

THE WIDOW.

THE widow is feckless, the widow's alane,
 Yet nae ane e'er hears the puir widow complain;
 For ah! there's a Friend that the warld wotsna o',
 Wha brightens her ken, and wha lightens her wo.

She looks a' around her, an' what sees she there,
 But quarrels and cavils, but sorrow and care?
 She looks in within, and she feels in her breast
 A dawning o' glory, a foretaste o' rest.

The hope o' hereafter her lane bosom cheers—
 She langs sair to meet him wha left her in tears;
 And life's flickerin' licht, as it wanes fast awa',
 But fades to gie place to a far brichter daw.

The God o' high heaven is her comfort and guide,
 When earthly friends leave her, He stands by her side;
 He soothes a' her sorrows, an' hushes her fears,
 An' fountains o' joy rise frae well-springs o' tears.

Then, oh! show the widow the smile on your face;
 She's aft puir in gear, but she's aft rich in grace:
 Be kind to the widow, her Friend is on high,
 You'll meet wi' the widow again in the sky.

THE SILENT CHILD.

“ WHAT ails brither Johnny, he’ll no look at me,
 But lies looking up wi’ a half-steekit ee?
 Oh, cauld is his hand, and his face pale and wee—
 What ails brither Johnny, he’ll no speak to me?”

“ Alack, my wee lammie! your brither’s asleep,
 He looksna, he speaksna—yet, dear, dinna weep;
 Ye’ll break mither’s heart gin ye sab ower him sae;
 He’s dreaming—he’s gazing—on freends far away!”

“ Oh, wha can he see like the freends that are here?
 And whaur can he find hearts that lo’e him sae dear?
 Just wauken him, mither! his brither to see,
 I’ll gie him the black frock my faither ga’e me.”

“ Your black frock, my bairn,—ah! your brither is dead!
 That symbol o’ death sends a stound through my head.
 I made mysel’ trow he wad wauken ance mair;
 But now he’s in Heaven—he’s waiting us there.”

THE DREAMING CHILD.

“ BE still, my dear darling, why start ye in sleep?
Ye dream and ye murmur, ye sob and ye weep;
What dread ye, what fear ye? oh, hush ye your fears—
Still starting, still moaning—still, still shedding tears!

“ Be still, my dear darling, oh, stay your alarm!
Your brave-hearted father will guard you from harm;
With bare arm he toils by that red furnace glare,
His child and his wife and his home all his care.

“ But, hark! what a crash—hush, my darling, be still,
Those screams 'mid dark night bode some terrible ill—
Your father is there—death and danger are there!”
She bears forth her child, and she flies fleet as air.

A slow measured tread beats the smoke-blacken'd way,
On which a pale torch sheds a dim sickly ray;
The dreaming child's father and comrades forlorn—
Their dead neighbour home to a widow have borne.

The mother her baby clasps close to her breast,
"Your father is safe—my dear darling, now rest,
While I go to aid this lone daughter of sorrow,
God help me! I may be a widow to-morrow!"

THE ORPHAN WANDERER.

“ O HELP the poor orphan ! who, friendless, alone,
In the darkness of night o'er the plain wanders on,
While the drift rushes fleet, and the tempest howls drear,
And the pelting snow melts as it meets the warm tear.”

“ Press onward ! a light breaks from yon cottage door—
There lives a lone widow, as kind as she's poor ;
Go ! let your sad plaint meet her merciful ear,
She'll kiss from your cold cheek that heart-bursting tear.

“ I'm fatherless ! motherless ! weary and worn,
Dejected, forsaken, sad, sad, and forlorn !
A voice 'mid the storm bade me bend my steps here—
And told me the widow the orphan would cheer !”

“ That voice was from Heaven—God hath answer'd my
prayer !
My dead boy's blue eyes and his bright sunny hair !
Thou com'st, my sweet orphan, my lone heart to cheer !
Thou hast both a home and a fond mother here !”

MY COTTAGE MAID.

