



LEA-RIG FANCIES:

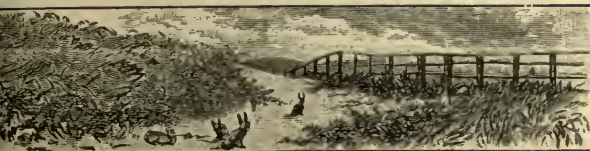
THE

RHYMES OF A FARM SERVANT

By ROBERT W. BLAIKIE,
ABERLEMNÖ.

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FOREWORD TO THE READER



My poems, to their greatest measure,
Are formed at work and peened at leisure.

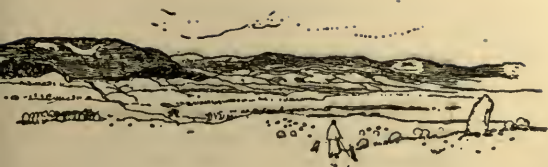
IT would be ungrateful on my part if I did not take the opportunity here of thanking my subscribers for so kindly enabling me to launch my little craft. I do so most sincerely, and trust that all classes of my readers will be lenient with me. My early opportunities were very scanty. Born in Edinburgh on the 6th of February, 1869, I was only six weeks old when my father died, and not a year old when my mother's remains were laid beside him in the Calton Cemetery. I was taken in charge by an aunt, who died when I was three years of age. Her husband having left the Lothians when I was about five to become a shepherd on the farm of Bolshan, Forfarshire, I was sent to Kinnell Public School, where I

remained till I reached the Ex-Sixth Standard, notwithstanding much broken time at sheep-farming, and otherwise assisting my uncle. When scarcely fourteen I "took a place" as a farm-servant, at which I remained, up and down the country, till I became a "minister's man." For some years, however, I had been making frequent attempts at rhyming, and now you have in book form some of the efforts of "The New Poet," as you will find him singing on page 75:—

ANOTHER poet of the times
 Is making up his thoughts in rhymes,
 And to the public he proclaims
 His name as Robert Blaikie, O;
 He fixes objects near and far.
 A perfect treat his poems are—
 I'm led to think he'll be a star,
 This chiel ca'ed Robert Blaikie, O.

Wha ever would ha'e thocht it, tho',
 Wha ever would ha'e thocht it,
 An orphan lad to be a bard,
 Frae heavenly Powers he had socht it, O.





LEA - RIG FANCIES



My Endeavour

NOW I intend to write this book
Of poems in rhyme by my own hook—
Not to show my energy,
But just for curiosity,
Could I compose each word so neat,
As ladies fit boots on their feet ;
Indeed I'll try my very best
To build them as a bird its nest—
Compact, and charming if I can,
With no ill intent to any man
Nor woman, his appointed mate,
Though of them both I yet may speak
In many a stage and different state
Just as, mayhap, it suits my freak. ;

What poet never speaks of God,
 Or heaven, His most high abode—
 Who tries his Maker's name to shun,
 And claims the credit all his own,
 His rhymes are scarcely worth attention,
 Which all his life long he may mention.
 Though glad to know we are the subject
 On which he acts in such a project,
 We should freely let our neighbours know
 The art ne'er sprang from earth below.

Flowers and shrubs I'll gladly greet,
 To tune my poetic accents sweet ;
 Also beasts and birds of many a hue,
 Their shape and size and manners, too,
 From a mite up to a whale
 All in this book may suit my tale.



Lovely Nature

ONE summer night, when calm and bright,
 Quite carelessly I strolled,
 A-courting lovely nature,
 So graceful to behold ;
 Old Luna, too, she seemed to view
 The pleasant scenes around,
 And stoop to listen with content
 To each enchanting sound.

My lightsome heart, I may remark,
Did beat with perfect glee
At the charms of my surroundings
Arrayed so fair to see.
Each fertile field appeared to yield
Abundance for our store,
And flowerets by the wayside
Were blooming evermore.

Far thro' the wood the cushat cooed,
The thrush poured forth her lays,
Unnumbered vocal warblers
Were liting on the sprays.
Our vernal choice, the cuckoo's voice,
Was ringing loud and clear,
I heard the corncraik that night
The first time for the year.

While thus I roamed the buncluck droned
Among the leafy trees,
The swallows frolicked through the air,
Then skipped along with ease.
Sweet was the noise of girls and boys
While sporting at their games,
God bless them in their innocence—
Their future lives wha kens.

The lapwings, with unwearied wings,
Were sporting here and there,
The whaps, out o'er the moorlands,
Screamed wildly in the air ;

The golden bloom was on the broom,
The briers were all aglow
With nature's roses, gaily spread
Out o'er the brook below.

On banks and fells the sweet bluebells
In lovely clusters hang,
All nature in her fairest
Did cheer my steps along,
Till in my view a charm anew
That did my heart beguile,
Was the meeting of a fair maid
Who approached me with a smile.

Whene'er we met her beauty set
My affection in a low,
Her auburn locks in ringlets trim
Adorned her snow-white brow.
I felt nae shame to link her name,
And, oh ! I must confess
The scenes and sounds of nature
Could never yield such bliss.



The Discomforts of an Ill Wife

MY wife, my quarrelsome relation,
Is sure to bring me to starvation,
Oh, would she take consideration
We both might have more consolation.

I'm fairly sick-tired o' my life,
And could nearly end it with my knife,
For nothing faces me but strife
Caused by a sluggish, thriftless wife.

Once I had a clean white shirt,
But now it is engrained with dirt ;
No wonder why I roust and chirp,
She treats me as a brocket stirk.

Meantime shé's lying in the jail
For drinking whisky like a whale ;
She thinks I'll take her out on bail,
But I can tell another tale.

They can keep her there, it serves her right,
Although she scarcely gets a bite,
But if she heard me say the like
I'd get a thumping just for spite.

I was well warned, before I wed,
The jade would force me yet to beg,
But still I saw no fault to Meg,
Because she called me " Darling Ned."

She carried out the scheme so neat,
I thought no maid was e'er so sweet ;
Now since I've realised the cheat
I'm apt to take a hearty greet.

Hech, sirs ! but this is woeful trade,
To think I must encounter Meg
On her illimitable parade,
I'd rather I had ne'er been wed.

Now my trials are at the test,
 And I may never get them dressed,
 But still I'll hope and do my best
 Till solemn death will give me rest.

Ye lads and lasses—oh, beware,
 If love for love ye fain would share,
 Use all the wit you have to spare
 To see that your habits do compare.

May you né'er experience my fate,
 I'm doomed to such a precarious state,
 No matter how I contemplate
 She'd make a stubborn man look blate.



What is Love?

COULD I express that part confined
 Within my noddle, called the mind,
 Upon that question asked above,
 And tell you truly what is love,
 What could I, a mortal being, say
 That I may lead you not astray?
 Just let me for a moment ponder
 To study this a little longer.
 Then I may give you satisfaction
 When I produce my best extraction.

Now, since I take a cautious aim
At truth and wisdom, I maintain
That God is love, as I understand
He has our hearts in full command
When good examples we do show
To each other, high and low ;
If we but view the kind affection
Of our dear Lord in His affliction,
It might cause the wicked to lament,
And from their evil ways repent ;
But Satan holds them so severe,
Their stony hearts are ill to steer.
Love lightens labour, so we say,
But who fulfilleth this I pray ?

Oh, love each other from your heart,
Then loyal friendship ne'er shall part.
This is the best plan to convince
You what is true benevolence,
What cause have we for any other
Towards a sister or a brother,
Since we are naught but kindred dust
Why should we then be so unjust ?
Now, I say this with no lark,
'Tis from the bottom of my heart,
Conveyed by some mysterious mark
To humour that inward organ part.



The Dunnichen Lass

UPON Dunnichen's bonnie braes
 There dwells a jolly maiden, O.
 Wi' something charming in her ways,
 Her kindly smiles unfadin', O.
 She has nae empty pride, I trow,
 Wi' ilka ane she's merry, O ;
 I kenna wha could e'er allow
 An angry word for Mary, O.

Chorus—

She's blithe an' merry, blithe an' merry,
 Her een are like the carrie, O ;
 The brichtest sun that ever shone
 Nae brichter was than Mary, O.

An' eident mither brought her up,
 Her father he's a gammie, O,
 And they hae siller weel I wat,
 Ay, mony a weel-won penny, O.
 She's like the blushing rose in June,
 She steps light as a fairy, O ;
 Success attend the lucky loon
 Wha wins the love o' Mary, O.

She's blithe an' merry, etc.

The Proof of God in Nature

I CAN see my Maker's powers,
 In this wondrous form of ours,
 And do regard them ;
 I see them in the various flowers,
 And often in the twilight hours
 I have admired them.

I reverence God, the all supreme,
 And hold His works a marvellous theme
 While life doth run ;
 Though sin abounds to its extreme,
 My faith and hope shall intervene—
 I trust His Son.

I see this proof in swelling floods,
 I see it in the bursting buds
 Which I adore ;
 He shall be praised by singing birds
 Among the gentle, waving shrubs
 When I'm no more.

When my existence ends on earth,
 With all my mingled woes and mirth
 May God be pleased
 To draw my craving spirit forth,
 Although I fear 'tis scarcely worth,
 From sin released.

Oh, God, Almighty Being, send
 Thy Comforter to cheer the end
 Of this strange life ;
 Alas ! my fluttering heart would rend
 To know my soul should be condemned
 To lasting strife.



The Gothic Bell

ABOVE the door we have a bell
 To awake us from our slumber,
 We've got employment for it still,
 Though 'twas laid aside for lumber. .

The reason why we applied this scheme
 You'll likely think a wonder,
 So I will tell you as you're green,
 Then you'll see it is no blunder.

The door will not secure behind
 With iron bolt nor timber,
 So it suits that purpose to our mind,
 And acts as our defeuder.

We need no bolt of any kind,
 The door rattles just like thunder,
 And keeps the robbers quite confined
 From venturing in to plunder.

The King and the Land o' the Leal

WE'RE daily growin' auld, Jean,
 Th' proof can weel be tauld, Jean ;
 We'll early reach the fauld
 In the land o' the leal.

Deed ay, you're speakin' sense, John,
 I'm sure o' that for aince, John,
 And we maun seek defence .
 Frae the King o' the leal.

He's ready at oor ca', Jean,
 To save us e'er we fa', Jean,
 He welcomes ane an' a'
 To the land o' the leal.

To end life's battlefield. John,
 Our future fate is sealed, John,
 Sae wha wadna yield
 To the King o' the leal.

As lang's we're to the fore, Jean,
 We'll steer for heaven's fair shore, Jean,
 Wild tempests daurna roar
 In the land o' the leal .

I really hope and trust, John,
 We're no' among the cursed, John,
 I'd rather, gin we durst,
 Praise the King o' the leal.

He suffered sair for sinners, Jean,
That they micht be croon-winners, Jean,
And happy, happy singers
In the land o' the leal.

Like maist folk, as a rule, John,
We've aften played the fool, John :
Sic a shame to be sae cruel
To the King o' the leal.

We're sic a silly pack, Jean,
The wisdom that we lack, Jean,
Is eneuch to keep us back
Frae the land o' the leal.

Guid sake, it's richt he'rt-rendin', John,
To hear some folk pretendin', John,
That we lippen juist by random
To the King o' the leal.

It is a perfect fack, Jean,
My ain he'rt's like to brak', Jean,
At the way some heathens crack
Ower the land o' the leal.

I canna but surmise, John,
At the last day, when they rise, John,
They'll get a great surprise
Frae the King o' the leal.

I haena the least doot, Jean,
They'll be sair pit about, Jean,
When they get ordered oot
Frae the land o' the leal.

'Twill no' be funnin' then, John,
They'll hae the wit to ken, John,
That He's the King o' men—
 The great King o' the leal.

Imagine for a wee, Jean,
Hoo glorious it maun be, Jean,
Frae turmoil ever free,
 In the land o' the leal.

Oor freends 'ill a' be there, John,
A score o' them and mair, John,
Wha gae their spirit's care
 To the King o' the leal.

My faither and my mither, Jean,
Were nae lang spared thegither, Jean,
When baith were wafted thither
 To the land o' the leal.

While my auld folks are livin', John,
I pray the Lord in heaven, John,
That their thochts may ne'er be driven
 Frae the King o' the leal.

What mak's you sigh an' greet, Jean,
Till tears run doon your cheek, Jean?
Binna feart, but we'll a' meet
 In the land o' the leal.

The meetin' maun be grand, John,
In that celestial land, John,
Wi' a' it's hameower band,
 And the King o' the leal.

This world may be fair, Jean,
 Wi' abundance an' to spare, Jean,
 Still it's naething to compare
 Wi' the land o' the leal.

There's nae sign o' nicht, John.
 It's aye braid daylight, John,
 Fu' bonnie maun be each sicht
 Roond the King o' the leal.

My saul delights to ken, Jean,
 There is a better hame, Jean,
 Beyond this earthly frame.
 In the land o' the leal.

When time brings on the test, John,
 Oh, may we join the blest, John,
 For I lang to be at rest
 Wi' the King o' the leal.



My Native Land

OH thou the land that gave me birth,
 My native land, I cling to thee ;
 Thou art the fairest hame on earth,
 Bonnie Scotland I lo'e thee.

Chorus—

Oh, dear art thou, my native land,
 As dear as fervent life to me,
 Nae wealth beyond thy pebbled strand
 Can ever bribe my love frae thee.

Thy crystal streams and gurgling rills
Meandering merrily to the sea ;
Thy fertile plains and heath-clad hills
All whisper wonderous tales to me.

Oh, dear art thou, etc.

