

CHAPTER VIII.

Weary fa' the fiddler, what took him awa?
An' I the flower o' a' the ball haena danced awa;
Wi' grannie's rings, and minny's pearlins, decked sae rich an' braw,
Weary fa' the fiddler, what took him awa!

Mint Rhyme.

THE sudden disappearance of the musician, and the emotion evinced by Nairn, excited the wonder of the numerous guests, and put a stop to the exuberant mirth and hilarity hitherto maintained in both dining and ball rooms. The whole company rushed to the door after the Laird, and in their eagerness to ascertain the cause of his sudden excitement, pressed so closely around him, as to render it impossible for him to stir a step further in pursuit of the object of his anxiety; while, to complete his embarrassment, a feeling of shame, at the unguarded extravagance of his own conduct, was mingled with regret for the opportunity he had lost of ascertaining the fate of those credentials so essential to the completion of a design, in the furtherance of which he was so warmly interested. For some time his mind remained entirely abstracted from the scene around him, and it was not till the voice of Aunt Matty was heard, exclaiming in tones that were distinctly heard above all the turmoil, "Laird Nairn, Laird Nairn! what has come ower ye?" that the Laird recovered himself sufficiently to conduct his company back to the ball-room. Then, in answer to numerous inquiries, he explained, that the musician who had appeared and disappeared so suddenly and unexpectedly, was, he firmly believed, a very old acquaintance, whom he had long thought dead; that he was convinced of his identity from the manner in which some semitones in the melody of "The auld Stuarts back again" had been blended together; that, startled by the well-known sounds, he had given way to his feelings in the extraordinary manner they had witnessed. "Now that I think of it," he added, "I wonder, seeing the oddness of my conduct, that you did not all run out of the house together, as well as the poor musician, who has always been of a nervous

temperament. Where he has come from, or whither gone, I cannot at all conjecture, but I have no doubt Miss Hepburn here, to whom we all owe so much, and by whom he was engaged for this occasion, will be able afterwards to satisfy my curiosity. Meantime," he continued, addressing my aunt, "you will perhaps, madam, add to the many favours you have already conferred on me, by supplying the place of the missing musician, and thus enable our friends to continue their merriment, which must not be stayed on any account. We shall have my old grandaunt's spinnet brought downstairs. I am sure you will readily take your place at the instrument, and keep up the dance, which I have to express my sincere regret for having undesignedly interrupted."

Aunt Matty at once acceded to the Laird's request. The ancient instrument, with its silver keys, which had sounded right merrily in this very house at a ball given by Nairn's father to the officers of Prince Charles's army, was again rendered fit for duty, and subsequently touched with great delicacy and skill by my aunt, who played Scotch reels and strathspeys with singular vigour and spirit. The gentlemen expressed their delight with the change in the musical department, if not as to the instrument, at least as regarded the performance; and several of the ladies afterwards insinuated that the departure of the fiddler had been contrived beforehand, to afford the good lady an opportunity of showing off her antiquated accomplishments. The festive board was in due time spread, or rather loaded, with a splendid supper, which was done ample justice to by the party, who afterwards separated, as usual, so highly delighted with themselves, that they scarcely reserved a corner in their hearts for gratitude to their entertainer, who found, as is not unfrequently the case on such occasions, that the object he had in view was not in any way forwarded by the entertainment on which so much labour and money had been expended.

After the guests had departed, and my uncle, as became such a gay and accomplished gallant, had gone away to convoy home some of the ladies whose liege lords or loving fathers had got a little top-heavy, my aunt had a long conversation with Nairn regarding the fiddler. She could give no account of him further than that having been attracted one night in the High Street, along with many others, by the superior

manner in which he played Scotch reels and strathspeys, she had made her way to him through the crowd, and engaged him for this occasion. She added, "I'm sure there winna be muckle difficulty in finding him out, unless, indeed, he had some reason for evading you, and then he'll likely leave the toon."

"Reason!" said Nairn, "he could have no reason for evading me, but what may have been caused by my sudden and abrupt exclamation. Yet he might have perceived that it indicated anything but evil to him. Besides, he ought to have known the house well, and to have been quite aware of my friendly disposition towards him."

"Yes," said my sagacious aunt, "but in this he showed mair discretion than you. For, frae your awfu' yell, whilk rings in my ears even yet, he wad very likely think that ye were gaun to tell your guests wha he was; and aiblins he has his ain reasons for keepin' that secret to himsel'. Even yet, there's no ower muckle charity gaun for folk o' his persuasion; but bide ye till our friend the Gaberlunzie comes back, he'll be sure to ken a' the howffs o' siccan clanjamphry, and can gang amang them as gin he were ane o' themsel's, and that's what neither you nor me can do; he winna be lang o' howkin the auld fiddler out o' his hole; but are ye sure it's him?"

"As sure as you are sitting beside me now," answered Nairn.

