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THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
ROBERT FERGUSSON

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ROBERT FERGUSSON.

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THE
POETICAL WORKS OF
ROBERT FERGUSSON

WITH
BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION
NOTES AND GLOSSARY, ETC.

BY
ROBERT FORD



PAISLEY: ALEXANDER GARDNER

Publisher by Appointment to the late Queen Victoria

1905

GENERAL

ROBERT FERGUSON.

BORN 1750. DIED 1774.

His stay so brief, like visit in the night
Of some kind Brownie known to ballad fame,
With true Promethean spark he, modest, came,
And to "The Farmer's Ingle" put a light,
Which ever since has burned so classic bright,
That Burns e'en took a "kin'lin'" from the same,
To raise on Cotter's hearth the cheerful flame,
And grace the leisure of his toil-worn wight;
The Pupil's picture soars to higher flights
Of thought, and nobler images, which show,
By contrast, darker shades and stronger lights;
The Master paints in tones so real and low,
You scent the very "kail by chimley cheek,"
And "buttered bannocks" that on "girdle reek."

—"GEORGE UMBER" (Wm. Findlay, M.D.).

P O E M S

By

ROBERT FERGUSSON



EDINBURGH.

Printed by Walter & Thomas Rudiman.

MDCCLXXIII

GENERAL

P R E F A C E.

MORE than fifty years having elapsed since the only hitherto all-embracing edition of the poetical writings of ROBERT FERGUSSON was given to the world,* and that being now long out of print, the opinion has been repeatedly expressed in literary circles in Scotland of late that a new and complete edition was so desirable that it would be widely welcome. Mr. Alexander Gardner, from the association of his house with the publication of distinctively national literature, has been frequently appealed to with expectation in this connection: hence the present issue, prepared at his request.

That the work, which has been edited *con amore*, will meet with the approval of the poet's many ardent admirers in the country is fondly anticipated. If it puts FERGUSSON "right with fame," as Robert Louis Stevenson hoped some such work might do, great indeed will be the reward.

Not much that is new has been added, for the reason that only one slight song has transpired in the long interval. But embracing, as it does, copies of the various portraits of FERGUSSON, as well as an article explanatory of these somewhat

* *The Works of Robert Fergusson, with Life of the Author, and an Essay on his Genius and Writings.* By the Rev. Alexander B. Grosart, LL.D. A. Fullerton & Co. 1851.

conflicting images, and a fairly ample, though perhaps not complete, list of the editions of the poet that have appeared, together with the full text of his writings, and a carefully-gleaned and faithful account of his brief and sadly-chequered career, a volume has been produced which, it is hoped, will prove not only acceptable to the public, but will be esteemed as not unworthy of the memory of ROBERT FERGUSSON, and of the long established popularity of his rarely graphic and finely imagined Scots poems.

For hints, and for valuable assistance in connection with the work, in various ways, thanks are due, and are gratefully acknowledged, to the Right Honourable the Earl of Rosebery; Alexander Anderson, Esq., of the University Library, Edinburgh; James L. Caw, Esq., of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery; George Thin, Esq., bookseller, Edinburgh; William Drummond Young, Esq., photo-artist, Edinburgh; A. H. Millar, Esq., of the *Dundee Advertiser*; and Alexander Kennedy, Esq., Bothwell; most of whom have exercised the warmest interest in the progress of the publication.

Many genuine Scots words used by FERGUSSON having since dropped out of our Northern vernacular writing, a full Glossary has been appended.

ROBERT FORD.