Deep in thy rural groves and glens
Thy feathered songsters lilt wi' glee,
And all around sweet budding gems
Burst forth to deck thy verdant lea.

Oh, dear art thou, etc.

Though emigrants may choose to roam
Beneath a distant foreign clime,
Contented I will stay at home,
And on thy tender lap recline.

Oh, dear art thou, etc.

Oh, blest be a' thy hamely bands,
Wi' he'rts pure as thy pearly dew ;
Kind Providence stretch forth thy hands
To bless them o'er and o'er anew.

Oh, dear art thou, etc.

Success to all thy heroes brave
Who act in true defence of thee,
Long may thy sturdy emblem wave
To mark my native land so free.

Oh, dear art thou, etc.

Bothy Life

MY cap is all that I require,
Accompanied with my spoon
For holding food when I desire,
Like any other bothy loon ;
While those of trade, or greater swells,
'Though merely clay, just like oursel's,
Can scarcely set themselves to dine
Out of various vessels less than nine.

Now, friends, I only mean to give
A slight description how we live
From those we term high pedigreed,
Who disdain to take brose for a feed,
And rather dine on something better,
That would cause poor folk's teeth to water
Though they were but to smell the feast,
Even let alone to pree the least
Of their soups or nice prime steak,
Their ham and egg, or pudding bake ;
Even nicer treats for me to mention
Seems far beyond my apprehension.
Brose or porridge, and sometimes coffee,
Is what we live on in a bothy ;
The plainest produce of the soil
Is our reward for daily toil.
After all we are a healthy race,
And can look the whole world in the face,
Though somewhat ignorant at times
If ta'en from our accustomed lines.

The house in which we dwell is rough,
 And at it gentry sneer and scoff ;
 Yet a manly heart they'd find within,
 A sunburned ploughboy's swarthy skin,
 If they were looked upon with grace,
 And respected as the standard race,
 Who keeps them up in pomp and pride
 With apparent pleasure on their side.
 But, ah! waes me, for all we know,
 Such appearance may be empty show ;
 There's many a sorrowful heart that tries
 To hide reality from searching eyes.



E Ae'er Lo'ed but Ae Lassie

(When intending to leave for Glasgow, June, 1893.)

I NE'ER lo'ed but ae lassie richt weel frae my he'rt,
 She vowed until death she could ne'er frae me pairt.
 When I saw her sae true she had me nigh weepin',
 Ah, never before was my he'rt sae sair beatin'.

Though Burns lo'ed sae weel his ain Highland dearie,
 He could ne'er lo'e her better than what I lo'e mine :
 Altho' weel I ken she ne'er trode Highland heather,
 She dwells in a cottage surrounded wi' thyme.

Oh, the sweet look she gae me I'll never forget
 When she gae me her hand and promised her he'rt
 That nicht ; by me it shall ne'er be forgot,
 Tho' mony lang miles frae that very same spot.

The mavis sang sweet on that mild summer even,
Wee birdies were chirping in ilka green shaw,
But me and my lassie their notes werena heedin',
For short was the oors that passed 'tween us twa.

How I wish in my he'rt that I never had seen
This winsome young lass by yon woodland sae green,
For since I am flittin' sae far, far awa',
It may prove yet to break her leal he'rt into twa.

But as long's my right hand can handle a pen,
And oh ! if kind fortune will spare me the time,
Then I will write her a true lover's letter
To say when I'll meet her, and kiss and caress her.

Till the day that I dee I will be true till her,
So if she slights me my lifelong I'll mourn,
But I'll ne'er let me think that she could be sae cruel
As pledge to another and leave me forlorn.

Oh, may she prove constant as yon little streamlet
That wends its way down to the green-bordered lake,
And if e'er I do pull this lovely young flower
I trust Him abune she'll be a true loving mate.

The primroses blow where the blue violets grow,
And the lily's bloom droops o'er the brink o' the burn,
But she'll bloom by my side wi' far brighter show,
This bonnie young flower if e'er I return.

Oh, may she live happy and still depend on me,
And trust Him abune that she never will rue :
Fareweel my dear lassie, since now I maun leave ye—
I canna say mair for my he'rt it is fu'.

My Lad's in the Highlands

MY lad's in the Highlands, my lad's in yon glen,
 My lad in the Highlands he lo'es me I ken ;
 I often think on him, and wish for the day
 My lad in the Highlands would wed me away.

Chorus—

Hurrah for the Highlands, the place of renown,
 That changes its colours in purple and brown :
 Though winter may clad them in robes of white snow,
 With love for the Highlands my bosom shall glow.

My laddie has promised to make me his bride,
 And we'll dwell in a wee cot by some mountain side,
 Where heather blooms bonny around oor ha' door,
 Then we'll live in contentment till life's tide is o'er.

Hurrah for the Highlands, the place of renown, etc.

Hurrah for the mountains, where roam the wild deer ;
 Hurrah for their corries and streamlets so clear ;
 Hurrah for each creature that sports them among,
 Oh may they be merry when I'm dead and gone.

Hurrah for the Highlands, the place of renown, etc.

And while my heart moulders in dear mother earth
 Some new brother poets, enraptured in mirth,
 May hear my survivors resounding their praise,
 And attempt to re-echo my theme in their lays.

Hurrah for the Highlands, the place of renown, etc.

The Bard's Epitaph

ALL ye survivors on the globe,
 Oh, shed a tear for brother Rob ;
 He died with such a sinful load
 Upon his back—
 Think whither will the deil or God
 This poor sowl tak'.

Such wae remarks are seldom made
 In memory of the silent dead,
 But it may stir your thoughtless head,
 Ye erring tribes,
 To train the soul for your last bed,
 As God describes.

Mind, friends, the case is truely sad,
 Yet how can you despise the lad,
 While ye yourselves may be as bad—
 Poor wicked apes,
 Consider him, then sigh and sab
 For your own sakes.

He tried to lead a Christian life,
 But sins surrounded him so rife
 He was o'erwhelmèd in the strife—
 So here he lies,
 Driven from each faculty of life
 This world supplies.

Oh, may the Lord forgive his ills,
 And judge him by his earnest wills ;
 That knave Temptation often thrills
 His resolute foes
 By various mean and crafty skills—
 With bitter woes.



A Deep Thought

WHILE I survey the hills around,
 And bonnie fields of rippling grain,
 How it does my mind confound
 To think from whence my God e'er came.

Yet, ah ! how true, I must confess,
 His being doth exist,
 Unnumbered proofs lead to impress
 My thoughts as in the mist.

Oh ! if I had a perfect view
 Of God fixed in my mind,
 My heart would then rejoice anew
 To enlighten all mankind.

Or even what faint view I trace,
 Had I the power to express it,
 Surprised would be the ungodly race
 If they could only guess it.

The Stream of Life

(AIR—*The Auld Hoose.*)

WHEN days of early childhood
 Maist gars me shed a tear,
 To recollect the joys, lang past,
 To come again nae mair.
 Oh, happy were thae bonny days
 When lightsomely we played
 Like lammies, 'neath the summer sun,
 On nature's verdure spread.

But, ah, how soon school mates disperse—
 Some to a foreign land.
 Ithers to the far-aff world have gane
 To join the goodly band.
 Ah, wae's me, they ken nocht o' trials,
 The spirit's happy there.
 While we, poor earthly creatures, toil,
 Sair blighted wi' despair.

But we hinna lang to bide here,
 I feel it's nae oor hame,
 Kind Nature gently whispers sae
 Ower deeply to explain ;
 Then let us do the best we can
 To plant humanity
 In ilka mortal breast that thirsts
 For worldly vanity."

It seems there fa's response on me
 To guard each word I say,
 And to improve the growing mind
 That's apt to go astray.
 Oh, what gen I should lead a soul
 Into perdition's brink ;
 My heart would be downcast to know,
 And make my courage sink.

Oh, Thou who searchest every heart
 That moves on earth below,
 Make firm our faith 'gainst doubt and fear—
 We seek thy love to know ;
 And as Thou art our only trust,
 When death is hovering round.
 Oh, clasp us in Thy fond embrace,
 Where Christiau grace is found.



Black grow the Brambles, O

BLACK grow the brambles, O,
 Jet black's the brambles, O,
 Nocht can snrpass a modest lass
 F'or company in my rambles, O.

Though summer scenes are bonnie, O,
 And much admired by mony, O,
 Still more increased her pleasures flow
 In company wi' a lassie, O.

Black grow the brambles, O, etc.

I carena for those donors, O,
 Of riches and high honours, O,
 Gin to my arms ye'll bestow
 A tidy, honest lassie, O.

Black grow the brambles, O, etc.

There's mony a man fu' merry, O,
 While quafting ales an' sherry, O,
 But my delight, gin ye wad know,
 Is wooing my dear lassie, O.

Black grow the brambles, O, etc.

When far oot ower the meadows, O,
 The sun doth cast our shadows, O,
 Love in its brightest glories glow
 While I embrace my lassie, O.

Black grow the brambles, O, etc.

Be kind to a' the lasses, O,
 Ye male tribes of the masses, O,
 We'd be ill aff gin there were no'
 Sae coothie mates as lasses, O.

Black grow the brambles, O, etc.

Oh, fie upon sic asses, O,
 Wha dare misca' the lasses, O,
 I'm wae to think, yet proud to show
 Their mammies ance were lassies, O.

Black grow the brambles, O, etc.

Song of the Eubereskandye Mill

ONE day as I was roving
 By the sparkling water Esk
 I took it in my restless mind
 To set me down and rest
 Upon a soft green mossy bank
 By the Mill of 'Reskandye,
 It being a warm sunny day
 In the month of bright July,
 When the meadow queen in splendour
 Did deck the river banks,
 And other flowery mantles
 Bloomed lovely in their ranks.

The mavis, 'mong the downy saughs,
 Sang blithely in her glee,
 While, charmed by her thrilling notes,
 New thoughts stole over me ;
 'Twas not about some mansion fair,
 Nor to where the waters ran,
 But all about this lonely mill,
 Which once made meal for man.

It now is quite deserted
 Of all her milling trade,
 And by the farmer close at hand
 Used for an orra shed.

No more we hear its clattering din,
 For silence in it reigns,
 No more our harvest yields for it
 The precious golden grains ;
 Here Nature claims her solitude
 As she had done before,
 Ere this erection had been raised
 In ancient days of yore ;
 But still the birdies sweetly sing,
 While North Esk murmurs by—
 This rural spot completes delight
 To thinkers such as I.



Song of the Peace Crusade

THE Czar of Wisdom has proposed a peace crusade,
 And it is forming into life through Mr Stead ;
 Let's play a part in it as well,
 And tune our song to make it swell
 The tidings over hill and dell, and secret shade—
 Even all around where man is found the news shall
 spread.

Chorus—

Then, hurrah for the Monarch of Wisdom !
 And our hero, William Stead !
 Come join them every nation
 In the great peace crusade !

Hie, all ye nations of the earth, your plans combine
To lay aside your pettish strife in perfect shame,
Then come and chant along with me—
I care not who nor where you be—
Come spend our future days with glee in laws divine
Cheer up! the rising race shall bless their fathers' fame.

Then, hurrah for the Monarch of Wisdom! etc.

Ye leading Powers unite in peace; why do ye fret?
Make war an ancient story, remarked with regret;
Ye females urge your lovers,
Your husbands, sons, and brothers—
Your charms excel all others in the Czar's peace
rescript,
Your soothing arts affect their hearts in virtues strict.

Then, hurrah for the Monarch of Wisdom! etc.

We'll need no more war weapons our kinsmen to
restrain;
All shall be peace and pleasure where once was grief
and pain;
Then every land shall prosper
With such abundant cluster
When all the nations muster the crusade to ordain,
Armaments shall rust like mouldering dust, never to
be used again.

Then, hurrah for the Monarch of Wisdom! etc.

Our ploughs shall break the meadows that lie in rural
grace,
To yield sufficient succour for our Maker's social race ;
Then true love shall impart
To every human heart
A feeling worth remark that our sires did ne'er
embrace,
And evil at length shall lose its strength, its folly, and
disgrace.

Then, hurrah for the Monarch of Wisdom ! etc.

Who shall not plead for peace to check those hard
taxation ties
That make the people sore oppressed, and urge dis-
tressing sighs ;
The curse of Cain shall haunt him,
Misfortunes shall provoke him,
Satan alone shall own him until the day he dies ;
Oh, may he rue, and join our crew in friendship's
enterprise.

Then, hurrah for the Monarch of Wisdom ! etc.



The Deil's Reply to Robert Burns

The following clever poem, in imitation of Burns, is dated 'From my chair in Lumby Den, Forfarshire, Sept. 6, 1793.' Though purporting to be from the pen of his satanic majesty, we are rather inclined to think it written by some pawky Scotchman:—

WAES me, Rab ; hae ye gane gyte?
 What is't that gars ye tak' delight
 To jeer at me, and ban, and flyte,
 In Scottish rhyme?
 And, fausely, gie me a' the wyte
 O' ilka crime!

O' auld nicknames ye hae a fouth,
 O' sharp sarcastic rhymes a routh,
 And as you're bent to gie them scouth,
 'Twere just as weel
 For you to tell the honest truth
 "And shame the deil."

I dinna mean to note the whole
 O' your confounded rigmarole;
 I'd rather haud my tongue and thole
 Your clashmaclavers,
 Than try to plod through sic a scroll
 O' senseless havers.

O' warlocks and o' witches a',
 O' helpless spunkies, great or sma',
 There is not any truth ava
 In what you say,
 For siccan fright I never saw
 Up to this day.