"Atweel an' that's sure enough," said my aunt, "as your lugs and my tongue can testify, for the ringin' o' the tane, an' the tinglin' o' the ither, wad rival the bell an' bell tongue o' auld St Giles himsel'. But I maun bid ye gude mornin'; for my brither, wha has been seeing Deacon Cordivan's wife an' daughters hame, has come back to convoy me to the square. We'll see ye up by the morn," added she, "or I'll be doun betimes, to gie Nanny a hand in reddin' up the house. Od help us! what a disjaskit lookin' thing is a ball and supper room after the party hae left them. What a world o' trouble we women bodies hae that naebody kens o' but oursel's, afore we get a' our nick-nackets in order again!"

"Indeed," said my uncle, "ye hae nae occasion to complain, Matty; it was a' your ain doing; and although I didna hook the salmon for a' the gude bait and line I offered, your trouble's no a' lost, now that we ken the musician's living."

“Many thanks, many thanks, my good, kind friends,” continued Nairn. “But good-night; I see you are impatient to get home; that queer loon the Gaberlunzie will soon be back, and then for the fiddler.”

In the course of a few days the Gaberlunzie did return from the country, and was delighted and astonished, though somewhat disappointed, to learn the result of the grand entertainment. Of course, he was much more interested in the appearance and disappearance of the musician, than excited by the long catalogue of dresses detailed to him by Matty, or the history of the fearful outlay of money, as retailed to him by Nanny. Neither did he seem much affected by the condescension of “the member;” and all the outgoings and incomings connected with the great event, were evidently matters of minor importance to him compared with the incident of the fiddler, about whom he asked many questions. He made Nairn imitate his style of playing; my uncle, who was noted for his mimicry, smoothed out his cue, contracted the muscles of his mouth, bent his head forward, and looked the very man. After observing all these points attentively, the Gaberlunzie declared that he would know the fiddler among a thousand, and if he was within broad Scotland he would discover his hiding-place. Accordingly, on the following day, he set out on a voyage of discovery, and day after day, night after night, continued perambulating the city, exploring every street, lane, and alley, but without success. On one occasion, however, after having spent the whole day in this fruitless pursuit, he found himself at night in the West Bow, when it occurred to him that in that neighbourhood there was a *howff*, or low-public house, where a number of street musicians, and dissipated persons of all sorts, were wont to assemble in the evenings, and this rendezvous he resolved on visiting, in the forlorn hope that here he might procure some tidings of the missing musician. But as the Old West Bow has now become one of the things that were, it may not be out of place here to put on record a short general outline of what then constituted one of the most remarkable features of the ancient city.

This very narrow and tortuous street, or rather alley, ascended at acute angles the most abrupt portion of the ridge on which the old town is cradled, and was perhaps the most unique specimen of antique irregular architecture to be found in Europe.

The form of the houses generally harmonized admirably with the steep ascent of the street, and, by mere accident, seemed to have been arranged in every point with a due regard to pictorial effect. There was much irregularity in the tall buildings, yet a general stately bearing characterized them all, and the dotted, twisted, and irregular outline, when seen from the street, strongly relieved against the blue sky, was bold, picturesque, and striking. Several of the tallest tenements had square leaden roofs, surrounded with open embrasured balconies, from which projected stone waterspouts cut into the shape of cannon, a conceit said by some of our local antiquaries to have been originally intended to give strangers an exaggerated idea of the strength of the old city. Others of the buildings had high gables, which faced the street, and tapered up into lofty pediments, generally terminated by sculptured roses, thistles, crescents, or fleurs-de-lis. Some of these crow-stepped roofs were very steep, and contained two distinct storeys above the eaves of the houses. Outside stairs and wooden balconies were thrown forward into this narrow and crowded thoroughfare, making it still more narrow and contracted. There were large oaken window frames, with very deep and beautifully cut mouldings, and the window tops were frequently carved and adorned with varied quaint devices. The street exhibited likewise many low-browed doors of a heavy antique construction, rivetted by strong iron hinges batted into the wall. On these doors were to be seen the old-fashioned rasps and long bodied knockers in use during the last century, while on the lintel-stones were carved curious mottoes, indicating a laudable anxiety on the part of the builders of these ancient edifices to transmit, not only their names, or the initials of their names, to posterity, but good, sound, moral, and patriotic maxims, similar to the following:—

KEE TRYST EVR BETTER LATE AS NEVER
 THE BLISSING OF GOD IS GRIT RICHES. 1.5.59
 I.B. GET AND SAIF AND TMOV SALT MAIF AAR
 HEV TTHOLIS  OVER CVMMIS.

