

THE LASS OF LIVINGSTONE.

The original ballad of *The Lass of Livingstone* has been doomed for reason good to oblivion, there being nothing of it preserved but a verse beginning,

The bonnie lass of Livingstone,
Her name ye ken, her name ye ken.

Ramsay, seeing the impossibility of getting the rustic verses into good company, composed for the air one of his mediocre songs, beginning with this verse :

Pained with her slighting Jamie's love,
Bell dropped a tear, Bell dropped a tear ;
The gods descended from above,
Well pleased to hear, well pleased to hear.

Fortunately, in our wish to convey the air in connection with a song, we are relieved from the dilemma between the original lass and worthy Allan's tear-dropping Bell, by a clever old ditty to this tune,¹ which was taken down some years ago from the singing of an elderly man residing in Peebles.

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The melody is written in a treble clef. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with some words underlined. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (beamed eighth notes), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (half). The lyrics under the first staff are: To hae a wife and rule a wife, Taks a. The second staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (beamed eighth notes), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (half). The lyrics under the second staff are: wise man, taks a wise man; But to. The third staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (beamed eighth notes), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (half). The lyrics under the third staff are: get a wife to rule a man, O that ye can, O.

¹ *The Lass of Livingstone* is the name of one of the tunes in Henry Playford's Collection, 1700.

that ye can. So the wife that's wise we
 aye maun prize, For they're few, ye ken, they're
 few, ye ken; O Sol - o - mon says ye'll
 no find ane, In hun - dreds ten, in hun - dreds ten.

To hae a wife and rule a wife,
 Taks a wise man, taks a wise man ;
 But to get a wife to rule a man,
 O that ye can, O that ye can.
 So the wife that's wise we aye maun prize,
 For they're few, ye ken, they're few, ye ken ;
 O Solomon says ye'll no find ane,
 In hundreds ten, in hundreds ten.

So he that gets a guid, guid wife,
 Gets gear eneuch, gets gear eneuch ;
 And he that gets an ill, ill wife,
 Gets cares eneuch, gets fears eneuch.
 A man may spend, and hae to the end,
 If his wife be ought, if his wife be ought ;
 But a man may spare, and aye be bare,
 If his wife be nought, if his wife be nought.

We learn from the *Memoirs of Alexander Carlyle*,¹ that the actual bonnie lass of Livingstone was living in that district in

¹ Edinburgh, 1860; p. 97.

1744, by which time she must have reached a mature period of life. Being storm-stayed in November that year on his way to Glasgow, Carlyle spent three days at the little solitary *auberge* of Whitburn, when at length a returning postchaise enabled him to complete his journey. The landlady, whom he characterises as a 'sensible woman,' 'had in her youth been celebrated in a song as "the bonnie lass of Livingstone." The walls and windows,' he adds, 'were all scrawled with poetry ; and I amused myself not a little in composing a satire on my predecessors, which I also inscribed on the walls, to the great delight of my landlady, who shewed it for many years afterwards with vanity to her travellers.'