The truth is, Rab, that wicked men
 When caught in crimes which are their ain,
 To find a help are unco fain
 To share the shame,
 And so they shout with might and main,
 "The deil's to blame."

Thus I am blamed for Adam's fa'—
 You say that I maist ruined a'—
 I'll tell ye a'e thing, that's no twa,
 It's just a lee.
 I fasht na wi' the pair ava,
 But loot them be.

I'd nae mair hand in that transgression
 You deem the source o' a' oppression,
 And wae, and death, and man's damnation
 Than you yoursel'.
 I fill'd a decent situation
 When Adam fell.

And, Rab, gin you'll just read your Bible
 Instead o' blin' Jock Milton's fable,
 I'll plank a crown on ony table
 Against a goat
 To find my name you'll no be able
 In a' the plot.

Your Mither Eve I ken'd her brawly,
A dainty quean she was and wally,
But destitute of prudence wholly—
 The witless hizzy ;
Aye bent on fun and whiles in folly
 And mischief busy.

Her father had a bonny tree,
The apples on't allured her e'e,
He warn'd her no the fruit to pree,
 Nor clim' the wa',
For if she did, she'd surely dee
 As dead's a craw.

She didna do her father's biddin',
She didna mind her husband's guidin',
Her ain braw house she wadna bide in,
 But stray'd awa',
Depending on her "art o' hidin'"
 To blin' them a'.

As for that famous serpent story,
To lee I'd baith be 'shamed and sorry,
'Tis just a clever allegory,
 And weel writ doon ;
The work of an Egyptian Tory--
 I ken'd the loon !

Your tale of Job, the man of Uz,
My reekit claes, and rusted giz,
My hornie hooves and breckit phiz
 Wi' ither clatter,
Is maistly, after a' the bizz,
 A moonshine matter.

Auld Job, I ken'd the carl richt weel,
 An honest, decent kintra chiel ;
 Wi' head to plan, and heart to feel,
 And hand to gie ;
 " He wadna wrong the verra deil "
 A broon baubee.

The man was gey an' weel-to-do,
 Had horse and kye, and ousen too,
 And sheep, and stots, and stirks enoo'
 To fill a byre ;
 O' meat, an' claes, a' maistly new,
 His heart's desire.

Forbye, he had, within his dwallins,
 Three winsome queans, and five braw callans,
 You wadna in the hale broad Lallan's
 Noo find their marrow,
 Were you to search from auld Tantallan's
 To braes of Yarrow.

It happened that three breeless bands
 Of cateran came frae distant lands,
 And took what fell amang their hands
 Of sheep and doddies,
 Just like your reivin' Hielan' clans,
 Or border boddies.

I tell ye, Rab, I had nae share
 In a' the tulzie, here or there,
 I lookit on, I do declare,
 A mere spectator,
 Nor said, nor ask'd, less or mair,
 About the maitter !

Job had a minstrel o' his ain—
 A genius rare, tho' something vain,
 Of rhyme and lear and then again
 (Just like yersel')

Of drink and lasses unco fain—
 The ne'er-do-weel.

He'd sing of lads and ladies fair,
 Of love, and hope, and mirk despair,
 And wondrous tales wad whiles prepare
 And string thegither.
 For a' he wanted was "a hair
 To mak' a tether."

So, with intention fully bent
 My doings to misrepresent,
 That book of Job he did invent,
 And then his rhymes
 Got published in Arabian print,
 To suit the times.

Your poets, Rab, are a' the same,
 Of ilka kintra, age, or name,
 No matter what may be your aim,
 Or your intention,
 Maist of your characters o' fame
 Are pure invention.

Shakspeare mak's ghaists and witches plenty,
 Jock Milton, deevils, mair that twenty,
 Tom Puck will soon be croose and canty,
 Wi' Rab the ranter ;
 And you yersel' are mair than vauntie
 Of " Tam O' Shanter."

Your dogs are baith debaters rare,
 Wi' sense galore, and some to spare.
 Yea, ev'n the verra "Brigs of Ayr,"
 You gar them quarrel—
 Tak' Coila ben to deck your hair
 Wi' Scottish laurel.

Yet, Robin, lad, for a' your spite,
 And taunts and jeers and wrangfu' wyte,
 I find, before you end your flyte
 And rin your pirn,
 You're no sae cankert in the bite
 As in the girn.

For when you think he's doomed to dwell,
 The lang forever mair in hell,
 You come, and bid a kind farewell,
 And—Gude be here !
 Ev'n for the verra deil himsel,
 Let fa' a tear.

And, Rab, I'm just as wae for thee,
 As ever thou can'st be for me ;
 For 'less you let the drink a-bee
 I'll tak my aith
 You'll a' gae wrang, and shortly dee
 A drunkard's death.

Sure as you mourn'd the daisy's fate
 That fate is thine, no distant date,
 Stern ruin's ploughshare drives elate
 Full on thy bloom ;
 And crush'd beneath the furrow's weight
 Shall be thy doom.

Reply to the Deil on Behalf of Burns

SATAN, Esquire, Lumby Den.
 Tealing, Forfarshire, ye ken :
 If nae fund oot, return it then
 To Robert Blaikey,
 Residin' wast frae Auldbar Den,
 Near Brechin city.

Dear Maister Deil, sin' Burns is deid,
 Accept this response to your screed ;
 I've ta'en the notion in my heid,
 Sae I'll come caution
 For ony illwill I may breed
 Through agitation.

You make a very grand pretence
 O' weel-intended self-defence,
 And charge him wi' the want o' sense
 In's accusations ;
 Forby, ye gie him recompense
 On the same conditions.

I ken braw weel he wadna aloo
 Sic slander frae the like o' you,
 Without gien ye guid cause to rue
 Your tauntin' folly—
 Had he been to the fore, it's true
 He would, by golly.

The Ranter had an honest heart
 That aye took up a hamely part.
 And though he lo'ed to hae a lark,
 He'd nae ill spite—
 As ye say, mair cankered wi' his bark
 Than wi' his bite.

I question if he wis far wrang
 Wi' what you reckoned ill-aimed slang ;
 Ye may deny and try to sham,
 But, by my sal,
 I hae nae doot but you're the stang
 O' Adam's fall.

Oor parents never were sae mean
 As lat the fruit tempt mou' or een
 Till you appeared upon the scene
 Wi' your beguilement,
 Syne you an' they were copit clean
 Through your defilement.

Yet, Eve, poor sowl, gets a' the blame.
 E'en though she wis a dainty dame ;
 You say she wouldna bide at hame,
 Nor tak' a tellin'—
 It seems ye hinna muckle shame,
 Ye sly auld villain.

Eve maybe wisna jist a snod ane,
 Considerin' her thievin' and her hoddin,
 But, dootless, you wis at the boddum
 O' a' the plot,
 And forged the serpent to shun a floggin'
 Ye nicht hae got.

Aiblins ye think it's no my place
To interfere wi' sic a case ;
Hooever, I tell you to your face,
 And no your doup,
Ye're fit eneuch to bring disgrace
 On decent fouk.

Jist look, for instance, hoo ye spoke
When fain ye would the Lord provoke
That time upon the mountain top ;
 I'se warn ye mind, min,
You deserved yon reprimand you got
 To get behind 'im.

And fancy yon puir delirious man
Wha dwelt in caves, guid kens hoo lang,
Sae prood he wis when Jesus cam'
 About that cast,
And richt dumfoundered wis the thrang
 To see what passed.

Christ cuist ye oot wi' twa three mair,
Sae thus the manic's life did spare ;
Then to redd up the hale affair
 Atween me and you,
The wirds o' Mark and Luke compare,
 An' ye'll find it's true.

Anither prank ye played that time
Wis wi' a herd o' twa thoosand swine—
You ran them doon a steep incline
 Into the sea ;
Your teeth marks identifees the sign
 Gin ye say I lee.

Ye're performin' mischief ilka day,
 Aye leadin' some puir sowl astray ;
 There's mair by far gaun doon the brae
 Than up to Heaven —
 Ay, though they're unco sweer to gae,
 Ye'se hae them driven.

I hae felt mysel' whiles in your clutch
 When your business wi' me wisna much :
 Losh ! yer unco sticky wi' your touch,
 To my idea,
 An' I hae guid reason to say such
 E'er I middle wi' you.

You speak o' Milton's mony a devil
 As if there couldna be sic evil :
 Constrain yersel' and be mair civil,
 For, mind, I'm able
 To twist ye roond on mony a swevil
 Linkit frae the Bible.

I notice that's the Buik ye mention
 For Rab to gie his maist attention ;
 Dinna think that wis some new invention
 To gie the poet,
 As it induced him to such apprehension
 Gen ye wad know it.

Syne efter a' yer guid advice
 Ye bauldly tell him, aince or twice,
 The Buik o' Job is fu' o' vice
 To screen yersel' ;
 Preserve me ! are ye daft or wice,
 Ye fiend o' hell ?

Your ongoings are a doonricht hertbrack,
Denyin' ye ever formed a contrac'
To drive Job's patience a' to wrack,
 Ye leein' scoundrel ;
Fy, fy ! 'twas a dirty dodge, in fack,
 Ye nesty mongrel ;

Especially when ye planned to smit
A saunt wi' boils frae heid to fit ;
Nae wonder though ye'll nae submit
 To tak' the wyte,
For gin ye ponder on't wi' wit
 'Twas cowardly like.

Hooe'er, in spite o' a' yer skill,
Job tholed the pain wi' vigour still :
He cursed his birth, but said nae ill
 Toward his Maker—
Puir mortal, I'd been wae mysel'
 To seen the crater.

But time brocht roond the happy end
O' a' his trials, we may depend,
For luck turned oot his sturdy friend—
 I assure ye it did—
And blest him gen the hinder end
 Wi' a'thing guid.

You even rail on Willie Shakspeare,
Syne gape and lauch, an', guid be here,
Wi' ither bards you interfere.
 As gen ye'd business ;
You'll file yer nest, or I'm a leer,
 Jist wi' yer stupidity.

Yer ain bit rhyme soonds fairly well,
 But jist there's ae thing I can smell—
 It's mair bent on brag about yersel'
 Than ony ither :
 I dinna like that style mysel'
 Somehoo or ither.

At onyrate, to finish up the flutter,
 Some wirds o' sympathy ye utter
 As though yer tongue could ne'er melt butter,
 Or create ill,
 And denominate Rab as a scutter
 Wi' his gill.

But as for landin' whaur ye dwell,
 I houp his soul escaped yer spell,
 While he gat time to improve himsel',
 In his last hour,
 Although, for certainty, I canna tell—
 That's past my power.



On Thrifty and Thriftless Wives

HOW doth the busy little wife
 Improve each passing day
 By rubbing, scrubbing, but and ben,
 And making things look gay :
 But thriftless limmers spend their time
 In quite a different way
 By gossiping in their neighbour's house,
 And spending the goodman's pay.

1 2
4 3

The Poet's Wedding

17TH NOVEMBER, 1893.

A COUPLE once upon a time,
Attracted by love's art divine,
Besought each other's heart to woo,
As upright, honest lovers do.
While thus engaged love seemed to play
In every word they dared to say,
And soon the youths began to learn
What power affection had to charm;
Though would-be wooers strove between
They ne'er could sunder Rob and Jean,
Who often spent the golden hours
Enjoying courtship's roving tours—
Each meeting soothed the heart so nice
As though it were in Paradise.
On the other hand, I may explain,
The partings caused exciting pain,
Even though trusty trysts were pledged
With more than twenty kisses wedged.
But after some two years or so—
New alterations come and go—
This faithful couple gathered courage
To make arrangements for a marriage,
And shortly after the intimation
They celebrated the occasion

'Tween the 17th and 18th of November,
Which all my life long I'll remember.
The day was dull, the drizzly rain
It moistened every hill and plain,
The vocal throng even changed their lay
To dull repose upon the spray,
And all around told dreary tales
Asserted by the recent gales,
That bereft the trees of all their leaves
To rot as fell decay may please :
My horses stood the whole day idle,
Or crimping hay within the stable.
'Twas five o'clock e'er the weather cleared,
Then pleasant prospects reappeared
As night stole in, like some transgressor,
And soon became the day's successor.
I then went home to dress, you bate,
Accompanied with Sie Glen, my mate ;
This operation was scarcely o'er
When a cab was waiting at the door,
But, faith, we did not hinder long
Till it was packed, and marching on
The way to Brechin ancient city,
Whose tower and cathedral look so pretty ;
And when we landed at the hall
We were the foremost there to call,
But soon some stragglers came dropping in,
And chat and tumult made some din
For half-an-hour, I would suppose,
Until the remainder showed their nose.
At length two brakefuls did arrive,

Then the hall was swarming like a hive,
Some shaking hands, with how-do-you-do's,
And some were even preeing mous;
My neglect of counting was a blunder,
But, losh preserve's! there was a mighty
Fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, [number—
Uncles, aunts, cousins, and others;
Then in came the Reverend Mr Ritchie—
A trustworthy, active, humorous birkie—
Wha soon proclaimed the marriage bands,
Uniting the loving pair and joining hands,
Syne carved a big three-storey cake,
Which Gellatly's bakers had to bake;
It was distributed with easy labour,
For ilka ane to pree its flavour;
And as there is seldom any joy
Without liquor being at the ploy,
Some kind was handed round in style
That the majority welcomed with a smile,
Exchanging toasts anent good health,
With the same desire for luck and wealth.
Better than that, the blithesome squad
Paired themselves, like lass and lad,
To despatch an excellent feast,
Which was no mockery in the least—
There was steak and potatoës nicely cooked,
Beef pie and puddings, different kinds, weel
With milk and sugar and berry juice. [dooked
Which made them snack their lips like puss.
Then tables and dishes were set aside,
While some of us took the air outside.