Altogether there was a smack of originality about this ancient locality, which, added to the old associations therewith connected, greatly enhanced the interest of the antiquarian relics with which it abounded. There still remained sunk in the walls a portion of a hinge belonging to the gate of the Overbow Port, where the triumphal arch had been erected on the joyous occasion of Charles I.'s visit to the metropolis of his ancient kingdom, and where the Lady Caledonia, in rich attire, received and congratulated his Majesty on his arrival, in a poetic speech, of which the following lines may serve as a specimen :—

“ The heavens have heard our vows, our just desires
 Obtained are, no higher now aspires
 Our wishing thought, since to his native clime
 The flower of Princes, honour of his time,
 Enchanting all our dales, hills, forests, streams,
 As Phœbus doth the summer with his beams,
 Is come, and radiant to us in his train.
 The golden age and virtues brings again.”

In the West Bow also was situated the Assembly Rooms, where the rank and beauty of the city in former days had tripped through the mazy dance. Here also was pointed out with superstitious horror the deserted house occupied of yore by Major Weir, of diabolical celebrity, who was wont to be whirled down the steep causeway at midnight in a carriage driven by the Prince of Darkness, and drawn by four headless black chargers, the noise of the wheels, and the glare of the Lucifer torches, accompanied by storms of thunder and lightning, often alarming the peaceful inhabitants at that dismal hour, which Burns has so happily called the “keystone” of “night's black arch.”

Although the height, closeness, and general cold gray colour of the buildings in this narrow and crooked street gave it a somewhat dull and sombre air, yet, when a stray sunbeam did struggle through some of the angular corners, it glistened brilliantly among the white shells with which the plaster fronts of the houses were thickly studded, and lightened the hearts of many a merry group of artisans, as busily employed at the anvil or the fire they sung away right cheerily in their dingy workshops. The chief thoroughfare to the western suburban districts, and the line of communication between the



WEST BOW: MIDNIGHT.

Here, also, was pointed out, with superstitious horror, the deserted house occupied of yore by MAJOR WEIR, or diabolical celebrity, who was wont to be whirled down the steep causeway at midnight in a carriage driven by the Prince of Darkness, and drawn by four headless black chargers.

High Street and Grassmarket, where all the weekly fairs and markets were held, the West Bow was one of the most noisy quarters of the city. The clinking of coppersmiths' hammers, the bawling of speech-criers, ballad-singers, and vendors of street merchandise, were mingled with the scraping of fiddles, the beating of drums, and the squeaking of cracked clarionets. Wonderful exhibitions were also shown there, from wooden Punchinello to the *ground-and-lofty* tumbling of ladies and gentlemen in spangled dresses and with carnationed faces. Most of the shops were such as dealt in the common necessities of life, with which they were generally crammed to the door; broadcloth, caps, kebbocks, stockings, wooden dishes, crockery, and other equally useful articles, being jumbled together in apparently inextricable confusion; thus rendering the West Bow a sort of emporium of homely merchandise and curious nick-nacks, and a source of great amusement to the urban wanderer.

The howff, or low public-house, to which the Gaberlunzie had proceeded on his mission of inquiry, was situated about the middle of this very characteristic entrance to Auld Reekie. It was kept by a Highlander, who sold, or professed to sell, genuine Ferintosh very cheap. The entrance-door to Donald's hostelry was in a narrow corner, formed by one of the acute angles of the Bow, with a curious half-hidden wooden front, above which projected a roof of the same material, and before which hung a large angular sign-board, on one side of which was painted with alluring fidelity a sheep's head and a kail-pot, and on the other side the figure of a Highlander working at a still—the whole supposed to be symbolical of the low-priced refreshments to be had within.

The persons who patronised this establishment were of a rather anomalous description. Amongst them were a number of jovial mechanics, who, attracted by the charms of music, were in the habit of mingling with the street professors of that delightful art, which here divided dominion with the god of grog, if there be such a deity. Several of the subordinate local dignitaries, such as the town bellman, drummer, and others, were in the habit of visiting the house secretly, the liquor being low-priced, and the place not one where they were likely to be sought. But the following cantata, opening with an address to the chief personage who was wont to rule as monarch of the

feast, is perhaps better adapted than anything I can do, in the way of prose description, to give my readers an idea of the worshipful fraternity into which the search for the fiddler led the Gaberlunzie—a picture of a club in low life, without which any representation of Edinburgh at the time now spoken of would be incomplete :—



THE NAILER'S GLORY : A CANTATA.

AULD, doiter'd, donnert, daidlin' creature,
 Thou wee black speck o' human nature !
 Ilk bloatit, bruckit, barkit feature
 Proclaims thy story,
 An' tells, though thou art scrimp in stature,
 Thou'rt great in glory.

A buddin', braid, carbuncled beak
 Spreads ower your phiz frae cheek to cheek ;
 A bushy beard, as thick as theeck,
 Begirts your mou,
 Wi' sneeshing an' tobacco-reek
 A' singet through.

Aneath your shaggy ee-brees brink
 Are twa black een that sleely wink

At ilka tale ye tell, they blink
Clear, keen, an' bright,
An' sparkle at ilk waught o' drink
Like stars o' light.

Your gab gangs at an endless gallop,
Laden wi' lees at ilka wallop ;
Auld Cloutie's sel' could ne'er develop
Sic plots an' lees,
As the lang whuds that thou can call up
Wi' perfect ease.

