scotland yield,  
     And ilka dainty  
 That grows or feeds upon her field,  
     And whisky pleuty !

But ye, perhaps, thirst mair for fame  
 Than a' the guid things I can name ;  
 And then, ye will be fair to blame  
     My guid intention :  
 For that ye needna gae frae hame,  
     You've sic pretension.

Sae soft and sweet your verses jingle,  
 And your auld words sae meetly mingle,  
 'Twill gar baith married fook and single  
     To roose your lays :  
 When we forgather round the ingle,  
     We'll chaunt your praise.

When I again Auld Reekie see,  
 And can forgather, lad, wi' thee,  
 Then we, wi' meikle mirth and glee,  
     Shall tak a gill,  
 And o' your cauler oysters we  
     Shall eat our fill.

If sic a thing should you betide,  
 To Berwick town to tak a ride,  
 I'se tak ye up Tweed's bonnie side  
     Before ye settle,  
 And shaw you there the fisher's pride,  
     A sa'mon kettle.

There lads and lasses do conveen,  
 To feast and dance upon the green ;  
 And there sic bravery may be seen  
     As will confound ye,  
 And gar you glower out baith your een  
     At a' around ye.



To see sae mony bosoms bare,  
 And sic huge puddings i' their hair,  
 And some o' them wi' naething mair  
     Upon their tete ;  
 Yea, some wi' mutches that might scare  
     Craws frae their meat.

I ne'er appeared before in print,  
 But, for your sake, wad fain be in't,  
 E'en that I might my wishes hint  
     That you'd write mair ;  
 For sure your head-piece is a mint  
     Where wit's no rare.

Sense fa' me, gif I hadna lure  
 I could command ilk muse as sure,  
 Than hae a chariot at the door  
     To wait upon me ;  
 Though, poet-like, I'm but a poor  
     Mid-Lothian Johnny.

*Berwick, August 31, 1773.*

J. S.

---

ANSWER TO MR J. S.'S EPISTLE.

I trow, my mettled Lothian laddie !  
 Auld-farran birkie I maun ca' thee ;  
 For when in guid black print I saw thee,  
     Wi' souple gab  
 I skirled fu' loud, " Oh, wae befa' thee !  
     But thou'rt a daub."

Awa, ye wily fleetchin' fallow !  
 The rose shall grow like gowan yellow,  
 Before I turn sae toom and shallow,  
     And void o' fushion,  
 As a' your butter'd words to swallow  
     In vain delusion.

Ye mak my muse a dautit pet ;  
 But gin she could like Allan's nict,  
 Or couthy cracks and hamely get  
     Upon her carritch,  
 Eithly wad I be in your debt  
     A pint o' parritch.

At times, when she may lowse her pack,  
 I'll grant that she can find a knack  
 To gar auld-warld wordies clack  
     In hamespun rhyme,  
 While ilk ane at his billy's back  
     Keeps guid Scots time.

But she maun e'en be glad to jook,  
 And play teet-bo frae nook to nook,  
 Or blush, as gin she had the youk  
     Upon her skin,  
 When Ramsay or when Pennycuik  
     Their lilts begin.

At mornin' ear', or late at e'enin',  
 Gin ye sud hap to come and see ane,  
 Nor niggard wife, nor greetiu' wee ane,  
     Within my cloyster,  
 Can challenge you and me frae pricin'  
     A cauler oyster.

Hech, lad ! it would be news indeed  
 Were I to ride to bonnie Tweed,  
 Wha ne'er laid gammon owre a steed  
     Beyont Lysterrick ;<sup>1</sup>  
 And auld shanks-naig would tire, I dread,  
     To pace to Berwick.

You crack weel o' your lasses there :  
 Their glancin' een, and brisket bare ;  
 But, though this town be smeeakit sair,  
     I'll wad a farden,  
 Than ours there's nane mair fat and fair,  
     Cravin' your pardon.

<sup>1</sup> [Restalrig, a village near Edinburgh.]

Gin heaven should gie the earth a drink,  
 And afterhend a sunny blink ;  
 Gin ye were here, I'm sure you'd think  
     It worth your notice,  
 To see them dubs and gutters jink  
     Wi' kiltit coaties.

And frae ilk corner o' the nation  
 We've lasses eke o' recreation,  
 Wha at close-mous tak up their station  
     By ten o'clock :—  
 The Lord deliver frae temptation  
     A' honest fouk !

Thir queans are aye upon the catch  
 For pursie, pocket-book, or watch,  
 And can sae glib their leesins hatch,  
     That you'll agree,  
 Ye canna eithly meet their match  
     'Tween you and me.

For this guid sample o' your skill  
 I'm restin' you a pint o' yill,  
 By and attour a Highland gill  
     O' *agua vitæ* ;  
 The which to come and sock at will  
     I here invite ye.

Though jillet fortune scowl and quarrel,  
 And keep me frae a bien beef barrel,  
 As lang's I've twopence i' the warl'  
     I'll aye be vokie  
 To part a fadge or girdle farl  
     Wi' Lothian Jockie.

Fareweel, my cock ! lang may you thrive,  
 Weel happit in a cozy hive ;  
 And that your saul may never dive  
     To Acheron,  
 I'll wish, as lang's I can subscribe  
     ROB. FERGUSSON.

## TO MY AULD BREEKS.

Now gae your wa's—though ance as guid  
 As ever happit flesh and bluid,  
 Yet part we maun.—The case sae hard is  
 Amang the writers and the bardies,  
 That lang they'll bruik the auld, I trow,  
 Or neibours cry, " Weel bruik the new !"  
 Still makin' tight, wi' tither steek,  
 The tither hole, the tither eik,  
 To bang the bir o' winter's anger,  
 And hand the hurdies out o' langer.

Siclike some weary wight will fill  
 His kyte wi' drogs frae doctor's bill,  
 Thinkin' to tack the tither year  
 To life, and look baith hale and fier,  
 Till at the lang-run death dirks in,  
 To birze his saul ayont his skin.

You ncedna wag your duds o' clouts,  
 Nor fa' into your dorty pouts,  
 To think that erst you've hain'd my tail  
 Frae wind and weet, frae snaw and hail,  
 And for reward, when bald and hummil,  
 Frae garret high to dree a tummil.  
 For you I cared, as lang's ye dow'd  
 Be lined wi' siller or wi' gowd :  
 Now to befriend it wad be folly,  
 Your raggit hide and ponches holey ;  
 For wha but kens a poet's placks  
 Get mony weary flaws and cracks,  
 And canna thole to hae them tint,  
 As he sae seenil sees the mint ?  
 Yet round the world keek, and see  
 That ithers fare as ill as thee ;  
 For weel we loe the chield we think  
 Can get us tick, or gie us drink,  
 Till o' his purse we've seen the bottom,  
 Then we despise, and hae forgot him.

Yet gratefu' hearts, to mak amends,  
 Will aye be sorry for their friends,  
 And I for thee;—as mony a time  
 Wi' you I've speel'd the braes o' rhyme,  
 Where, for the time, the muse ne'er cares  
 For siller, or sic guilefu' wares,  
 Wi' whilk we drumly grow, and crabbit,  
 Dour, capernoited, thrawin'-gabbit;  
 And brither, sister, friend, and fae,  
 Without remeid of kindred, slay.  
 You've seen me round the bickers reel  
 Wi' heart as hale as temper'd steel,  
 And face sae open, free, and blythe,  
 Nor thought that sorrow there could kyth;  
 But the niest moment this was lost,  
 Like gowan in December's frost.

Could prick-the-louse but be sae handy  
 As mak the breeks and claes to stand aye,  
 Through thick and thin wi' you I'd dash on,  
 Nor mind the folly o' the fashion:  
 But, hech! the times' *vicissitudo*  
 Gars ither breeks decay, as you do.  
 The macaronies, braw and windy,  
 Maun fail—*Sic transit gloria mundi!*  
 Now, speed you to some madam's chaumer  
 That butt and ben rings dule and clamour;  
 Ask her, in kindness, if she seeks  
 In hidlin ways to wear the breeks.  
 Safe you may dwell, though mould and mooty,  
 Beneath the veil o' under-coatie:  
 For this, mair fau'ts nor yours can screen  
 Frae lover's quickest sense, his een.

Or if some bard, in lucky times,  
 Should profit meikle by his rhymes,  
 And pace awa, wi' smirky face,  
 In siller or in gowden lace,  
 Glower in his face, like spectre gaunt,  
 Remind him o' his former want,  
 'To cow his daffin' and his pleasure,  
 And gar him live within the measure.

So Philip, it is said, who would ring  
 Ower Macedon a just and guid king,  
 Fearing that power might plume his feather,  
 And bid him stretch beyond the tether,  
 Ilk morning to his lug would ca'  
 A tiny servant o' his ha',  
 To tell him to improve his span,  
 For Philip was, like him, a man.

### AULD REEKIE.<sup>1</sup>

[This poem is a curious memorial of Edinburgh in its old state, when as yet it mainly consisted of one or two densely built streets, and exhibited many of the moral and social features of a small country town. The coarse bacchanalianism—the filthiness—the gossipry—the cadies, macaronies, street-haunters of all kinds—are all here faithfully described.]

Auld Reekie ! wale o' ilka town  
 That Scotland kens beneath the moon ;  
 Where coothy chields at e'enin' meet,  
 Their bizzin' craigs and mous to weet ;  
 And blythely gar auld care gae by  
 Wi' blinkin' and wi' bleerin' eye.  
 Ower lang frae thee the muse has been  
 Sae frisky on the simmer's green,  
 Wheu flowers and gowans went to glent  
 In bonnie blinks upon the bent ;  
 But now the leaves o' yellow dye,  
 Peel'd frae the branches, quickly fly ;  
 And now frae nouter bush nor brier  
 The speckled mavis greets your ear ;  
 Nor bonnie blackbird skims and roves  
 To seek his love in yonder groves.  
 Then, Reekie, welcome ! Thou canst charm,  
 Unfleggit by the year's alarm.

<sup>1</sup> [A familiar appellation for Edinburgh, originating no doubt with reference to the dense coal smoke which constantly involves the city.]

Not Boreas, that sæ snelly blows,  
 Dare here pop in his angry nose ;  
 Thanks to our dada, whase biggin stands  
 A shelter to surrounding lands !

Now morn, wi' bonnie purple smiles  
 Kisses the air-cock o' Saunt Giles ;  
 Rakin' their een, the servant lasses  
 Early begin their lies and clashes.  
 Ilk tells her friend o' saddest distress  
 That still she bruiks frae scoulin' mistress ;  
 And wi' her joe, in turnpike stair,  
 She'd rather snuff the stinkin' air,  
 As be subjected to her tongue,  
 When justly censured i' the wrong.

On stair, wi' tub or pat in hand,  
 The barefoot housemaids loe to stand,  
 That antrin fouk may ken how snell  
 Auld Reekie will at mornin' smell :  
 Then, wi' an inundation big as  
 The burn that 'neath the Nor' Loch brig is,  
 They kindly shower Edina's roses,  
 To quicken and regale our noses.  
 Now some for this, wi' satire's leesh,  
 Hae gien auld Edinbrough a creesh :  
 But without sourin' nought is sweet ;  
 The mornin' smells that hail our street  
 Prepare and gently lead the way  
 To simmer canty, braw, and gay.  
 Edina's sons mair eithly share  
 Her spices and her dainties rare,  
 Than he that's never yet been call'd  
 Aff frae his plaidie or his fauld.

Now stairhead critics, senseless fools !  
 Censure their aim, and pride their rules,  
 In Luckenbooths, wi' glowrin' eye,  
 Their neibour's sma'est fau'ts descry.  
 If ony loun should dander there,  
 O' awkward gait and foreign air,  
 They trace his steps, till they can tell  
 His pedigree as weel's himsel.

When Phœbus blinks wi' warmer ray,  
 And schools at noon-day get the play,  
 Then bus'ness, weighty bus'ness, comes ;  
 The trader glowers—he doubts, he hums.  
 The lawyers eke to Cross repair,  
 Their wigs to shaw, and toss an air ;  
 While busy agent closely plies,  
 And a' his kittle cases tries.

Now night, that's cunzied chief for fun,  
 Is wi' her usual rites begun ;  
 Through ilka gate the torches blaze,  
 And globes send out their blinkin' rays.  
 The usefu' cadie plies in street,  
 To bide the profits o' his feet ;  
 For, by thir lads Auld Reekie's fouk  
 Ken but a sample o' the stock  
 O' thieves, that nightly wad oppress,  
 And mak baith goods and gear the less.  
 Near him the lazy chairman stands,  
 And wotsna how to turn his hands,  
 Till some daft birkie, rantin' fou,  
 Has matters somewhere else to do ;—  
 The chairman willing gies his light  
 To deeds o' darkness and o' night.

It's never saxpence for a lift  
 That gars thir lads wi' founess rift ;  
 For they wi' better gear are paid,  
 And whores and culls support their trade.

Near some lamp-post, wi' dowie face,  
 Wi' heavy een and sour grimace,  
 Stands she, that beauty lang had kenn'd—  
 Whoredom her trade, and vice her end.  
 But see where now she wins her bread  
 By that which nature ne'er decreed,  
 And vicious ditties sings to please  
 Fell dissipation's votaries.  
 Whene'er we reputation lose,  
 Fair chastity's transparent gloss !



Redemption, seenil kens the name—  
But a's black misery and shame.

Frae joyous tavern, reelin' drunk,  
Wi' fiery phiz and een half sunk,  
Behold the bruiser, fae to a'  
That in the reek o' gardies fa' !  
Close by his side, a feckless race  
O' macaronies show their face,  
And think they're free frae skaith or harm,  
While pith befriends their leader's arm.  
Yet fearfu' aften o' their maught,  
They quit the glory o' the faught  
To this same warrior, wha led  
Thae heroes to bright honour's bed ;  
And aft the hack o' honour shines  
In bruiser's face wi' broken lines.  
O' them sad tales he tells anon,  
When ramble and when fighting's done ;  
And, like Hectorian, ne'er impairs  
The brag and glory o' his sairs.

When feet in dirty gutters plash,  
And fouk to wale their fitstaps fash—  
At night, the macaroni drunk,  
In pools and gutters afitimes sunk :  
Hech ! what a fright he now appears,  
When he his corpse dejected rears !  
Look at that head, and think if there  
The pomet slaister'd up his hair !  
The cheeks observe ;—where now could shine  
The scancin' glories o' carmine !  
Ah, legs ! in vain the silk-worm there  
Display'd to view her eident care ;  
For stink instead of perfumes grow,  
And clarty odours fragrant flow.

Now, some to porter, some to punch,  
Some to their wife, and some their wench,  
Retire ; while noisy ten hours' drum  
Gars a' your trades gae danderin' hame.  
Now, mony a club, jocose and free,  
Gie a' to merriment and glee ;

Wi' sang and glass they fley the power  
 O' care, that wad harass the hour;  
 For wine and Bacchus still bear down  
 Our thrawart fortune's wildest frown:  
 It maks you stark, and bauld, and brave,  
 Even when descending to the grave.

Now some, in Pandemonium's shade,<sup>1</sup>  
 Resume the gormandising trade;  
 Where eager looks, and glancin' een,  
 Forspeak a heart and stamack keen.  
 Gang on, my lads! it's lang sinsyne  
 We kenn'd auld Epicurus' line;  
 Save you, the board wad cease to rise,  
 Bedight wi' daintiths to the skies;  
 And salamanders cease to swill  
 The comforts o' a burning gill.

But chief, oh Cape!<sup>1</sup> we crave thy aid,  
 To get our cares and poortith laid.  
 Sincerity and genius true,  
 O' knights have ever been the due.  
 Mirth, music, porter deepest dyed,  
 Are never here to worth denied;  
 And health, o' happiness the queen,  
 Blinks bonnie wi' her smile serene.

Though joy maist part Auld Reekie owns  
 Eftsoons she kens sad sorrow's frowns.  
 What group is yon sae dismal, grim,  
 Wi' horrid aspect, cleedin' dim?  
 Says Death, "They're mine—a dowie crew—  
 To me they'll quickly pay their last adieu."

How come mankind, when lacking woe,  
 In saulie's face their hearts to show;<sup>2</sup>  
 As if they were a clock to tell  
 That grief in them had rung her bell?  
 Then, what is man!—why a' this fraise?  
 Life's spunk decay'd, nae mair can blaze.

<sup>1</sup> Pandemonium and the Cape were two social clubs.

<sup>2</sup> [The hired attendants at funerals are called saulies in Scotland.]

Let sober grief alane declare  
 Our fond anxiety and care ;  
 Nor let the undertakers be  
 The only waefu' friends we see.

Come on, my Muse ! and then rehearse  
 The gloomiest theme in a' your verse.  
 In mornings, when ane keeks about,  
 Fu' blythe and free frae ail, nae doubt,  
 He lippens no to be misled  
 Amang the regions o' the dead ;  
 But, straight, a painted corpse he sees,  
 Lang streekit 'neath its canopies.  
 Soon, soon will this his mirth control,  
 And send damnation to his soul :  
 Or when the dead deal (awfu' shape !)  
 Maks frighted mankind girn and gape,  
 Reflection then his reason sours—  
 For the neist dead-deal may be ours.  
 When Sibyl led the Trojan down  
 To haggard Pluto's dreary town,  
 Shapes waur nor thae, I freely ween,  
 Could never meet the soger's een.

If kail sae green, or herbs, delight,  
 Edina's street attracts the sight :<sup>1</sup>  
 Not Covent-Garden, clad sae braw,  
 Mair fouth o' herbs can eithly shaw ;  
 For mony a yard is here sair sought,  
 That kail and cabbage may be bought,  
 And healthfu' salad to regale,  
 When pamper'd wi' a heavy meal.  
 Glower up the street in simmer morn,  
 The birks sae green, and sweet-brier thorn,  
 Wi' spraingit flowers that scent the gale,  
 Ca' far awa the mornin' smell,  
 Wi' which our ladies' flower-pat's fill'd,  
 And every noxious vapour kill'd.  
 Oh, Nature ! canty, blythe, and free,  
 Where is there keeking-glass like thee ?

<sup>1</sup> [The High Street between the Tron Church and St Giles's was then a vegetable market.]

Is there on earth that can compare  
 Wi' Mary's shape and Mary's air,  
 Save the empurpled speck, that grows  
 In the soft fauld o' yonder rose?  
 How bonnie seems the virgin breast,  
 When by the lilies here caresst,  
 And leaves the mind in doubt to tell,  
 Which maist in sweets and hue excel.

Gillespie's snuff<sup>1</sup> should prime the nose  
 O' her that to the market goes,  
 If she wad like to shun the smells  
 That float around frae market cells;  
 Where wames o' painches' sav'ry scent  
 To nostrils gie great discontent.  
 Now, wha in Albion could expect  
 O' cleanliness sic great neglect?  
 Nae Hottentot, that daily lairs  
 'Mang tripe, and ither clarty wares,  
 Hath ever yet conceived or scen,  
 Beyond the Line, sic scenes unclean.

On Sunday, here, an alter'd scene  
 O' men and manners meets our een.  
 Ane wad maist trow, some people chose  
 To change their faces wi' their clo'es,  
 And fain wad gar ilk neibour think  
 They thirst for guidness as for drink;  
 But there's an unco dearth o' grace,  
 That has nae mansion but the face,  
 And never can obtain a part  
 In benmost corner o' the heart.  
 Why should religion mak us sad,  
 If good frae virtue's to be had?  
 Na: rather gleefu' turn your face,  
 Forsake hypocrisy, grimace;  
 And never hae it understood  
 You fleg mankind frae being good.

<sup>1</sup> [Two brothers Gillespie, who realised a large fortune as tobacco-merchants in Edinburgh.]

In afternoon, a' brawly buskit,  
 The joes and lasses loe to frisk it.  
 Some tak a great delight to place  
 The modest bon-grace owre the face ;  
 Though you may see, if so inclined,  
 The turning o' the leg behind.  
 Now, Comely-Garden and the Park  
 Refresh them, after forenoon's wark :  
 Newhaven, Leith, or Canonmills,  
 Supply them in their Sunday's gills ;  
 Where writers aften spend their pence,  
 To stock their heads wi' drink and sense.