My Cottage Maid, my Cottage Maid,
 Ah! long and weary ways I've strayed,
 Afar from home, afar from thee,
 Dear idol of my memory ;
 To whom my heart's fond feelings cling,
 To whom my soul would fain take wing.—
 All wealth, and power, and glory fade
 Before thy light, my Cottage Maid.

Thy sylph-like form, that heath-clad grot,
 That ivy-circled, thatch-roofed cot,
 All lead my wandering fancy back
 Along Time's hollow-sounding track,
 To Nature as she wont to be
 When, in my merry boyhood's glee,
 A truant o'er the fields I strayed,
 With love and thee, my Cottage Maid.

Ah! oft we climbed the whin-clad hill,
 Where linnets warbled clear and shrill,

'Mong skipping lambs and bleating sheep,
 'Mid goats that scaled each craggy steep;—
 Then flower was pluckt, and tuft was shorn,
 Then fence was leapt, and skirt was torn;
 And there, in rosy bloom arrayed,
 Sprung like a sylph, my Cottage Maid.

Or, when the gloaming lull'd to rest
 Each little flower on earth's fair breast;
 And tall trees shook their leafy wings
 'Mid nature's gentle murmurings,
 And sense and feeling, sound and sight,
 Were chasten'd by the falling night;—
 How sweet in chequer'd forest glade,
 To stray with thee, my Cottage Maid!

And there, while dark trees met the sky,
 Obscuring tints of richest dye,
 All golden though those tints might be—
 Why, what were skies of gold to me,
 When cheek to cheek, and heart to heart,
 We both like timid fawns would start,
 If one small ray pierced through the shade
 That wrapt me and my Cottage Maid!

When heaven's pale brow was jewell'd bright,
 And moon and stars shed floods of light;

Together would we wand'ring stray,
 And strive to trace each glist'ning ray;
 Yet not a light illumed the skies
 So lustrous as those pure bright eyes
 That with my trembling heartstrings played—
 And told thy love, my Cottage Maid.

Oh, happy days! oh, happy hours!
 Oh, life's fantastic fairy flowers!
 Why fly those happy hours away?
 Why do those fairy flowers decay?
 On Time's swift wing all pleasures fly,
 As autumn clouds fleet o'er the sky:
 Now, low in earth my flower is laid—
 My sun of life, my Cottage Maid!

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW'S LAMENT.

OCH-ON och-rie ! Och-on och-rie !

I'm weary, sad, and lone ;
 And who can cheer the desolate,
 When all their friends are gone ?
 The midnight wind that stirs the heath,
 And wails with hollow moan,
 Is laden with the voice of death,
 And I am left alone.

Och-on och-rie ! Och-on och-rie !

That ancient mournful strain,
 Which echoes thro' each Highland glen,
 Hath rent my heart in twain.
 I gaze upon my roofless cot,
 And on my cold hearth-stone,
 I murmur, am I God-forgot,
 That I am left alone ?

Och-on och-rie ! Och-on och-rie !

Still swells that melting air,

Blest spirits of my gallant boys,
 I hear your voices there :
 Ye fought—a Scottish Prince to place
 Upon a Scottish throne ;
 Ye died—the last of all your race,
 And I am left alone !

DESPONDENCY AND CHEERFULNESS.

“ My wee bit helpless callant ! oh, that look I canna bear !
 Ye are seeking for a smile, an’ I gie ye but a tear ;
 For oh ! your daddie’s heart wi’ grief is unco sair oppress’d,
 While ye are lying faulded to your minnie’s beating breast.”

“ Come, come, cheer up, my Johnnie, man, an’ tak ye heart
 frae me,
 I’ll keep awa the saut, saut tear that bleers your kindly ee ;
 We’re puir short-sighted mortals, sae let’s aye hope for the
 best,
 An’ bury a’ your cares an’ fears within your wifie’s breast.”

“ In vain ye strive to cheer my heart, my kind an’ gentle
 dame,
 When poortith’s dark and dreary cluds are low’rin’ ower our
 hame ;
 I canna get a stroke o’ wark—oh, sair, sair is the test !
 An’ whiles, God help me ! cruel thoughts rise swelling in my
 breast.”

“Hoot toot, awa, my Johnnie, man, why wad ye fret an’
mourn?

