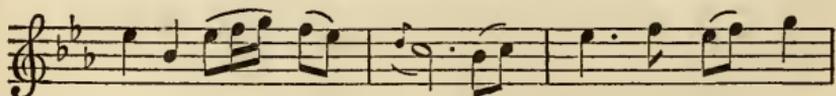


OLD LONG SYNE.

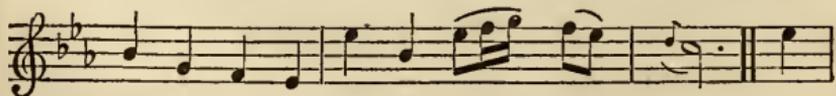
Burns thought the phrase, *Auld Lang Syne*, 'exceedingly expressive.' Its expressiveness in connection with the social feelings of the Scotsman—hallowing, as it were, all ordinary relations, and especially that of love—had struck the mind of a poet long before the days of the Ayrshire Ploughman. Probably as early as the reign of Charles I., its associations were conveyed in a song of many stanzas, which has been traced in broadsides prior to the close of the seventeenth century, and was gathered into James Watson's Collection, 1711. This song was as follows :



Should old ac - quaint - ance be for - got, And



nev - er thought up - on, The flames of love ex -



tin - guish - ed, And free - ly past and gone? Is

thy kind heart now grown so cold In that lov-ing breast of
 thine, That thou canst nev - er once re - flect On
 old long syne ?

FIRST PART.

Should old acquaintance be forgot,
 And never thought upon,
 The flames of love extinguished,
 And freely past and gone ?
 Is thy kind heart now grown so cold
 In that loving breast of thine,
 That thou canst never once reflect
 On old long syne ?

Where are thy protestations,
 Thy vows, and oaths, my dear,
 Thou mad'st to me and I to thee,
 In register yet clear ?
 Is faith and truth so violate
 To th' immortal gods divine,
 That thou canst never once reflect
 On old long syne ?

Is 't Cupid's fears, or frosty cares,
 That makes thy spirits decay ?
 Or is 't some object of more worth
 That's stolen thy heart away ?

Or some desert makes thee neglect
Him, so much once was thine,
That thou canst never once reflect
On old long syne ?

Is't worldly cares, so desperate,
That makes thee to despair ?
Is't that makes thee exasperate,
And makes thee to forbear ?
If thou of that were free as I,
Thou surely should be mine ;
If this were true, we should renew
Kind old long syne.

But since that nothing can prevail,
And all hope is in vain,
From these dejected eyes of mine
Still showers of tears shall rain :
And though thou hast me now forgot,
Yet I'll continue thine,
And ne'er forget for to reflect
On old long syne.

If e'er I have a house, my dear,
That truly is call'd mine,
And can afford but country cheer,
Or ought that's good therein ;
Though thou were rebel to the king,
And beat with wind and rain,
Assure thyself of welcome, love,
For old long syne.

SECOND PART.

My soul is ravish'd with delight
When you I think upon ;
All griefs and sorrows take the flight,
And hastily are gone ;

The fair resemblance of your face
So fills this breast of mine,
No fate nor force can it displace,
For old long syne.

Since thoughts of you do banish grief,
When I'm from you removed ;
And if in them I find relief,
When with sad cares I'm moved,
How doth your presence me affect
With ecstasies divine,
Especially when I reflect
On old long syne.

Since thou hast robb'd me of my heart,
By those resistless powers
Which Madam Nature doth impart
To those fair eyes of yours,
With honour it doth not consist
To hold a slave in pyne ;
Pray let your rigour, then, desist,
For old long syne.

'Tis not my freedom I do crave,
By deprecating pains ;
Sure, liberty he would not have
Who glories in his chains :
But this I wish—the gods would move
That noble soul of thine
To pity, if thou canst not love,
For old long syne.

Allan Ramsay fructified upon the hint afforded by the touching refrain of *Auld Lang Syne*, and produced a song of more moderate length, which William Thomson gave with music in his *Orpheus Caledonius*, and which may be found so

accompanied in Johnson's *Museum*. We cannot say much for Ramsay's verses; but one may be selected as a favourable specimen:

Methinks, around us, on each bough,
A thousand Cupids play;
Whilst through the groves I walk with you,
Each object makes me gay.
Since your return the sun and moon
With brighter beams do shine,
Streams murmur soft notes while they run,
As they did lang syne.

Burns afterwards produced a brief and most expressive song involving the idea, most part being his own composition; and this song, to the tune of *I Feed a Lass at Martinmas*, has found a lodgment in the hearts of Scotsmen in all parts of the earth, and must there remain while the words continue to be understood. It is appended here for the sake of the contrast with the elder song.