The forms were set around the wall,
And music echoed through the hall ;
As the piper set his pipes in tune
All was restored to order soon,
An' ilka lad took up a lass—
Likely his pick among the mass—
And placed themselves as if for drill,
And started up a Highland reel,
A dance well known to young and old,
As the number on the floor well told ;
Losh, when it came to quicker time,
We yarkit across the floor, by jing.
Powset, and swang wi' airms linkit,
Then through the figure eight we jinkit,
Making thumbs and fingers snap,
And hooch't and brisker grew, in fack,
Till some of them were turning dizzy,
And ran reel-rall among the busy.
At length the piper stopped complete,
So the sweating dancers took a seat.
Soon the violonist began to cuddle
And tickle at his friend, the fiddle.
Tuning her guts with skilful taste.
And squeezing her about the waist
Till she was fairly forced to squeak,
As if she fain, but could not speak.
This set the youths astir at once
To congratulate her with a dance ;
Her notes, while blended with the flute.
Were really grand without dispute ;
But, sall, the dancers tired at times,

As much exertion oft inclines
To do those who are overjoyed,
As well as those who are hard employed.
After being supplied with some refreshment
Other amusements became more frequent ;
We whiles got treated to an auld Scotch sang—
The best enjoyment the hale nicht lang,
I could notice at a single glance,
To those who were not inclined to dance ;
They changed their countenance all at once—
Their fancies actually seemed to rove
Away in far-off fairy grove ;
But as the moments swiftly fled
They heard the charming lilt completed,
Then, clapping hands with loud encore,
The listeners welcomed one verse more.
Thus on they went with joyful glee,
Singing, dancing, laughing, and drinking tea
Or a wee bit spark of something stronger
To cheer the heart a little longer.
Of drink there was not one the worse—
You see the expense came from my purse,
Which seemed to be a little scrimpy,
Although no doubt I did hae plenty ;
By Jove, that night of jolly din
Made its swelling kite fall sadly in ;
But the like seldom happens in a lifetime,
So what cared I when the bride was mine—
A prize well worth my hindmost copper,
That I knew well before I sought her.
While we the antics were performing

All night long the wind was storming,
But we were not aware 'twas so terrific,
Or creating such excessive havoc,
Till homeward bound we left the hall,
Bidding it farewell for good and all
At seven o'clock, or there about,
The remainder of us took the route,
Then realised what great destruction
Was done in almost each direction.
Ashpans were birling through the street,
Folk could scarcely keep their feet,
Hats were blown off many a head,
And forced through many a droll parade,
While half in hopes, half in despair,
The owner gave chase with streaming hair,
And often, when he stooped to lift it,
A sudden gale would smartly shift it ;
At length, when sadly smeared with gutters,
He snatched it with avenging mutters.
Poor chap, his threats were all in vain,
For it was apt to do the same again.
Stacks were levelled to the ground,
Sheaves were scattered yards around,
And trees, uprooted by the hundreds,
Lay stretched beside their prostrate comrades :
Slates from off the roofs were torn,
And things displaced in many a form ;
Even when we landed at Montrose
The roaring waters rushed and rose
High over some ill-fated boats
Belonging some poor fisher stocks

Within the village of Ferryden,
 Where we spent our honeymoon.
 Still far more damage on the seas
 Had been effected by the breeze ;
 The papers gave exciting news
 Of sinking ships, and how their crews
 By Providence had saved their lives,
 Or sunk beneath remorseless waves,
 Leaving friends to weep and mourn,
 After the prospects of a fond return.
 Alas! how often sad preventions
 Blast the hopes of good intentions :
 Though luck regarded us by chance
 Throughout the marriage night for once—
 When me and mine had pledged our faith
 To love each other until death.



A Bard's Epitaph

COME all ye people who can read,
 And listen to my constant chime
 In memory of thy kindred breed—
 A fellow-mortal born with sin.

Know his remains are interred here,
 Who inclined his God to fear,
 Though many a time the deil's persistence
 Urged upon his strong resistance.

He was of an impatient mood
 To know the secrets of the earth,
 But by his knowledge understood
 That the world contains a curious birth.

If the victim's soul has gone to hell,
 That will not suit his wishes well,
 For every day while he was livin'
 His earnest thoughts were drawn to heaven.

Now take a warning from this stone,
 And think not you can live alone.
 For, like the sleeper 'neath this sod,
 Thou too must know the power of God.



The First Cuckoo of Spring

HARK! what is that I faintly hear,
 Echoing through the atmosphere,
 That startles me with gladness?
 It sounds familiar to my ear,
 But unseen it seems to steer,
 And searching is but madness.

Call again thou image fair,
 That in truth I can declare
 What thou really art,
 For here, among my writing gear,
 I would that you may claim a share
 Developed from my heart.

In fact you seem to understand,
For quite distinct at my demand
 Again I hear your voice ;
As on this glorious spot I stand
I can say with outstretched hand
 That I have seen my choice.

I ne'er could pitch a lovelier tune
To match the woodlands full in bloom,
 Where fairies dart ;
Behind the many clouds of gloom,
Thou art another pleasure strewn
 To charm the heart.



To William Duncan, a Fellow-Ploughman

(Answer to a Marriage Invitation.)

WE have received your invitation,
 And gather from the intimation
Results expected of the past
Are arranged to come at last :
And if so be we are not present,
Certainly something will prevent
Us from coming to the wedding,
Since you have given us a bidding—
So we accept your welcome call
To join the sport in Knowles' Hall.

Deception

H LENDING ear to a crafty tale
 Gains wit when other methods fail,
 And stirs a man to firm resolves,
 As through the path of life he strolls,
 To store up knowledge for the future,
 Awaiting some resembling feature.

Oh, vile deceit, why dost thy touch
 Command the human mind so much?
 Unnumbered thousands meaning well
 Thou hast misled and sent to hell;
 Had thy existence ne'er done harm
 They'd been prepared for heaven, I'll warn.

But while you impose we must recall
 That there are means to conquer all;
 Thy acute venom and dismay,
 Thou intrusive usurper of the day,
 If we only had that spot revealed
 Where thou art lurking, well concealed.



A Soldier's Toast

HERE'S to my country and my friends,
 May they stick well together.
 And when their safety on me depends
 I'll risk my life for either.

My Jean

(AIR—O' a' the Airts.)

SUCH power of love burns in my breast
 'Mid nature's lovely scene,
 I sighing look towards the west
 Still yearning for my Jean,
 That she may come again and rove
 Where evening dewdrops sheen,
 And I'd bequeath my ardent love
 To my bewitching Jean.

The burnie wimples through the den,
 Where often we did stray;
 Its pleasant banks and fair Jane Ann
 Recalls my thoughts each day,
 And even through the silent night
 I see them in my dream—
 Oh, where on earth is more delight
 Than wi' my winsome Jean.

Yea, though I move to sunny lands,
 Where all is blooming fair,
 And gain all else my heart demands.
 Nocht can wi' her compare,
 For, oh! I know her heart is true,
 As ever mine has been,
 All other maids I'd bid adieu,
 And live content wi' Jean.

So haste ye back, my bonnie lass,
 And soothe this heart o' mine,
 Nane else to me can thee surpass,
 Though thirty should combine :
 I would give up all I possess—
 All but my life, I wean—
 That I might live and win such bliss
 As my ain charming Jean.

She's tidy, honest, and sublime,
 Her features too are bright,
 A gentle type of feminine—
 Oh, that's my chief delight !
 Her modest charms enthrall my heart,
 But still that's naething mean,
 I'll be rewarded for the smart
 When I wed bonnie Jean.



The Christian

LET him perform the righteousness
 While it is his desire,
 'Tis but a duty bound to us
 Until we do expire.

So hinder not his goodly habit,
 'Twill profit you and him,
 But rather wish you also had it
 To cure you of your sin.

And let the wicked speak at large
As they may choose to do,
But if they don't the truth discharge
They'll sin their soul anew.

The simple task rewards a life
Of everlasting joy :
Then why should sinners be so rife
In disasterous employ ?

Oh, can such truly be the case
One's conscience is so blind
That it dare not to confess
A God rules human kind.

If so there be, what can be done
His poor soul may be saved,
Though there's no other chance but one,
Pray let it be engraved :

Which is, dear friend, to love the Lord,
And own that He is thine :
Always depend upon His word
In holy laws divine.

Oh, come, dear brothers, simply trust ;
And sisters of the day,
Our erring soul train to be just—
Its frame shall soon decay.

Then naked as ourselves when born,
Our spirit must regard
That God shall judge in serious form,
And pronounce our due reward.

Old Age and Poverty

OH, try and help the puir auld man,
 He'll no be spared sae very lang,
 Sae kindly tak' 'im by the han'.
 An' cheer him on as lang's ye can ;
 Mind poverty's an awfu' stang,
 I've noticed since my life began—
 In fact, I've shared it noo an' than ;
 Though it was for a wee short span
 'Twas long enough to understan'
 The dreadfu' power it could comman',
 But the knave an' me was never thrang,
 So here I yet abune him stan',
 And hope that it will never dawn
 Wi' its cruel, lingering, treacherous fang
 Upon my life wi' ponderous bang,
 Especially in that period whan
 My days are sweeping on the main—
 Yea, till my form lies 'neath the lawn.

To Thee, my Maker. I proceed,
 Imploring Thee my way to lead,
 Till stern death's malicious greed
 Shall cease my simple heart to bleed ;
 I know no other trust to heed
 'That I may to Thy realms succeed.
 If I the allotted span exceed,

O, Lord, provide my daily need,
 Leave all my senses keen indeed,
 Teach me Thy Scriptural truth to read
 That Christian life may be my creed,
 Do let me on Thy pastures feed :
 Accompanied with my wife, I plead
 For good examples to our seed.



Summer Song

HO, bright summer's come aince mair,
 Wi' a' her treasures rich an' rare,
 Which we are welcomed now to share
 Unto our heart's contentment, O.

We canna wish a fairer land
 Than dear auld Caledonia's strand,
 Wi' a' her scenery so grand
 To roam among wi' pleasure, O.

Far frae the busy city's din,
 Alang the brink o' some bit lin,
 My nature is wi' it to sing,
 And mak' my he'rt feel cheery, O.

What better pleasure can be got
 Where folk incline to strive and plot,
 I'll tak' the wager o' a grot
 My life's nae half sae weary, O.

I love to dwell near woodlands gay,
 Where harmless birdies lilt a' day,
 And through the quiet recess to stray
 At even wi' my dearie, O.

Or wander lanely at my ease
 Enjoying the cooling summer breeze,
 And rhyming simply as I please
 Concerning this wide creation, O.



Death

THOU unmerciful, mysterious carl',
 Few are thy friends throughout the warl',
 Unless a few auld aged, frail bodies,
 Scarce able for their bits o' jobies,
 Wha mak's you welcome soon to claim
 Their feeble spunk o' life frae pain,
 Or some uncoothie depredators
 Who are haunted for their ill behaviours ;
 Impatient for your stealthy grapple,
 Commits suicide to shun the scaffol' ;
 And thou art keen as edge o' knife
 At hailing creatures tired o' life.
 There's not a living being which
 Dreadeth not your untimely clutch
 Throughout their lives some time or other,
 Until you snap them altogether.

Were I able to explore thee,
And expert to overpower ye,
I would restrain your awful sway,
Regretted oft in misery,
Where many a loved one has to part
Expelled by your regardless art.

But thou shalt end thy tether yet—
The King of men has pledged your fate,
This world's pleasures speedily wallow,
Dispersing like a passing shadow,
And who but thee, oh Death! I pray,
So swiftly ends all in decay.

To-day we see a form flourish
Which gentle nature means to nourish,
And, though we hope to see it cherish,
E'er to-morrow it may perish,
Subdued by thy cruel requisition,
A sad, unruly, mean position—
A vengeance vowed by Eve's disgrace
On her and each succeeding race.

But conscience still persuades my mind,
As it in my early youth inclined,
That He who has created all
Retains control to suit his call ;
Then who claims wisdom to persist
Against their Maker's high behest?
'Tis surely folly, treble treason,
And far beyond a speck of reason—
Therefore our beings must submit
For God to judge as He thinks fit.

Prosen's Bonnie Banks and Braes

WHOU bonnie banks an' braes o' Prosen,
 In praise I lilt a sang to thee,
 For I may never see thee more—
 My way has led me far frae thee.
 I've rambled through the Pearsy woods,
 Which hugs thee in her bosom deep,
 I've strolled among thy hazel bowers,
 Where pleasure won my heart complete.

Chorus—

Oft in my youth, when blithesome and free,
 I've relished life's pleasures aroving in thee,
 When summer was bonnie, all nature in glee,
 Oft times in the gloamin' I've sported in thee.

I've seen the winding Earn flow,
 Where splendour graced her rugged flanks,
 I've seen the Tay and river Forth
 Glide sweetly by their flowery banks,
 But Prosen's bonnie banks an' braes
 Seem quite as wonderous fair to me—
 These shall I praise with heart and voice
 In special tones of boundless glee.

Oft in my youth, when blithesome and free, etc.

By Prosen's bonnie banks an' braes
 There flows the arn-mantled stream,
 In which was my delight to wade,
 Fishing in the twilight hours at e'en.
 But now these joys have passed away,
 And fresh the thoughts awake in me ;
 Though, Prosen, I ne'er see thee more,
 I sing in hearty strains to thee.

Oft in my youth, when blithesome and free, etc.



In Memory of Nelly H. Crichton

Who Died on 23d December, 1893, Aged 20 Months.