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BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

It has been frequently complained — Robert Louis Stevenson and Andrew Lang being amongst the complainants—that the youthful composer of “The Farmer’s Ingle,” “The Daft Days,” and “Leith Races,” has never at any time received the meed of popular appreciation to which, as a Nature poet, glowing with original fancy and humour set forth in the richest ore of the ruggedly-grand vernacular of his country, he is in all respects entitled. That the complaint is a just one, loudly calling for expression, every intimate and discerning student of Scottish poetical letters has continually been ready to admit. The fact that such has been the case, too, has been roundly and justly deplored. They have been over-zealous admirers, doubtless, and poor critics, who have attempted to set FERGUSSON up as an equal, or nearly equal, light to Robert Burns. He had neither the all-captivating song-gift, the variety, the grit, nor the grasp of life and its issues to render his comparison with Burns tolerable. This admitted, it is yet true that while his Scottish poems are pregnant with the same popular elements, often as happily and seldom less graphically expressed, ROBERT FERGUSSON has never attained to a height in the popular estimation anything like duly proportionate to that occupied by his later “brother in the muse.” Our “wondrous boy,” indeed, who gave Burns ever so many hints, in subject no less than form, making the

greater, to the day of his death, the eloquently-grateful debtor of the less, has in large measure been a neglected poet. The specialists have all the time, no doubt, been conscious of his true and rare value. But the misfortune that dogged every step of his sadly tragic and all too brief life has persistently dogged every step of his fame ; and if the full harvest of ROBERT FERGUSSON is ever to be stored, it has yet to be reaped. Edinburgh, whose gifted child he was, and whose life and manners in his time he caught as they rose and set in verse more graphic and true than ever before or since has emanated from within her walls, has never condescended, as she ought, to welcome her "prodigal son," so-called, and kill "fatted calf" in his honour. She has published no really choice edition of his poems. Amongst so many statues that adorn her streets and squares—some of which might not be sorely missed—no monument stands within her "causey" erected, as consistency demands, to the memory of poor ROBERT FERGUSSON. Some day the defect will be remedied, perhaps : by stimulus from without, let us hope, if not by impulse from within. But, come when or how it may, the setting up of a statue in honour of the author of "Auld Reekie," near by that of the author of "The Gentle Shepherd," will be no more than a simple act of corresponding justice already too long delayed. When the ruck of Burns clubites all over the world are able to understand, as Burns might desire, the spirit of the Bard under whose name and for the honour of whose memory they periodically combine, something really worthy in this way may be done. When the votaries of the Master-singer generally—and the clubites here are but a fraction—come in the quiet of their bosoms

to realise how tenderly in earnest Burns was when he wrote of FERGUSSON as "my elder brother in misfortune, by far my elder brother in the muse"; and how hot were his tears, how bitter was his regret over his tragic and untimely death, when, with uncovered head, he knelt and kissed the barren sod on his grave in the Canongate kirkyard, something undoubtedly *will* be done. Thus far, certainly Burns has been FERGUSSON's most eloquent trumpeter—his only eloquent trumpeter. To the Master-poet's early and hearty recognition of his genius, as certainly, too, much of the subsequent knowledge of FERGUSSON has been due. Such, in the circumstances, is no unpleasant thought. But one would prefer to see FERGUSSON have fame—and much fame, as he deserves—by virtue of his own work, independently of how Burns esteemed it. And that he will have it that way yet—that he will come to his own entirely by his own—there is some reason for hoping. A new and complete edition of his poetical writings with illustrative notes, together with an account of his interesting career, as well as an estimate of the quality and value of his work, such as is here presented, may hasten the hoped-for day. With that issue in view, at anyrate, the work has been undertaken.

Although ROBERT FERGUSSON died as early as 1774, no even fairly adequate biography of him appeared until 1800—twenty-six years afterwards—when the Chapman & Lang (Glasgow) edition of his poems was published, embracing a "Life" and "Critique" from the vigorous and picturesque pen of Dr. David Irving, the historian of Scottish Poetry. Dr. Irving's writing, unfortunately, was even yet, however, satisfactory only in the sense of bulk. In its bearing on the social

tendencies of the poet in Edinburgh, it has been proved to be slanderously extravagant. Later biographers, including Thomas Sommers, the Rev. James Gray, Dr. Robert Chambers, and Dr. Alexander B. Grosart, taking more pains, got nearer the truth ; and by fuller information, drawn from reliable sources, were happily able to present a much fairer picture. The last-named writer, in particular, even although his details of the life of FERGUSSON (in the "Famous Scots" series, where he has written at greatest length) are set in the most garrulously tiresome order, by sleepless industry, long continued, got at all the facts ; and has rendered a service to the memory of the poet for which his admirers in the country have been, or should be, duly grateful. Though strenuous, and full of colour, FERGUSSON's life was one of brief stretch and narrow environment, and may be best told when set down within moderate compass. Grosart's one prime mistake was the padding of it out with irrelevant remarks and quotations to the extent of one hundred and sixty closely printed pages. Yet, as I have said, he got all the facts—he set the poet in the light of truth—and that is something to be thankful for.

