

## BURNS' NICHT IN FALLINBRAE

## ADAPTED FOR RECITAL.

I HAD just missed the last train, and as the night gave token of proving "saft," I left the dreary wayside station, and hurried back to the village. After all, a quiet night with old M'Glashan would not be ill spent.

"Guidsakes!" exclaimed that gentleman, as I entered the cottage kitchen, "I hope there's naethin' wrang? Whit's brocht ye back?"

"Well, Sandy," I replied, "I've missed the train, so I'll just need to do as I've often done before, take off my boots and make myself comfortable." (For, be it noted, I made Sandy's couthie cottage my abiding-place when I had occasion to be in the village.)

"Weel, that bates a'," he exclaimed. "It's fair providenshul, that's whit it is. It's jist fair extraordinar'. Div ye ken muckle aboot Rabbie Burns?"

"Burns?" I replied. "Well, I do know a *little*, but, I am ashamed to say, not so much as a Scotsman should."

"Eh, weel, it's a peety," said Sandy, disconsolately. "If ye'd been a strong Burns man, I'd 'a got ye a job ti gie the oration the nicht doon the wey. Auld Wullie Johnson wis ti hae dune't, bit he's no weel, an' the only ane they can get is the young laird. He's jist hame frae Oxford, an' he's no awfu' shair about it, he says: 'but,' says he, 'if ye canna get onybody else afore aicht o'clock, I'll hae a go at it.' He's awfu' Englified, an' he's gaun ti staun' fur Paurlyment at the next eleckshun for the diveesion, an' he's keen ti dae whit he can. Man, I'm no shair whit shape he'll mak' the nicht, bit we'll jist need tae

be daein' wi' 'im. So, you see, ye'll need ti keep on yer buits, as ye'll bid ti come doon."

And so, at eight o'clock, instead of being back in Glasgow, as I had expected, I found myself sitting between Sandy and his friend Lauchie Thomson, at the Burns' Dinner in the village of Fallinbrae.

The seat of honour was occupied by the young laird before mentioned. He was painfully young, that at least was evident, and the irritating frequency with which he loaded his right eye with a monocle, and discharged it by a facial contortion of tremendous dimensions, seemed to me to indicate that Mr Kenneth Graham, Younger, of Fallinbrae, was not exactly at his ease. This appeared to be Sandy's idea too, for, nudging my elbow, he whispered "The young ane's gey keen ti hen't, I'm thinkin'."

But at length the toast of the evening, the "Immortal Memory" of Scotland's only Burns had come. Everybody looked towards the chair, and its occupant started to his feet, fixed his monocle three times in as many seconds, and began.

"Ah—gentlemen—eh—I hed no idea that it would—ah—hev bin I who would hev bin given the dooty—down't ye now—of talkin' to you to-night—ah—about Mistah Boens (for he pronounced the name as if it were spelt Banes). The sekt of the mettah is, gentlemen—ah—that I've been stewin' et a devil of a rate for the pawst two or three days et that beastly Fiscal Problem that we're all hearin' so much about. When a men means to hev a try for a seat in the House—down't ye now—he's got to now what's he talkin' about. I believe it was Mistah Boens who said in a powm called 'The Two Doags' that 'A men's a men for all thet'. You Johnnies now what I'm drivin' et. I believe it gows somethin' like "For all thet and all thet, a men's a men for all thet," end a lot more about a guinea stemp. The guinea is not in the British coinage et the present dye, but it was

in the dyes of Mistah Boens: end, es you all now, he was a stemp distributah or excise official or a Government Johnnie of some kind, end no doubt, he hed often to do with stemp, even highah then a guinea. But 'For all thet and all thet' Mistah Boens was a right good soht. I believe it's the thing et a function of this kind—ah—to—er—cough off some of Mistah Boens' powms, end, in the shoht time et my dispowsal between the Fiscal Problem—ha, ha—I've—ha, ha—been ible to get the hang of 'The Two Doags' end the 'Address to a Dysy,' end 'Address to a Mouse,' end so rawthah flattah myself—down't ye now—thet I've done pwetty faiah. As foh 'The Two Doags,' I've given you my shoht bit—but a good thing's worth repeatin', so heah gows agane:

'For all thet, and all thet,  
A men's a men for all thet,  
For two doags give a guinea stemp,  
For all thet, and all thet.'

As foh the 'Address to a Dysy,' it gows off et a hend gellop. I believe Mistah Boens was alsow a fahmah in a small wye—ah—end a doocid soft-hahted Johnnie with flowahs end mice. He alsow rowt 'The Cottah's Satuhdye Nyte,' end I'm always confoosin' it with Cassel's Satuhdye Jaynal end The Awabian Nytes. Then there's the Seven Knytes of Kwistendom end the Knytes of the Rownd Table, end a fellah gets knocked stoopid ovah them all. I oaften sye to the dad et howm thet now wundah Mistah Boens went a bit of a fluttah on a Satuhdye nyte occasionally.

'Wee modest flowah, wee modest flowah,  
You need not run away sow hastily,  
I would not run if I were you,'

end so on: but, eftah oal, down't ye now, when you get down to the bottom, Mistah Boens was best in

'A men's a men for all thet,' end a Johnnie ken remembah it sow well. End now, I give you 'Mistab Boens' end 'For auld leng syne,' I howp we'll hev a pleasant evenin'.

But human nature could stand it no longer. I rushed from the hall, and when the first violence of my trouble had passed the meeting was "scalin'." Halfway down the village street I came on an old man, leaning with his back towards me, against a dry-stane dyke, and gazing across the fields. "By dam! did ye hear THON?" he was moaning to himself. And when I entered the cottage, Sandy met me with quivering lips. "Well, Sandy, here we are again," I said. And his only reply was "By crivens! thon's a nuvulette."

*From "The Glasgow Bailie."  
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