While danderin' cits delight to stray  
 To Castlehill or public way,  
 Where they nae other purpose mean,  
 Than that fool cause o' being seen,  
 Let me to Arthur's Seat pursue,  
 Where bonnie pastures meet the view,  
 And mony a wild-lorn scene accrues,  
 Befitting Willie Shakspeare's muse.  
 If Fancy there would join the thrang,  
 The desert rocks and hills amang,  
 To echoes we should lilt and play,  
 And gie to mirth the live-lang day.

Or should some canker'd biting shower  
 The day and a' her sweets deflower,  
 To Holyrood-house let me stray,  
 And gie to musing a' the day ;  
 Lamenting what auld Scotland knew,  
 Bien days for ever frae her view.  
 O Hamilton, for shame ! the Muse  
 Would pay to thee her couthy vows,  
 Gin ye wad tent the humble strain,  
 And gie's our dignity again !  
 For, oh, wae's me ! the thistle springs  
 In domicil o' ancient kings,  
 Without a patriot to regret  
 Our palace and our ancient state.

Blest place ! where debtors daily run,  
 To rid themsels frae jail and dun.<sup>1</sup>  
 Here, though sequester'd frae the din  
 That rings Auld Reekie's wa's within ;  
 Yet they may tread the sunny braes,  
 And bruik Apollo's cheery rays :  
 Glower frae St Anthon's grassy height,  
 Ower vales in simmer claes bedight ;  
 Nor ever hing their head, I ween,  
 Wi' jealous fear o' being seen.  
 May I, whenever duns come nigh,  
 And shake my garret wi' their cry,  
 Scour here wi' haste, protection get,  
 To screen mysel frae them and debt ;  
 To breathe the bliss o' open sky,  
 And Simon Fraser's bolts defy.<sup>2</sup>

Now gin a loun should hae his claes  
 In threadbare autumn o' their days,  
 St Mary, broker's guardian saunt,  
 Will satisfy ilk ail and want ;<sup>3</sup>  
 For mony a hungry writer there  
 Dives down at night, wi' cleedin' bare,  
 And quickly rises to the view  
 A gentleman, perfite and new.  
 Ye rich fouk ! lookna wi' disdain  
 Upon this ancient brokage lane,  
 For naked poets are supplied  
 Wi' what you to their wants denied.

Peace to thy shade, thou wale o' men,  
 Drummond<sup>4</sup> relief to poortith's pain :

<sup>1</sup> [The precincts of Holyrood Palace are a sanctuary for debtors.]

<sup>2</sup> The keeper of the Tolbooth.

<sup>3</sup> [St Mary's Wynd is a mean street in Edinburgh, exclusively occupied by dealers in old clothes.]

<sup>4</sup> [George Drummond, a benevolent chief magistrate of Edinburgh, who was chiefly instrumental in the establishment of an infirmary in his native city, and in the extension of the city over the grounds to the north.]

To thee the greatest bliss we owe,  
 And tribute's tear shall gratefu' flow :  
 The sick are cured, the hungry fed,  
 And dreams o' comfort tend their bed.  
 As lang as Forth weets Lothian's shore,  
 As lang's on Fife her billows roar,  
 Sae lang shall ilk whase country's dear,  
 To thy remembrance gie a tear.  
 By thee, Auld Reekie thrive and grew  
 Delightfu' to her childer's view ;  
 Nae mair shall Glasgow striplings threap  
 Their city's beauty and its shape,  
 While our new city spreads around  
 Her bonnie wings on fairy ground.

But provosts now, that ne'er afford  
 The sma'est dignity to lord,  
 Ne'er care though every scheme gae wild  
 That Drummond's sacred hand has cull'd.  
 The spacious brig<sup>1</sup> neglected lies,  
 Though plagued wi' pamphlets, dunn'd wi' cries ;  
 They heed not, though destruction come  
 To gulp us in her gaunting womb.  
 Oh, shame ! that safety canna claim  
 Protection from a provost's name ;  
 But hidden danger lies behind,  
 To torture and to fleg the mind.  
 I may as weel bid Arthur's Seat  
 To Berwick Law mak gleg retreat,  
 As think that either will or art  
 Shall get the gate to win her heart :  
 For politics are a' their mark,  
 Bribes latent, and corruption dark.  
 If they can eithly turn the pence,  
 Wi' city's good they will dispense,  
 Nor care though a' her sons were lair'd  
 Ten fathom i' the auld kirkyard.  
 To sing yet meikle does remain,  
 Undecent for a modest strain ;

<sup>1</sup> In allusion to the state of the North Bridge after its fall.

And since the poet's daily bread is  
 The favour o' the Muse or ladies,  
 He downa like to gie offence  
 To delicacy's tender sense ;  
 Therefore the stews remain unsung,  
 And bawds in silence drap their tongue.

Reekie, fareweel ! I ne'er could part  
 Wi' thee, but wi' a dowrie heart :  
 Aft frae the Fife coast I've seen  
 Thee towerin' on thy summit green ;  
 So glower the saints when first is given  
 A favourite keek o' glore and heaven.  
 On earth nae mair they bend their een,  
 But quick assume angelic mien ;  
 So I on Fife wad glower no more,  
 But gallop to Edina's shore.

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## HAME CONTENT,

A SATIRE.

*To all whom it may concern.*

Some fouk, like bees, fu' glegly rin  
 To bykes bang'd fu' o' strife and din,  
 And thieve and huddle, crum by crum,  
 Till they hae scraped the dautit plum ;  
 Then craw fell crouselly o' their wark,  
 Tell owre their turners, mark by mark,  
 Yet darena think to lowse the pose,  
 To aid their neighbours' ails and woes.

If gowd can fetter thus the heart,  
 And gar us act sae base a part,  
 Shall man, a niggard, near-gaun elf !  
 Rin to the tether's end for pelf ;  
 Learn ilka cunzied scoundrel's trick ;  
 When a's done, sell his saul to Nick !  
 I trow they've coft the purchase dear,  
 That gang sic lengths for warldly gear.

Now, when the dog-day heats begin  
 To birsle and to peel the skin,



May I lie streekit at my ease  
 Beneath the cauler shady trees  
 (Far frae the din o' borrows town),  
 Where water plays the haughs bedowu ;  
 To jouk the simmer's rigour there,  
 And breathe a while the cauler air,  
 'Mang herds and honest cottar fouk,  
 That till the farm and feed the flock ;  
 Careless o' mair, wha never fash  
 To lade their kist wi' useless cash,  
 But thank the gods for what they've sent  
 O' health enugh, and blythe content,  
 And pith that helps them to stravaig  
 Ower ilka cleugh and ilka craig ;  
 Unkenn'd to a' the weary granes  
 That aft arise frae gentler banes,  
 On easy chair that pamper'd lie,  
 Wi' baneful viands gustit high,  
 And turn and fauld their weary clay,  
 To rax and gaunt the live-lang day.

Ye sages tell, was man e'er made  
 To dree this hatefu' sluggard trade ?  
 Steekit frae nature's beauties a',  
 That daily on his presence ca' ;  
 At hame to girn, and whinge, and pine  
 For fav'rite dishes, fav'rite wine :  
 Come, then, shake aff thir sluggish ties,  
 And wi' the bird o' dawning rise !  
 On ilka bank the clouds hae spread  
 Wi' blobs o' dew a pearly bed ;  
 Frae faulds nae mair the owsen rout,  
 But to the fatt'ning clover lout,  
 Where they may feed at heart's content,  
 Unyokit frae their winter's stent.

Unyoke thee, man, and binna swear  
 To ding a hole in ill-hain'd gear !  
 Oh think that eild, wi' wily fit,  
 Is wearing nearer bit by bit !  
 Gin yence he claws you wi' his paw,  
 What's siller for ! Fient hait ava ;

But gowden playfair, that may please  
The second sharger till he dies.

Some daft chiel reads, and taks advice ;  
The chaise is yokit in a trice ;  
Awa drives he like huntit deil,  
And scarce tholes time to cool his wheel,  
Till he's, Lord kens how far awa' !  
At Italy or well o' Spa,  
Or to Montpelier's safter air ;  
For far-aff fowls hae feathers fair.

There rest him weel ! for eith can we  
Spare mony glaikit gowks like he ;  
They'll tell whare Tiber's waters rise ;  
What sea receives the drumly prize,  
That never wi' their feet hae met  
The marches o' their ain estate.

The Arno and the Tiber lang  
Hae run fell clear in Roman sang ;  
But, save the reverence o' schools,  
They're baith but lifeless, dowie pools.  
Dought they compare wi' bonnie Tweed,  
As clear as ony lammer-bead ?  
Or are their shores mair sweet and gay  
Than Fortha's haughs or banks o' Tay !  
Tho' there the herds can jink the showers  
'Mang thriving vines and myrtle bowers,  
And blaw the reed to kittle strains,  
While echo's tongue commends their pains ;  
Like ours, they canna warm the heart  
Wi' simple saft bewitching art.  
On Leader haughs and Yarrow braes,  
Arcadian herds wad tyne their lays,  
To hear the mair melodious sounds  
That live on our poetic grounds.

Come, Fancy ! come, and let us tread  
The simmer's flow'ry velvet bed,  
And a' your springs delightful lowse  
On Tweeda's bank or Cowdenknowe.  
That taen wi' thy enchanting sang,  
Our Scottish lads may round ye thrang,

Sae pleas'd they'll never fash again  
 To court you on Italian plain ;  
 Soon will they guess ye only wear  
 The simple garb o' nature here ;  
 Mair comely far, and fair to sight,  
 When in her easy cleedin' dight,  
 Than in disguise ye was before  
 On Tiber's or on Arno's shore.

O Bangour !<sup>1</sup> now the hills and dales  
 Nae mair gie back thy tender tales !  
 The birks on Yarrow now deplore,  
 Thy mournfu' muse has left the shore.  
 Near what bright burn or crystal spring,  
 Did you your winsome whistle hing !  
 The muse shall there, wi' watery ee,  
 Gie the dunk swaird a tear for thee ;  
 And Yarrow's genius, dowie dame !  
 Shall there forget her bluid-stain'd stream,  
 On thy sad grave to seek repose,  
 Who mourn'd her fate, condoled her woes.

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### MY LAST WILL.

While sober folks, in humble prose,  
 Estate, and goods, and gear dispose,  
 A poet surely may disperse  
 His moveables in dogg'ril verse ;  
 And, fearing death my blood will fast chill,  
 I hereby constitute my last Will.

Then, wit ye me to have made o'er  
 To Nature my poetic lore ;  
 To her I give and grant the freedom  
 Of paying to the bards who need 'em  
 As many talents as she gave,  
 When I became the Muse's slave.

<sup>1</sup> Mr Hamilton of Bangour [author of the beautiful ballad "The  
 Brace of Yarrow."]

Thanks to the gods, who made me poor,  
 No lukewarm friends molest my door,  
 Who always show a busy care  
 For being legatee or heir,  
 Of this stamp none will ever follow  
 The youth that's favour'd by Apollo.

But to those few who know my case,  
 Nor thought a poet's friend disgrace,  
 The following trifles I bequeath,  
 And leave them with my kindest breath ;  
 Nor will I burden them with payment  
 Of debts incurr'd, or coffin raiment.  
 As yet 'twas never my intent  
 To pass an Irish compliment.

To Jamie Rae,<sup>1</sup> who oft, *jocosus*,  
 With me partook of cheering doses,  
 I leave my snuff-box, to regale  
 His senses after drowsy meal,  
 And wake remembrance of a friend  
 Who loved him to his latter end :  
 But if this pledge should make him sorry,  
 And argue like *memento mori*,  
 He may bequeath't 'mong stubborn fellows  
 To all the finer feelings callous,  
 Who think that parting breath's a sneeze  
 To set sensations all at ease.

To Oliphant,<sup>2</sup> my friend, I legate  
 Those scrolls poetic which he may get,  
 With ample freedom to correct  
 Those writs I ne'er could retrospect ;  
 With power to him and his succession  
 To print and sell a new impression :  
 And here I fix on Ossian's head  
 A domicile for Doric reed,  
 With as much power *ad musæ bona*  
 As I in *propria persona*.

<sup>1</sup> Solicitor at law, and the poet's intimate friend.

<sup>2</sup> Late bookseller in Edinburgh.

To Hamilton<sup>1</sup> I give the task  
 Outstanding debts to crave and ask ;  
 And that my Muse he may not dub ill,  
 For loading him with so much trouble,  
 My debts I leave him *singulatim*,  
 As they are mostly *desperatim*.

To thee, whose genius can provoke  
 Thy passions to the bowl or sock ;  
 For love to thee, Woods !<sup>2</sup> and the Nine,  
 Be my immortal Shakspeare thine.  
 Here may you through the alleys turn,  
 Where Falstaff laughs, where heroes mourn,  
 And boldly catch the glowing fire  
 That dwells in raptures on his lyre.

Now, at my dirge (if dirge there be),  
 Due to the Muse and poetry,  
 Let Hutchison<sup>3</sup> attend ; for none is  
 More fit to guide the ceremonies :  
 As I, in health, with him would often  
 This clay-built mansion wash and soften,  
 So let my friends with him partake  
 The gen'rous wine at dirge or wake.

And I consent to registration  
 Of this my Will for preservation,  
 That patent it may be, and seen,  
 In Walter's<sup>4</sup> Weekly Magazine.  
 Witness whereof, these presents wrote are  
 By William Blair, the public notar,  
 And, for the tremor of my hand,  
 Are sign'd by him at my command.

His  
 R. + F.  
 Mark.

<sup>1</sup> Solicitor at law, and the poet's intimate friend.

<sup>2</sup> [An esteemed actor in Edinburgh, and an intimate friend of the poet.]

<sup>3</sup> A tavern-keeper.

<sup>4</sup> [Walter Ruddiman, publisher of the Weekly Magazine, the work in which most of Fergusson's poems appeared.]

## CODICIL

## TO R. FERGUSSON'S LAST WILL.

Whereas, by test'ment, dated blank,  
 Enroll'd in the poetic rank,  
 'Midst brighter themes that weekly come  
 To make parade at Walter's drum,  
 I there, for certain weighty causes,  
 Produced some kind bequeathing clauses,  
 And left to friends (as 'tis the custom  
 With nothing till our death to trust 'em)  
 Some tokens of a pure regard  
 From one who lived and died a bard.

If poverty has any crime in  
 Teaching mankind the art of rhyming,  
 Then, by these presents, know all mortals,  
 Who come within the Muses' portals,  
 That I approve my will aforesaid,  
 But think that something might be more said;  
 And only now would humbly seek  
 The liberty to add and eek  
 To test'ment which already made is,  
 And duly registered, as said is.

To Tulloch,<sup>1</sup> who, in kind compassion,  
 Departed from the common fashion,  
 And gave to me, who never paid it,  
 Two flasks of port upon my credit,  
 I leave the flasks, as full of air  
 As his of ruddy moisture were;  
 Nor let him to complain begin—  
 He'll get no more of cat than skin.

To Walter Ruddiman, whose pen  
 Still screen'd me from the dunce's den,  
 I leave of phiz a picture, saving  
 To him the freedom of engraving

<sup>1</sup> A wine merchant.

Therefrom a copy, to embellish,  
 And give his work a smarter relish;  
 For prints and frontispieces bind do  
 Our eyes to stationery window,  
 As superfluities in clothes  
 Set off and signalise the beaux.  
 Not that I think in reader's eyes  
 My visage will be deem'd a prize;  
 But works that others would outrival,  
 At glaring copperplates connive all;  
 And prints do well with him that led is  
 To shun the substance, hunt the shadows;  
 For, if a picture, 'tis enough—  
 A Newton, or a Jamie Duff.<sup>1</sup>

Nor would I recommend to Walter  
 This scheme of copperplates to alter;  
 Since others at the samen prices  
 Propose to give a dish that nice is,  
 Folks will desert his ordinary,  
 Unless, like theirs, his dishes vary.

To Williamson,<sup>2</sup> and his reseters,  
 Dispersing of the burial letters,  
 That they may pass with little cost  
 Fleet on the wings of penny-post;  
 Always providing and declaring,  
 That Peter shall be ever sparing  
 To make, as use is, the demand  
 For letters that may come to hand,  
 To me addressed while *locum tenens*  
 Of earth and of corporeal penance;  
 Where, if he fail, it is my will,  
 His legacy be void and null.

Let honest Greenlaw<sup>3</sup> be the staff  
 On which I lean for epitaph.  
 And that the Muses, at my end,

<sup>1</sup> A fool who attended at funerals.

<sup>2</sup> The penny-post master.

<sup>3</sup> An excellent classical scholar.

May know I had a learned friend,  
Whate'er of character he's seen  
In me, through humour or chagrin,  
I crave his genius may narrate in  
The strength of Ciceronian Latin.

Reserving to myself the power  
To alter this at latest hour,  
*Cum privilegio revocare,*  
Without assigning *ratio quare* :  
And I (as in the Will before did)  
Consent this deed shall be recorded :

*In testimonium cujus rei,*  
These presents are delivered by

R. FERGUSSON.



## POEMS IN ENGLISH.

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### PASTORAL I.—MORNING.

DAMON, ALEXIS.

DAMON.

Aurora now her welcome visit pays ;  
 Stern darkness flies before her cheerful rays ;  
 Cool circling breezes whirl along the air,  
 And early shepherds to the fields repair :  
 Lead we our flocks, then, to the mountain's brow,  
 Where junipers and thorny brambles grow ;  
 Where founts of water 'midst the daisies spring,  
 And soaring larks and tuneful linnets sing ;  
 Your pleasing song shall teach our flocks to stray,  
 While sounding echoes smooth the sylvan lay.

ALEXIS.

'Tis thine to sing the graces of the morn,  
 The zephyr trembling o'er the ripening corn ;  
 'Tis thine with ease to chaunt the rural lay,  
 While bubbling fountains to your numbers play.  
 No piping swain that treads the verdant field,  
 But to your music and your verse must yield :  
 Sing then—for here we may with safety keep  
 Our sportive lambkins on this mossy steep.

DAMON.

With ruddy glow the sun adorns the land ;  
 The pearly dew-drops on the bushes stand ;  
 The lowing oxen from the folds we hear ;  
 And snowy flocks upon the hills appear.

ALEXIS.

How sweet the murmurs of the neighbouring rill !  
 Sweet are the slumbers which its floods distil,  
 Through pebbly channels winding as they run,  
 And brilliant sparkling to the rising sun.

DAMON.

Behold Edina's lofty turrets rise !  
 Her structures fair adorn the eastern skies :  
 As Pentland's cliffs o'ertop yon distant plain,  
 So she the cities on our north domain.

ALEXIS.

Boast not of cities, or their lofty towers,  
 Where discord all her baneful influence pours ;  
 The homely cottage, and the wither'd tree,  
 With sweet content, shall be preferr'd by me.

DAMON.

The hemlock dire shall please the heifer's taste,  
 Our lands like wild Arabia be waste,  
 The bee forget to range for winter's food,  
 Ere I forsake the forest and the flood.

ALEXIS.

Ye balmy breezes ! wave the verdant field ;  
 Clouds ! all your bounties, all your moisture yield ;  
 That fruits and herbage may our farms adorn,  
 And furrow'd ridges teem with loaded corn.

DAMON.

The year already hath propitious smil'd ;  
 Gentle in spring-time, and in summer mild ;  
 No cutting blasts have hurt my tender dams ;  
 No hoary frosts destroy'd my infant lambs.

ALEXIS.

If Ceres crown with joy the bounteous year,  
 A sacred altar to her shrine I'll rear ;  
 A vigorous ram shall bleed, whose curling horns  
 His woolly neck and hardy front adorns.

DAMON.

Teach me, oh Pan ! to tune the slender reed,  
 No favourite ram shall at thine altars bleed ;  
 Each breathing morn thy woodland verse I'll sing,  
 And hollow dens shall with the numbers ring.

ALEXIS.

Apollo! lend me thy celestial lyre,  
 The woods in concert join at thy desire;  
 At morn, at noon, at night, I'll tune the lay,  
 And bid fleet Echo bear the sound away.

DAMON.

Sweet are the breezes when cool eve returns,  
 To lowing herds, when raging Sirius burns:  
 Not half so sweetly winds the breeze along,  
 As does the murmur of your pleasing song.