Your sooty, singet, brunt bit brattie,
Strung round your buik, ye waichlin fattie ;
Your auld knee-breekums, rent and clattie,
And your auld pate,
Stuck in a rimless sodger's hattie,
Wi' regal state.

A never-ending, munching muddle,
A mixtie-maxtie steghing puddle,
Ye've been this forthnight on the fuddle,
Fy ! fy ! for shame ;
Nor greetin' weans, nor wifie's cuddle
Can wyle ye hame.

Around ye sit your chosen wordies,
Cockin' their heads as high as lordies,
Wi' street musicians, skirling bardies,
An' lazy louts,
Girnin ower grating hurdie-gurdies,
Or crackit flutes.

Deaf Wattie, wi' his squeaking fife,
Blind clarionet Jock, wi's lang lean wife ;
Wee foreign blackguards chattering rife
Wi' their vile puggies,
Mimickin' mankind to the life,
Striddling ower doggies.

Auld Hawkie, roaring rough and rudely,
Jock and his mither bawlin' loudly,

THE GABERLUNZIE'S WALLET.

Blind fiddler Duncan, struntin' proudly,
 An' crawling crouselly,
 Led by a wee lang luggit poodlie,
 As auld's Methusaleh.

The broken-winded, spavint poacher,
 The penny-writer, scuffy sloucher,
 The muckle, pechlin, greasy butcher,
 The shear-shank'd tailor,
 Wee Jockie, and his tough auld gutcher,
 The tree legg't sailor.

The miller, fuddlin' a' his mouter
 Wi' the wee, wardless, windy souter,
 The wylie glass-eed sodger fouter,
 The drouthy hatter,
 An' Vulcan, like a red-het couter,
 Bizzing in water.

The inky coated, paddlin' preacher,
 The sallow napkin'd carritch teacher,
 The auld grave-digger, pawky fleecher,
 Confabbing thrang,
 Wi' the swart-visaged body-snatcher,
 Sae lank an' lang.

Town-drummer Tam, wi's drummie ruffin',
 Town-beagle Bob, wi's cheekies buffin',
 Town-crier Sandy, swelled and puffin',
 Wi' loads o' drink,
 An' mim-mou'd Mungo, kenn'd for scuffin'
 The puir-box clink.

Ye'll sit, an' soak there, gude confound ye,
 Wi' sic a batch o' blackguards round ye,
 Wha, fired wi' drunken zeal, hae crown'd ye
 King o' their feast ;
 An' e'en your wife's tongue canna stound ye,
 Nor gar ye reist.

O ! listen, puir demented loon,
To this your wife's kindly croon,
Wha, after howkin' a' the town,
 Huntin' for you,
Find ye encircled roun' an' roun'
 Wi' sic a crew.

TUNE—" Three time: crowdy in a day,

WEE bit bruckit, drunken bodie,
 Drinkin', daidlin' a' the day ;
Gin ye winna work for crowdie,
 What can your puir wife do ?

A' the weans cry crowdie, crowdie,
 Crowdie, mammy, crowdie mae ;
Till the wee bit hungry totts
 Hae crowdied a' my meal away.



In comes Jockie frae the school,
 In comes Davock frae his play ;
The twa twin tottums on my knee
 Are skirlin' for their crowdie too.

The auld blind man cam to the door,
 Wist ye but my heart was wae
To let him gang without his crowdie ?
 But my meal was a' away.

Twosome dainty strapping callants,
 Twosome lassoock twins we hae ;
But gin ye winna work for crowdie,
 Ne'er o' me 'll hae ony mae.

RECITATIVE.

This waesome croonach scuffs his ear,
 He caresna for't a jot ;
 The ne'er an inch he'll budge or steer,
 But table's down his groat ;
 The motely group hurrah an' cheer,
 While the auld wairdless sot
 Taks a lang waught his pipes to clear,
 An' up his husky throat
 Comes loud and strang.

TUNE—"I hae laid a herrin' in saut."

O! WHAT care I for the joys o' a hame,—
 The loun ingle-cheek has nae pleasure for me ;
 Skirlin' weans, an' a girngo dame,
 Might set ony man to the barley bree.

Our auld Luckie comes, an' she gaunts an' she girns,
 Sic a puir fusionless bodie is she ;
 An' she sings out for meal to her supperless bairns,
 But we'll soon steek her gab wi' the barley-bree.

Come, sit ye down, Luckie, an' gie us your croon,
 Why wad ye break up gude company ?
 By my gude faith, an' we'll rise ower soon,
 Unless we get tick o' mair barley-bree.

Sons o' the nappy, we canna do less
 Than honour the source o' our humour an' glee ;
 So let ilka crony now coup aff his glass,
 To better acquaintance wi' barley-bree.

RECITATIVE.