DEAR Nellie. our departed treasure,
 Another year has swiftly fled
 Since thy fair form was laid for ever
 In the bosom of the grave.

Without our little darling's presence
 No pleasure now on earth we find ;
 But, God be praised, we are the parents
 Of such a flower as He has claimed.

The Twa Horse

It's generally a horse and mare, of course,
Are considered as a pair of horse.

IT happened on a day in June,
Well over in the afternoon,
Before the sun's full orb of light
Had fairly vanished out of sight,
Two horses in a meadow park
Lay down to rest and hae a crack
Upon their earlier life and pranks,
And all about their present ranks ;
And even in their conversation
Did no forget the human nation,
Wha likely gave them some occasion
To lead them to such meditation.

Trust was a noble Cleveland spanker,
Willing to work, and mild in temper ;
While Bloom, a hardy Clydesdale mare,
Was rather ranker clad wi' hair.
Now, they being filled with grass and water
Made them look mair plump and fatter
Than what they did last month or twa,
When sparely fed on corn and straw ;
They had got more than a week to browse,
And less disturbèd than the cows ;

The field being rich with grass and clover,
 Soon satisfied themselves for fodder ;
 Then being tormented with mischievous flies
 That swarm beneath the summer skies,
 To defend their nose, and ears, and eyes
 The plan they took was very wise—
 They both lay down with head to tail,
 And then began to swich and flail
 Till their opponents were driven back ;
 Bloom earnestly began the chat,
 Trust spoke in turn now and then—
 Both seemed as wise as many men.

To prove my words repeat their tales,
 And hear them speaking for yourselves,
 Then doubtless you may think it strange
 What passes through a horse's brains.

BLOOM—

Man, Trust, while lying on our wime,
 Let's hae a crack to pass the time ;
 Nae doot a rest revives the weary,
 But recollections make life cheery,
 Especially wi' a friend I trust in,
 And that's just what I take you for, min—
 In fact I never came across
 A changing nature in a horse,
 Unless that men had sair provoked him,
 Or likely spoiled it when they yoked him,
 Those human beings are so deceitfu'—
 Think wi' reason and they're really dreadfu'.

TRUST—

Faith, Bloom, I agree wi' your opinion,
 Some scarce deserve to hae dominion
 Over animals which they claim—
 A second thought might bring them shame
 Would they compare the human frailties
 With the animal realities.

I wat they are clever in the mind,
 Though some are foolisher inclined ;
 Consider how many a droll contrivance
 Connected with our class—for instance,
 There's carting, ploughing, harrowing, and grub-
 Rolling, coaching, and waggons tugging, [ing,
 There's racing, thrashing grain, and leaping—
 In fact, the truth just plainly speaking,
 About each performance to perfection
 Would induce a long description ;
 'Tis really wonderful, no doubt,
 What length of time may bring about.

BLOOM—

Losh, man, their plans attract attention,
 But much is needed towards invention ;
 It seems to me some great endower
 Acts on their brains like magic power ;
 Since I took notice of their movements
 They have adopted great improvements,—
 Just fancy—those engines through the kingdom,
 These same give horses far more freedom ;
 We may misca' them as we like,

But, to give the creatures honour bright,
When we see them so laborious
Let us regard them as meritorious.

It's fourteen years, I'll guarantee,
Since they first alarmed me—
I wondered what betook their brains
When they decked me up wi' straps and chains,
Then led me aff langside a blue,
And yoked us baith to haul a ploo ;
At the least offer I made to resist
They laid to me wi' something crisp,
But since then I've come to wit
It was that 'tag they call a whip.
At first I thought they wanted fun,
So I kicked and plunged and tried to run—
Guidsake, they gave my head a tit,
And commanded me wi' a confounded bit ;
I soon gave in, but it was provokin',
I tell you without a word of jokin'.

TRUST—

Hech, lass, I weel believe your story,
It's like enough you had been sorry,
And it's not uncommon for a horse,
As well as human beings, of course,
To think that their ain share o' trouble
Exceeds their neighbours even double ;
Perhaps trials are meant to make us humble,
Still we cannot help but grumble.
When I recall my early youth

Nae blither colt e'er ran on hoof ;
 I pranced and capered the hale day lang,
 Ne'er fearing the face of mortal man.

BLOOM—

But even although, losh man, they are cute,
 Compared wi' the instincts of a brute,
 They speak of having hearts and souls,
 Yet they deprive me of my foals :
 Wae's me, when minding on that same,
 I've had my share of heart-felt pain—
 As fack as death it grieves me sair
 To think—Hech how ! I can say nae mair.

TRUST—

Well, Bloom, no wonder though you're sad,
 Folk are not much better than they're ca'ed—
 Just look, for instance, at mysel' :
 Nae doot I had provoked them fell
 When they started me to work.
 But they kicked and smashed at me like dirt,
 As if my legs were iron stanchions,
 And I born with the gift of their intentions.
 They seem to think that we accept
 A violent blow with small effect ;
 No wonder though I've turned crazy
 In prime of life—what they ca' lazy.
 I've had enormous loads to draw,
 Which made me sprent till like to fa'.
 Yet unmercifully they lashed me up,

Whiles wi' a cudgel, whiles a whip ;
 Hard labour has my limbs deformed,
 And now I am by some folk scorned.
 They have hearts of either steel or flint,
 And white-iron souls I'm led to think—
 At least it's plain enough to see
 There is something wrong that should not be,
 And to give the animal tribe protection
 There is much necessity for sharp correction.

With that they fairly closed their mugs,
 Sprang to their hoofs and cocked their lugs,
 While staring at a ploughman chield
 Approaching to them through the field,
 With halters hanging on his shoulder,
 To house them, as the night grew colder,
 Caused by the glorious orb of day
 Giving place to Lunar's sway.
 So if their crack was e'er extended,
 It's quite uncertain how it ended.



To a Swallow

TWITTER, twitter, little swallow,
 Skimming through the summer air,
 My very heart delights to see you
 Darting swiftly here and there.

Such a merry life of pleasure
I must say you seem to spend,
Flitting with the warmest weather,
Always welcomed as a friend.

Ah, little dost thou dread, blithe creature,
As thou art dashing overhead,
The many miseries that man, sure,
Must withstand ere he is dead.

Still we have our pleasures also,
Life's not all unpleasant here ;
'Twould be much brighter had we less though
Of man's inhumanity to bear.

Beyond all misfortunes found in nature
Since e'er our foremost parents arose,
Man's inhumanity, I'm sure,
Creates our greatest earthly woes.

But woe betide the one of ignorance
Who would seek to take thy life,
Or even those who wish for hind'rance
To thy matchless speedy flight.

Skip along, thou nimble bird.
Unwearied on thy wanton wing :
Such rapture in my breast is stirred
To see thee frolic, harmless thing.



The New Poet

ANOTHER poet of the times
 Is making up his thoughts in rhymes,
 And to the public he proclaims
 His name as Robert Blaikie, O;
 He fixes objects near and far,
 A perfect treat his poems are—
 I'm led to think he'll be a star,
 This chiel ca'ed Robert Blaikie, O.

Chorus—

Wha ever would ha'e thocht it, tho',
 Wha ever would ha'e thocht it,
 An orphan lad to be a bard,
 Frae heavenly Powers he had socht it, O.

At a hundred St Leonards he was born,
 There first he saw the light o' morn,
 Then how can Edinburgh scorn
 To own this Robert Blaikie, O.
 At the early age of twenty-three
 He had the rhyming art, I see,
 And still extends his pedigree
 As poet Robert Blaikie, O.

Wha ever would ha'e thocht it, etc.

His name seems no much further spread
 Than where he is working at his trade
 In Forfarshire, where he was bred,
 This clown ca'ed Robert Blaikie, O.
 While he was learnin' at the school—
 A public ane they call Kinnell—
 They took him for a stupid fool,
 Still he was Robert Blaikie, O.

Wha ever would hae thocht it, etc.

He has had his ups and downs through life,
 But always tried to shun from strife,
 And now he has got a winsome wife
 An' helpmate has Rob Blaikie, O.
 Success attend them all their days,
 Well blest by future shining rays,
 And still incline to spin his lays
 As suits the mind of Blaikie, O.

Wha ever would hae thocht it, etc.



Lines on a Skylark

ONE morning early by the dawn
 As I went forth to till the lan',
 Swiftly from the earth there sprang
 A blithesome laverock;
 She soared so high the clouds amang,
 Beyond the distance I could scan,
 And there poured forth her bonnie sang
 By early daybreak.

The woodlands joined her in the ploy,
And sweet her echoes did convoy—
My very heart did leap for joy:
 Within my breast ;
But, oh, how soon grief did annoy
The pleasure that I did enjoy—
I saw the heedless plough destroy
 Her cosy nest.

So waefu' was the sight to see,
The very teardraps dimmed my e'e,
For there within was one, two, three
 Dark spotted eggs.
But ere the danger I could see,
In time to turn my horse agee,
The helpless things were doomed to dee—
 Puir hermless tades.

Ah, little does their mother ken
That she expects them there in vain,
Or like the shell around each wean,
 Her tiny heart would break ;
For even mine is moved with pain
To see the works of nature slain,
And to mankind the tale explain
 In wae regret.

Oh, such a pity that mischief
Should e'er befall her harmless life,
As her tide of pleasure being so brief
 Ends on this earth ;

Though I may stain the book of life
 When tempting prospects end in grief,
 Heaven still offers me relief
 In endless mirth.

But God will cheer her o'er the worst,
 And guide her where she can entrust,
 That neither plough nor harrow durst
 Cause her vexation ;
 Then she may cast a glance of thirst
 To see this fellow-mortal curst,
 Though in tears I'm like to burst
 Wi' lamentation.



Robert William Blaikie

IN eighteen-hundred and sixty-nine
 Fortune got me to refine,
 And aince he was determined,
 But, wi' a memory like my grannie's,
 He soon forgot about his promise
 By taking up wi' ither cronies :
 Syne, when the thocht came in his heed,
 He then desired to change my creed,
 And cuist me oot, just like a weed,
 To be a farm servant.

A Chat wi' the Deil;
or, Imagination Mixed wi' Truth

THE way was long, the night was cold,
A piercing wind was howling bold :
This happened on a winter season,
And proof I'll give you for a reason—
Though snaw was scarce, the frost was keen,
Aloft the glancing moon did sheen ;
And though the road was clad with ice,
I saw to wile it pretty nice,
Until it wended through a wood
Where darkness then began to brood.
As it covers up a mighty span,
I'm no to name it though I can,
In case that ither folk, for instance,
May startle at the least disturbance ;
Tho' it may be a falling twig
Dashed against another sprig,
Or rabbits prancing through the wood
In harmless pursuit for food—
Even dry leaves rustling wi' the wind
Knocks a timorous bodie stunned,
Expecting some unearthly sight,
Witches and warlocks, or sic like :
But those of more undaunted feelings
Are seldom scared with such-like dealings ;

And though at nights I've often been
Oot very late, an' by my lean,
I can say I never fell
In wi' waur like than mysel',
Until this night I saw a sight
Which nearly frightened me outright.
At first I drew a langsome sich
That nearly knocked me oot o' breath ;
Besides, my hair stood right on end,
My very he'rt was like to rend,
Until I came back to my senses
And then relied on my defences.
Expecting to protect my life
Wi' my sturdy staff and pocket knife.

But no resistance was required,
Although my courage was admired ;
If war had been the one request
I'd likely come off second best,
For who, think ye. I had encountered,
No wonder though I was dumfounded—
The deil we hear o' doing such deeds
As snapping life, like tender threeds,
So many ills he gets the blame o'
They would hinder lang to gie the name o'—
The special interest o' my tale
Is concerning auld nick an' mysel'.

He was weel clad frae heid to heel
Wi' dirks an' arrows made o' steel,
Likewise a hook—a perfect demon—
For haulin' victims nearer till 'im,

It was well worn, and very aged,
And seemed the principal tool engaged ;
It had ance been broken somehow or other,
And then been roughly waled together.
A heavy instrument of manner
To try its weight would make you stammer,
But seeing him wield it made me glower,
For it seemed as nothing in his power.

And while the carl showed his strength,
I well surveyed his breadth and length,
Which appeared just like an ordinar' whale
Turned end up upon its tail ;
Of course he had arms in place of fins,
And stood erect upon his pins.
He was an easy-minded villain—
In fact he seemed to hae nae feelin',
His face resembled some gorilla's,
His ears were shaped like umbrellas ;
Twa horns had he, so fancy twirled—
I think they soounded when he skirled.
I could neither call him thin nor fat,
But, losh keep me, his skin was black,
Tho' his teeth were white as snaw,
The drollest jiff that e'er I saw ;
And what drew my attention weel—
He was as wry as ony eel,
Tho' nigh six thousand years, it's said,
He has been professor of his trade.
Full half-an-hour I stood and stared,
While slavers trickled down his beard.

Preserve me ! how he spat, and fussed, and
I would lee to say his snoot was corkèd, [snorted,
His eyes glared forth like Rontgen rays,
And seemed to penetrate my claes ;
Thinks I, great Scot ! I'm in for't now,
He has wanted me to start the row—
My very legs shook in my breeks
As if they fain would screed the steeks ;
Still, my determinedness could spurn
The inclination to let me turn,
Even although he ventured forward,
Expecting I would soon be murdered.
Prepared again to draw my whittle,
When, mighty ! I minded on the bottle
In my pocket, weel primed wi' brandy,
And thinking it might tempt auld Sandy,
Suspiciously I held it oot,
Freely urging him to take a sook.
My courtesy forced him to smile,
Which brightened up my heart the while,
And gratitude on his countenance dawned
As he snatched the bottle frae my hand :
No wonder, for the scent I only got,
The glutton drained it every drop ;
He seemed to think the contents precious—
In fact he exclaimed it was delicious ;
Indeed, I feared to contradict him
In case I should become a victim ;
But, all the same, I had the dreed
That he was byordinar wi' his greed ;
You'd think yersel' the weary clip

Might have offered me a nip.
I've often heard of his temptation,
But surely this was aggravation.