ALEXIS.

To hear your strains the cattle spurn their food,  
 The feather'd songsters leave their tender brood;  
 Around your seat the silent lambs advance,  
 And scrambling he-goats on the mountains dance.

DAMON.

But haste, Alexis, reach yon leafy shade,  
 Which mantling ivy round the oaks hath made:  
 There we'll retire, and list the warbling note  
 That flows melodious from the blackbird's throat;  
 Your easy numbers shall his songs inspire,  
 And every warbler join the general choir.

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## PASTORAL II.—NOON.

CORYDON, TIMANTHES.

CORYDON.

The sun the summit of his orb hath gain'd;  
 No flecker'd clouds his azure path hath stain'd;  
 Our pregnant ewes around us cease to graze,  
 Stung with the keenness of his sultry rays;  
 The weary bullock from the yoke is led,  
 And youthful shepherds from the plains are fled

To dusky shades, where scarce a glimmering ray  
 Can dart its lustre through the leafy spray.  
 Yon cooling rivulet where the waters gleam,  
 Where springing flowers adorn the limpid stream,  
 Invites us where the drooping willow grows,  
 To guide our flocks and take a cool repose.

## TIMANTHES.

To thy advice a grateful ear I'll lend,  
 The shades I'll court where slender osiers bend ;  
 Our weanlings young shall crop the rising flower,  
 While we retire to yonder twining bower ;  
 The woods shall echo back thy cheerful strains,  
 Admired by all our Caledonian swains.

## CORYDON.

There have I oft with gentle Delia stray'd  
 Amidst the embowering solitary shade,  
 Before the gods to thwart my wishes strove,  
 By blasting every pleasing glimpse of love :  
 For Delia wanders o'er the Anglian plains,  
 Where civil discord and sedition reigns.  
 There Scotia's sons in odious light appear,  
 Though we for them have waved the hostile spear :  
 For them my sire, enwrapp'd in curdled gore,  
 Breathed his last moments on a foreign shore.

## TIMANTHES.

Six lunar months, my friend, will soon expire,  
 And she return to crown your fond desire.  
 For her, oh rack not your desponding mind !  
 In Delia's breast a generous flame's confined,  
 That burns for Corydon, whose piping lay  
 Hath caused the tedious moments steal away ;  
 Whose strains melodious moved the falling floods  
 To whisper Delia to the rising woods.  
 Oh ! if your sighs could aid the floating gales,  
 That favourably swell their lofty sails,  
 Ne'er should your sobs their rapid flight give o'er,  
 Till Delia's presence graced our northern shore !

## CORYDON.

Though Delia greet my love, I sigh in vain,  
 Such joy unbounded can I ne'er obtain.  
 Her sire a thousand fleeces numbers o'er,  
 And grassy hills increase his milky store ;  
 While the weak fences of a scanty fold  
 Will all my sheep and fattening lambkins hold.

## TIMANTHES.

Ah, hapless youth ! although the early Muse  
 Painted her semblance on thy youthful brows ;  
 Though she with laurels twined thy temples round,  
 And in thy ear distill'd the magic sound ;  
 A cheerless poverty attends thy woes,  
 Your song melodious unrewarded flows.

## CORYDON.

Think not, Timanthes, that for wealth I pine,  
 Though all the Fates to make me poor combine :  
 Tay, bounding o'er his banks with awful sway,  
 Bore all my corn and all my flocks away.  
 Of Jove's dread precepts did I e'er complain ?  
 E'er curse the rapid flood or dashing rain ?  
 Even now I sigh not for my former store,  
 But wish the gods had destined Delia poor.

## TIMANTHES.

'Tis joy, my friend, to think I can repay  
 The loss you bore by autumn's rigid sway.  
 Yon fertile meadow where the daisies spring,  
 Shall yearly pasture to your heifers bring :  
 Your flock with mine shall on yon mountain feed,  
 Cheer'd by the warbling of your tuneful reed :  
 No more shall Delia's ever-fretful sire  
 Against your hopes and ardent love conspire.  
 Roused by her smiles, you'll tune the happy lay,  
 While hills responsive waft your songs away.

## CORYDON.

May plenteous crops your irksome labour crown,  
 May hoodwink'd Fortune cease her envious frown ;  
 May riches still increase with growing years,  
 Your flocks be numerous as your silver hairs.

## TIMANTHES.

But, lo! the heat invites us at our ease  
 To court the twining shades and cooling breeze ;  
 Our languid joints we'll peaceably recline,  
 And 'midst the flowers and opening blossoms dine.

## PASTORAL III.—NIGHT.

## AMYNTAS, FLORELLUS.

## AMYNTAS.

While yet grey twilight does his empire hold,  
 Drive all our heifers to the peaceful fold ;  
 With sullied wing grim darkness soars along,  
 And larks to nightingales resign the song ;  
 The weary ploughman flies the waving fields,  
 To taste what fare his humble cottage yields ;  
 As bees, that daily through the meadows roam,  
 Feed on the sweets they have prepared at home.

## FLORELLUS.

The grassy meads that smiled serenely gay,  
 Cheer'd by the ever-burning lamp of day,  
 In dusky hue attired, are cramp'd with colds,  
 And springing flowerets shut their crimson folds.

## AMYNTAS.

What awful silence reigns throughout the shade !  
 The peaceful olive bends his drooping head ;  
 No sound is heard o'er all the gloomy maze ;  
 Wide o'er the deep the fiery meteors blaze.

## FLORELLUS.

The west, yet tinged with sol's effulgent ray,  
 With feeble light illumines our homeward way ;

The glowing stars with keener lustre burn,  
While round the earth their glowing axles turn.

AMYNTAS.

What mighty power conducts the stars on high ?  
Who bids these comets through our system fly ?  
Who wafts the lightning to the icy pole,  
And through our regions bids the thunders roll ?

FLORELLUS.

But say, what mightier power from nought could raise  
The earth, the sun, and all that fiery maze  
Of distant stars, that gild the azure sky,  
And through the void in settled orbits fly ?

AMYNTAS.

That righteous power, before whose heavenly eye  
The stars are nothing, and the planets die ;  
Whose breath divine supports our mortal frame,  
Who made the lion wild and lambkin tame.

FLORELLUS.

At his command the bounteous spring returns ;  
Hot summer, raging o'er the Atlantic, burns ;  
The yellow autumn crowns our sultry toil,  
And winter's snows prepare the cumbrous soil.

AMYNTAS.

By him the morning darts his purple ray ;  
To him the birds their early homage pay ;  
With vocal harmony the meadows ring,  
While swains in concert heavenly praises sing.

FLORELLUS.

Sway'd by his word, the nutrient dew descends,  
And growing pastures to the moisture bend ;  
The vernal blossoms sip his falling showers,  
The meads are garnish'd with his opening flowers.

AMYNTAS.

For man, the object of his chiefest care,  
Fowls he hath form'd to wing the ambient air ;

For him the steer his lusty neck doth bend,  
Fishes for him their scaly fins extend.

FLORELLUS.

Wide o'er the orient sky the moon appears,  
A foe to darkness and his idle fears;  
Around her orb the stars in clusters shine,  
And distant planets 'tend her silver shrine.

AMYNTAS.

Hush'd are the busy numbers of the day,  
On downy couch they sleep their hours away.  
Hail, balmy sleep, that soothes the troubled mind!  
Lock'd in thy arms our cares a refuge find.  
Oft do you tempt us with delusive dreams,  
When wildering fancy darts her dazzling beams:  
Asleep, the lover with his mistress strays  
Through lonely thickets and untrodden ways;  
But when pale Cynthia's sable empire's fled,  
And hovering slumbers shun the morning bed,  
Roused by the dawn, he wakes with frequent sigh,  
And all his flattering visions quickly fly.

FLORELLUS.

Now owls and bats infest the midnight scene,  
Dire snakes envenom'd twine along the green:  
Forsook by man the rivers mourning glide,  
And groaning echoes swell the noisy tide.  
Straight to our cottage let us bend our way,  
My drowsy powers confess sleep's magic sway.  
Easy and calm upon our couch we'll lie,  
While sweet reviving slumbers round our pillows fly.

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## THE COMPLAINT.

A PASTORAL.

Near the heart of a fair spreading grove,  
Whose foliage shaded the green,  
A shepherd, repining at love,  
In anguish was heard to complain:—



“ Oh Cupid ! thou wanton young boy !  
Since, with thy invisible dart,  
Thou hast robb'd a fond youth of his joy,  
In return grant the wish of his heart.

Send a shaft so severe from thy bow  
(His pining, his sighs to remove), -  
That Stella, once wounded, may know  
How keen are the arrows of love.

No swain once so happy as I,  
Nor tuned with more pleasure the reed ;  
My breast never vented a sigh,  
Till Stella approach'd the gay mead.

With mirth, with contentment endow'd,  
My hours they flew wantonly by ;  
I sought no repose in the wood,  
Nor from my few sheep would I fly.

Now my reed I have carelessly broke,  
Its melody pleases no more :  
I pay no regard to a flock  
That seldom hath wander'd before.

Oh, Stella ! whose beauty so fair  
Excels the bright splendour of day,  
Ah ! have you no pity to share  
With Damon thus fall'n to decay !

For you have I quitted the plain,  
Forsaken my sheep and my fold :  
For you in dull languor and pain  
My tedious moments are told.

For you have my roses grown pale ;  
They have faded untimely away :  
And will not such beauty bewail  
A shepherd thus fall'n to decay !

Since your eyes still requite me with scorn,  
And kill with their merciless ray ;  
Like a star at the dawning of morn,  
I fall to their lustre a prey.

Some swain who shall mournfully go  
 To whisper love's sigh to the shade,  
 Will haply some charity show,  
 And under the turf see me laid :  
 Would my love but in pity appear  
 On the spot where he moulds my cold grave,  
 And bedew the green sod with a tear,  
 'Tis all the remembrance I crave."  
 To the sward then his visage he turn'd ;  
 'Twas wan as the lilies in May :  
 Fair Stella may see him inurn'd—  
 He hath sigh'd all his sorrows away.

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### THE DECAY OF FRIENDSHIP.

#### A PASTORAL ELEGY.

When Gold, man's sacred deity, did smile,  
 My friends were plenty, and my sorrows few ;  
 Mirth, love, and bumpers, did my hours beguile,  
 And arrow'd Cupids round my slumbers flew.

What shepherd then could boast more happy days !  
 My lot was envied by each humbler swain ;  
 Each bard in smooth eulogium sang my praise,  
 And Damon listen'd to the guileful strain.

Flattery ! alluring as the syren's lay,  
 And as deceitful thy enchanting tongue,  
 How have you taught my wavering mind to stray,  
 Charm'd and attracted by the baneful song !

My pleasant cottage, shelter'd from the gale,  
 Arose, with moss and rural ivy bound ;  
 And scarce a floweret in my lowly vale  
 But was with bees of various colours crown'd.

Free o'er my lands the neighbouring flocks could roam ;  
 How welcome were the swains and flocks to me !  
 The shepherds kindly were invited home,  
 To chase the hours in merriment and glee.

To wake emotions in the youthful mind,  
Strephon, with voice melodious, tuned the song ;  
Each sylvan youth the sounding chorus join'd,  
Fraught with contentment 'midst the festive throng.

My clustering grape compensated their magic skill ;  
The bowl capacious swell'd in purple tide,  
To shepherds, liberal as the crystal rill  
Spontaneous gurgling from the mountain's side.

But, ah ! these youthful sportive hours are fled ;  
These scenes of jocund mirth are now no more :  
No healing slumbers 'tend my humble bed,  
No friends condole the sorrows of the poor.

And what avail the thoughts of former joy ?  
What comfort bring they in the adverse hour ?  
Can they the canker-worm of care destroy,  
Or brighten fortune's discontented hour ?

He who hath long traversed the fertile plain,  
Where nature in its fairest vesture smiled,  
Will he not cheerless view the fairy scene,  
When lonely wandering o'er the barren wild ?

For now pale poverty, with haggard eye  
And rueful aspect, darts her gloomy ray ;  
My wonted guests their proffer'd aid deny,  
And from the paths of Damon steal away.

Thus, when fair summer's lustre gilds the lawn,  
When ripening blossoms deck the spreading tree,  
The birds with melody salute the dawn,  
And o'er the daisy hangs the humming bee.

But when the beauties of the circling year  
In chilling frosts and furious storms decay,  
No more the bees upon the plains appear,  
No more the warblers hail the infant day.

To the lone corner of some distant shore,  
In dreary devious pilgrimage I'll fly,  
And wander pensive, where deceit no more  
Shall trace my footsteps with a mortal eye.

There solitary saunter o'er the beach,  
 And to the murmuring surge my griefs disclose ;  
 There shall my voice in plaintive wailings teach  
 The hollow caverns to resound my woes.

Sweet are the waters to the parched tongue ;  
 Sweet are the blossoms to the wanton bee ;  
 Sweet to the shepherd sounds the lark's shrill song ;  
 But sweeter far is solitude to me.

Adieu, ye fields, where I have fondly stray'd !  
 Ye swains, who once the favourite Damon knew !  
 Farewell, ye sharers of my bounty's aid !  
 Ye sons of base ingratitude, adieu !

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#### AGAINST REPINING AT FORTUNE.

Though in my narrow bounds of rural toil  
 No obelisk or splendid column rise ;  
 Though partial fortune still averts her smile,  
 And views my labours with condemning eyes ;  
 Yet all the gorgeous vanity of state  
 I can contemplate with a cool disdain ;  
 Nor shall the honours of the gay and great  
 E'er wound my bosom with an envious pain.  
 Avails it aught the grandeur of their halls,  
 With all the glories of the pencil hung,  
 If truth, fair truth ! within the unhallow'd walls  
 Hath never whisper'd with her seraph tongue !  
 Avails it aught, if music's gentle lay  
 Hath oft been echoed by the sounding dome,  
 If music cannot soothe their griefs away,  
 Or change a wretched to a happy home !  
 Though fortune should invest them with her spoils,  
 And banish poverty with look severe—  
 Enlarge their confines, and decrease their toils—  
 Ah ! what avails, if she increase their care !  
 Though fickle, she disclaim my moss-grown cot,  
 Nature ! thou look'st with more impartial eyes :

Smile thou, fair goddess! on my sober lot;  
 I'll neither fear her fall nor court her rise.  
 When early larks shall cease the matin song;  
 When Philomel at night resigns her lays;  
 When melting numbers to the owl belong—  
 Then shall the reed be silent in thy praise.  
 Can he who with the tide of fortune sails,  
 More pleasure from the sweets of nature share?  
 Do zephyrs waft him more ambrosial gales,  
 Or do his groves a gayer livery wear?  
 To me the heavens unveil as pure a sky;  
 To me the flowers as rich a bloom disclose;  
 The morning beams as radiant to my eye;  
 And darkness guides me to as sweet repose.  
 If luxury their lavish dainties piles,  
 And still attends upon their fated hours,  
 Doth health reward them with her open smiles,  
 Or exercise enlarge their feeble powers?  
 'Tis not in richest mines of Indian gold,  
 That man this jewel, happiness, can find,  
 If his unfeeling breast, to virtue cold,  
 Denies her entrance to his ruthless mind.  
 Wealth, pomp, and honour, are but gaudy toys—  
 Alas, how poor the pleasures they impart!  
 Virtue's the sacred source of all the joys  
 That claim a lasting mansion in the heart.

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## CONSCIENCE.

### AN ELEGY.

————— Leave her to heaven,  
 And to the thorns that in her bosom lodge,  
 To prick and sting her.—SHAKESPEARE.

No choiring warblers flutter in the sky;  
 Phœbus no longer holds his radiant sway;  
 While nature, with a melancholy eye,  
 Bemoans the loss of his departed ray.

Oh happy he, whose conscience knows no guile !  
 He to the sable night can bid farewell ;  
 From cheerless objects close his eyes a while,  
 Within the silken folds of sleep to dwell.

Elysian dreams shall hover round his bed,  
 His soul shall wing, on pleasing fancies borne,  
 To shining vales where flowerets lift their head,  
 Waked by the breathing zephyrs of the morn.

But wretched he, whose foul reproachful deeds  
 Can through an angry conscience wound his rest ;  
 His eye too oft the balmy comfort needs,  
 Though slumber seldom knows him as her guest.

To calm the raging tumults of his soul,  
 If wearied nature should an hour demand,  
 Around his bed the sheeted spectres howl ;  
 Red with revenge the grinning furies stand.

Nor state nor grandeur can his pain allay ;  
 Where shall he find a requiem to his woes !  
 Power cannot chase the frightful gloom away,  
 Nor music lull him to a kind repose.

Where is the king that conscience fears to chide !  
 Conscience, that candid judge of right and wrong,  
 Will o'er the secrets of each heart preside,  
 Nor awed by pomp, nor tamed by soothing song.

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### DAMON TO HIS FRIENDS.

The billows of life are suppress ;  
 Its tumults, its toils, disappear ;  
 To relinquish the storms that are past,  
 I think on the sunshine that's near.

Dame Fortune and I are agreed ;  
 Her frowns I no longer endure ;  
 For the goddess has kindly decreed  
 That Damon no more shall be poor.

Now riches will ope the dim eyes,  
 To view the increase of my store ;  
 And many my friendship will prize,  
 Who never knew Damon before.

But those I renounce and abjure  
 Who carried contempt in their eye ;  
 May poverty still be their dower,  
 That could look on misfortune awry !

Ye powers that weak mortals govern,  
 Keep pride at his bay from my mind ;  
 Oh let me not haughtily learn  
 To despise the few friends that were kind !

For theirs was a feeling sincere,  
 'Twas free from delusion and art :  
 Oh may I that friendship revere,  
 And hold it yet dear to my heart !

By which was I ever forgot ?  
 It was both my physician and cure,  
 That still found the way to my cot,  
 Although I was wretched and poor.

'Twas balm to my canker-tooth'd care ;  
 The wound of affliction it heal'd ;  
 In distress it was pity's soft tear,  
 And naked, cold poverty's shield.

Attend, ye kind youth of the plain !  
 Who oft with my sorrows condoled ;  
 You cannot be deaf to the strain,  
 Since Damon is master of gold.

I have chose a sweet sylvan retreat,  
 Bedeck'd with the beauties of spring ;  
 Around, my flocks nibble and bleat,  
 While the musical choristers sing.

I force not the waters to stand  
 In an artful canal at my door ;  
 But a river, at nature's command,  
 Meanders both limpid and pure.

She's the goddess that darkens my bowers  
 With tendrils of ivy and vine ;  
 She tutors my shrubs and my flowers ;  
 Her taste is the standard of mine.

What a pleasing diversified group  
 Of trees has she spread o'er my ground !  
 She has taught the grave larix to droop,  
 And the birch to shed odours around.

For whom has she perfumed my groves ?  
 For whom has she cluster'd my vine ?  
 If friendship despise my alcoves,  
 They'll ne'er be recesses of mine.

He who tastes his grape juices by stealth,  
 Without chosen companions to share,  
 Is the basest of slaves to his wealth,  
 And the pitiful minion of care.

Oh come, and with Damon retire  
 Amidst the green umbrage embower'd !  
 Your mirth and your songs to inspire,  
 Shall the juice of the vintage be pour'd.

Oh come, ye dear friends of his youth !  
 Of all his good fortune partake ;  
 Nor think 'tis departing from truth,  
 To say 'twas preserved for your sake.

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### RETIREMENT.

Come, Inspiration ! from thy vernal bower,  
 To thy celestial voice attune the lyre ;  
 Smooth gliding strains in sweet profusion pour,  
 And aid my numbers with seraphic fire.

Under a lonely spreading oak I lay,  
 My head upon the daisied green reclined ;  
 The evening sun beam'd forth his parting ray,  
 The foliage bended to the hollow wind.



There gentle sleep my acting powers supprest ;  
 The city's distant hum was heard no more ;  
 Yet fancy suffer'd not the mind to rest,  
 Ever obedient to her wakeful power.

She led me near a crystal fountain's noise,  
 Where undulating waters sportive play ;  
 Where a young comely swain, with pleasing voice,  
 In tender accents sang his sylvan lay.