This drunken rant is roar'd and rung
 Wi' aid o' fiddle, fife, and tongue,
 Wi' deafening mirth and glee ;
 Even the puir wife's master'd wi't,
 And sits her down, maist like to greet,
 To ee the jovial spree.

When up jumps limping Sailor Jack,
And spits his quid in's fist ;
Syne licking baith lips wi' a smack,
Like lasses when they're kiss'd,
He bawls out, he brawls out,
Wi' lusty rantin' roar,
And flustering and blustering,
Thus yells his " Jack's ashore."

TUNE—" Jack's the go ! "

WHO'LL go with me over the sea,
Breasting the billows merrily ;
With a tight little ship, and a bright can of flip,
What heart but braves it cheerily :
Winds may blow, high or low,
Steady, ready, merry, cheery, Jack's the go !

The star of love that beams above
Shines down all pure and holily ;
We'll brave the breeze, we'll sweep the seas,
With bosoms beating jollily :
Winds may blow, high or low,
Steady, ready, merry, cheery, Jack's the go !

Then, while we're afloat in our island boat,
Let's reef and steer her warily ;
And if our foes dare come to blows,
We'll meet them taut and yarily :
Winds may blow, high or low,
Steady, ready, merry, cheery, Jack's the go !

RECITATIVE.

Auld sodger Willie's glass ee glanced,
His head heaved high and haughty,
Wi' anger he stark-mad maist danced,
But Jack was stout an' doughty ;
And though Will could hae seen him lanced,
He pawkily and paughty
Smoor'd in his wrath, though up he pranced
Wi' air like monarch moughty,
And bawl'd wi' birr.

TUNE—"The girl I left behind me."

A SOLDIER'S life is a merry, merry life,
 With his musket over his shoulder,
 He marches on through blood and strife,
 Bolder still, and bolder ;
 'Mid cannons' roar, and trumpets' blast,
 'Mid bombs and bullets flying,
 He tears away like a man to the last,
 And damns the French when dying !

Then O ! how snug when he's beat the French
 And at home in barracks laying,
 He strolls about with his buxom wench,
 The devil a penny paying ;
 He lists recruits, gets drunk and fights,
 He swaggers, swears, and blusters ;
 Goes home, and shakes himself to rights,
 Then on parade he musters !

Then O ! how merrily rolls away
 The life of a gallant soldier ;
 Kill or no kill, he pockets his pay,
 And heaves care o'er his shoulder :
 And when an eye or limb is lost,
 With his pension every quarter,
 He quaffs his grog at his country's cost,
 And is crown'd his country's martyr !

Then how shall a sailor dog set up,
 To cope with a soldier's glory,
 A swad with his girl, his gun, and his cup,
 Is the star of Briton's story :
 And while you've noble Moira* here,
 With a gallant British army,
 Nor Spanish Don, nor French Monseer,
 Nor the devil himself, shall harm ye !

* Earl Moira about this time reviewed 10,000 troops on Leith and Portobello Sands, and was consequently a great hero with the Edinburgh public.

RECITATIVE.

By this the twa at fisticuffs,
 Wi' boisterous blows, an' thuds, an' buffs,
 Lay sprawling on the ground ;
 The sailor's tricker snapt in twa,
 The sodger's glass ee struck the wa',
 And flew in finders round.
 The nailer swore a brimstane aith,
 An' raise wi' muckle ire ;
 Syne by the neck he seized them baith,
 An' gaur'd their skulls strike fire !
 He strappit them, he slappit them,
 He shook them hard and sair ;
 An' swore faith, he'd smoor baith,
 Gin they daur'd quarrel mair !
 The swad and sailor now maun pay
 The nailer's dram between them,
 Nor ane around a word daur say,
 Nor move a peg to 'freen' them :
 Dumfounder'd a', and weel they may,
 Sic swatch o' power he's gi'en them ;
 Till " whup the cat " lilts aff his lay,
 Right fain frae war to wean them,
 Wi's canty sang !

TUNE—"Dainty Davie."

O! WHA'S the loun can clout the claes,
 Canty Davie, dainty Davie ;
 Wha the lassocks' spunks can raise
 Like little tailor Davie ?

Though callants ca' him " whup the cat,"
 And men folk curse his gabbin' chat,
 The lassies they find nae sic faut
 Wi' kindly little Davie !

O! blythe is ilka body's house
 Whaur Davie sits and cracks fou crouse ;
 Nae post-bag's half sae cramm'd wi' news
 As tonguey tailor Davie !



The weanies round him in a raw,
 He raises sic a loud guffaw,
 You'll hear the din a mile awa
 O' them and tailor Davie!

The auld man's roomy weddin' coat,
 Wi' age an' moths scarce worth a groat,
 Maks breeks to Tam, an' coat to Jock,
 An' spats to tailor Davie.
 O! wha's the loon, &c.

RECITATIVE.

Now lang blind Jock and's wee auld mither,
 Sits cowerin' in the neuk thegither,
 As tosh and tozy wi' ilk ither
 As lad an' lass,
 Rakin their pocks to raise anither
 Three-bawbee glass.