Goodness knows yet how he spared me,
My very looks might have betray'd me ;
At any rate he pouched his gullies,
And turned out to be guid billies,
For down he sat beside a whin,
Coxing me to sit near him.
No being designed to provoke his temper,
My timorous courage let me venture
To flap upon a patch of heather
Three yards frae him, or fully further.

This satisfied me now, you'll think :
Yea, fegs. I could scarcely trust my eyes to wink,
But soon gave o'er my superstition
As we wore on to conversation ;
His voice retained a curious sound,
It appeared to come up through the ground ;
First when I heard it how I wondered—
I saw no lightning, and yet it thundered ;
His language was the auld Scotch doric,
An' he seemed to hae a fancy for it.
He told me many a thrilling story,
Regarded as his special glory,
But what about no one else knows,
And I'm sworn to leave you to suppose
For fear it leads to harm his trade,
And heaps conviction on his head.

'Gainst a few remarks o' small importance
 He stented no particular hind'rance,
 Where I'd the chance of word about
 I'm just to tell you what may suit.

[SATAN, after speaking lang himsel',
 Prepares for me to speak as well.]

Ay, ay, my freend, hoo are fouk behavin'
 Roond about the cast o' Brechin ;
 My roonds this while I hinna gane.
 I've been sae trachled about hame—
 Gettin' in a store o' coals,
 An' examinin' my wicked rolls—
 That thae minister bodies try to lessen,
 But, faith, they look mair like increasin'.
 You see, the term's wearin' near,
 And it sets the maist o' fouk asteer,
 Even then wha dinna flit
 Like to sprush up things a bit.

[ROBIN, yearning for the chance,
 Gladly answered him at once.]

Weel. Sandy, I'm hearing no complaint—
 At least to any great extent—
 About my neighbour folks' affairs,
 And I'm sweer to neglect my ain for theirs ;
 Still it makes me wae to listen
 That wicked folk are yet increasin' ;
 I wonder if you know the cause, min,
 Or hae a remedy to convert them.
 My certy, it would ease your labour,
 And men would speak more in your favour.

When folk are flittin' about the terms,
 God pity those wi' bits o' bairns,
 But I'm persuaded that you possess
 Some witchery if you confess,
 Calculating by the way your speakin',
 Or how do you know I come frae Brechin.

[SATAN, in a hameower style,
 Answers wi' a pawky smile.]

Ha, ha ! if ye hae sense ye canna use it,
 For that wis na very ill to guess, mate,
 I hae guid een into my noddle,
 They twigged the label on yer bottle—
 Where I'm in lack of education
 Perseverence brings me information,
 Patience, a favourite chum of mine,
 Generally enlightens me through time ;
 But for a remedy to reduce the wicked,
 My foresight has not yet concluded.

[ROBIN shows his manners to the other,
 And treats him as he were a brother.]

I believe you, an' would like to say a wurd or twa,
 If I can speak wi' sense ata',
 To you, about your pedigree,
 If you permit me, do you see.

[SATAN complies to the request,
 But first of all he thus addresset.]

I winna hinder ye or care,
 If ye can just the truth declare,

For seldom such an opportunity
 I hae ama' the hale community.
 The majority o' the human race
 Prefer to shun my dwelling place,
 They even sneer at my position,
 And imagine that I desire ambition ;
 Yet they can't resist temptation,
 Although it leads them to vexation.

[ROBIN ventures to explain
 In a sympathetic strain.]

Puir chiel. I hear you sair run down
 Both in the country and the town,
 Not only in my land of birth,
 But here and there o'er all the earth
 By many people, of different classes,
 In such taunting ways—my modesty surpasses
 To express the profane language
 Fathered on you if they can manage ;
 But there seems enough of wise folk still
 To restrain the unwitty from their malicious
 Who call you evil, vile, deceitful. [will.
 Beyond comparing with an equal ;
 If any misdeed has been transacted.
 It little matters who was at it,
 Even though it was the vilest weed
 That the world could produce, indeed.
 You are blamed for giving him the art,
 And must share dishonour too in part.
 They imagine it is but your due
 That no ill can happen without you

Being at the root of such exploits,
 Then pronounce all mischief yours by rights—
 Excuse my encroaching liberty
 For asking, “Is't true what people say,
 That you protest in opposition
 'Towards the Almighty powers of heaven?”

[SATAN. scratching at his heid,
 Lays doon a melancholy screed.]

Weel, honest freend, in truth I tell ye,
 I canna help mysel', you see,
 It's somewhat true in certain sense,
 And yet I act in their defence ;
 Despite of all my curious projects,
 I'm but one of our Almighty's subjects,
 Sent to test the human frame,
 And point the weak parts out more plain.
 With intent to give all opportunity
 To cultivate the soul's divinity,
 For the Almighty Maker's great desire is
 That every one ought to admire His
 Wonderous works of wise design
 To escape the horrible experience of mine.

It's my trade that causeth all the nations
 To insult me with disgusting indignations,
 While they have themselves to blame
 For disobeying God's great aim—
 Would they perform their duty as well
 As I, they would liberate themselves from hell—
 Composed of sinful enemies,
 Wreathing and wailing in their agonies.

Although I'm proclaimed hard-hearted Nick,
 And keeper of the dismal pit,
 Folk little ken how wae it seems
 For me to hear the mournful screams
 Of unfortunat sufferers in my den,
 Or they would pity me alang wi' them.
 I'd fain desert my gloomy occupation,
 But, Lord preserve's! my resignation
 Would prove sad excitement to well-wishers,
 And the wicked to increase their lustful
 pleasures ;
 But I'll complete my strange appointment,
 Likely intended till the day of judgment,
 Then we'll understand more plain
 The reason why I'm brought to shame.

[ROBIN rising, shivering, from his seat,
 Resolves to end the crack complete.]

Losh, man, I thank you for the patience
 You've taken to describe my inquiring reference.
 All your ideas I agree wi',
 And now I beg you to forgee me.
 It's time that I was taking flight,
 Another hour will bring daylight ;
 My wife, I'll warn, has wearied long,
 Wondering what on earth is wrong,
 For it's not my usual way
 To disappoint her with delay ;
 When she questions where I've been
 She'll likely think my tale a dream,
 She has heard me say a good night's rest

Is worth all enjoyments at their best—
 I've lost a good night' sleep, I wat,
 But good friendship is worth more than that.
 We'll maybe meet some ither time,
 When the weather retains a warmer clime,
 And our surroundings more adorning ;
 Meantime I take my leave—Good morning.

SATAN—I second the proposal you've been forming,
 Likewise respond to your good morning.



The Artful Highland Shepherd

A SHEPHERT chieft unknown py name
 Came town from Inferness, man,
 With a few sheep, we'll suppose her ain—
 There was four score and fiff, man.

She scrant apout ta puplic roats,
 In titches ant in woots, man,
 To save ta expense of a few croats,
 To help to make them pay, man.

Through time she wore out py Altpar.
 A coot mile from ta Castle, man,
 And even venturet yont as far
 As ta Moorsite of Melgunt, man.

Ant after loafing pack an' fore
 Apout two weeks or so, man,
 Resolvet that she woult giv it o'er
 Ant take a pit of pasture, man.

She fixet upon ta Stoneypriggs
 Her new tesire to suit, man,
 Ta crass looket ponnie on ta riggs,
 A crant treat for her sheep, man.

To make a pargin off she went
 To converse with ta master, man,
 Putt to ta charge she woult not consent—
 Ach, sure, 'twass far too much, man.

Putt then to counsel with hersel'
 She took another night, man,
 Ant came pack to settle after all,
 Complying with Calter's wish, man.

She wass four weeks all putt a tay,
 Her sheep crazing where they pleaset, man,
 In fielts that on ta farm lay.
 And no one interferet, man.

Now, tureing all that time, she wass
 Lotching in Brechin motely, man,
 Therefore we knew not how to class
 Her troll suspicious looks, man.

Civility woult fain convince
 Us, not to contemn a person, man,
 Py ta natural countenance
 We are all provitet with, man.

At last, howeffer, time permits,
It neetful for to shift, man,
Ant, as she wass lifing py her wits,
She tumplet on a scheme, man.

Unto ta farmer she proposet
To take to Forfar sale, man,
Fifty sheep, ass she supposet,
Ant ta rest to Brechin mart, man.

So in ta morning she awoke
Pefore ta preak of tay, man,
Ant took ta roat, with all her flock,
With tifferent plans in view, man.

Put, och, ta farmer jalooset ta prank,
When taylight tit appear, man ;
He saw no sheep, ant fearet ta scamp
Intentet not to pay, man.

Then sure he yoket ta pony now,
A coot one, too, it wass, man,
Threatening an indignant vow
To offertake his tebter, man.

When he hat trove nine miles complete,
He landet into Forfar, man,
Ant charget ta rogue upon ta street
Inclining to Perth direction, man.

Now after learning she wass coppet,
She staret with creat surprise, man,
Putt soon contrivet a cunning plot—
Och, she meant to call acain, man.

Peing challanget in ta public range,
 Ant threatenet with ta police, man,
 Sait, holt my coat, till I cet change,
 Inteet, she'll chustly pay you, man.

She soon came pack with plenty of cash—
 Och, more than pay her tebt, man ;
 Putt, faith, she neffer meant to fash
 Till Master Calter pushet her, man.

Ant after they settlet up ta splore,
 Each took their tifferent course, man,
 Some wiser than they were pefore,
 Peing warnet for ta future, man.



To John Mackenzie Fenton

STATION HOTEL, FORFAR.

LOSH, Fenton, you are a humorous chield—
 In fack, there seems few like ye,
 I see they have a mighty screed
 In the public news about thee ;
 So weel's they may.
 I have been reading it with interest,
 And so has my wife—
 Your photograph illustrates it,
 This story of a busy life
 Frae your earliest day.

It seems at Sheep's Park you were born,
Somewhere near Balgavies,
And ever frae that time henceforth
You've been as blithe's the mavis
That rambles there,
And lilt her sweet, he'rt-stirring sang,
Which makes the gay surroundings ring
Frae early morn till late at e'en,
While flourishes the budding spring
And summer fair.

After a somewhat scanty schooling
You became a village herd,
And syne got on for bottler and strapper
To Mr Banks, upon my wurd,
A local hotel-keeper ;
But, faith, you took it in your heid
To try the bakin',
And served your time with Mr Crab
To the desire new taken—
A regular dough-beater.

Your mind next bent on being sodger,
So you took the bob ;
But got discharged for being too young,
And resumed your recent job—
The baking trade ;
But still there smouldered in your breast
A vicious thirst for gore,
And, to satisfy your ample notion,
Soon joined the regiment once more—
The Cameron grade.

I'm thinking you'd a trying time
 Manœuvring through wet weather ;
But time soon brought you back again
 To the bakehouse as peacemaker,
 But no to bide ;
Nine months later you became a constable
 To try your nerves.
While thus engaged you embarked for war
 As one of the Queen's reserves,
 To cross the tide.

During the first Egyptian campaign
 You fought at Tel-el-Kebir,
And hold the medal, clasp, and star
 With proud, romantic fever
 For that brave action.
Inspired by many a frantic scene
 You steered again for Scotland,
And joined the bobbies, as before,
 In the dear auld mother land
 With more attraction.

You soon received the rank of sergeant,
 Then keeper of the police cells ;
Before this you married a blacksmith's daughter,
 Her maiden name Hellen Allan spells—
 She was appointed matron ;
Since then you've raised yourselves as far
 As own a big hotel ;
From what I chance to see and hear
 I'm sure you're prospering well—
 Seventeen stones a patron.

A hundred dinners to supply on Mondays
Must give you brisk employment,
But the amount of clink you bank for that
Rewards you with enjoyment—
I's warn ye ;
Besides refreshments and annual feasts,
When social clubs combine—
Flower shows, marriages, balls, and ploughing
All such as suits your line, [matches—
And pays thee.

They reckon you an eager sportsman
In many a game that's played,
And when your favours are required
You at once bestow your aid
With the greatest pleasure.
I question what you may be yet,
You are only forty-two,
But a man who is marked among the rest
Gets many a cause to rue,
And loss all favour.

So be aware, thou lucky man,
To guide aright thy wits,
And ne'er give way to foolishness,
Or you may loss your strips
In your old age.
A noted man should always prove
To be a goodly sample,
For he's the readiest to affect
The ignorant with example
Of any stage.

The Twa Lovers

WILL you go wi' me, bonnie lassie, O?
 To yon thorn-blossomed tree, bonnie lassie, O?
 While birds are singing sweet
 Your sweet charms I'll entreat,
 Neath yon thorn-blossomed tree, bonnie lassie, O.

My mammy wont allow, bonnie laddie, O,
 My company with you, bonnie laddie, O;
 She causes me to frown
 When she says I am too young,
 And to let the lads a' be, bonnie laddie, O.

If you and I agree, bonnie lassie, O,
 Come along wi' me, bonnie lassie, O;
 I have for you in store
 Sweet kisses as before,
 'Neath yon thorn-blossomed tree, bonnie lassie, O.