“ Adieu, ye baneful pleasures of the town !  
 Farewell, ye giddy and unthinking throng !  
 Without regret your foibles I disown ;  
 Themes more exalted claim the Muse's song.

Your stony hearts no social feelings share ;  
 Your souls of distant sorrows ne'er partake ;  
 Ne'er do you listen to the needy prayer,  
 Nor drop a tear for tender pity's sake.

Welcome, ye fields, ye fountains, and ye groves !  
 Ye flowery meadows, and extensive plains !  
 Where soaring warblers pour their plaintive loves,  
 Each landscape cheering with their vocal strains.

Here rural beauty rears her pleasing shrine ;  
 She on the margin of each streamlet glows ;  
 Where, with the blooming hawthorn, roses twine,  
 And the fair lily of the valley grows.

Here chastity may wander unassail'd  
 Through fields where gay seducers cease to rove ;  
 Where open vice o'er virtue ne'er prevail'd,  
 Where all is innocence and all is love.

Peace with her olive wand triumphant reigns,  
 Guarding secure the peasant's humble bed ;  
 Envy is banish'd from the happy plains,  
 And defamation's busy tongue is laid.

Health and contentment usher in the morn ;  
 With jocund smiles they cheer the rural swain ;  
 For which the peer, to pompous titles born,  
 Forsaken sighs, but all his sighs are vain.

For the calm comforts of an easy mind  
 In yonder lonely cot delight to dwell,  
 And leave the statesman for the labouring hind,  
 The regal palace for the lowly cell.

Ye who to wisdom would devote your hours,  
 And far from riot, far from discord stray!  
 Look back disdainful on the city's towers,  
 Where pride, where folly, point the slippery way.

Pure flows the limpid stream in crystal tides  
 Thro' rocks, thro' dens, and ever verdant vales,  
 Till to the town's unhallow'd wall it glides,  
 Where all its purity and lustre fails."

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### ODE TO HOPE.

Hope! lively cheerer of the mind,  
 In lieu of real bliss design'd,  
 Come from thy ever verdant bower  
 To chase the dull and lingering hour:  
 Oh! bring, attending on thy reign,  
 All thy ideal fairy train,  
 To animate the lifeless clay,  
 And bear my sorrows hence away.

Hence, gloomy-featured black despair,  
 With all thy frantic furies fly,  
 Nor rend my breast with gnawing care,  
 For Hope in lively garb is nigh.

Let pining discontentment mourn;  
 Let dull-eyed melancholy grieve;  
 Since pleasing Hope must reign by turn,  
 And every bitter thought relieve.

Oh smiling Hope! in adverse hour  
 I feel thy influencing power:  
 Though frowning fortune fix my lot  
 In some defenceless lonely cot,

Where poverty, with empty hands,  
In pallid meagre aspect stands,  
Thou canst enrobe me 'midst the great,  
With all the crimson pomp of state,  
Where luxury invites his guests  
To pall them with his lavish feasts.  
What cave so dark, what gloom so drear,  
So black with horror, dead with fear,  
But thou canst dart thy streaming ray,  
And change close night to open day!

Health is attendant in thy radiant train;  
Round her the whispering zephyrs gently play;  
Behold her gladly tripping o'er the plain,  
Bedeck'd with rural sweets and garlands gay!

When vital spirits are deprest,  
And heavy languor clogs the breast,  
With more than Esculapian power  
Endued, blest Hope! 'tis thine to cure:  
For oft thy friendly aid avails,  
When all the strength of physic fails.

Nay, even though death should aim his dart,  
I know he lifts his arm in vain,  
Since thou this lesson canst impart—  
Mankind but die to live again.

Deprived of thee must banners fall:  
But where a living Hope is found,  
The legions shout at danger's call,  
And victors are triumphant crown'd.

Come, then, bright Hope! in smiles array'd,  
Revive us by thy quickening breath;  
Then shall we never be afraid  
To walk through danger and through death.

## THE RIVERS OF SCOTLAND.

AN ODE.

*Set to Music by Mr Collet.*

O'er Scotia's parched land the Naiads flew,  
 From towering hills explored her shelter'd vales,  
 Caused Forth in wild meanders please the view,  
 And lift her waters to the zephyr's gales.

Where the glad swain surveys his fertile fields,  
 And reaps the plenty which his harvest yields,

Here did these lovely nymphs unseen,  
 Oft wander by the river's side,  
 And oft unbind their tresses green,  
 To bathe them in the fluid tide.

Then to the shady grottoes would retire,  
 And sweetly echo to the warbling choir ;

Or to the rushing waters tune their shells,  
 To call up Echo from the woods,  
 Or from the rocks or crystal floods,  
 Or from surrounding banks, or hills, or dells.

CHORUS.

Or to the rushing waters, &c.

When the cool fountains first their springs forsook,  
 Murmuring smoothly to the azure main,  
 Exulting Neptune then his trident shook,  
 And waved his waters gently to the plain.  
 The friendly Tritons, on his chariot borne,  
 With cheeks dilated blew the hollow-sounding horn.

Now Lothian and Fifean shores,  
 Resounding to the mermaid's song,  
 Gladly emit their limpid stores,  
 And bid them smoothly sail along

To Neptune's empire, and with him to roll  
 Round the revolving sphere from pole to pole ;

To guard Britannia from envious foes ;  
 To view her angry vengeance hurl'd  
 In awful thunder round the world,  
 And trembling nations bending to her blows.

## CHORUS.

To guard Britannia, &c.

High towering on the zephyr's breezy wing,  
 Swift fly the Naiads from Fortha's shores,  
 And to the southern airy mountains bring  
 Their sweet enchantment and their magic powers.

Each nymph her favourite willow takes ;  
 The earth with feverous tremor shakes ;  
 The stagnant lakes obey their call ;  
 Streams o'er the grassy pastures fall.

Tweed spreads her waters to the lucid ray ;  
 Upon the dimpled surf the sunbeams play.

On her green banks the tuneful shepherd lies :  
 Charm'd with the music of his reed,  
 Amidst the wavings of the Tweed,  
 From sky-reflecting streams the river-nymphs arise.

## CHORUS.

On her green banks, &c.

The listening Muses heard the shepherd play ;  
 Fame with her brazen trump proclaim'd his name,  
 And to attend the easy graceful lay,  
 Pan from Arcadia to Tweeda came.

Fond of the change, along the banks he stray'd,  
 And sang, unmindful of the Arcadian shade.

AIR—*Tweed-side.*

Attend, every fanciful swain,  
 Whose notes softly flow from the reed ;  
 With harmony guide the sweet strain,  
 To sing of the beauties of Tweed :  
 Where the music of woods and of streams  
 In soothing sweet melody join,

To enliven your pastoral themes,  
And make human numbers divine.

Ye warblers from the vocal grove,  
The tender woodland strain approve,  
While Tweed in smoother cadence glides  
O'er flowery vales in gentle tides;  
And as she rolls her silver waves along,  
Murmurs and sighs to quit the rural song.  
Scotia's great Genius, in russet clad,  
From the cool sedgy bank exalts her head;  
In joyful rapture she the change espies,  
Sees living streams descend and groves arise.

AIR—*Gilderoy.*

As sable clouds at early day  
Oft dim the shining skies,  
So gloomy thoughts create dismay,  
And lustre leaves her eyes.  
"Ye powers! are Scotia's ample fields  
With so much beauty graced,  
To have those sweets your bounty yields  
By foreign foes defaced?  
Oh Jove! at whose supreme command  
The limpid fountains play,  
O'er Caledonia's northern land  
Let restless waters stray.  
Since from the void creation rose,  
Thou'st made a sacred vow,  
That Caledon to foreign foes  
Should ne'er be known to bow."

The mighty Thunderer on his sapphire throne,  
In mercy's robes attired, heard the sweet voice  
Of female woe—soft as the moving song  
Of Philomela 'midst the evening shades;  
And thus return'd an answer to her prayers:

"Where birks at Nature's call arise;  
Where fragrance hails the vaulted skies;

Where my own oak its umbrage spreads,  
 Delightful 'midst the woody shades;  
 Where ivy mouldering rocks entwines;  
 Where breezes bend the lofty pines;  
 There shall the laughing Naiads stray,  
 'Midst the sweet banks of winding Tay."

From the dark womb of earth Tay's waters spring,  
 Ordain'd by Jove's unalterable voice;  
 The sounding lyre celestial muses string;  
 The choiring songsters in the grove rejoice.

Each fount its crystal fluid pours,  
 Which from surrounding mountains flow;  
 The river bathes its verdant shores;  
 Cool o'er the surf the breezes blow.

Let England's sons extol their gardens fair;  
 Scotland may freely boast her generous streams:  
 Their soil more fertile, and their milder air;  
 Her fishes sporting in the solar beams.

Thames, Humber, Severn, all must yield the bay  
 To the pure streams of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

## CHORUS.

Thames, Humber, &c.

Oh Scotia! when such beauty claims  
 A mansion near thy flowing streams,  
 Ne'er shall stern Mars, in iron car,  
 Drive his proud coursers to the war;  
 But fairy forms shall strew around  
 Their olives on the peaceful ground;  
 And turtles join the warbling throng,  
 To usher in the morning song;

Or shout in chorus all the livelong day,  
 From the green banks of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

When gentle Phœbe's friendly light  
 In silver radiance clothes the night,  
 Still music's ever-varying strains  
 Shall tell the lovers Cynthia reigns;  
 And woo them to her midnight bowers,  
 Among the fragrant dew-clad flowers,

Where every rock, and hill, and dale,  
 With echoes greet the nightingale,  
 Whose pleasing, soft, pathetic tongue,  
 To kind condolence tunes the song ;  
 And often wins the love-sick swain to stray,  
 To hear the tender variegated lay,  
 Through the dark woods of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.  
 Hail, native streams, and native groves !  
 Oozy caverns, green alcoves !  
 Retreats for Cytherea's reign,  
 With all the graces in her train.  
 Hail, Fancy ! thou whose ray so bright  
 Dispels the glimmering taper's light !  
 Come in ærial vesture blue,  
 Ever pleasing, ever new ;  
 In these recesses deign to dwell  
 With me in yonder moss-clad cell :  
 Then shall my reed successful tune the lay,  
 In numbers wildly warbling as they stray  
 Through the glad banks of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

## THE TOWN AND COUNTRY CONTRASTED.

IN AN EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.

From noisy bustle, from contention free,  
 Far from the busy town I careless loll ;  
 Not like swain Tityrus, or the bards of old,  
 Under a beechen, venerable shade,  
 But on a furzy heath, where blooming broom  
 And thorny whins the spacious plains adorn.  
 Here health sits smiling on my youthful brow :  
 For ere the sun beams forth his earliest ray,  
 And all the east with yellow radiance crowns ;  
 Ere dame Aurora, from her purple bed,  
 'Gins with her kindling blush to paint the sky ;  
 The soaring lark, morn's cheerful harbinger,  
 And linnet joyful, fluttering from the bush,  
 Stretch their small throats in vocal melody,



To hail the dawn, and drowsy sleep exhale  
From man, frail man! on downy softness stretch'd.

Such pleasing scenes Edina cannot boast;  
For there the slothful slumber seal'd mine eyes,  
Till nine successive strokes the clock had knell'd.  
There, not the lark, but fish-wives' noisy screams,  
And inundations plunged from ten house height,  
With smell more fragrant than the spicy groves  
Of Indus fraught with all her orient stores,  
Roused me from sleep—not sweet refreshing sleep,  
But sleep infested with the burning sting  
Of bug infernal, who the live-long night  
With direst suction sipp'd my liquid gore.  
There, gloomy vapours in our zenith reign'd,  
And fill'd with irksome pestilence the air.  
There, lingering sickness held his feeble court,  
Rejoicing in the havoc he had made;  
And death, grim death! with all his ghastly train,  
Watch'd the broke slumbers of Edina's sons.

Hail, rosy health! thou pleasing antidote  
'Gainst troubling cares!—all hail, these rural fields,  
Those winding rivulets and verdant shades,  
Where thou, the heaven-born goddess, deign'st to dwell!  
With thee the hind, upon his simple fare,  
Lives cheerful, and from Heaven no more demands.  
But ah! how vast, how terrible the change  
With him who night by night in sickness pines!  
Him, nor his splendid equipage can please,  
Nor all the pagantry the world can boast;  
Nay, not the consolation of his friends  
Can aught avail; his hours are anguish all;  
Nor cease till envious death hath closed the scene.

But, Carlos, if we court this maid celestial;  
Whether we through meandering rivers stray,  
Or midst the city's jarring noise remain,  
Let temperance, health's blythe concomitant,  
To our desires and appetites set bounds,  
Else, cloy'd at last, we surfeit every joy;  
Our slacken'd nerves reject their wonted spring;

We reap the fruits of our unkindly lusts,  
And feebly totter to the silent grave.

ODE TO PITY.

To what sequester'd gloomy shade  
Hath ever gentle Pity stray'd !  
What brook is water'd from her eyes !  
What gales convey her tender sighs !  
Unworthy of her grateful lay,  
She hath despised the great, the gay ;  
Nay, all the feelings she imparts  
Are far estranged from human hearts.  
Ah, Pity ! whither would'st thou fly  
From human heart, from human eye !  
Are desert woods and twilight groves,  
The scenes the sobbing pilgrim loves !  
If there thou dwell'st, oh Pity ! say,  
In what lone path you pensive stray.  
I'll know thee by the lily's hue,  
Besprinkled with the morning's dew ;  
For thou wilt never blush to wear  
The pallid look and falling tear.  
In broken cadence from thy tongue,  
Oft have we heard the mournful song ;  
Oft have we view'd the loaded bier  
Bedew'd with Pity's softest tear.  
Her sighs and tears were ne'er denied,  
When innocence and virtue died.  
But in this black and iron age,  
Where vice and all his demons rage,  
Though bells in solemn peals are rung,  
Though dirge in mournful verse is sung,  
Soon will the vain parade be o'er,  
Their name, their memory, be no more,  
Who love and innocence despised,  
And every virtue sacrificed.

Here pity, as a statue dumb,  
 Will pay no tribute to the tomb ;  
 Or wake the memory of those  
 Who never felt for others' woes.

Thou mistress of the feeling heart !  
 Thy powers of sympathy impart :  
 If mortals would but fondly prize  
 Thy falling tears, thy passing sighs,  
 Then should wan poverty no more  
 Walk feebly from the rich man's door ;  
 Humility should vanquish pride,  
 And vice be drove from virtue's side :  
 Then happiness at length should reign ;  
 The golden age begin again.



#### ON THE COLD MONTH OF APRIL, 1771.

Oh ! who can hold a fire in his hand  
 By thinking on the frosty Caucasus ?  
 Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite  
 By bare imagination of a feast ?  
 Or wallow naked in December's snow,  
 By thinking on fantastic summer's heat ?

*Shakspeare's Richard II.*

Poets in vain have hail'd the opening spring,  
 In tender accents woo'd the blooming maid ;  
 In vain have taught the April birds to wing  
 Their flight through fields in verdant hue array'd.  
 The Muse, in every season taught to sing,  
 Amidst the desert snows, by fancy's powers,  
 Can elevated soar, on placid wing,  
 To climes where spring her kindest influence showers.  
 April, once famous for the zephyr mild ;  
 For sweets that early in the garden grow ;  
 Say, how converted to this cheerless wild,  
 Rushing with torrents of dissolving snow !

Nursed by the moisture of a gentle shower,  
Thy foliage oft hath sounded to the breeze ;  
Oft did thy choristers melodious pour  
Their melting numbers through the shady trees.

Fair have I seen thy morn in smiles array'd,  
With crimson blush bepaint the eastern sky ;  
But now the dawn creeps mournful o'er the glade,  
Shrouded in colours of a sable dye.

So have I seen the fair, with laughing eye,  
And visage cheerful as the smiling morn,  
Alternate changing for the heaving sigh,  
Or frowning aspect of contemptuous scorn.

Life ! what art thou !—a variegated scene  
Of mingled light and shade, of joy and woe ;  
A sea where calms and storms promiscuous reign ;  
A stream where sweet and bitter jointly flow.

Mute are the plains ; the shepherd pipes no more ;  
The reed's forsaken, and the tender flock ;  
While echo, listening to the tempest's roar,  
In silence wanders o'er the beetling rock.

Winter, too potent for the solar ray,  
Bestrides the blast, ascends his icy throne,  
And views Britannia, subject to his sway,  
Floating emergent on the frigid zone.

Thou savage tyrant of the fretful sky !  
Wilt thou for ever in our zenith reign ?  
To Greenland's seas, congeal'd in chillness fly,  
Where howling monsters tread the bleak domain.

Relent, oh Boreas ! leave thy frozen cell ;  
Resign to spring her portion of the year ;  
Let west winds temperate wave the flowing gale,  
And hills, and vales, and woods, a vernal aspect wear.

## THE SIMILE.

At noontide, as Colin and Sylvia lay  
 Within a cool jessamine bower,  
 A butterfly, waked by the heat of the day,  
 Was sipping the juice of each flower.  
 Near the shade of this covert, a young shepherd boy  
 The gaudy brisk flutterer spies,  
 Who held it as pastime to seek and destroy  
 Each beautiful insect that flies.  
 From the lily he hunted this fly to the rose,  
 From the rose to the lily again ;  
 Till, weary with tracing its motions, he chose  
 To leave the pursuit with disdain.  
 Then Colin to Sylvia smilingly said,  
 " Amyntor has followed you long ;  
 From him, like the butterfly, still have you fled,  
 Though woo'd by his musical tongue.  
 Beware in persisting to start from his arms,  
 But with his fond wishes comply ;  
 Come, take my advice ; or he's pall'd with your charms,  
 Like the youth and the beautiful fly."  
 Says Sylvia—" Colin, thy simile's just,  
 But still to Amyntor I'm coy ;  
 For I vow she's a simpleton blind that would trust  
 A swain, when he courts to destroy."

## THE BUGS.

Thou source of song sublime ! thou chiefest Muse !  
 Whose sacred fountain of immortal fame  
 Bedew'd the flowerets cull'd for Homer's brow,  
 When he on Grecian plains the battles sang  
 Of frogs and mice—do thou through fancy's maze  
 Of sportive pastime, lead a lowly Muse

Her rites to join, while, with a faltering voice,  
She sings of reptiles yet in song unknown.

Nor you, ye bards ! who oft have struck the lyre,  
And tuned it to the movement of the spheres,  
In harmony divine, reproach the lays,  
Which, though they wind not through the starry host  
Of bright creation, or on earth delight  
To hunt the murmuring cadence of the floods  
Through scenes where nature, with a hand profuse,  
Hath lavish strew'd her gems of precious dye ;  
Yet, in the small existence of a gnat,  
Or tiny bug, doth she, with equal skill,  
If not transcending, stamp her wonders there,  
Only disclosed to microscopic eye.

Of old the Dryads near Edina's walls  
Their mansions rear'd, and groves unnumber'd rose  
Of branching oak, spread beech, and lofty pine ;  
Under whose shade, to shun the noontide blaze,  
Did Pan resort, with all his rural train  
Of shepherds and of nymphs. The Dryads, pleased,  
Would hail their sports, and summon echo's voice  
To send her greetings through the waving woods.  
But the rude axe, long brandish'd by the hand  
Of daring innovation, shaved the lawns ;<sup>1</sup>  
Then not a thicket or a copse remain'd  
To sigh in concert with the breeze of eve.

Edina's mansions with lignarian art  
Were piled and fronted. Like an ark she seem'd  
To lie on mountain's top, with shapes replete,  
Clean and unclean, that daily wander o'er  
Her streets, that once were spacious, once were gay.

<sup>1</sup> [There is a tradition in Edinburgh that one of the King Jameses, in order to clear the forest, which in his time encumbered the ground to the south of Edinburgh, and which proved a retreat for banditti, gave the citizens permission to extend their houses seven feet forward into the street by means of wooden balconies, using the timber of that forest as the material. Of this tradition or fact, Fergusson here very neatly takes advantage.]

To Jove the Dryads pray'd, nor pray'd in vain,  
For vengeance on her sons. At midnight drear  
Black showers descend, and teeming myriads rise  
Of bugs abhorrent, who by instinct steal  
Through the putrescent and corrosive pores  
Of sapless trees, that late in forest stood  
With all the majesty of summer crown'd.