They cough to clear their barkit thrapples,
 As rustit as twa auld pipe-stapples,
 Wi' smoking dottles, drinkin' drapples,
 An' boltin' skran,
 Syne Jock his mither's shouter grapples,
 An' thus began :—

TUNE—"Whistle ower the lave o't."

- JOCK.* O COME, my minnie, come wi' me,
We'll rattle aff a stave wi' glee,
An' gin we get a glass for fee,
We'll whistle ower the lave o't.
- She.* Troth, Jockie, I am cauld as lead,
Ye've struck the right nail on the head,
And gin we had anither bead
We'd whistle ower the lave o't.
- He.* Full thirty years are past an' gane
Sin' I cam hame as blin's a stane ;
I've cost ye mony a pech an' grane,
But whistle ower the lave o't.
- She.* My wee blind Jockie on my back,
Wi' spunks an' ballants in my pack,
I a' the kintry side did hawk,
An' whistled ower the lave o't.
- He.* Sin' that first day, when cock-bird heigh,
I by your side began to skreigh,
Though fortune whiles was dour an' dreigh,
We whistled ower the lave o't.
- She.* Wi' our twa tongues, aye waggin' loud,
We've gather'd round us mony a crowd,
An' o' ilk ither aye were proud,
An' whistled ower the lave o't.
- He.* O! we've seen mony ups an' douns
Sin we began to croon thro' towns ;
But whisky a' our sorrow dawns,
Sae whistle ower the lave o't.
- She.* O! ne'er ye mind, my bonny Jock,
The weans may pouk our tails an' mock,
But while we've twopence in our pock,
We'll whistle ower the lave o't.

RECITATIVE.

This croon was cheer'd wi' sic a shout,
 That roused the hedge apostle,
 Wha frae the fire—end, elbows out,
 Wi' big important bustle :
 He mounts the table wi' a bout,
 Gaurs stoups and glasses jostle,
 An' syne the wee bit gabby smout,
 Wi' voice like penny whistle,
 Cheeps loud an' clear.

TUNE—"The Quaker's Wife."

YE may talk o' your monks, the barefitted hunks,
 And your beggarly temperance teachers ;
 Wi' them wha command a' the fat o' the land,
 Your Papist an' Prelatic preachers ;
 The neap-headed fules, wi' their auld fusted schules,
 May croon ower their Hebrew an' Greek, O !
 But gin ye're in need o' a saul-stirring screed,
 Just clap ye a gill in my cheek, O !

I trail here an' there, through foul and through fair,
 Through ilka wee clachan an' village ;
 An' mony a heart wi' a word I convert,
 An' mony a penny I pillage :
 Wi' my hat at my feet, in the midst o' the street,
 On a table I take up my stand, O !
 Till thrapples are wheezing, an' bosoms are bleezing,
 Wi' a stab o' my sharp-pointed brand, O !

In braw gentry's houses, sic guzzles an' bouses,
 Frae kindly housekeepers, auld maidens ;
 An' at half-mark weddin's I bless aye the beddin's
 In spite o' my brethren's upbraidin's ;
 What mischief care I for the black-coated fry,
 Though they've clappit me under their ban, O !
 Let puir body's cuddle, I'll swallow their fuddle,
 And marry as mony's I can, O !

RECITATIVE.

This done, up rose the auld grave-digger,
A half-immortal, mortal swigger,
A hoary harden'd sinner ;



His snawy locks, his furrow'd brow,
His hard braced jaws, his pursell'd mou,
Show'd he was nae beginner,
But had seen ages come and gang,
An' moulder into clay ;
While aye he drank, and aye he sang,
And laugh'd auld Death away.
Now snuffin', now stuffin',
His beak as fou's 'twad bang,
He snivellin' an' drivellin',
Roared up his howkin' sang.

TUNE—"There's nae luck about the house."

A green Yule, a green Yule,
A green Yule for me ;
A green Yule maks a fat kirkyard,
An' that's the Yule for me.

THE GABERLUNZIE'S WALLET.

Then young an' auld, wi' cough an' cauld,
 Come hoastin' ower the lea,
 Till daddy Death, he stops their breath,
 An' links them hame to me.

Then manly might and beauty bright,
 And bairnie on the knee,
 Are nippit fast by winter's blast,
 An' shankit hame to me.

Then high and law, an' grit an' sma',
 Maun a'thegither dee ;
 An' whaur's their pride, when side by side
 They're quietly laid by me ?

'Mang graves sae thick, wi' spade an' pick,
 I gain a dainty fee,
 An' ilka night I chuckle bright,
 Out ower my barley bree.
 A green Yule, &c.

RECITATIVE.

"Awa wi' sic unhallow'd sangs,
 Ye weirdless, wither'd naething,
 Or I'll come ower ye wi' the tangs,
 For sic polluted breathing :
 Gin Death ance gets ye in his fangs,
 He'll clout up your auld claething,
 An' gaur ye feel remorse's pangs,
 For makin' him a plaything."