Deed I have the mind, bonnie laddie, O,
 But I'll rather stay behind, bonnie laddie, O;
 My mammy's word is law,
 Though I ne'er should wed ava,
 And let the lads a' be, bonnie laddie, O.

Come, get on your hat, bonnie lassie, O,
 For true lovers canna part, bonnie lassie, O,
 Till they both express their heart,
 Though the night be e'er so dark,
 Neath yon thorn-blossomed tree, bonnie lassie, O.

I have a bashful pride, bonnie laddie, O,
Which is very hard to chide, bonnie laddie, O,
For I'm in an awful swither
Betwixt you and my auld mither,
Gen I should let the lads a be, bonnie laddie, O.

You needna say you're shy, bonnie lassie, O,
I can read your rolling eye, bonnie lassie, O ;
Come, link each other's arms,
And we'll breathe each other's charms
'Neath yon thorn-blossomed tree, bonnie lassie, O.

Let us steal away unseen, bonnie laddie, O,
As we did th' streen, bonnie laddie, O,
I think I'm no' to blame
For my maunnie did the same
Ere she let the lads a be, bonnie laddie, O.

If you have a mind, bonnie lassie, O,
When will we combine, bonnie lassie, O,
Now I'm ready for the time,
So we'll make it up by nine
'Neath yon thorn-blossomed tree, bonnie lassie, O.

You can set the time yoursel', bonnie laddie, O,
When we reach the dell, bonnie laddie, O,
And I shall feel at ease
To comply with what you please,
And let my lad a be, bonnie laddie, O.



To the North Esk

FLOW on, thou wild majestic river,
 I hinder not thy rapid pace,
 Though I have come to view thy splendour,
 Which fills me with admiring grace.

Sweep on, amid thy lovely scenes,
 Darting o'er thy rugged linns ;
 While warblers lilt amid thy screens,
 Which now display their autumn tinge.

Thy banks, with rural nature spread,
 Convinces me, while here I linger,
 That there is something far ahead
 Incites my brain with endless wonder.

My baffled thoughts may yet be known
 When I my appointed race perform,
 Whilst thou art gaily gliding on,
 And my body feeds the worm.

Oft by thy crystal stream I've strayed,
 'Mong fairest flowers that ever bloomed,
 But now they have vanished and decayed—
 Their days, like mine, are also doomed.

But while they die, to live again
 When spring returns, with cheerful song,
 Shall I a lasting life retain
 Among my Maker's holy throng.

Ah, well may I this question doubt,
 My conscience checks the inward man,
 And puts my courage so to rout,
 I dare not mention if I can.

Still there is One who knows my fears—
 He, who created all I see,
 From this bank through blinding tears,
 My wayward life brings grief on me.



Elegy on the Death of —————

YE Brechin randies, ane and a',
 Your lover's dead,
 And ye have been his greatest flaw,
 Mixed wi' that confounded usqueba,
 Such abominable trade,
 I wonder if you think ava
 To rue, and let a tear doonfa'
 For him, wha's mony a bairn's da,
 Though never wed:
 Or will ye never care a straw,
 But run headlong to ruin—ah!
 I am afraid,
 Ye shameless hizzies, Satan's paw
 Will make you dread.

To My Watch

YHOUGH you are but an English lever,
 With double cases made of silver,
 If you I happen to forget
 When from home I do regret,
 For precious time you do unfold,
 Like dandy watches made of gold ;
 I have no doubt but you are better
 Than many a twenty-five pound noter.

Of course you are not quite so flash,
 But your telling truth they can't surpass ;
 To me you are such a trusty pard
 That I bind you with a guard
 On the side next to my heart,
 That robbers dare not make us part :
 Geese regulate themselves when flying,
 But so do you while time is dying.

Although you cost me five pound ten,
 I wouldn't sell you for that sum again.
 A buyer would expect some pro',
 So I will bear you to and fro ;
 Unless you may prove to deceive me
 After trimming wont relieve thee,
 And if so be that we must part,
 A touch of woe shall pierce my heart.

I've had you five years now almost,
 And a good time keeper I can boast,
 In that time I've broken two fine glasses
 While I was cheering up the lasses ;
 But as your hands were on your face,
 Your dial has gotten no disgrace,
 A crystal glass I did restore,
 So you look as handsome as before.

The fitter told me it was stronger,
 And it has really lasted longer ;
 When I would like the time to trace
 I look upon thy truthful face.
 There, again, I see your hands
 Pointing to what my mind demands :
 Then I place you in my pocket,
 Where many a tick, tick, you have mocket.



The Gannochy

WHERE is a lovely scene, I trow,
 And if ye dinna ken o't,
 Ye pleasure-seekers, ane and a',
 I'll tell to you the name o't.

Chorus—

Ha, ha, the Gannochy,
 Cheer up and see the Gannochy ;
 If this you do, you'll never rue
 A trip up to the Gannochy.

Drive up to Edzell in a 'bus,
 And you're fairly on the scent o't.
 Still further north, twa mile or so,
 That's just about the stent o't.

Ha, ha, the Gannochy, etc.

About midsummer is the time
 To get the grandest view o't,
 Then nature's robes enhance the scene
 And magnify the tourists' thought.

Ha, ha, the Gannochy, etc.

The Burn wood enwraps the scene,
 And beautifies the rustic spot ;
 Each feathered warbler's melody
 Betrays the secret pleasure sought.

Ha, ha, the Gannochy, etc.

I've aften wandered there my lean
 To court the fascinations o't,
 Lang e'er I saw my winsome Jean,
 Wha noo can claim my foremost vote.

Ha, ha, the Gannochy, etc.

When Phœbus lends his glistening rays,
 Enlivening a' the interior o't,
 It's like a blink o' Paradise
 Described as our hereafter lot.

Ha, ha, the Gannochy, etc.

The Bible

THOU holy messenger of truth,
 Example of my Maker's proof,
 Thou'lt guide me from my early youth
 Unto the grave—
 An excellent trust from all the worst
 My soul to save.

Oh, such a blessing as thou art,
 A perfect treasure to my heart ;
 How could my thoughts from thee depart,
 Thou wise instructor ?
 Sincerest friend from start to end,
 My life's conductor.

The way to heaven's eternal bowers
 Are spread among thy leaves like flowers,
 Though blighted by destruction's powers
 It still exists,
 To bloom as gay, and hold the sway
 O'er evil tests.

You tell us how the world began
 Whereon we gaze with wondrous scan,
 And even how God created man
 And gave him life ;
 Then thought it good to cheer his mood
 With a loving wife.

And when the twa wère happily paired,
And placed in Eden's lovely yaird,
You warn us how the serpent snared
 Their tempting eye.
And marred their mirth with trials on earth,
 To pine and die.

In thee we have in full detail
How Noah prepared the ark to sail
Upon the flood that did prevail
 Over all the globe,
And safely sat on Mount Ararat
 With her chosen mob.

Even how the Israelites were led
When from King Pharaoh's hosts they fled,
And the miracles which God displayed
 To set them free,
Yet how they mourned till plagues returned,
 Is sad to see.

But those who obeyed the Lord's command
Journeyed safe across the desert sand,
And enjoyed the pleasant promised land
 They held in view,
Full forty years, with doubts and fears,
 And trials anew.

Oh, Book of Books ! thy generous light
Doth make the silent future bright ;
Thy gospel truth strives to invite
 Our souls from sin,
To gain true rest among the blest,
 God's realms within.

While through thy pages I proceed,
And meditate on what I read.
I perceive that many a glorious deed
 Is performed through faith,
And happy are they who trust her sway—
 They shall conquer death.

Abraham's faith was strong of old,
When the knife aloft his hand did hold
To slay his son, more loved than gold,
 To uphold his creed
And please the Lord, whom he adored
 For staying the deed.

The feats of Samson make us wonder :
Yet, ah ! he made a mighty blunder
When to his wife he did surrender
 The secret so strange ;
But faith did restore his power once more
 To have revenge.

The psalms of David, oh, how sweet
 To hear them sung where Christians meet ;
 They shine as light to guide our feet—
 Yea, even the heart ;
 They stir to raise its Maker's praise
 With vocal art.



Acrostic—Maggie Duthie

MAY health, mirth, and prosperity
Attend thee all thy life :
Good faith, hope, and charity
Govern thee from strife,
Improve thy hours of leisure time,
Elect some prosperous design.

Detain thy mind from evil thoughts,
Utter true and loving notes,
Then to cheer thee in old age you'll find
Honour on thy brow entwined ;
Imagine how dreadful it must be to live
Entangled by beguiling power till we reach the
 grave.



The Daisy

YHOU lovely flower of modesty,
 That decks the fields in bright array,
 Could I compare my life to thee
 My soul from grieving would be free.

While passing o'er the green clad lea,
 Sweet gem thy form perplexes me
 At even, when the sun is low,
 And sparkling dew from the heavens descend,
 Thy blossom o'er thy leaves does bow,
 And rests upon thy slender stem.

Then early by the dawn of day,
 When sighing winds at freedom stray,
 Thy fringed border, tinged with red,
 Around thy golden eye doth spread,
 Beneath the sun's bright burning rays
 In splendour glints on grassy braes.

Even all the winter round
 A straggling daisy may be found
 Smiling by some tinkling rill
 That glides its course down through the vale ;
 But when warmer breezes blow,
 In numerous wreaths their beauties glow
 Upon the lea-rigs here and there,
 Where burnies rowe and in gardens fair.

To Miss Paton

ONCE more I write to you, my dear,
Because I love you most sincere ;
Thou art gentle as a dove,
Ever giving way to love.

I do not mean to flatter thee,
Or coax you up my mate to be ;
For I know that thou art mine
Whenever I do so incline.

Fair are the flowers in yonder grove,
And upon the hill above,
But thou art fairer than them all—
May blessings ever on thee fall.

Even the daisy on the lea
Cannot more humble or modest be
As thou, before my sparkling eyes,
Though I do much this flowerie prize.

Thou art constant on my brain—
Oh ! that we would link the chain—
My weak mind would then find rest
Upon thy heaving, snow-white breast.

This is to one I truly love,
Next to Him who rules above ;
He must come first, that I do know,
But thou are foremost here below.



To R. B. from Miss P.

IF those few lines you gave to me
Be true, as these I give to thee,
Then we'd have nothing now to fear
For we would love each other dear ;

Then none could part us from each other,
One in life and death we'd be,
All in all to one another,
I to you, and you to me.

All in all, since that fond meeting
When with joy I woke to find
Mine the heart within thee beating,
Thine the heart that's here enshrined.



Faithful Old Bob

WHIS hardy black and tan Scotch collie
 Was whelped doon in cauld Carmyllie,
 He then on Bolshan Farm was bred,
 Where he learned a rattling trade.
 John Chisholm trained him to the sheep,
 And, fegs, he turned oot worth his keep :
 There's mony a dog's gone through the college
 That never picked up half his knowledge.

He was as fleet as ony hare,
 For mony ane he caught, I'll swear ;
 The broth-pot often join'd the crook,
 To boil some beastie which he took.
 They scarce could venture out to eat
 Far from their place of safe retreat,
 Or if he was at hand, I trow,
 They very soon experienced how.

But now his hunting days are spent,
 And the hares do live content
 Among the sweet perfuming clover,
 And enjoy their fill with little bother ;
 Then frisk and skip along the lea,
 Like people when enjoying a spree,
 While poor old Bob, trustworthy dog,
 Lies stark and stiff beneath the clod.

Gen a Body Lo'es a Body

GEN a lad escorts a lassie
 On the public street,
 Ill-minded bodies needna sneer,
 And think to make them greet ;
 For courtin' is nae crime ava,
 And we have heard it said
 A lass would rather ha'e a man.
 Than live and dee a maid.

Chorus—

Gen a body lo'es a body,
 Love's pangs are ill to smother ;
 Gen a body lo'es a body,
 What business has another?

Gen a laddie airs a lassie
 A wee bit oot the road,
 That's no to say the passers-by
 Should take him for a rogue ;
 Even though his arm is round her waist,
 And stealing whiles a kiss,
 I cannot understand mysel'
 What harm can be in this.

Gen a body lo'es a body, etc.

Gen a lad strays wi' his lass
 Amang the stooks o' wheat,
 Folk needna ha'e suspicious thochts
 Gen they should tak' a seat ;
 A lassie likes to be embraced—
 Her mammie did the same—
 Love's flame is grafted in the blood,
 So the fair one's no to blame.

Gen a body lo'es a body, etc.

Gen a lad should make a lass
 His lawful wedded wife.
 She'll surely strive to do her best
 To cheer him on through life ;
 While years are passing o'er their head,
 May love more stronger grow,
 The tender actions of the heart
 Make fond affections flow.

Gin a body lo'es a body, etc.



Robin's Farewell to Jeanie

(AIR—*The Smith's a Gallant Fireman.*)

J EANIE, lassie, I'm gaun far awa' to leave thee,
 Jeanie, lassie, I'm gaun far awa' to leave thee,
 To yon fairer land abune where angels aye sing cheerie,
 But Jeanie, lassie, I will pledge to come and meet thee,
 dearie.

Oh Robin lad, it makes me wae to hear that you maun
leave me,

Robin, lad, it makes me wae to hear that you maun
leave me ;

Oh, my poor heart is sure to break when left my lane
sae eerie,

This world has nae joy for me without my ain kind
dearie.

Oh Jeanie, lassie, dinna mourn, though death may
wile me frae thee,

Jeanie, lassie, dinna mourn, though death may wile
me frae thee,

We'll meet yet far beyond the moon, set in the lift so
clearly,

If we but trust the Lord, my lass, and plead wi' Him
sincerely.