By Jove's command dispersed, they wander wide  
O'er all the city. Some their cells prepare  
'Mid the rich trappings and the gay attire  
Of state luxuriant, and are fond to press  
The waving canopy's depending folds;  
While others, destined to an humbler fate,  
Seek shelter in the dwellings of the poor,  
Plying their nightly suction to the bed  
Of toil'd mechanic, who, with folded arms,  
Enjoys the comforts of a sleep so sound,  
That not the alarming sting of glutting bug  
To murderous deed can rouse his brawny arm  
Upon the blood-swoln fiend, who basely steals  
Life's genial current from his throbbing veins.

Happy were grandeur could she triumph here,  
And banish from her halls each misery,  
Which she must brook in common with the poor  
Who beg subsistence from her sparing hands.  
Then might the rich, to fell disease unknown,  
Indulge in fond excess, nor ever feel  
The slowly creeping hours of restless night,  
When shook with guilty horrors. But the wind  
Whose fretful gusts of anger shake the world,  
Bears more destructive on the aspiring roofs  
Of dome and palace, than on cottage low,  
That meets Æolus with his gentler breath,  
When safely shelter'd in the peaceful vale.

Is there a being breathes, howe'er so vile,  
Too pitiful for envy!—she, with venom'd tooth  
And grinning madness, frowns upon the bliss  
Of every species; from the human form  
That spurns the earth, and bends his mental eye

Through the profundity of space unknown,  
Down to the crawling bug's detested race.

Thus the lover pines, that reptile rude  
Should 'mid the lilies of fair Chloe's breast  
Implant the deep carnation, and enjoy  
Those sweets which angel modesty hath veil'd  
From eyes profane. Yet murmur not, ye few  
Who gladly would be bugs for Chloe's sake!  
For soon, alas! the fluctuating gales  
Of earthly joy invert the happy scene.  
The breath of spring may, with her balmy power,  
And warmth diffusing, give to nature's face  
Her brightest colours; but how short the space,  
Till angry Eurus, from his petrid cave,  
Deform the year, and all these sweets annoy!

Even so befalls it to this creeping race,  
This envied commonwealth. For they a while  
On Chloe's bosom, alabaster fair,  
May steal ambrosial bliss; or may regale  
On the rich viands of luxurious blood,  
Delighted and sufficed. But mark the end:  
Lo! Whitsuntide appears with gloomy train  
Of growing desolation. First upholsterer rude  
Removes the waving drapery, where for years  
A thriving colony of old and young  
Had hid their numbers from the prying day.  
Anon they fall, and gladly would retire  
To safer ambush; but his ruthless foot,  
Ah, cruel pressure! cracks their vital springs,  
And with their deep-dyed scarlet smears the floor.

Sweet powers! has pity in the female breast  
No tender residence, no loved abode,  
To urge from murderous deed the avenging hand  
Of angry housemaid! She'll have blood for blood!  
For, lo! the boiling streams from copper tube,  
Hot as her rage, sweep myriads to death.  
Their carcasses are destined to the urn  
Of some chaste Naiad, that gives birth to floods,  
Whose fragrant virtues hail Edina, famed



For yellow limpid—whose chaste name the Muse  
Deems too exalted to retail in song.

Ah me! No longer they at midnight shade,  
With baneful sting, shall seek the downy couch  
Of slumbering mortals. Nor shall love-sick swain,  
When, by the bubbling brook, in fairy dream,  
His nymph, but half reluctant to his wish,  
Is gently folded in his eager arms,  
E'er curse the shaft envenom'd that disturbs  
His long-loved fancies. Nor shall hungry bard,  
Whose strong imagination whetted keen,  
Conveys him to the feast, be tantalised  
With poisonous tortures, when the cup, brimful  
Of purple vintage, gives him greater joy  
Than all the Heliconian streams that play  
And murmur round Parnassus. Now the wretch  
Oft doom'd to restless days and sleepless nights,  
By bugbear conscience thrall'd, enjoys an hour  
Of undisturb'd repose. The miser, too,  
May brook his golden dreams, nor wake with fear  
That thieves or kindred (for no soul he'll trust)  
Have broke upon his chest, and strive to steal  
The shining idols of his useless hours.

Happy the bug, whose unambitious views  
To gilded pomp ne'er tempt him to aspire!  
Safely may he, enwrapt in russet fold  
Of cobweb'd curtain, set at bay the fears  
That still attendant are on bugs of state.  
He never knows at morn the busy brush  
Of scrubbing chambermaid. His coursing blood  
Is ne'er obstructed with obnoxious dose  
By Oliphant prepared; too poisonous drug!  
As fatal to this hated crawling tribe  
As ball and powder to the sons of war,

## A SATURDAY'S EXPEDITION.

IN MOCK HEROICS.

At that sweet period of revolving time  
When Phœbus lingers not in Thetis' lap ;  
When twinkling stars their feeble influence shed,  
And scarcely glimmer through the ethereal vault,  
Till sol again his near approach proclaims,  
With ray purpureal, and the blushing form  
Of fair Aurora, goddess of the dawn,  
Leading the winged coursers to the pole  
Of Phœbus' car. 'Twas in that season fair,  
When jocund summer did the meads array  
In Flora's ripening bloom, that we prepared  
To break the bond of business, and to roam  
Far from Edina's jarring noise a while.

Fair smiled the wakening morn on our design ;  
And we, with joy elate, our march began  
For Leith's fair port, where oft Edina's sons  
The week conclude, and in carousal quaff  
Port, punch, rum, brandy, and Geneva strong,  
Liquors too nervous for the feeble purse.  
With all convenient speed we there arrived :  
Nor had we time to touch at house or hall,  
Till from the boat a hollow thundering voice  
Bellow'd vociferous, and our ears assail'd  
With " Ho ! Kinghorn, ho ! come straight aboard."  
We fail'd not to obey the stern command,  
Utter'd with voice as dreadful as the roar  
Of Polyphemus, 'mid rebounding rocks,  
When overcome by sage Ulysses' wiles.  
" Hoist up your sails !" the angry skipper cries,  
While fore and aft the busy sailors run,  
And loose th' entangled cordage. O'er the deep  
Zephyrus blows, and hugs our lofty sails,  
Which, in obedience to the powerful breeze,  
Swell o'er the foaming main, and kiss the wave.

Now o'er the convex surface of the flood  
 Precipitate we fly. Our foaming prow  
 Divides the saline stream. On either side  
 Ridges of yesty surge dilate apace ;  
 But from the poop the waters gently flow,  
 And undulation for the time decays,  
 In eddies smoothly floating o'er the main.

Here let the Muse in doleful numbers sing  
 The woeful fate of those whose cruel stars  
 Have doom'd them subject to the languid powers  
 Of watery sickness. Though with stomach full  
 Of juicy beef, of mutton in its prime,  
 Or all the dainties luxury can boast,  
 They brave the elements—yet the rocking bark,  
 Truly regardless of their precious food,  
 Converts their visage to the ghastly pale,  
 And makes the sea partaker of the sweets  
 On which they sumptuous fared. And this the cause  
 Why those of Scotia's sons, whose wealthy store  
 Hath blest them with a splendid coach and six,  
 Rather incline to linger on the way,  
 And cross the river Forth by Stirling bridge,  
 Than be subjected to the ocean's swell,  
 To dangerous ferries, and to sickness dire.

And now at equal distance shows the land ;—  
 Gladly the tars the joyful task pursue  
 Of gathering in the freight. Debates arise  
 From counterfeited halfpence. In the hold  
 The seamen scrutinise, and eager peep  
 Through every corner where their watchful eye  
 Suspects a lurking-place or dark retreat,  
 To hide the timid corpse of some poor soul  
 Whose scanty purse can scarce one groat afford.

At length we, cheerful, land on Fifean shore,  
 Where sickness vanishes, and all the ills  
 Attendant on the passage of Kinghorn.  
 Our pallid cheeks resume their rosy hue,  
 And empty stomachs keenly crave supply.  
 With eager step we reach'd the friendly inn ;

Nor did we think of beating our retreat  
Till every gnawing appetite was quell'd.

Eastward along the Fifan coast we stray :  
And here th' unwearied eye may fondly gaze  
O'er all the tufted groves and pointed spires  
With which the pleasant banks of Forth are crown'd.  
Sweet navigable stream ! where commerce reigns,  
Where peace and jocund plenty smile serene.  
On thy green banks sits liberty enthroned :  
But not that shadow which the English youth  
So eagerly pursue ; but freedom bought,  
When Caledonia's triumphant sword  
Taught the proud sons of Anglia to bemoan  
Their fate at Bannockburn, where thousands came—  
Never to tread their native soil again.

Far in a rugged den, where Nature's hand  
Had careless strew'd the rocks, a dreadful cave,  
Whose concave ceiling echoed to the floods  
Their hollow murmurs on the trembling shore,  
Demanded our approach. The yawning porch  
Its massy sides disclosed, and o'er the top  
The ivy tendrils twined the uncultured fern.  
Fearful, we pry into the dreary vault,  
Hoary with age, and breathing noxious damps.  
Here screeching owls may unmolested dwell  
In solitary gloom ;—for few there are  
Whose inclination leads them to review  
A cell where putrid smells infectious reign.<sup>1</sup>

Then, turning westward, we our course pursue  
Along the course of Fortha's briny flood,  
Till we o'ertake the gradual rising dale  
Where fair Burntisland rears her reverend dome :  
And here the vulgar sign-post, painted o'er  
With imitations vile of man and horse,  
Of small-beer frothing o'er the unshapely jug,  
With courteous invitation spoke us fair  
To enter in, and taste what precious drops

<sup>1</sup> A large cave at a small distance from Kinghorn, supposed, about a century ago, to have been the haunt of thieves.

Were there reserved to moisten strangers' throats,  
Too often parch'd upon the tedious way.

After regaling here with sober can,  
Our limbs we plied, and nimbly measured o'er  
The hills, the vales, and the extensive plains,  
Which form the distance from Burntisland's port  
To Inverkeithing. Westward still we went,  
Till in the ferry-boat we loll'd at ease :  
Nor did we long on Neptune's empire float ;  
For scarce ten posting minutes were elaps'd  
Till we again on *terra firma* stood,  
And to M'Laren's march'd, where roasted lamb,  
With cooling lettuce, crown'd our social board.  
Here, too, the cheering glass, chief foe to care,  
Went briskly round ; and many a virgin fair  
Received our homage in a bumper full.

Thus having sacrificed a jocund hour  
To smiling mirth, we quit the happy scene,  
And move progressive to Edina's walls.

Now still returning eve creep'd gradual on,  
And the bright sun, as weary of the sky,  
Beam'd forth a languid occidental ray,  
Whose ruby-tinctur'd radiance faintly gleam'd  
Upon the airy cliffs and distant spires  
That float on the horizon's utmost verge.  
So we, with festive joints and lingering pace,  
Moved slowly on, and did not reach the town  
Till Phœbus had unyoked his prancing steeds.

Ye sons of Caledonia ! who delight,  
With all the pomp and pageantry of state,  
To roll along in gilded affluence ;  
For one poor moment wean your thoughts from these,  
And list this humble strain. If you, like us,  
Could brave the angry waters, be uprous'd  
By the first salutation to the morn  
Paid by the watchful cock ; or be compell'd  
On foot to wander o'er the lonely plain  
For twenty tedious miles—then should the gout,  
With all his racking pangs, forsake your frame ;

For he delights not to traverse the field,  
 Or rugged steep, but prides him to recline  
 On the luxuriance of a velvet fold,  
 Where indolence on purple sofa lolls.

## THE CANONGATE PLAYHOUSE IN RUINS.<sup>1</sup>

A BURLESQUE POEM.

Ye few, whose feeling hearts are ne'er estranged.  
 From soft emotions! ye who often wear  
 The eye of pity, and oft vent her sighs,  
 When sad Melpomene, in woe-fraught strains,  
 Gains entrance to the breast; or often smile  
 When brisker Thalia gaily trips along  
 Scenes of enlivening mirth—attend my song!  
 And fancy! thou whose ever-flaming light  
 Can penetrate into the dark abyss  
 Of chaos and of hell—oh! with thy blazing torch  
 The wasteful scene illumine, that the Muse  
 With daring pinions may her flight pursue,  
 Nor with timidity be known to soar  
 O'er the theatric world, to chaos changed.

Can I contemplate those deserted scenes  
 Of mouldering desolation, and forbid  
 The voice elegiac and the falling tear?  
 No more, from box to box, the basket piled  
 With oranges as radiant as the spheres,  
 Shall with their luscious virtues charm the sense  
 Of taste and smell. No more the gaudy beau,  
 With handkerchief in lavender well drench'd,  
 Or bergamot, or in rose-water pure,  
 With flavoriferous sweets shall chase away

<sup>1</sup> [The Canongate Theatre stood behind the south line of the street, opposite to the head of New Street. It was founded in August 1746 by Mr Lacy Ryan of Covent-Garden, and, when finished, could hold, at 2s. 6d., 1s. 6d., and 1s., about £70. It was first used under the royal licence on the 9th of December 1767; but a new theatre being built next year in the New Town, this humble place of entertainment was almost immediately after left to ruin. The site has long been occupied by a brewery.]

The pestilential fumes of vulgar cits,  
 Who, in impatience for the curtain's rise,  
 Amused the lingering moments, and applied  
 Thirst-quenching porter to their parched lips.

Alas, how sadly alter'd is the scene !  
 For, lo ! those sacred walls, that late were brush'd  
 By rustling silks and waving capuchins,  
 Are now become the sport of wrinkled time !  
 Those walls, that late have echoed to the voice  
 Of stern king Richard, to the seat transform'd  
 Of crawling spiders and detested moths,  
 Who in the lonely crevices reside,  
 Or gender in the beams that have upheld  
 Gods, demi-gods, and all the joyous crew  
 Of thunderers in the galleries above.

Oh, Shakspeare ! where are all thy tinsell'd kings,  
 Thy fawning courtiers, and thy waggish clowns !  
 Where all thy fairies, spirits, witches, fiends,  
 That here have gamboll'd in nocturnal sport  
 Round the lone oak, or sunk in fear away  
 From the shrill summons of the cock at morn !  
 Where now the temples, palaces, and towers !  
 Where now the groves that ever verdant smiled !  
 Where now the streams that never ceased to flow !  
 Where now the clouds, the rains, the hails, the winds,  
 The thunders, lightnings, and the tempests strong !

Here shepherds, lolling in their woven bowers,  
 In dull recitative often sang  
 Their loves, accompanied with clangour strong  
 From horns, from trumpets, clarionets, bassoons ;  
 From violinos sharp or droning bass,  
 Or the brisk tinkling of a harpsichord.

Such is thy power, oh music ! such thy fame,  
 That it has fabled been, how foreign song,  
 Soft issuing from Tenducci's<sup>1</sup> slender throat,

<sup>1</sup> [Tenducci was an opera singer of repute. He often visited Edinburgh, where his mellifluous way of singing the Scottish melodies made him a great favourite.]

Has drawn a plaudit from the gods enthroned  
 Round the empyreum of Jove himself,  
 High seated on Olympus' airy top.  
 Nay, that his feverish voice was known to soothe  
 The shrill-toned prating of the females' tongues,  
 Who, in obedience to the lifeless song,  
 All prostrate fell, all fainting died away  
 In silent ecstasies of passing joy.

Ye who oft wander by the silver light  
 Of sister Luna, to the churchyard's gloom,  
 Or cypress shades; if chance should guide your steps  
 To this sad mansion, think not that you tread  
 Unconsecrated paths; for on this ground  
 Have holy streams been pour'd and flowerets strew'd;  
 While many a kingly diadem, I ween,  
 Lies useless here entomb'd, with heaps of coin  
 Stamp'd in theatric mint—offenceless gold!  
 That carried not persuasion in its hue,  
 To tutor mankind in their evil ways.  
 After a lengthen'd series of years,  
 When the unhallow'd spade shall discompose  
 This mass of earth, then relics shall be found,  
 Which, or for gems of worth, or Roman coins,  
 Well may obtrude on antiquary's eye.  
 Ye spouting blades! regard this ruin'd fane,  
 And nightly come within those naked walls  
 To shed the tragic tear. Full many a drop  
 Of precious inspiration have you suck'd  
 From its dramatic sources. Oh! look here  
 Upon this roofless and forsaken pile,  
 And stalk in pensive sorrow o'er the ground  
 Where you've beheld so many noble scenes.

Thus, when the mariner to foreign clime  
 His bark conveys, where odoriferous gales,  
 And orange groves, and love-inspiring wine,  
 Have oft repaid his toil—if earthquake dire,  
 With hollow groanings and convulsive pangs,  
 The ground hath rent, and all those beauties foil'd,  
 Will he refrain to shed the grateful drop



A tribute justly due (though seldom paid)  
To the blest memory of happier times !

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### FASHION.

Bred up where discipline most rare is,  
In military garden, Paris.—*Hudibras*.

Oh nature, parent goddess ! at thy shrine,  
Prone to the earth, the Muse, in humble song,  
Thy aid implores ; nor will she wing her flight,  
Till thou, bright form ! in thy effulgence pure,  
Deign'st to look down upon her low state,  
And shed thy powerful influence benign.

Come, then, regardless of vain fashion's fools ;  
Of all those vile enormities of shape  
That crowd the world ; and with thee bring  
Wisdom, in sober contemplation clad,  
To lash those bold usurpers from the stage.

On that gay spot, where the Parisian dome  
To fools the stealing hand of time displays,  
Fashion her empire holds—a goddess great !  
View her, amidst the *millinerian* train,  
On a resplendant throne exalted high,  
Strangely diversified with gewgaw forms ;  
Her busy hand glides pleasurably o'er  
The darling novelties, the trinkets rare,  
That greet the sight of the admiring dames,  
Whose dear-bought treasures o'er their native isle  
Contagious spread, infect the wholesome air  
That cherish'd vigour in Britannia's sons.

Near this proud seat of fashion's antic form  
A sphere revolves, on whose bright orb behold  
The circulating mode of changeful dress,  
Which, like the image of the sun himself,  
Glories in coursing through the diverse signs  
Which blazon in the zodiac of heaven.

Around her throno coquettes and petits beaux

Unnumber'd shine, and with each other vie  
 In nameless ornaments and gaudy plumes.  
 Oh worthy emulation! to excel  
 In trifles such as these, how truly great!  
 Unworthy of the peevish blubbering boy,  
 Crush'd in his childhood by the fondling nurse,  
 Who for some favourite bauble frets and pines.

Amongst the proud attendants of this shrine,  
 The wealthy, young, and gay Clarinda draws  
 From poorer objects the astonish'd eye.  
 Her looks, her dress, and her affected mien,  
 Speak her enthusiast keen in fashion's train.  
 White as the cover'd Alps, or wintry face  
 Of snowy Lapland, her tupée uprear'd,  
 Exhibits to the view a cumbrous mass  
 Of curls high nodding o'er her polish'd brow;  
 From which redundant flows the Brussels lace,  
 With pendant ribbons, too, of various dye,  
 Where all the colours in the ethereal bow  
 Unite and blend, and tantalise the sight.

Nature! to thee alone, not fashion's pomp,  
 Does beauty owe her all-commanding eye.  
 From the green bosom of the watery main,  
 Array'd by thee, majestic Venus rose,  
 With waving ringlets carelessly diffused,  
 Floating luxurious o'er the restless surge.  
 What Rubens, then, with his enlivening hand,  
 Could paint the bright vermilion of her cheek,  
 Pure as the roseate portal of the east,  
 That opens to receive the cheering ray  
 Of Phœbus beaming from the orient sky?  
 For sterling beauty needs no faint essays  
 Or colourings of art to gild her more—  
 She is all-perfect. And if beauty fail,  
 Where are those ornaments, those rich attires,  
 Which can reflect a lustre on that face,  
 Where she with light innate disdains to shine?

Britons! beware of fashion's luring wiles.  
 On either hand, chief guardians of her power,

And sole dictators of her fickle voice,  
 Folly and dull effeminacy reign;  
 Whose blackest magic and unhallow'd spells  
 The Roman ardour check'd; their strength decay'd;  
 And all their glory scatter'd to the winds.