This speech cam frae the lang lean jaws,
 O's carritch teachin' brither,
 Wha flourish'd high his brunt-taed taws,
 Made o' auld tough bend leather ;
 The man o' skulls a saxpence draws,
 Whilk makes the teacher swither ;
 A gill comes in, he weets his hause,
 An' thus begins to blether.



TUNE—"Jenny Nettles."

GIE a wean his parritch,
An' dinna spare the sour-douk can,
An' wi' a bawbee carritch
I'll mak your son a man, O!

In days o' yore when I was young,
We learn'd to read our mither tongue,
An' mony raps wi' rape and rung
We gat to mind our carritch.

New-fangled schools hae ither laws,
Wi' mony English hums an' haws,
But leeze me on a bunch o' taws
An' a bawbee carritch.

A rousing palmy on the loof
Will wauken up a sleepy coof,
An' gaur him gie ye Scripture proof
For a' the single carritch.

Your wee toun getts, sae glib an' sma',
They winna stand a yerk ava,
So a' my scholars rin awa
Frae my taws an' carritch.

THE GABERLUNZIE'S WALLET.

An' guess ye what the deevils did ?
 They brunt my taws, my wig they hid,
 Syne lap upon the bunker lid,
 An' danced upon the carritch.

Yet what for need I mak my mane,
 Sin' thae auld times are lang bygane,
 Let's hope the days will come again
 When weans will mind their carritch.
 Gie a wean, &c.

RECITATIVE.

Now raise a noisy gibble gabble,
 As gin the builders o' auld Babel
 Up frae their cairns had jumpit ;
 An' half-a-score o' boisterous tongues,
 Wi' gaping gabs and lowing lungs,
 A' sung, an' swore, an' stumpit.
 But drummer Tammie ruffs like stour,
 An' drowns the dinsome clamour ;
 For ilk drumstick wi's elbuck power
 Comes down like Vulcan's hammer.
 Till crustily an' lustily,
 Aboon the drummin' noise,
 Thus ringin' an' singin',
 Yell's out the crier's voice.

TUNE—"Three gude fellows."



Aye drummin'
 Aye soakin'
 Aye jokin'
 Ken ye Tam

an' ruffin',
 an' scuffin',
 an' stuffin',
 an' his drum ?

I trow he's a stuffy wee cricket ;
 Tho' cruikit, wee buikit, an' stickit,
 He's no very easily lickit,
 Stuffy wee Tam an' his drum.
 Whaure'er maüt or mischief is brewin',
 Whaure'er there is aught to get fou on,
 Whaure'er there is onything new in,
 You're sure to meet Tam an' his drum.

A' sleepy new married folks, scornin'
 To rise up betimes in the mornin',
 Gie Tammie his fee an' his warnin',
 He's sure to be there wi' his drum.
 The bride in a flusterin' flurry,
 The bridegroom a' foaming wi' fury,
 He bangs on his claes in a hurry,
 An' curses baith Tam an' his drum.

At twalhours, when knee-breekit carles
 Slip in to their whisky an' farles,
 Gin Tammie has gotten his arles,
 He's sure to be there wi' his drum.
 At ilka puir body's cross roupin',
 At ilka bit niffer or coupin',
 The moment ye ca' the gill-stoup in
 You're sure to see Tam an' his drum.

At e'ening when ten o'clock's chappin',
 An' wark-folks a' hameward are stappin',
 Straught up the Heigh Street he comes pappin'.
 An' shuts a' the shops wi' his drum.
 At midnight when bodies get bouzie,
 An' set up in flames their bit housie,
 Wee Tammie, half-naked an' touzie,
 Awakens the town wi' his drum.

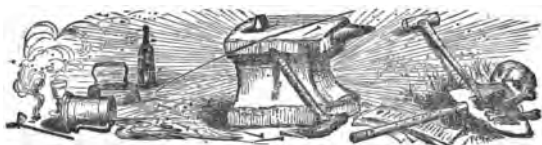
When our bailies, wi' round chubby faces,
 Are coach'd down in state to the races,
 A' the racers show off their best paces,
 At tuck o' Wee Tam an' his drum,

THE GABERLUNZIE'S WALLET.

I trow he is merry an' cheery,
 Gin ye hae him ye canna weel weary,
 But a' wad gang heeliegoleery
 Gin ye wanted Wee Tam an' his drum.

RECITATIVE.

The nailer wi' the yellin' noise,
 Has started frae his snooze,
 His very heart an' banes rejoice
 He's still a groat to bouse :
 He lifts on high his vogie voice,
 Their faggin' spunks to rouse,
 An' gies them a' a hearty hoise,
 Wi's bacchanalian muse.



TUNE—"Brose an' Butter."

Come gie us drink, drink,
 Come gie us drink to our supper ;
 The ne'er an ee shall wink
 Till we a' be cramm'd to the crupper.

