

Yon's the new tenant o' Mossgiel,
 A gey hard-workin', honest chiel.
 Ye'll see him whiles at kirk or fair;
 He cam' frae some airt wast by Ayr.
 He an' his brither Gibbie baith
 Are steerin' mensefu' lads; but faith!
 They'll no' mak' muckle oot Mossgiel,
 Yon land would fley the very de'il.
 But Rab gaes at it, dour, ram-stam.
 There's whiles he tak's an unco dram
 To gie him spunk when things gae bad;
 But maistly he's a douce young lad.

There's something in his big, broon een
 That would mak' ony man his freen;
 A kindly glint that seems to say
 Mankind are brithers, weel or wae.
 But losh! there's something in the cratur,
 A feckless side to his guid-natur,
 That gars him, whiles, at plooin' thrang,
 Rein in his horse, an' croon a sang,
 Syne write a screed o' rhymin' verse
 That gangs to some auld tune in Erse.
 Then, to his wark wi' furious ettle
 He'll yoke ance mair, like man o' mettle.

They say the chiel is faur frae blate
 When bonnie lassies come his gate;
 But folk maun clash—ne'er heed sic havers,
 Nor fash yer thoom wi' country clavers:
 We're sinners a' or saints by turns.
 Ye're speirin' for his name?—It's Burns.

A COVENANTER

I'se ne'er uphaud I was a saint,
I've had my daft days like the lave ;
An' de'il be in't, can I repent :
I'se bear the wyte o't yont the grave.

But when the State, wi' murderous dirk
Held to my breist, threeps down my thrapple
That I maun lea' auld Scotland's Kirk,
Sit under Prelates in a chapel ;

Forsweer the sacred covenant
Oor faithers made in bygane years,
An' worship as the King does want !
Shall this be tholed? Na, damn the fears !

Kings may be kings by richt divine :
The King shall hae his richts ; but dod !
He'll get them when he gi'es me mine,
An' mells na wi' the things o' God.

The men o' wrath gaed forth to kill ;
The red dragoons were at their posts ;
I left my yowes upon the hill,
An' listed wi' the Lord o' hosts.

For Cov'nant folk the sword had drawn
To meet the oppressors front to front :
Gin they be dour, weel, we'se be thrawn ;
We'll up an' gi'e them dunt for dunt.

I saw the tulzie at Drumclog,
Whaur mony gat the wage o' sin ;
We drave them ram-stam through the bog,
An' faith ! they werna sweer tae rin.

Claver'se himsel' was gar'd to ride—
Oh ! prood were we that day an' big—
Wae's me ! wae's me ! for sinfu' pride,
We gat oor paiks at Bothwell Brig.

Sae, hunted like the tods an' brocks,
Ower muir an' moss by sodgers driven,
Oor kirk is 'mang the roofless rocks ;
Oor prayers gang stracht to God in heaven.

He sees His creatures through an' through ;
He kens He made us o' the dust ;
He kens oor he'rts, though steeve, are true ;
He kens oor Cov'nant's cause is just.

THE YETTS O' TRAQUAIR

During the '45, when Prince Charles Edward left on his march south, the gates of Traquair were closed behind him, to be opened when his cause triumphed.

THEY hae steekit the yetts o' Traquair till the king
comes hame.

She kissed his haun' at the door an' saw him gang.
(Oh! prood she was in her he'rt o' the Stewart
name.)

An' the Prince rade forth, an' ahint him the yetts
gaed clang!

The lads are awa', but Tweed rins aye the same.

They hae steekit the yetts o' Traquair till the king
comes hame.

Lang will the yetts be lockit, an' lang awa'
The lads that followed the Prince wi' the yellow
hair.

The leaves shall redden an' fa' in the birken shaw,
An' bud again when the mavis sings ance mair;
But the licht has gane frae the een, an' the bloom is
ta'en

Frae the cheek, o' the lass that's left to sigh her lane.

They hae steekit the yetts o' Traquair till the king
comes hame;

The iron bars are red wi' the rust o' years.

It's an auld sang noo, the end o' an ancient name,
There's pride in't, an' dule in't ower deep for tears;
An' there's ghaists that pass in the mirk, by Tweed's
dark river,

Whaur the yetts o' Traquair are steekit for aye an'
ever.

THE SUMMONS

“Wha chaps at the door
At this mirk 'oor o' nicht,
When there's nae staur or mune
Or nae caun'le-licht?
Wha tirls at the pin,
Cryin': 'Rise, ye maun ride'?
The gudeman is bedded;
Your errand can bide.”

“My errand can bide na,
My purpose is set,
A black steed is champin'
His bit at your yett;
Though deep be the snaw-drift,
The river in flude,
I rede ye maun ride
Through the daurk o' the wude.”

“Wha chaps at the door
On this snell nicht an' cauld?
The gudeman is dwaibly,
The gudeman is auld.
What black steed is champin'?
Nae horse that I ken.
It's a reuch road to trevel
Faur doon the deep glen.”

“The road ye maun trevel's
A road that is new;
What's frichtsme to some
Micht be he'rtsome to you.

Ye ken na my errand?
Ye're nigh on fower score.
Weel, speir ye my name then—
Daith chaps at your door ! ”

THE REIVER'S SON

THE King cam' up the Canongate,
And dule was in his e'e;
He kent the fate that, sune or late,
A Stewart king maun dree.
Nae benison could bring him grace;
A curse was laid upon his race.

The King cam' up the Canongate,
Wi' gentles in his train;
And through the crood that murmured lood
They rade in grim disdain.
The drums may beat, the bells may ring,
But wha would cheer a luckless king?

A little lad amang the thrang
Threw up his cap in glee,
Amid the crood that murmured lood
"God save the King!" cried he.
Though nane was there to say "Amen,"
"God save the King!" he cried again.

The King drew rein, and a' his train
Halted to ken his will.
The monarch smiled upon the child,
"Why dost thou love me still?
Alane you shout, 'God save the King!'
'Mang a' this gurly gathering."

"Sire," said the boy, "nae need to speir
Why I do love thee still,
I shout 'God save the King!' because
'Twas my deid faither's will.
He bade me loyal aye to be,
To Scotland and your Majesty."

“Wha was your faither?” said the King.
Then spak’ the lad in grief,
“He was a border Armstrong,
You hanged him for a thief.
Ah, Sire, what monarch could be blest,
Wha hangs the folk that love him best?”

The King gaed up the Canongate,
And dule was in his e’e;
He kent the fate that, sune or late,
A Stewart king maun dree.
Nae benison could bring him grace;
The curse o’ God was on his race.