Tremble, oh Albion! for the voice of fate  
 Seems ready to decree thy speedy fall.  
 By pride, by luxury, what fatal ills,  
 Unheeded, have approach'd thy mortal frame!  
 How many foreign weeds their heads have rear'd  
 In thy fair garden! Hasten, ere their strength  
 And baneful vegetation taint the soil,  
 To root out rank disease, which soon must spread,  
 If no blest antidote will purge away  
 Fashion's proud minions from our sea-girt isle.

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### A BURLESQUE ELEGY,

ON THE AMPUTATION OF A STUDENT'S HAIR, BEFORE HIS  
 ORDERS.

Oh sad catastrophe! event most dire!  
 How shall the loss, the heavy loss, be borne?  
 Or how the muse attune the plaintive lyre,  
 To sing of Strephon with his ringlets shorn?  
 Say, ye who can divine the mighty cause  
 From whence this modern circumcision springs,  
 Why such oppressive and such rigid laws  
 Are still attendant on religious things?  
 Alas, poor Strephon! to the stern decree  
 Which prunes your tresses, are you doom'd to yield?  
 Soon shall your *caput*, like the blasted tree,  
 Diffuse its faded honours o'er the field.  
 Now let the solemn sounds of mourning swell,  
 And wake sad echoes to prolong the lay;  
 For, hark! methinks I hear the tragic knell;  
 This hour bespeaks the barber on his way.

Oh razor! yet thy poignant edge suspend ;  
 Oh yet indulge me with a short delay ;  
 Till I once more pourtray my youthful friend,  
 Ere his proud locks are scatter'd on the clay ;  
 Ere the huge wig, in formal curls array'd,  
 With pulvil pregnant, shall o'ershade his face ;  
 Or, like the wide umbrella, lend its aid  
 To banish lustre from the sacred place.

Mourn, oh ye zephyrs! for, alas! no more  
 His waving ringlets shall your call obey!  
 For, ah! the stubborn wig must now be wore,  
 Since Strephon's locks are scatter'd on the clay.

Amanda, too, in bitter anguish sighs,  
 And grieves the metamorphosis to see.  
 Mourn not, Amanda, for the hair that lies  
 Dead on the ground shall be revived for thee.

Some skilful artist of a French friseur,  
 With graceful ringlets shall thy temples bind,  
 And cull the precious relics from the floor,  
 Which yet may flutter in the wanton wind.

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### VERSES

WRITTEN AT THE HERMITAGE OF BRAID, NEAR EDINBURGH.

Would you relish a rural retreat,  
 Or the pleasure the groves can inspire,  
 The city's allurements forget!  
 To this spot of enchantment retire ;  
 Where a valley and crystalline brook,  
 Whose current glides sweetly along,  
 Give nature a fanciful look,  
 The beautiful woodlands among.

Behold the umbrageous trees  
 A covert of verdure have spread,  
 Where shepherds may loll at their ease,  
 And pipe to the musical shade.

For, lo! through each opening is heard,  
 In concert with waters below,  
 The voice of a musical bird,  
 Whose numbers melodiously flow.

The bushes and arbours so green,  
 The tendrils of spray interwove,  
 With foliage shelter the scene,  
 And form a retirement for love.

Here Venus transported may rove  
 From pleasure to pleasure unseen,  
 Nor wish for the Cyprian grove  
 Her youthful Adonis to screen.

Oft let me contemplative dwell  
 On a scene where such beauties appear ;  
 I could live in a cot or a cell,  
 And never think solitude near.

-----  
 A T A L E.

Those rigid pedagogues and fools,  
 Who walk by self-invented rules,  
 Do often try, with empty head,  
 The emptier mortals to mislead,  
 And fain would urge that none but they  
 Could rightly teach the A, B, C ;  
 On which they've got an endless comment,  
 To trifling minds of mighty moment,  
 Throwing such barriers in the way  
 Of those who genius display,  
 As often, ah ! too often, tease  
 Them out of patience and of fees,  
 Before they're able to explode  
 Obstructions thrown on learning's road.  
 May mankind all employ their tools  
 To banish pedantry from schools !  
 And may each pedagogue avail,  
 By listening to this simple tale !

Wise Mr Birch had long intended  
 The alphabet should be amended,  
 And taught that H a breathing was ;  
*Ergo*, he saw no proper cause  
 Why such a letter should exist :  
 Thus in a breath was he dismiss'd,  
 With, " Oh beware, beware, oh youth !  
 Take not the villain in your mouth."

One day this alphabetic sinner  
 Was eager to devour his dinner,  
 When to appease the craving glutton,  
 His boy Tom produced the mutton.  
 Was such disaster ever told !  
 Alas, the meat was deadly cold !  
 " Here take and h—eat it," says the master ;  
 Quoth Tom, " That shall be done, and fast, sir."  
 And few there are who will dispute it,  
 But he went instantly about it ;  
 For Birch had scorn'd the H to say,  
 And blew him with a puff away.

The bell was rung with dread alarm—  
 " Bring me the mutton—Is it warm ?"  
 " Sir, you desired, and I have eat it."  
 " You lie ; my orders were to heat it."  
 Quoth Tom, " I'll readily allow  
 That H is but a breathing now."

---

### THE PEASANT, THE HEN, AND YOUNG DUCKS.

A FABLE.

A hen, of all the dunghill crew  
 The fairest, stateliest to view,  
 Of laying tired, she fondly begs  
 Her keeper's leave to hatch her eggs.  
 He, dunn'd with the incessant cry,  
 Was forced for peace' sake to comply ;

And in a month, the downy brood  
 Came chirping round the hen for food,  
 Who view'd them with parental eyes  
 Of pleasing fondness and surprise,  
 And was not at a loss to trace  
 Her likeness growing in their face ;  
 Though the broad bills could well declare  
 That they another's offspring were :  
 So strong will prejudices blind,  
 And lead astray the easy mind.

To the green margin of the brook  
 The hen her fancied children took :  
 Each young one shakes his unfledged wings,  
 And to the flood by instinct springs ;  
 With willing strokes they gladly swim,  
 Or dive into the glassy stream,  
 While the fond mother vents her grief,  
 And prays the peasant's kind relief.  
 The peasant heard the bitter cries,  
 And thus in terms of rage replies :  
 " You fool ! give o'er your useless moan,  
 Nor mourn misfortunes not your own ;  
 But learn in wisdom to forsake  
 The offspring of the duck and drake."  
 To whom the hen, with angry crest  
 And scornful look, herself address'd :  
 " If reason were my constant guide  
 (Of man the ornament and pride),  
 Then should I boast a cruel heart,  
 That feels not for another's smart :  
 But since poor I, by instinct blind,  
 Can boast no feelings so refined,  
 'Tis hoped your reason will excuse,  
 Though I your counsel sage refuse,  
 And from the perils of the flood  
 Attempt to save another's brood."

## MORAL.

When Pity, generous nymph ! possess'd,  
 And moved at will the human breast,

No tongue its distant sufferings told,  
 But she assisted, she condoled,  
 And willing bore her tender part  
 In all the feelings of the heart :  
 But now from her our hearts decoy'd,  
 To sense of others' woes destroy'd,  
 Act only from a selfish view,  
 Nor give the aid to pity due.

---

SONG.

Where winding Forth adorns the vale,  
 Fond Strephon, once a shepherd gay,  
 Did to the rocks his lot bewail,  
 And thus address'd his plaintive lay :  
 " Oh, Julia ! more than lily fair,  
 More blooming than the budding rose,  
 How can thy breast, relentless, bear  
 A heart more cold than winter's snows !  
 Yet nipping winter's keenest sway  
 But for a short-lived space prevails ;  
 Spring soon returns, and cheers each spray,  
 Scented with Flora's fragrant gales.  
 Come, Julia ! come ; thy love obey,  
 Thou mistress of angelic charms !  
 Come, smiling like the morn in May,  
 And bless thy Strephon's longing arms.  
 Else, haunted by the fiend despair,  
 He'll court some solitary grove,  
 Where mortal foot did ne'er repair,  
 But swains oppress'd by hapless love.  
 From the once pleasing rural throng  
 Removed, he'll through the desert stray,  
 Where Philomela's mournful song  
 Shall join his melancholy lay."



## SONG.

Amidst a rosy bank of flowers,  
 Damon, forlorn, deplored his fate ;  
 In sighs he spent his languid hours,  
 And breathed his woes in doleful state.

No more shall gaiety cheer his mind ;  
 No wanton sports can soothe his care ;  
 Since sweet Amanda proved unkind,  
 And left him full of black despair.

His looks, that were as fresh as morn,  
 Can now no longer smiles impart ;  
 His pensive soul, on sadness borne,  
 Is rack'd and torn by Cupid's dart.

Turn, fair Amanda ! cheer your swain ;  
 Unshroud him, from his veil of woe :  
 Turn, gentle nymph ! and ease the pain  
 That in his tortured breast doth grow.



## EX TEMPORE,

ON BEING ASKED WHICH OF THREE SISTERS WAS THE MOST  
 BEAUTIFUL.

When Paris gave his voice, in Ida's grove,  
 For the resistless Venus, queen of love,  
 'Twas no great task to pass a judgment there,  
 Where she alone was exquisitely fair :  
 But here, what could his ablest judgment teach,  
 When wisdom, power, and beauty, reign in each !  
 The youth, nonplus'd, behoved to join with me,  
 And wish the apple had been cut in three.

## ON SEEING A LADY PAINT HERSELF.

When by some misadventure cross'd,  
 The banker hath his fortune lost,  
 Credit his instant need supplies,  
 And for a moment blinds our eyes:  
 So, Delia, when her beauty's flown,  
 Trades on a bottom not her own,  
 And labours to escape detection,  
 By putting on a false complexion.

\*\*\*\*\*

 EX TEMPORE,

ON SEEING STANZAS ADDRESSED TO MRS HARTLEY, COMEDIAN,  
 WHEREIN SHE IS DESCRIBED AS RESEMBLING MARY QUEEN  
 OF SCOTS.

Hartley resembles Scotland's queen,  
 Some hard enraptured cries;  
 A flattering bard he is, I ween,  
 Or else the painter lies.

\*\*\*\*\*

 ON THE DEATH OF  
 MR THOMAS LANCASHIRE, COMEDIAN.<sup>1</sup>

Alas, poor Tom! how oft with merry heart  
 Have we beheld thee play the sexton's part!  
 Each comic heart must now be grieved to see  
 The sexton's dreary part perform'd on thee.

<sup>1</sup> [“ Mr Lancashire possessed a great fund of dry humour, and filled Shuter's line in low comedy. He was a great favourite with the public. He kept a tavern, first in the Canongate, and afterwards in the New Town. He drank and joked with his customers; laughed and grew fat; and at length died, respected by many, and with the good word of all.”—*Jackson's History of the Scottish Stage*, 42.]

TO THE MEMORY OF  
JOHN CUNNINGHAM THE POET.

Sing his praises that doth keep  
Our flocks from harm,  
Pan, the father of our sheep ;  
And, arm in arm,  
Tread we softly in a round,  
While the hollow neighbouring ground  
Fills the music with her sound.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

Ye mournful meanders and groves,  
Delight of the Muse and her song !  
Ye grottoes and dripping alcoves,  
No strangers to Corydon's tongue !  
Let each Sylvan and Dryad declare  
His themes and his music how dear ;  
Their plaints and their dirges prepare,  
Attendant on Corydon's bier.  
The echo that join'd in the lay,  
So amorous, sprightly, and free,  
Shall send forth the sounds of dismay,  
And sigh with sad pity for thee.  
Wild wander his flocks with the breeze,  
His reed can no longer control ;  
His numbers no longer can please,  
Or send kind relief to the soul.  
But long may they wander and bleat ;  
To hills tell the tale of their woe ;  
The woodlands the tale shall repeat,  
And the waters shall mournfully flow.  
For these were the haunts of his love,  
The sacred retreats of his ease,  
Where favourite fancy would rove,  
As wanton, as light as the breeze.

Her zone will discolour'd appear,  
With fanciful ringlets unbound ;  
A face pale and languid she'll wear,  
A heart fraught with sorrow profound.

The reed of each shepherd will mourn ;  
The shades of Parnassus decay ;  
The Muses will dry their sad urn,  
Since reft of young Corydon's lay.

To him every passion was known  
That throbb'd in the breast with desire ;  
Each gentle affection was shown  
In the soft sighing songs of his lyre.

Like the carolling thrush on the spray  
In music soft warbling and wild,  
To love was devoted each lay,  
In accents pathetic and mild.

Let beauty and virtue revere,  
And the songs of the shepherd approve,  
Who felt, who lamented the snare,  
When repining at pitiless love.

The summer but languidly gleams ;  
Pomona no comfort can bring ;  
Nor valleys, nor grottoes, nor streams,  
Nor the May-born flowerets of spring.

They've fled all with Corydon's muse,  
For his brows to form chaplets of woe ;  
Whose reed oft awaken'd their boughs,  
As the whispering breezes that blow.

To many a fanciful spring  
His lyre was melodiously strung ;  
While fairies and fawns, in a ring,  
Have applauded the swain as he sung.

To the cheerful he usher'd his smiles ;  
To the woeful his sigh and his tear ;  
A condoler with want and her toils,  
When the voice of oppression was near.

Though titles and wealth were his due ;  
 Though fortune denied his reward ;  
 Yet truth and sincerity knew  
 What the goddess would never regard.

Avails aught the generous heart,  
 Which nature to goodness design'd,  
 If fortune denies to impart  
 Her kindly relief to the mind ?

'Twas but faint the relief to dismay,  
 The cells of the wretched among ;  
 Though sympathy sang in the lay,  
 Though melody fell from his tongue.

Let the favour'd of fortune attend  
 To the ails of the wretched and poor :  
 Though Corydon's lays could befriend,  
 'Tis riches alone that can cure.

But they to compassion are dumb ;  
 To pity, their voices unknown ;  
 Near sorrow they never can come,  
 Till misfortune has mark'd them her own.

Now the shades of the evening depend ;  
 Each warbler is lull'd on the spray ;  
 The cypress doth ruefully bend  
 Where reposes the shepherd's cold clay.

Adieu, then, the songs of the swain !  
 Let peace still attend on his shade ;  
 And his pipe, that is dumb to his strain,  
 In the grave be with Corydon laid.

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#### THE DELIGHTS OF VIRTUE.

Returning morn, in orient blush array'd,  
 With gentle radiance hail'd the sky serene ;  
 No rustling breezes waded the verdant shade ;  
 No swelling surge disturb'd the azure main.

These moments, meditation ! sure are thine ;  
These are the halcyon joys you wish to find,  
When nature's peaceful elements combine  
To suit the calm composure of the mind.

The Muse, exalted by thy sacred power,  
To the green mountain's airy summit flew,  
Charm'd with the thoughtful stillness of an hour,  
That usher'd beaming fancy to her view.

Fresh from old Neptune's fluid mansion sprung  
The sun, reviver of each drooping flower ;  
At his approach, the lark, with matin song,  
In notes of gratitude confess'd his power.

So shines fair Virtue, shedding light divine  
On those who wish to profit by her ways ;  
Who ne'er at parting with their vice repine,  
To taste the comforts of her blissful rays.

She with fresh hopes each sorrow can beguile ;  
Can dissipate adversity's deep gloom ;  
Make meagre poverty contented smile ;  
And the sad wretch forget his hapless doom.

Sweeter than shady groves in summer's pride,  
Than flowery dales or grassy meads, is she ;  
Delightful as the honied streams that glide  
From the rich labours of the busy bee.

Her paths and alleys are for ever green :—  
There innocence, in snowy robes array'd,  
With smiles of pure content, is hail'd the queen  
And happy mistress of the sacred shade.

Oh let no transient gleam of earthly joy  
From virtue lure your labouring steps aside ;  
Nor instant grandeur future hopes annoy  
With thoughts that spring from insolence and pride.

Soon will the winged moments speed away,  
When you'll no more the plumes of honour wear :  
Grandeur must shudder at the sad decay,  
And pride look humble when he ponders there.

Deprived of virtue, where is beauty's power !  
Her dimpled smiles, her roses, charm no more ;

So much can guilt the loveliest form deflower,  
 We loathe that beauty which we loved before.  
 How fair are virtue's buds, where'er they blow,  
 Or in the desert wild or garden gay!  
 Her flowers how sacred, wheresoe'er they show,  
 Unknown to killing canker and decay!

---

### A TAVERN ELEGY.

Fled are the moments of delusive mirth;  
 The fancied pleasure, paradise divine!  
 Hush'd are the clamours that derive their birth  
 From generous floods of soul-reviving wine.  
 Still night and silence now succeed their noise;  
 The erring tides of passion rage no more;  
 But all is peaceful as the ocean's voice  
 When breezeless waters kiss the silent shore.  
 Here stood the juice, whose care-controlling powers  
 Could every human misery subdue,  
 And wake to sportive joy the lazy hours,  
 That to the languid senses hateful grew.  
 Attracted by the magic of the bowl,  
 Around the swelling brim in full array  
 The glasses circled, as the planets roll,  
 And hail with borrow'd light the god of day.  
 Here music, the delight of moments gay,  
 Bade the unguarded tongues their motions cease,  
 And with a mirthful, a melodious lay,  
 Awed the fell voice of discord into peace.  
 These are the joys that virtue must approve,  
 While reason shines with majesty divine,  
 Ere our ideas in disorder move,  
 And sad excess against the soul combine.  
 What evils have not phrensied mortals done  
 By wine, that *ignis fatuus* of the mind!  
 How many by its force to vice are won,  
 Since first ordain'd to tantalise mankind!

By Bacchus' power, ye sons of riot ! say,  
 How many watchful sentinels have bled !  
 How many travellers have lost their way,  
 By lamps unguided through the evening shade !  
 Oh spare those friendly twinklers of the night !  
 Let no rude cane their hallow'd orbs assail !  
 For cowardice alone condemns the light  
 That shows her countenance aghast and pale.  
 Now the short taper warns me to depart,  
 Ere darkness shall assume his dreary sway ;  
 Ere solitude fall heavy on my heart,  
 That lingers for the far approach of day.  
 Who would not welcome the less dreaded doom,  
 To be for ever number'd with the dead,  
 Rather than bear the miserable gloom,  
 When all his comforts, all his friends, are fled ?  
 Bear me, ye gods ! where I may calmly rest  
 From all the follies of the night secure,  
 The balmy blessings of repose to taste,  
 Nor hear the tongue of outrage at my door.

---

### GOOD EATING.

Hear, oh ye host of Epicurus ! hear !—  
 Each portly form, whose overhanging paunch  
 Can well denote the all-transcendant joy  
 That springs unbounded from fruition full  
 Of rich repast—to you I consecrate  
 The song adventurous ; happy if the Muse  
 Can cook the numbers to your palates keen,  
 Or send but half the relish with her song,  
 That smoking sirloins to your souls convey.  
 Hence now, ye starvelings wan ! whose empty sides  
 Oft echo to the hollow-murmuring tones  
 Of hunger fell. Avaunt, ye base-born hinds !  
 Whose fates unkind ne'er destined you to gorge



The banquet rare, or wage a pleasing war  
 With the delicious morsels of the earth.  
 To you I sing not—for, alas! what pain,  
 What tantalising tortures would ensue,  
 To aid the force of famine's sharpest tooth,  
 Were I to breathe my accents in your ear!

Hail, roast beef! monarch of the festive throng,  
 To hunger's bane the strongest antidote;  
 Come, and with all thy rage-appeasing sweets  
 Our appetites allay! For, or attended  
 By root Hibernian, or plum-pudding rare,  
 Still thou art welcome to the social board.  
 Say, can the spicy gales from orient blown,  
 Or zephyr's wing, that from the orange groves  
 Brushes the breeze with rich perfumes replete,  
 More aromatic or reviving smell  
 To nostrils bring! Or can the glassy streams  
 Of Pactolus, that o'er his golden sands  
 Delightful glide, the luscious drops outvie  
 That from thy sides embrown'd unnumber'd fall!  
 Behold, at thy approach, what smiles serene  
 Beam from the ravish'd guests! Still are their tongues,  
 While they, with whetted instruments, prepare  
 For deep incision. Now the abscess bleeds,  
 And the devouring band, with stomachs keen,  
 And glutting rage, thy beauteous form destroy;  
 Leave you a skeleton marrowless and bare,  
 A prey to dunghills, or vexatious sport  
 Of torrent rushing from defilement's urns,  
 That o'er the city's flinty pavement hurls.