Although the times are hard e’ennow, they soon may tak a
turn;

Be thankfu’ for the mercies past, Heaven still will mak us
blest,—

E’en now a daw of hope is rising in your wifie’s breast.”

And hark! a round, full manly voice shouts through the
cottage-door,

“Hallo! Jock, lad, the laird’s come hame—there’s wark for
years in store;”

The father started till his feet, an’ wife an’ wean caress’d,—

He felt that Heaven had a shrine within his wifie’s breast.

THE AULD AUNTY MAIDEN.

Oh, rosy are the eastern skies
 At dawn o' summer mornin',
 But brighter are the gowden dyes
 The e'ening skies adornin' :
 Oh pure the love o' her wha's charms
 May grace the hamely plaiden,
 But purer far the love that warms
 The Auld Aunty Maiden.

Then twine it weel, then twine it weel,
 Then twine it weel the plaiden ;
 There's nane e'er twined or span for me
 Like my dear Aunty Maiden.

Oh, how may hand-bound minnie get
 Her tottums clad sae gaily?
 The youngest aye is Aunty's pet,
 Wha brings him presents daily.

An' wha wad tak the orphan's part
 An' twine for him the plaiden,
 An' 'twerena for the kindly heart
 O' his dear Aunty Maiden?
 Then twine it weel, &c.

Oh, mutual love is mutual bliss,
 Young mou's were made for preicin',
 An' when we pree the half-stoun kiss,
 We're gettin' whaur we're geein'.
 But there's a love seeks nae return
 Frae them wi' poortith laden—
 A heart to beat for them wha mourn
 A kindly Aunty Maiden.
 Then twine it weel, and twine it weel,
 Then twine it weel the plaiden,
 There's nane e'er twined or toil'd for me,
 Like my Auld Aunty Maiden.

A PLEASING SURPRISE.

O WHAT a racketing and noise,
From morning until night,
These restless children make,—I'm kept
For ever in a fright.

A boist'rous burst of merriment
Rings pealing in my ears,
Anon discordant screams and yells
Awake my keenest fears.

I read, but cannot understand,
I try in vain to think,
My dizzy brain wheels round and round,
As if I were in drink.

Then in the bold insurgents rush,
When I would write or draw,
With "Sketch me this," and "Scrawl me that,"
"O there 's a dear papa!"

They're off, when lo! a sudden lull,
A silence hushed and still,
Steals o'er the house, like death, and makes
My blood run cold and chill.

But hark! now loud and louder screams
My tingling ears annoy;
"These screaming girls will drive me mad,
I wish I had a boy."

I ring the bell, I cry "Good nurse,
Cannot you keep them quiet?
A full brigade of boys could ne'er
Kick up so loud a riot."

When lo! the nurse placed in my arms
An infant young and fair,
"This is the boy who bawled so loud,
Come, kiss your son and heir."

THE EXPRESS TRAIN.

SPEED on in thine impetuous course,
 Speed on in thy resistless force,
 Speed on o'er river, lake, and fen,
 Speed on through valley, brake, and glen,
 O'er fertile plain, o'er sterile hill,
 Speed, speed, my soul flies fleeter still ;
 Time, space, alike are nought to thee,
 And distant scenes are dear to me.

What though around on every side
 Rich verdant fields stretch far and wide,
 Though blending with the smiling sky,
 Skiddaw's blue peak looms towering high,
 Though far beneath in glist'ning gold,
 Those lakes a double earth unfold,
 Still wayward fancy wanders free,
 And wafts dear Scotland's hills to me.

Come, stoker, come, more steam, more steam,
 With smelting heat make furnace gleam ;

That blazing mass come stoke and poke,
 Send up vast sheets of flame and smoke,
 Urge on with treble speed the train
 That wafts me to my home again,
 When wife and children, wild with glee,
 Shall fondly bound to welcome me.

No drawing rein, no slacking pace,
 No pausing in this matchless race,
 No ceasing of that rushing song,
 No wearing of those lungs so strong;
 But ha! that whistle shrill and clear,
 Chills every heart, strains every ear,
 One stroke, one bound, ah! there may be
 Sad hearts at home bereft of me.