Ye may brag o' your butter an' brose,
 An' crack o' your cauld water crowd'
 But gie me the neb o' my nose,
 Ower a thumping tankard o' toddy.

Ye'll put your penny to mine,
 We'll a' be pennies thegither ;
 An' siccan a dainty join,
 Will moisten a' our leather.

An' I shall drink to you,
 An' you shall drink to anither,
 An' gin we get a' blin' fou,
 The tane canna laugh at the tither.

Our mou's a' spiced wi' skran,
Our noddles a' fozy wi' fuddle,
Baith wifie, an' weanie, an' man,
Shall kindly an' couthily cuddle.
Come gie us, &c.

On the particular evening of the Gaberlunzie's visit to this rendezvous, the party seemed to have arrived at the high pitch of excitement, to which the uproarious rant that concludes the cantata just quoted might be supposed to give rise. On this occasion our friend was almost a silent spectator; for though he was in the habit of mingling with such company, and always met with a hearty welcome from them, he seemed to possess a degree of control over them that prevented their ever using any freedom with him, further perhaps than soliciting his advice or assistance in cases of difficulty. Accordingly, he sat as usual quietly sipping his very moderate beverage, a twopenny bottle of small ale, and probably engaged, either in composing the cantata now quoted, or in collecting material for it in the motley assemblage before him, when a young man entered the apartment. This new comer had a pack on his back, which he unslung from his shoulders, and, making use of it as a seat, sat quietly down by the fire, apparently anxious to avoid observation. His countenance, which was naturally of a lively expression, wore at present a pensive air, and he buried his head in his hands, or sat gazing abstractedly in the fire, without casting a glance at, or exchanging a word with, any of those around him. This person had entered while the nailer's song was being sung, and the indefatigable chanter of that mellifluous strain, apparently either offended at the slight put upon his effusion, or struck with the unusual gloom which hung over the young packman, accosted him, so soon as he had concluded the song, with—

“Peter, laddie, whaur hae ye come frae the night sae late and sae eerie? ye look as ye had seen either a ghaist or a warlock.”

“I hae seen,” answered the lad, “what wad gaur even a fouter like you think an' feel, and ding sic senseless daffin' frae your wairdless pate. Mony a long stair hae I paidled up and down this blessed day, and far hae I gaen for little siller, yet, little as that was, I blythely parted wi' the last penny o't to

relieve the wants of the puir, needy, deeing creature, whase bedside I hae been sitting by for the last five hours."

"They maun hae been needy, indeed, wha wrung onything frae sic a greedy creature as you, Patie. I'm glad, callant, to see that you are no a'thegither lost, for I thought that greed had fairly gotten atween you an' your wits: however, better mend late than never; so here's a wee drappie to encourage ye in weel-doing. Toom out that," said he, handing to the Pedlar a wooden queach or bicker, with scarcely as much liquor as covered the bottom.

"An' what case can this hae been, Patie, my man?" said the Gaberlunzie, who being placed in an out-of-the-way corner or nook of the apartment, had not before been observed by Peter.

"Alack! alack!" said Peter, hurrying towards him, "this is a case needing your aid; and when was ever the ear o' the Gaberlunzie steekit to the cry o' distress; and when or whaur did ever suffering or woe come under his ken, but he tried to lighten them? Ah!" said he, setting down untasted the nailer's beverage, "gin ye'll come wi' me e'enow, late or early as it is, I'll lead ye whaur ye'll see twa o' the most helpless o' God's creatures. A puir fiddler in a fever, and a witless lassie watching night and day, e'en an' morning, sleepin' an' wakin', soothing him asleep wi' snatches o' sangs, and when he sleeps, whispering laighly into his ear fragments o' hymns that are liker the breathings o' haly angels than the imperfect thoughts o' a puir feckless creature. Then she ca's him her protector, her guide, her father, and then she looks up an' says, 'Father, my father is in heaven.'"

"And where are these poor people to be found, Peter?" eagerly inquired the Gaberlunzie, much excited, and manifesting a keen and immediate interest in the matter, which Peter was not prepared for; "do none of their neighbours administer to their necessities? Have you left them alone, and without assistance?"

"Alack!" answered Peter, "they are staying wi' a puir widow, wha is slowly recovering frae the same bad fever; and though there's scores o' families in the same stair, no ane e'er enters their door to spier anent them. Their only assistance is the widow's daughter, a wean atween twal an' fourteen years o' age, wha has the wisdom o' an auld woman an' the lightness o'

a wee fairy. Come awa, an' ye'll see a scene o' suffering that will wauken your pity, an' marks o' affection that will melt your heart within ye. Come awa wi' me; the gray daylight's beginning to break through the chinks o' the dark closes, and after the midnight hour is past, as is often the case, aiblins the puir sufferer may hae gotten a turn."

"Lead on, then, Peter," said the Gaberlunzie, shouldering his wallet and staff; "we'll see gin we can be o' ony use to these puir bodies."