So fares it with the man whose powerful pelf  
 Once could command respect. Caress'd by all,  
 His bounties were as lavish as the hand  
 Of yellow Ceres, till his stores decay'd;  
 And then (oh dismal tale!) those precious drops  
 Of flattery that bedew'd his spring of fortune,  
 Leave the sad winter of his state so fallen,  
 Nor nurse the thorn from which they ne'er can hope  
 Again to pluck the odour-dropping rose!

For thee, roast beef ! in variegated shapes,  
 Have mortals toil'd. The sailor sternly braves  
 The strength of Boreas, and exulting stands  
 Upon the sea-wash'd deck. With hopes inspired  
 Of yet indulging in thy wish'd-for sweets,  
 He smiles amidst the dangers that surround him ;  
 Cheerful he steers to cold forbidden climes,  
 Or to the torrid zone explores his way.

Be kind, ye powers ! and still propitious send  
 This paragon of feeding to our halls.  
 With this regaled, who would, vain-glorious, wish  
 For towering pyramids superbly crown'd  
 With jellies, syllabubs, or ice-creams rare ?  
 These can amuse the eye, and may bestow  
 A short-lived pleasure to a palate strange ;  
 But for a moment's pleasure, who would vend  
 A lifetime that would else be spent in joy,  
 For hateful loathings, and for gouty rheums,  
 Ever preceded by indulged excess ?

Blest be those walls where hospitality  
 And welcome reign at large ! There may you oft  
 Of social cheer partake, and love, and joy ;  
 Pleasures that to the human mind convey  
 Ideal pictures of the bliss supreme :  
 But near the gate where parsimony dwells,  
 Where ceremony cool, with brow austere,  
 Confronts the guests, ne'er let thy foot approach !  
 Deprived of thee, heaven-born benevolence !  
 What is life's garden but a devious wild,  
 Through which the traveller must pass forlorn,  
 Unguided by the aid of friendship's ray !  
 Rather, if poverty hold converse with thee,  
 To the lone garret's lofty bield ascend,  
 Or dive to some sad cell—there have recourse  
 To meagre offals, where, though small thy fare,  
 Freedom shall wing thee to a purer joy  
 Than banquets with superfluous dainties crown'd,  
 Mix'd with reserve and coolness, can afford.

But if your better fortunes have prepared

Your purse with ducats, and with health your frame,  
 Assemble, friends! and to the tavern straight,  
 Where the officious drawer, bending low,  
 Is passive to a fault. Then, nor the signior grand,  
 Nor Russia's empress, signalised for war,  
 Can govern with more arbitrary sway.

Ye who, for health, for exercise, for air,  
 Oft saunter from Edina's smoke-capt spires,  
 And by the grassy hill or dimpled brook,  
 An appetite revive, should often stray  
 O'er Arthur-Seat's green pastures, to the town  
 For sheep-heads and bone-bridges famed of yore,  
 That in our country's annals stands yeleft  
 Fair Duddingstonia, where you may be blest  
 With simple fare and vegetable sweets,  
 Freed from the clamours of the busy world.<sup>1</sup>

Or if for recreation you should stray  
 To Leithian shore, and breathe the keener air  
 Wafted from Neptune's empire of the main;  
 If appetite invite, and cash prevail,  
 Ply not your joints upon the homeward track,  
 Till Lawson, chiefest of the Scottish hosts;<sup>2</sup>  
 To nimble-footed waiters give command  
 The cloth to lay. Instinctively they come;  
 And, lo! the table, wrapt in cloudy steams,  
 Groans with the weight of the transporting fare,  
 That breathes frankincense on the guests around.

Now, while stern winter holds his frigid sway,

<sup>1</sup> [The village of Duddingstone, near Edinburgh, was famed for taverns in which sheep-head dinners could be got. The crania of the sheep being afterwards placed as stepping-stones across pools in the street, the place was quizzically spoken of as a great city possessing a hundred bone bridges!]

<sup>2</sup> [Lawson's tavern was in a large old house (dated 1678), on the Shore at Leith, very near the flag-house at the end of the pier. It has long been a private dwelling. Chancing to be in this house a good many years ago, the writer of this note observed on a window, scribbled by a diamond, the complaint of some dissatisfied customer, who had perhaps dined in it the most part of a century ago—"Lawson's is a good house, but bad waiters."]

And to a period spins the closing year ;  
 While festivals abound, and sportive hours  
 Kill the remembrance of our waning time,  
 Let not intemperance, destructive fiend !  
 Gain entrance to your halls. Despoil'd by him,  
 Shall cloyed appetite, forerunner sad  
 Of rank disease, inveterate clasp your frame :  
 Contentment shall no more be known to spread  
 Her cherub wings round thy once happy dwelling,  
 But misery of thought, and racking pain,  
 Shall plunge you headlong to the dark abyss.

-----  
 T E A.

Ye maidens modest ! on whose sullen brows  
 Hath weaning chastity her wrinkles cull'd ;  
 Who constant labour o'er consumptive oil,  
 At midnight knell, to wash sleep's nightly balm  
 From closing eyelids, with the grateful drops  
 Of tea's blest juices—list the obsequious lays,  
 That come not, with Parnassian honours crown'd,  
 To dwell in murmurs o'er your sleepy sense ;  
 But, fresh from orient blown, to chase far off  
 Your lethargy, that dormant needles roused  
 May pierce the waving mantua's silken folds.  
 For many a dame, in chamber sadly pent,  
 Hath this reviving liquor call'd to life :  
 And well it did, to mitigate the frowns  
 Of anger, reddening on Lucinda's brow  
 With flash malignant, that had harbour'd there,  
 If she at masquerade, or play, or ball,  
 Appear'd not in her newest, best attire.  
 But Venus, goddess of the eternal smile,  
 Knowing that stormy brows but ill become  
 Fair patterns of her beauty, hath ordain'd  
 Celestial tea—a fountain that can cure  
 The ills of passion, and can free from frowns,  
 And sobs, and sighs, the disappointed fair.

To her, ye fair! in adoration bow;  
 Whether at blushing morn or dewy eve  
 Her smoking cordials greet your fragrant board,  
 With Hyson, or Bohea, or Congou crown'd.  
 At midnight skies, ye mantua-makers! hail  
 The sacred offering: for the haughty belles  
 No longer can upbraid your lingering hands,  
 With trains upborne aloft by dusty gales  
 That sweep the ball-room. Swift they glide along,  
 And, with their sailing streamers, catch the eye  
 Of some Adonis, mark'd to love a prey;  
 Whose bosom ne'er had panted with a sigh,  
 But for the silken draperies that enclose  
 Graces from fancy's eye but ill conceal'd.

Mark well the fair! observe their modest eye,  
 With all the innocence of beauty blest;  
 Could slander o'er that tongue its power retain  
 Whose breath is music! Ah, fallacious thought!  
 The surface is ambrosia's mingled sweets,  
 But all below is death. At ten-board met,  
 Attend their prattling tongues; they scoff, they rail  
 Unbounded; but their darts are chiefly aim'd  
 At some gay fair, whose beauties far eclipse  
 Her dim beholders, who, with haggard eyes,  
 Would blight those charms where raptures long have  
 dwelt

In ecstasy, delighted and sufficed.

In vain hath beauty, with her varied robe,  
 Bestow'd her glowing blushes o'er her cheeks,  
 And called attendant graces to her aid,  
 To blend the scarlet and the lily fair:  
 In vain did Venus in her favourite mould  
 Adapt the slender form to Cupid's choice;  
 When slander comes, her blasts too fatal prove;  
 Pale are those cheeks where youth and beauty glow'd—  
 Where smiles, where freshness, and where roses grew;  
 Ghastly and wan their Gorgon picture comes,  
 With every fury grinning from the looks  
 Of frightful monster. Envy's hissing tongue

With deepest vengeance wounds, and every wound  
With deeper canker, deeper poison teems.

Oh gold! thy luring lustre first prevail'd  
On man to tempt the fretful winds and waves,  
And hunt new fancies. Still, thy glaring form  
Bids commerce thrive, and o'er the Indian waves,  
O'er-stemming danger, draw the labouring keel  
From China's coast to Britain's colder clime,  
Fraught with the fruits and herbage of her vales.  
In them, whatever vegetable springs,  
How loathsome and corrupted, triumphs here,  
The bane of life, of health the sure decay:  
Yet, yet we swallow, and extol the draught,  
Though nervous ails should spring, and vapourish  
qualms  
Our senses and our appetites destroy.

Look round, ye sippers of the poison'd cup  
From foreign plant distill'd! No more repine  
That nature, sparing of her sacred sweets,  
Hath doom'd you in a wilderness to dwell;  
While round Britannia's streams she kindly rears  
Green sage and wild thyme. These were sure decreed,  
As plants of Britain, to regale her sons  
With native moisture, more refreshing, sweet,  
And more profuse of health and vigour's balm,  
Than all the stems that India can boast.

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### THE SOW OF FEELING.

Well! I protest there's no such thing as dealing  
With these starch'd poets—with these men of feeling!  
*Epilogue to the Prince of Tunis.*

Malignant planets! do ye still combine  
Against this wayward, dreary life of mine?  
Has pitiless oppression—cruel case!—  
Gain'd sole possession of the human race!

By cruel hands has every virtue bled,  
And innocence from men to vultures fled !

Thrice happy had I lived in Jewish time,  
When swallowing pork or pig was deem'd a crime ;  
My husband long had blest my longing arms,  
Long, long had known love's sympathetic charms !  
My children, too—a little suckling race,  
With all their father growing in their face—  
From their prolific dam had ne'er been torn,  
Nor to the bloody stalls of butchers borne.

Ah, luxury ! to you my being owes  
Its load of misery, its load of woes !  
With heavy heart I saunter all the day ;  
Gruntle and murmur all my hours away !  
In vain I try to summon old desire  
For favourite sports—for wallowing in the mire ;  
Thoughts of my husband, of my children, slain,  
Turn all my wonted pleasure into pain !  
How oft did we, in Phœbus' warming ray,  
Bask on the humid softness of the clay !  
Oft did his lusty head defend my tail  
From the rude whispers of the angry gale ;  
While nose-refreshing puddles stream'd around,  
And floating odours hail'd the dung-clad ground.

Near by a rustic mill's enchanting clack,  
Where plenteous bushels load the peasant's back,  
In straw-crown'd hovel, there to life we came,  
One boar our father, and one sow our dam.  
While tender infants on our mother's breast,  
A flame divine in either shone confest :  
In riper hours, love's more than ardent blaze  
Enkindled all his passion, all his praise !  
No deadly, sinful passion fired his soul—  
Virtue o'er all his actions gain'd control !  
That cherub which attracts the female heart,  
And makes them soonest with their beauty part,  
Attracted mine ; I gave him all my love,  
In the recesses of a verdant grove :  
'Twas there I listen'd to his warmest vows,  
Amidst the pendant melancholy boughs ;

'Twas there my trusty lover shook for me  
 A shower of acorns from the oaken tree ;  
 And from the teeming earth, with joy, plough'd out  
 The roots salubrious with his hardy snout.

But, happiness! a floating meteor thou,  
 That still inconstant art to man and sow,  
 Left'st us in gloomiest horrors to reside,  
 Near by the deep-dyed sanguinary tide,  
 Where whetting steel prepares the butchering knives,  
 With greater ease to take the harmless lives  
 Of cows, and calves, and sheep, and hogs, who fear  
 The bite of bull-dogs, that incessant tear  
 Their flesh, and keenly suck the blood-distilling ear!

At length the day, the eventful day, drew near,  
 Detested cause of many a briny tear!  
 I'll weep, till sorrow shall my eyelids drain,  
 A tender husband and a brother slain!  
 Alas! the lovely languor of his eye,  
 When the base murderers bore him captive by ;  
 His mournful voice, the music of his groans,  
 Had melted any hearts, but hearts of stones!  
 Oh! had some angel at that instant come,  
 Given me four nimble fingers and a thumb,  
 The blood-stain'd blade I'd turn'd upon his foe,  
 And sudden sent him to the shades below—  
 Where, or Pythagoras' opinion jests,  
 Beasts are made butchers—butchers changed to beasts.

Wisely in early times the law decreed,  
 For human food few quadrupeds should bleed ;  
 But monstrous man, still erring from the laws,  
 The curse of Heaven upon his banquet draws!  
 Already has he drain'd the marshes dry  
 For frogs, new victims of his luxury ;  
 And soon the toad and lizard may come home,  
 In his voracious paunch to find a tomb ;  
 Cats, rats, and mice, their destiny may mourn,  
 In time their carcasses on spits may turn ;  
 They may rejoice to-day—while I resign  
 Life, to be number'd 'mongst the feeling swine.



AN EXPEDITION TO FIFE AND THE  
ISLAND OF MAY,

ON BOARD THE BLESSED ENDEAVOUR OF DUNBAR, CAPTAIN  
ROXBURGH COMMANDER.

List, oh ye slumberers on the peaceful shore,  
Whose lives are one unvariegated calm  
Of stillness and of sloth ! And hear, oh nymph !  
In heaven yeapt pleasure ; from your throne  
Effulgent send a heavenly radiant beam,  
That, cheer'd by thee, the Muse may bend her way :  
For from no earthly flight she builds her song,  
But from the bosom of green Neptune's main  
Would fain emerge, and, under Phœbe's reign,  
Transmit her numbers to inclining ears.

Now, when the warbling songsters quit the groves,  
And solemn sounding whisperings lull the spray,  
To meditation sacred, let me roam  
O'er the blest floods that wash our natal shore,  
And view the wonders of the deep profound,  
While now the western breezes reign around,  
And Boreas, sleeping in his iron cave,  
Regains his strength and animated rage,  
To wake new tempests and inswell new seas.

And now Favonius wings the sprightly gale ;  
The willing canvass, swelling with the breeze,  
Gives life and motion to our bounding prow,  
While the hoarse boatswain's pipe shrill-sounding far,  
Calls all the tars to action. Hardy sons !  
Who shudder not at life-devouring gales,  
But smile amidst the tempest's sounding jars,  
Or 'midst the hollow thunders of the war.  
Fresh sprung from Greenland's cold, they hail with joy  
The happier clime, the fresh autumnal breeze,  
By Sirius guided, to allay the heat  
That else would parch the vigour of their veins.  
Hard change, alas ! from petrifying cold

Instant to plunge to the severest ray  
That burning dog-star or bright Phœbus sheds.  
Like comet whirling through the ethereal void,  
Now they are reddened with the solar blaze,  
Now froze and tortur'd by the frigid zone.

Thrice happy Britons ! whose well-temper'd clay  
Can face all climes, all tempests, and all seas.  
These are the sons that check the growing war ;  
These are the sons that hem Britannia round  
From sudden innovation—awe the shores,  
And make their drooping pendants hail her queen  
And mistress of the globe. They guard our beds,  
While fearless we enjoy secure repose,  
And all the blessings of a bounteous sky.  
To them in feverous adoration bend,  
Ye fashion'd macaronies ! whose bright blades  
Were never dimm'd or stain'd with hostile blood,  
But still hang dangling on your feeble thigh,  
While through the Mall or Park you show away,  
Or through the drawing-room on tiptoe steal.

On poop aloft, to messmates laid along,  
Some son of Neptune, whose old wrinkled brow  
Has braved the rattling thunder, tells his tale  
Of dangers, sieges, and of battles dire ;  
While they, as fortune favours, greet with smiles,  
Or heave the bitter sympathetic sigh,  
As the capricious fickle goddess frowns.

Ah, how unstable are the joys of life !  
The pleasures, ah, how few ! Now smile the skies  
With aspect mild ; and now the thunders shake,  
And all the radiance of the heavens deflower.  
Through the small opening of the mainsail broad,  
Lo, Boreas steals, and tears him from the yard,  
Where long and lasting he has play'd his part !  
So suffers virtue. When in her fair form  
The smallest flaw is found, the whole decays.  
In vain she may implore with piteous eye,  
And spread her naked pinions to the blast :  
A reputation maim'd finds no repair,

Till death, the ghastly monarch, shuts the scene.

And now we gain the May, whose midnight light,  
Like vestal virgins' offerings undecay'd,  
To mariners bewilder'd acts the part  
Of social friendship, guiding those that err  
With kindly radiance to their destined port.

Thanks, kindest nature ! for those floating gems,  
Those green-grown isles, with which you lavish strew  
Great Neptune's empire. But for thee, the main  
Were an uncomfortable mazy flood.

No guidance then would bless the steersman's skill,  
No resting-place would crown the mariner's wish,  
When he to distant gales his canvass spreads  
To search new wonders. Here the verdant shores  
Teem with new freshness, and regale our sight  
With caves, that ancient time, in days of yore,  
Sequester'd for the haunt of Druid lone,  
There to remain in solitary cell,  
Beyond the power of mortals to disjoin  
From holy meditation. Happy now  
To cast our eyes around from shore to shore,  
While by the oozy caverns on the beach  
We wander wild, and listen to the roar  
Of billows murmuring with incessant noise.

And now, by fancy led, we wander wild  
Where o'er the rugged steep the buried dead  
Remote lie anchor'd in their parent mould ;  
Where a few fading willows point the state  
Of man's decay. Ah, death ! where'er we fly,  
Whether we seek the busy and the gay,  
The mourner or the joyful, there art thou !  
No distant isle, no surly swelling surge,  
E'er awed thy progress or controll'd thy sway,  
To bless us with that comfort, length of days,  
By all aspired at, but by few attain'd.

To Fife we steer—of all beneath the sun  
The most unhallow'd 'mid the Scotian plains !  
And here (sad emblem of deceitful times !)  
Hath sad hypocrisy her standard borne.

Mirth knows no residence ; but ghastly fear  
 Stands trembling and appall'd at airy sights.  
 Once, only once—reward it, gracious powers !—  
 Did hospitality, with open face,  
 And winning smile, cheer the deserted sight,  
 That else had languish'd for the blest return  
 Of beauteous day, to dissipate the clouds  
 Of endless night, and superstition wild,  
 That constant hover o'er the dark abode.  
 Oh happy Lothian ! happy thrice thy sons !  
 Who ne'er yet ventured from the southern shore  
 To tempt misfortune on the Fifer coast :  
 Again with thee we dwell, and taste thy joys,  
 Where sorrow reigns not, and where every gale  
 Is fraught with fulness, blest with living hope,  
 That fears no canker from the year's decay.

TO SIR JOHN FIELDING,

ON HIS ATTEMPT TO SUPPRESS THE BEGGARS' OPERA.

When you censure the age,  
 Be cautious and sage,  
 Lest the courtiers offended should be ;  
 When you mention vice or bribe,  
 'Tis so pat to all the tribe,  
 Each cries, " It was levell'd at me !"—GAY.  
 'Tis woman that seduces all mankind.—*Fitch.*

Beneath what cheerful region of the sky  
 Shall wit, shall humour, and the Muses fly ?  
 For ours, a cold, inhospitable clime,  
 Refuses quarter to the Muse and rhyme.  
 If on her brows an envied laurel springs,  
 They shake its foliage, crop her growing wings,  
 That with the plumes of virtue wisely soar,  
 And all the follies of the ago explore.  
 But should old Grub her rankest venom pour,  
 And every virtue with a vice deflower,

Her verse is sacred, justices agree ;  
 Even Justice Fielding signs the wise decree.

Let fortune-dealers, wise predictors ! tell  
 From what bright planet Justice Fielding fell.  
 Augusta trembles at the awful name ;  
 The darling tongue of liberty is tame,  
 Basely confined by him in Newgate chains,  
 Nor dare exclaim how harshly Fielding reigns.

In days when every mercer has his scale,  
 To tell what pieces lack, how few prevail !  
 I wonder not the low-born menial trade  
 By partial justice has aside been laid ;  
 For she no discount gives for virtue worn ;  
 Her aged joints are without mercy torn.