Does sight, does reason hold their sway?
 Proud London did I leave to-day!
 We stop,—what next? groups gather thick;
 We're home! we're home!—come, guard, be quick!
 I'm answer'd by a counter claim,
 “Papa, what hae ye brought us hame?”
 And clustering round my neck and knee,
 My wife and bairnies welcome me.

THE NIGHT ATTACK.

STRIKE, strike, brave drum, thy startling note,
Strain, bugle, strain thy brazen throat;
Up, warriors, up! your country calls,
Up, thickly man your castle walls!
Let floods of flame dark night illumine,
Dread foemen lurk amid the gloom.

With stealthy tread and pent-up breath,
The close-wedged ranks stride o'er the heath,
The rock they climb, the walls they scale,
Shots rattle thick and fleet as hail:
To arms! To arms! hoarse voices call,
In vain;—the assailants man the wall.

A thousand heroes start from sleep,
They rush to arms 'mid darkness deep,
Each musket raised with deadly aim,
Now vomits sheets of death-gorged flame;
And lights with fiery red the night,
That shrinking shuns the bloody sight.

Anon, anon, steel pressed to steel,
Down, down, the stricken warriors reel ;
Again, again, heart, hand, and eye,
Fierce struggle for the mastery,
And dying shrieks and war-shouts tell
The horrors of a battle-hell.

The sun now gleams o'er tower and height,
And silence comes with morning light,
Victor and vanquished, which are they ?
Alas ! in yonder castle grey,
But few survive of either host
To tell the keep was kept or lost.

THE HIGHLAND LADDIE.

WHAT can a kilted callant do,
 But like his gallant sire, man,
 Baith learn to fecht an' conquer too,
 Wi' Highland pith and fire, man?
 The love o' hill, o' heath, an' hame,
 Comes wi' his first-drawn breath man,
 And Freedom beits the patriot flame
 That bleazes bright till death man.

Your feckless, thowless, Southlan' brats,
 Dang doyte wi' licks an' lair man,
 May deave ye wi' their gabbin' chats,
 But can do little mair man.
 Their licks an' laws, their beuks an' taws,
 Man's stalwart vigour kills man;
 But gin ye'd see him bauld an' free,
 Come to our Highland hills man.

Here ilka callant learns to wield
 His dirk, claymore, an' a' man;

And scorns his limbs in breeks to bield,
 For a' the blasts that blaw man ;
 And though they swear their lowland lear
 Maks Britain great and free man,
 It's our snell braes that gaurs her faes
 A' cowerin' swarf an' flee man.

Hurrah for Scotland's laurelled fame !
 Hurrah for Britain's glory !
 Long may they wear their taintless name,
 Lang shine in sang and story.
 Lang may the voice o' Freedom ring
 Through ilka Scottish shieling ;
 And lang may Britain's callants sing,
 Inspired wi' kindred feeling.

THE SODGER'S LASSIE.

I WINNA hae a lawyer loun, wi' glib an' sleekit mou',
 Wha gaurs the wrang appear the richt, gin bribed by
 muckle fee,
 Wha plays at fast an' loose alike baith wi' the fause and true,
 Nae twa-faced whomlin' whirligig shall ever wheedle me.

I winna hae the merchant chiel, wha's wealth is a' his pride,
 Wi' treasures piled in ilka land, an' ships on ilka sea ;
 E'en let him woo Dame Fortune, and her fickle humour bide,
 Nae sordid son o' Mammon e'er shall win a heart frae me.

I winna hae a loutish laird, wha talks o' wheat an' bear,
 And brags o' acres stretchin' far ower mountain, muir, and
 lee ;
 Wha hoards kind Nature's gowden stores to keep the markets
 dear,
 Nae wretch wha stints the puir man's caup need e'er seek
 grace frae me.

But gin a sodger, young an' brave, wha guards his country's
weal,

Wi' patriot ardour in his heart, an' daurin' in his ee,
Should ever seek to win my heart, wi' purpose true an' leal,
How dear the thought, that sic a heart should hae a neuk
for me !