Ah Robin, lad, that's true; nae doot, but oh, I'll mourn
for thee,

Robin, lad, that's true, I wat, but oh, I'll mourn for
thee ;

I'll miss thy loving smiles, dear lad, which aften made
me cheerie,

And a' my bits o' cares in life will turn tapsalteerie.

Oh Jeanie, lass, gie me a kiss, for now the angels call
me,

Jeanie, lass, gie me a kiss, for now the angels call me,
I maun submit this earthly life, for oh, I'm sinking
frae thee,

Farewell, my blessings on ye lass, oh may the Lord
protect thee.

Oh dear, oh dear, hoo can I live, my only joys ta'en
 frae me ;
 Oh dear, oh dear, how can I live, misfortune has
 bereaved me ;
 I'm sadly stricken noo I wat, despair shall make me
 dreary,
 Oh Lord hae mercy on my soul, in absence o' my
 dearie.



The Den o' Airlie

HURRAH! the winter's past again,
 And spring has come with cheerie strain ;
 Soon there shall be a robe of green
 In the bushy Den o' Airlie.

Chorus—

So, bonnie lassie, will ye go?
 I scarcely think you'll answer no ;
 Comply your mind to let us rove
 In the pleasant Den o' Airlie.

Little birds now chirp and sing,
 And merrily flit on airy wing,
 'mong hazels that do gently swing
 O'er the rustic Den o' Airlie.

So, bonnie lassie, will ye go? etc.

Rippling streamlets also hum
A tune in praise as they do run ;
They seem delighted with the sun
As he blinks through the Den o' Airlie.

So, bonnie lassie, will ye go? etc.

We'll view the fishes as they bound
Above the Isla, with splashing sound,
To catch the flies that doth abound
Near them, in the Den o' Airie.

So, bonnie lassie, will ye go? etc.

Among the clover daisies peep,
Mild April showers they gladly greet,
Which makes the brier to smell so sweet,
And scent the Den o' Airlie.

So, bonnie lassie, will ye go? etc.

Broom and heather buds may blow.
But their graceful form can ne'er bestow
The charms that from thyself does flow
On me in the Den o' Airlie.

So, bonnie lassie, will ye go? etc.

The butterfly and bumble bee
Flit round the flowers with signs of glee,
Then why for not should you and me
Be enticed to the Den o' Airiie.

So, bonnie lassie, let us go. etc.

Come, dearie, let us haste away,
 That we may spend a blithesome day,
 Where midnight fairies frisk and play
 Like moonbeams in the Den o' Airlie.

Now bonnie lassie, here we go.
 I scarcely thought you'd answer no,
 Comply with me, and let us rove,
 In the pleasant Den o' Airlie.



To a Flea.

YE ugly, sleekit, venomous wratch,
 You torture me, and make me scratch
 Till blisters rise on me like puddin's,
 The colour of nearly half-ripe roddins.
 Your pranks I cannot well forbear,
 Your bites are poison I must swear ;
 Oh, could I plan some patent trap
 To hold you fast, you greedy whaup.
 Guidsave, you desp'rate, vicious being,
 Again my blood you think of preeing,
 Your suction annoys me most infernal—
 How could I stand this for eternal ?
 I must get up and search my shirt
 To free my body from your dirk.
 Stare as I like, you rude impostor.
 It's ten to one if I may prosper ;

But, sure enough, that itchie blister
Shall determine me to look the brisker.
My blood is surely precious sweet,
For if my fingers tend the pains
To another place with glee you leap,
And thrust your prong into my veins.
You still defy my earnest eyes
To light upon thee by surprise ;
Where I felt you last I stare,
But soon I find you've got elsewhere,
You seem to play at hide-and-peek—
Wow ! it's poor fun for me, you sneak.
I'm nearly foaming at the mouth
When I know you're getting so much scouff ;
Begone ! you roguish, reckless pest,
I can neither sleep nor yet get rest,
I'm sure your belly's not so big,
You are sipping more than do you guid ;
Losh ! I'd be delighted if you durst
To drink as much as make you burst,
So I might leave you to your will
To appease your hungry appetite ;
But, mind my words, you'll be as well
To resist temptation for the night,
And let me sleep in peace once more
To make up for the loss of gore.
I doubt you're not to be advised,
My charms have you mesmerised.
I'll search once more, you vagabond,
And woe betide ye, I'se be bound,
If I get the slightest glimpse

Of you I'll crush you into mince.
 Ah, I see you now, you bitch,
 Dancing on the sheet, you witch ;
 You surely have a great dislike
 At being exposed to face the light.
 There, now, you're tethered on the blanket—
 By Jove, I have you, God be thanket !
 Perhaps you think I want a slate ;
 Ha, ha ! you'll find I'm not so blate—
 Take you that, you weary foreigner,
 You've been tormenting me past ordinar ;
 Since torture is against the law,
 I've settled that between us twa.
 So, Master Flea, you're fairly sold,
 And I ne'er was happier handling gold.
 With an easier mind I'll enjoy my bed,
 And may all your tribe e'er long be dead.



The Wasp

YOU black-and-yellow strippèd tyke,
 Ill fortune frown upon thy byke,
 May winter frosts be so severe
 As to check your worthless career ;

Even though you were to croak the morn
Few people for your loss would mourn.
You're a nuisance to the country-side,
And many avenging plan is tried
To take the life you think so sweet,
Though the want of it would be a treat ;
And the reason I'll soon try to show,
Whither that is the truth or no.
One day while mowing meadow grass,
Where rapid running waters pass,
That was upon a lovely bank,
Near by the North Esk's western flank,
A little 'neath Invereskandye farm,
By chance I had provoked a swarm,
So one of the company left the gang
And into my arm forced his stang,
Even before I was aware
That I had trampled on his lair ;
Anither soon joined him in the fun ;
This made me quit my work and run
For fear the indignant pack might soon pursue
And sting Rob Blaikie black and blue.
I soon defied the ignominious pack,
Favoured by the wind to keep them back ;
This favour I soon did procure,
Right glad, of course, you may be sure ;
But still the two stuck fast like demons,
So full of ill-intended meanings
That I ceased their spiteful reign
For instigating such a pain.
Many a similar occurrence have I seen

Where I ne'er thought you would hae been,
Until you arose in multitudes
And poured your fury out like floods
Of downhill torrents by a spate,
Or the wrath of Tam o' Shanter's Kate ;
Then bizzed and darted round our head,
Till each of us for refuge fled,
And even then you would give chase,
Attempting to sting about the face.
You good-for-nothing, ill-bred vermin,
Frae thee I maist could preach a sermon,
Which, sad to say, I have found correct
In comparison to my tribe in some respect.
Your cankered habits resemble folk
Whose disposition scarce can stand a joke
Without the ruling crimson fire
Being kindled by their passionate ire ;
Then, for want of reasoning wisely,
The innocent must stand the test precisely,
Through ignorance of a selfish kinsman
Who plays that part so called inhuman.
Pray, let us strive with ardent might
To understand and act aright,
Cool temperaments are more sublime
Than lack of wisdom any time.



Another Adventure wi' the Deil

ABOUT mid-April month one night
 I took the road, in clear moonlight,
 To please the wishes of a friend,
 A ploughmen's meeting to attend,
 Some twa miles distant frae my hame,
 And he had just about the same.
 We were welcomed as loyal guests
 To join the company in their jests,
 Composed of talk, in secret phrase,
 Concerning horses and their ways.

At times they felt somewhat inclined
 That a dram was needed to press the mind ;
 As for mysel', I cared na a snuff,
 Without it I was better stuff,
 But when we shared company's pleasure
 We must agree to a certain measure ;
 Therefore, to correspond with the rest,
 I was prigg'd to take a wee bit taste
 Of so much-respected John Barleycorn,
 Refined in a lively liquid form,
 And after a few hours' jolly crack,
 Betook ourselves to ha'e a nap,
 Following the example of decent folk,
 Before we turned out to the yoke,

So ilka lad wha had to trottle
Got's morning with him in a bottle ;
Then after farewells for the time
Each one assumed his homeward line.

The moon being young had disappeared,
This made our home-going dark and weird,
Still my fears of wandering was prevented ;
For in the cast I was well acquainted ;
So, just to let me home the faster,
Thinks I I'll cross this field of pasture.
My certy, it seemed to hae nae end,
Even though I lowered my view to extend ;
I had been winding a circular course,
And began to think it was nae farce,
Till at last, resembling a bewildered goose,
I came on an auld deserted hoose
In another lea park altogether,
And the antic left me in a swither ;
To know how my feet did me beguile,
Unless I entered at a stile
Through the fence, meant to divide
One field from the other close beside.
However, I must now relate
What happened next to confuse my state.

In the auld biggin' seemed a desperate noise,
Like children disputing about their toys ;
For certain proof to ascertain
I cocked my ears, but all in vain—
I still remained a doubtful thinker,
Although I heard the sound distincter,

Which now appeared much liker music
Mixed with screams of an infant getting
Or howlets screechin' on a prap, [physic,
Or some creature tortured in a trap ;
Of course the sound was apt to alter
As the breezes made it falter.
Droll fancies set my nerves on edge,
My throat seemed plugged up with a wedge—
I'm safe to say I heard the thumping
Of my heart as it was pumping
Life's purple current through my veins,
Which flushed as if caused by toiling strains.

Despite of this I wished to know
What could really be on go,
And summoned up my generosity
To satisfy my curiosity
By proceeding windward to invest
The auld clay biggin' that faced the west.

Being a few yards distant from its back,
I ventured round the front to walk,
And stared on an unexpected scene
Through where a window once had been,
Which now was roughly closed with timber,
A cheaper plan than glass and stronger.
Here I solved the mystery at a glance—
It was goblins and fairies enjoying a dance,
And as the company had nae fiddle
They had Auld Nick engaged to diddle.
He seemed to act his part with ease,
His hands beating time upon his knees ;

And how the goblins hooched and swang
The fairies round wi' hurried bang,
Then skipped across the floor as neat
As if they never touched it with their feet ;
And sparks were darting from their eyes
Like stars dropping from the skies.
The attire worn by the goblin worthies
Was just a hippin round the hurdies :
But, sal! the fairies wore a gown
Of stuff that looked like cotton down ;
Their graceful forms possessed such air
As twine primroses in their hair :
Sure evil spirits were not befitt
For those gentle creatures—not a bit—
I know not how they e'er inclined
'Taking up with demons of the kind.
However, their actions excited me
Till I laughed aloud with perfect glee.

To see them yarking up to time
Displayed a splendid pantomime—
To show the effect of their eruption
I never caused the least disruption.
At length they stopped the dancing now,
And wiped the sweat from off their brow—
Deed, some of them were nigh exhausted
I'm certain by the way they gasped,
So, leaning their backs against the wall,
They proposed to have an interval.
Meanwhile the average of the throng
Ruffed in a fairy for a song ;

She was very bashful, I understood,
Or not upon a singing mood,
For while her mates upon her prest
She hung her head upon her breast.
I then began my thoughts to spend
How my predicament might end,
For running now I was too late,
And at once decided to endure my fate.
I scarce adopted this intention
When new results drew my attention.

The auld door muttered on its hinges,
And the deil hirpled oot wi' bended hitches,
Likely to save an accidental
Crash upon the doorway lintel,
When at length he cleared the threshold,
He looked surprised me to behold.

“Hallo,” quo’ he, and snatched me by the ear,
“I’ll put an end to you, my lad, from prowling
With that he pushed me inside the door [here.”
With such force I fell upon the floor,
And the whole jing-bang that I saw dance
Fairly vanished out of sight at once,
But how or where beats me to clash,
For they disappeared like a lightning flash.
However, I got to my feet
Much terrified, the truth to speak.
He soon returned, and to increase my fear
He presented a blood-stained rusty spear,
Threatening to let me feel its blows
If I didn’t proceed to take off my clothes.

Quite horrified, I fixed my coat
To slack the button next my throat,
When my arm came against my bottle,
And, remembering he was not teetotal,
I produced to him the half-filled cutter,
Which he accepted with a mutter ;
On fearing that I was nigh a goner,
And knowing well how he loved honour,
The only plan that I thought wise
Was to humble myself to apologise
By begging his pardon to forgive me,
As I had wandered here completely.
Meanwhile he had engulfed the whisky,
And its charms inclined to make him frisky.
Quo' he, " Ye needna fash your bum,
I only meant to hae some fun."
Then patting me upon the head,
With a few uncoothie strokes he said,
" My lad, I like your honest face ;
The parents never caused disgrace
Wha brought you to this world's shore,
My blessings on you evermore,
We's hae a crack on freendly terms."
And then he hugged me in his arms.
Now certainly this was ill to thole,
His loathsome smell would spane a foal ;
Still I tried to bear as best I could,
Seeing that he meant it all for good,
But for excuse to free his clutch
I proposed to look upon my watch
To witness how the time passed o'er,

Which proved a quarter after four ;
Then, of course, I looked excited,
And stated how I'd be delighted
If he would let me scamper hame,
As I would likely need my time
To execute my bits o' jobbies
Before I entered on my duties.

After wringing the juice frae oot his nose,
“ My faith,” quo' he, “ and I suppose
It's time that I was danderin' tae,
Since fower o'clock is past, you say.”
Then he signed for me to go before,
And lead the way outside the door ;
With such a grip he shook my han',
I felt the effects of it for lang—
What a'miracle how he left me hale.
Or fit to distribute the tale.
However, he disappeared like magic
Without committing any tragic,
Unless to a handsome drop of spirits.
But I'm thankful he enjoyed its merits ;
Although I considered it no treat,
It won Satan's favours for me complete.