In vain, oh Gay ! thy Muse explored the way,  
 Of yore, to banish the Italian lay ;  
 Gave homely numbers sweet, though warmly strong ;  
 The British chorus blest the happy song ;  
 Thy manly voice, and Albion's, then were heard,  
 Felt by her sons, and by her sons revered :  
 Eunuchs, not men, now bear aloft the palm,  
 And o'er our senses pour lethargic balm.

The stage the truest mirror is of life :  
 Our passions there revolve in active strife ;  
 Each character is there display'd to view ;  
 Each hates his own, though well assured 'tis true.  
 No marvel, then, that all the world should own  
 In Peachum's treachery Justice Fielding known ;  
 Since thieves so common are, and, Justice, you  
 Thieves to the gallows for reward pursue.  
 Had Gay, by writing, roused the stealing trade,  
 You'd been less active to suppress your bread :  
 For, trust me ! when a robber loses ground,  
 You lose your living with your forty pound.

'Twas woman first that snatch'd the luring bait ;  
 The tempter taught her to transgress and eat  
 Though wrong the deed, her quick compunction told,  
 She banish'd Adam from an age of gold.

When women now transgress fair virtue's rules,  
 Men are their pupils, and the stews their schools.

From simple whoredom greater sins began  
 To shoot, to bloom, to centre all in man:  
 Footpads on Hounslow flourish here to-day;  
 The next, old Tyburn sweeps them all away.  
 For woman's faults, the cause of every wrong,  
 Men robb'd and murder'd, thieves at Tyburn strung,  
 In panting breasts to raise the fond alarm;  
 Make females in the cause of virtue warm;  
 Gay has compared them to the summer flower,  
 The boast and glory of an idle hour;  
 When cropp'd, it falls, shrinks, withers, and decays,  
 And to oblivion dark consigns its days.

Hath this a power to win the female heart  
 Back from its vice, from virtue ne'er to part?  
 If so, the wayward virgin 'twill restore;  
 And murders, robberies, rapes, will be no more.

These were the lays of him who virtue knew;  
 Her dictates who revered, and practis'd too;  
 No idle theorist in her guiltless ways,  
 He gave the spotless goddess all his days.

Oh Queensberry!\* his best and earliest friend,  
 All that his wit or learning could command;  
 Thou best of patrons! of his Muse the pride!  
 Still in her pageant shalt thou first preside;—  
 No idle pomp that riches can procure,  
 Sprung in a moment, faded in an hour,  
 But pageant lasting as the uncropp'd bay,  
 That verdant triumphs with the Muse of Gay.

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### CHARACTER OF A FRIEND,

IN AN EPITAPH WHICH HE DESIRED THE AUTHOR TO WRITE.

Under this turf, to mouldering earth consign'd,  
 Lies he, who once was fickle as the wind.

\* [Charles, the good Duke of Queensberry, the patron of Gay, was then still alive.]

Alike the scenes of good and ill he knew,  
 From the chaste temple to the lewdest stew.  
 Virtue and vice in him alternate reign'd ;—  
 That fill'd his mind, and this his pocket drain'd ;  
 Till in the contest they so stubborn grew,  
 Death gave the parting blow, and both withdrew.

---

TO DR SAMUEL JOHNSON.

FOOD FOR A NEW EDITION OF HIS DICTIONARY.

Let Wilkes and Churchill rage no more,  
 Though scarce provision, learning's good :  
 What can these hungries next explore ?  
 Even Samuel Johnson loves our food.

Great pedagogue ! whose literarian lore,  
 With syllable on syllable conjoin'd,  
 To transmutate and varify, hast learn'd  
 The whole revolving scientific names  
 That in the alphabetic columns lie,  
 Far from the knowledge of mortalic shapes ;  
 As we, who never can peroculate  
 The miracles by thee miraculised,  
 The Muse, silential long, with mouth apert,  
 Would give vibration to stagnatic tongue,  
 And loud encomiate thy puissant name,  
 Eulogiated from the green decline  
 Of Thames's banks to Scoticanian shores,  
 Where Lochlomondian liquids undulise.

To meminate thy name in after times,  
 The mighty mayor of each regalian town  
 Shall consignate thy work to parchment fair  
 In roll burgharian, and their tables all  
 Shall fumigate with fumigation strong :  
 Scotland, from perpendicularian hills,  
 Shall emigrate her fair muttonian store,  
 Which late had there in pedestration walk'd,  
 And o'er her airy heights perambulised.

Oh, blackest execrations on thy head,  
 Edina shameless! Though he came within  
 The bounds of your notation, though you knew  
 His honorific name, you noted not,  
 But basely suffer'd him to chariotise  
 Far from your towers with smoke that nubilate,  
 Nor drank one amicitial swelling cup  
 To welcome him convivial. Bailies all!  
 With rage inflated, catenations tear,\*  
 Nor ever after be you vinculis'd,  
 Since you that sociability denied  
 To him whose potent lexiphanian style  
 Words can prolongate, and inswell his page  
 With what in others to a line's confined.

Welcome, thou verbal potentate and prince!  
 To hills and valleys, where emerging oats  
 From earth assuage our pauperty to bay,  
 And bless thy name, thy dictionarian skill,  
 Which there definitive will still remain,  
 And oft be speculised by taper blue,  
 While youth studentious turn thy folio page.

Have you, as yet, in per'patetic mood,  
 Regarded with the texture of the eye  
 The cave cavernic, where fraternal bard,  
 Churchill, depicted pauperated swains  
 With thraldom and bleak want reducted sore;  
 Where nature, colourised, so coarsely fades,  
 And puts her russet par'phernalia on?  
 Have you, as yet, the way explorified  
 To let lignarian chalice, swell'd with oats,  
 Thy orifice approach? Have you, as yet,  
 With skin fresh rubified with scarlet spheres,  
 Applied brimstonic unction to your hide,  
 To terrify the salamandrian fire  
 That from involuntary digits asks  
 The strong allaceration? Or can you swill  
 The usquebalian flames of whisky blue

\* Catenations, *vide Chains*.—JOHNSON.



In fermentation strong? Have you applied  
 The kilt ærian to your Anglian thighs,  
 And with renunciation assign'd  
 Your breeches in Londona to be worn?  
 Can you, in frigour of Highlandian sky,  
 On heathy summits take nocturnal rest?  
 It cannot be:—You may as well desire  
 An alderman leave plumpuddenian store,  
 And scratch the tegument from pottage dish,  
 As bid thy countrymen, and thee, conjoin'd,  
 Forsake stomachic joys. Then hie you home,  
 And be a malcontent, that naked hinds,  
 On lentils fed, could make your kingdom quake,  
 And tremulate Old England libertised!

~~~~~

#### EPITAPH ON GENERAL WOLFE.

In worth exceeding, and in virtue great,  
 Words would want force his actions to relate.  
 Silence, ye bards! eulogium vain forbear;  
 It is enough to say that Wolfe lies here.

~~~~~

#### EPIGRAM

ON THE NUMEROUS EPITAPHS FOR GENERAL WOLFE; FOR  
 THE BEST OF WHICH A PREMIUM OF £100 WAS PROMISED.

The Muse, a shameless mercenary jade!  
 Has now assumed the arch-tongued lawyer's trade:  
 In Wolfe's deserving praises silent she,  
 Till flatter'd with the prospect of a fee.

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#### EPIGRAM

ON SEEING SCALES USED IN A MASON LODGE.

Why should the brethren met in lodge,  
 Adopt such awkward measures,  
 To set their scales and weights to judge  
 The value of their treasures?

The law laid down from age to age,  
 How can they well o'ercome it ?  
 For it forbids them to engage  
 With aught but line and plummet.

\*\*\*\*\*

### EPILOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MR WILSON, AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL, IN THE  
 CHARACTER OF AN EDINBURGH BUCK.

Ye who oft finish care in Lethe's cup,  
 Who love to swear, and roar, and keep it up,  
 List to a brother's voice, whose sole delight  
 Is—sleep all day, and riot all the night.

Last night, when potent draughts of mellow wine  
 Did sober reason into wit refine ;  
 When lusty Bacchus had contrived to drain  
 The sullen vapours from our shallow brain ;  
 We sallied forth (for valour's dazzling sun  
 Up to its bright meridian had run),  
 And, like renown'd Quixotte and his squire,  
 Spoils and adventures were our sole desire.

First, we approach'd a seeming sober dame,  
 Preceded by a lanthorn's pallid flame,  
 Borne by a liveried puppy's servile hand,  
 The slave obsequious of her stern command.  
 "Curse on those cits," said I, "who dare disgrace  
 Our streets at midnight with a sober face ;  
 Let never tallow-chandler give them light,  
 To guide them through the dangers of the night !"  
 The valet's cane we snatch'd, and, dam'me ! I  
 Made the frail lanthorn on the pavement lie.  
 The guard, still watchful of the liege's harm,  
 With slow-paced motion stalk'd at the alarm.  
 "Guard, seize the rogues !" the angry madam cried ;  
 And all the guard, with "Seize ta rogue," replied.

As, in a war, there's nothing judged so right  
 As a concerted and prudential flight,  
 So we, from guard and scandal to be freed,  
 Left them the field and burial of their dead.

Next, we approach'd the bounds of George's Square :  
 Blest place!—no watch, no constables, come there.  
 Now had they borrow'd Argus' eyes who saw us,  
 All was made dark and desolate as chaos:  
 Lamps tumbled after lamps, and lost their lustres,  
 Like doomsday, when the stars shall fall in clusters.  
 Let fancy paint what dazzling glory grew  
 From crystal gems, when Phoebus came in view:  
 Each shatter'd orb ten thousand fragments strews,  
 And a new sun in every fragment shows.

Hear, then, my bucks, how drunken fate decreed us  
 For a nocturnal visit to the Meadows;  
 And how we, valorous champions! durst engage—  
 Oh deed unequal'd!—both the Bridge and Cage;<sup>1</sup>  
 The rage of perilous winters which had stood—  
 This 'gainst the wind, and that against the flood:  
 But what nor wind, nor flood, nor Heaven could bend  
 e'er,

We tumbled down, my bucks! and made surrender.

What are your far-famed warriors to us,  
 'Bout whom historians make such mighty fuss?  
 Posterity may think it was uncommon  
 That Troy should be demolish'd for a woman;  
 But ours your ten years' sieges will excel,  
 And justly be esteem'd the nonpareil:  
 Our cause is slighter than a dame's betrothing;  
 For all these mighty feats have sprung from—*nothing*.

<sup>1</sup> [The *Cage* was a small circular building at the end of the central walk in the Meadows, for the shelter of loungers during a shower. The *Bridge* bestrode a small stream which crossed the same walk.]

## POSTHUMOUS POEMS.

## PARAPHRASE

OF CHAP. III. OF THE BOOK OF JOB.

Perish the fatal day when I was born,  
The night with dreary darkness be forlorn ;  
The loathed, hateful, and lamented night  
When Job, 'twas told, had first perceived the light ;  
Let it be dark, nor let the God on high  
Regard it with a favourable eye ;  
Let blackest darkness and death's awful shade  
Stain it, and make the trembling earth afraid ;  
Be it not join'd unto the varying year,  
Nor to the fleeting months in swift career.  
Lo ! let the night, in solitude's dismay,  
Be dumb to joy, and waste in gloom away ;  
On it may twilight stars be never known ;  
Light let it wish for, Lord ! but give it none.  
Curse it let them who curse the passing day,  
And to the voice of mourning raise the lay ;  
Nor ever be the face of dawning seen  
To ope its lustre on the enamell'd green ;  
Because it seal'd not up my mother's womb,  
Nor hid from me the sorrows doom'd to come.  
Why, Lord ! the wretched object of thine ire,  
Did I not rather from the womb expire ?  
Why did supporting knees prevent my death,  
Or suckling breasts sustain my infant breath ?  
For now my soul with quiet had been blest,  
With kings and counsellors of earth at rest,  
Who bade the house of desolation rise,  
And awful ruin strike tyrannic eyes ;

Or with the princes unto whom were told  
Rich store of silver and corrupting gold ;  
Or, as untimely birth, I had not been  
Like infant who the light hath never seen :  
For there the wicked from their trouble cease,  
And there the weary find their lasting peace ;  
There the poor prisoners together rest,  
Nor by the hand of injury are prest ;  
The small and great together mingled are,  
And free the servant from his master, there.  
Say, wherefore has an over-bounteous Heaven  
Light to the comfortless and wretched given ?  
Why should the troubled and oppress'd in soul  
Fret over restless life's unsettled bowl,  
Who long for death, who lists not to their prayer,  
And dig as for the treasures hid afar ;  
Who with excess of joy are blest and glad,  
Rejoiced when in the tomb of silence laid ?  
Why, then, is grateful light bestow'd on man,  
Whose life is darkness, all his days a span ?  
For ere the morn return'd, my sighing came,  
My mourning pour'd out as the mountain stream ;  
Wild-visaged fear, with sorrow-mingled eye,  
And wan destruction, hideous, stared me nigh !  
For though no rest or safety blest my soul,  
New trouble came, new darkness, new control.

---

#### ODE TO HORROR.

Oh thou, who with incessant gloom  
Courts the recess of midnight tomb !  
Admit me of thy mournful throng,  
The scatter'd woods and wilds among.  
If e'er thy discontented ear  
The voice of sympathy can cheer,  
My melancholy bosom's sigh  
Shall to your mournful plaint reply ;

There to the fear-foreboding owl  
 The angry furies hiss and howl ;  
 Or near the mountain's pendant brow,  
 Where rush-clad streams in cadent murmurs flow.

## EPODE.

Who's he that with imploring eye  
 Salutes the rosy dawning sky !  
 The cock proclaims the morn in vain,  
 His sp'rit to drive to its domain :  
 For morning light can but return  
 To bid the wretched wail and mourn.  
 Not the bright dawning's purple eye  
 Can cause the frightful vapours fly ;  
 Nor sultry sol's meridian throne  
 Can bid surrounding fears be gone.  
 The gloom of night will still preside,  
 While angry conscience stares on either side.

## STROPHE.

To ease his sore distemper'd head,  
 Sometimes upon the rocky bed  
 Reclined he lies, to list the sound  
 Of whispering reed in vale profound.  
 Happy if Morpheus visits there,  
 A while to lull his woe and care ;  
 Send sweeter fancies to his aid,  
 And teach him to be undismay'd !  
 Yet wretched still ; for when no more  
 The gods their opiate balsam pour,  
 Behold ! he starts, and views again  
 The Libyan monster prance along the plain.  
 Now from the oozing cave he flies,  
 And to the city's tumult hies,  
 Thinking to frolic life away ;  
 Be ever cheerful, ever gay :  
 But though enwrapp'd in noise and smoke,  
 They ne'er can heal his peace when broke

His fears arise, he sighs again  
 For solitude on rural plain :  
 Even there his wishes all convene  
 To bear him to his noise again.  
 Thus tortured, rack'd, and sore oppress,  
 He ever hunts, but never finds his rest.

## ANTISTROPHE.

Oh exercise! thou healing power,  
 The toiling rustic's chiefest dower ;  
 Be thou with heaven-born virtue join'd,  
 To quell the tumults of the mind ;  
 Then man as much of joy can share  
 From ruffian winter, bleakly bare,  
 As from the pure ethereal blaze  
 That wantons in the summer rays.  
 The humble cottage then can bring  
 Content, the comfort of a king ;  
 And gloomy mortals wish no more  
 For wealth and idleness, to make them poor.

## ODE TO DISAPPOINTMENT.

Thou joyous fiend, life's constant foe,  
 Sad source of care, and spring of woe,  
     Soft pleasure's hard control ;  
 Her gayest haunts for ever nigh,  
 Stern mistress of the secret sigh  
     That swells the murmuring soul.

Why haunt'st thou me through deserts drear !  
 With grief-swoln sounds why wound my ear,  
     Denied to pity's aid !  
 Thy visage wan did e'er I woo,  
 Or at thy feet in homage bow,  
     Or court thy sullen shade !

Even now enchanted scenes abound,  
 Elysian glories strew the ground,  
     To lure the astonish'd eyes ;  
 Now horrors, hell, and furies reign,  
 And desolate the fairy scene  
     Of all its gay disguise.

The passions, at thy urgent call,  
 Our reason and our sense enthrall  
     In phrensy's fetters strong.  
 And now despair, with lurid eye,  
 Doth meagre poverty descry,  
     Subdued by famine long.

The lover flies the haunts of day,  
 In gloomy woods and wilds to stray,  
     There shuns his Jessy's scorn ;  
 Sad sisters of the sighing grove  
 Attune their lyres to hapless love,  
     Dejected and forlorn.

Yet hope undaunted wears thy chain,  
 And smiles amidst the growing pain,  
     Nor fears thy sad dismay ;  
 Unawed by power, her fancy flies  
 From earth's dim orb to purer skies,  
     To realms of endless day.

---

### DIRGE.

The waving yew or cypress wreath  
 In vain bequeath the mighty tear ;  
 In vain the awful pomp of death  
 Attends the sable-shrouded bier.

Since Strephon's virtue's sunk to rest,  
 Nor pity's sigh, nor sorrow's strain,  
 Nor magic tongue, have e'er confest  
 Our wounded bosom's secret pain.



The just, the good, more honours share  
 In what the conscious heart bestows,  
 Than vice adorn'd with sculptor's care,  
 In all the venal pomp of woes.

A sad-eyed mourner at his tomb,  
 Thou, friendship! pay thy rights divine,  
 And echo through the midnight gloom  
 That Strephon's early fall was thine.

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HORACE, ODE XI. LIB. I.

Ne'er fash your thumb what gods decree  
 To be the weird o' you or me,  
 Nor deal in cantrip's kittle cunning  
 To spier how fast your days are running;  
 But patient lippen for the best,  
 Nor be in dowy thought opprest.  
 Whether we see mair winters come,  
 Than this that spits wi' canker'd foam.  
 Now moisten weel your geyzen'd wa's  
 Wi' couthy friends and hearty blaws;  
 Ne'er let your hope o'ergang your days,  
 For eild and thraldom never stays;  
 The day looks gash, toot aff your horn,  
 Nor care ae strae about the morn.

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ON NIGHT.

Now murky shades surround the pole;  
 Darkness lords without control:  
 To the notes of buzzing owl,  
 Lions roar and tigers howl,  
 Fright'ning from their azure shrine  
 Stars that wont in orbs to shine:  
 Now the sailor's storm-toss'd bark  
 Knows no blest celestial mark,

While in the briny troubled deep  
 Dolphins change their sport for sleep ;  
 Ghosts, and frightful spectres gaunt,  
 Church-yard's dreary footpaths haunt,  
 And brush with wither'd arms the dews  
 That fall upon the drooping yews.

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### THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

My life is like the flowing stream  
 That glides where summer's beauties teem,  
 Meets all the riches of the gale  
 That on its watery bosom sail,  
 And wanders 'midst Elysian groves  
 Through all the haunts that fancy loves.

May I, when drooping days decline,  
 And 'gainst those genial streams combine,  
 The winter's sad decay forsake,  
 And centre in my parent lake.

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### SONG.

Since brightest beauty soon must fade,  
 That in life's spring so long has roll'd,  
 And wither in the drooping shade,  
 E'er it return to native mould—  
 Ye virgins, seize the fleeting hour,  
 In time catch Cytherea's joy,  
 Ere age your wonted smiles deflower,  
 And hopes of love and life annoy.

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### EPIGRAM

ON A LAWYER'S DESIRING ONE OF THE TRIBE TO LOOK WITH  
 RESPECT TO A GIBBET.

The lawyers may revere that tree  
 Where thieves so oft have strung,  
 Since, by the law's most wise decree,  
 Her thieves are never hung.

## EPIGRAM

ON THE AUTHOR'S INTENTION OF GOING TO SEA.

Fortune and Bob, e'er since his birth,  
Could never yet agree;  
She fairly kick'd him from the earth  
To try his fate at sea.

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## EPIGRAM

WRITTEN EXTEMPORE, AT THE DESIRE OF A GENTLEMAN WHO  
WAS RATHER ILL-FAVOURED, BUT WHO HAD A FAMILY OF  
BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN.

Scott and his children emblems are  
Of real good and evil;  
His children are like cherubims,  
But Scott is like the devil.

THE END.







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