ROBERT FERGUSSON was born in a confined alley of old Edinburgh, known as the Cap-and-Feather Close, on the 5th of September, 1750. Some of his biographers have named the 17th as the date, while others have given 1751 as the year of his arrival ; but these are undoubtedly mistakes.* He was the fourth of a family

* 1750. Sept. 5. To William Fergusson, clerk to bailie Robert Baillie, merchant in the N.K.P., and Elizabeth Forbes his spouse, a son named Robert ; born same day.—*Entry in Canongate Parish Register, preserved in the Register House, Edinburgh.*

of at least five children—Henry, born in 1742; Barbara, in 1744; John (who seems to have died in infancy), in 1746; Robert, in 1750; Margaret, in 1753—and descended from parents both hailing from the far North. His father was William Fergusson, who sprang from Tarland, in Aberdeenshire, and his mother, Elizabeth Forbes, the youngest daughter of John Forbes, tacksman and tenant of Templeton Hillock-head, and Wellhead of Kildrummy, also in Aberdeenshire. William Fergusson had served an apprenticeship to a merchant in the city of Aberdeen, in whose service he had continued, presumably, for some time after he was a journeyman. Anyway, when the merchant died, in or about 1746, it was in consequence of this event that Mr. Fergusson, already a married man with two or three children, pushed his way to the Capital in search of work. This, by bearing with him a good character, he was soon able to secure, and he held several clerkships in Edinburgh and its neighbourhood; but wind and weather seem to have been dead against him, for he was seldom able to find a situation that yielded more than a very modest salary. He was, notwithstanding, while a man of excellent character, evidently a man of ideas, remarkable at all times for taste and ingenuity. When acting as clerk to Messrs. Wardrop & Peat, upholsterers in Carrubber's Close, he framed a very useful book of rates; and he had a turn for poetry, it appears, which he exercised in satirical rhymes on occasional subjects. The elder Fergusson came to his last haven as managing clerk and accountant in the offices of the British Linen Company, in the Canongate, in 1762. He died in 1767, when his poet-son was seventeen years old. Mrs. Fergusson, no less than her

husband, was evidently a person of great moral worth ; and, it would appear, she was a busy housewife as well, for her husband, in one of his Edinburgh letters, addressed to a brother-in-law in the North, says : " My wife has had a web for several months in the stocks, which I hope will soon be launching." The web, whatever it consisted of, as Alexander Gordon remarks, must have been badly wanted in a household where the annual income, at the best, was only a few degrees higher than that shown by the following abstract of expenses, prepared by William Fergusson himself—

" ABSTRACT OF EXPENSES, ANNO 1751.

" House-rent,	-	-	-	-	£1	10	0
Coals,	-	-	-	-	2	12	0
Candles,	-	-	-	-	0	19	6
Bread,	-	-	-	-	4	6	8
Milk,	-	-	-	-	2	4	5
Flesh and fish,	-	-	-	-	3	6	2½
Salt, greens, and barley,	-	-	-	-	0	8	8
. . . [torn away with wafer],	-	-	-	-	1	10	4
Washing,	-	-	-	-	0	13	0
Quarter-payments for children, etc.,	-	-	-	-	1	15	0

£19 5 9½

" N.B.—4s. 2½d. and chance for shoes,
shirts, clothes, etc."

In the letter to which the above abstract was appended " Rob. the young one " is mentioned as " a thriving boy." He was, notwithstanding, a weakly child, and, owing to the delicate state of his health, was not sent to school until he was six years old. He was thus, as

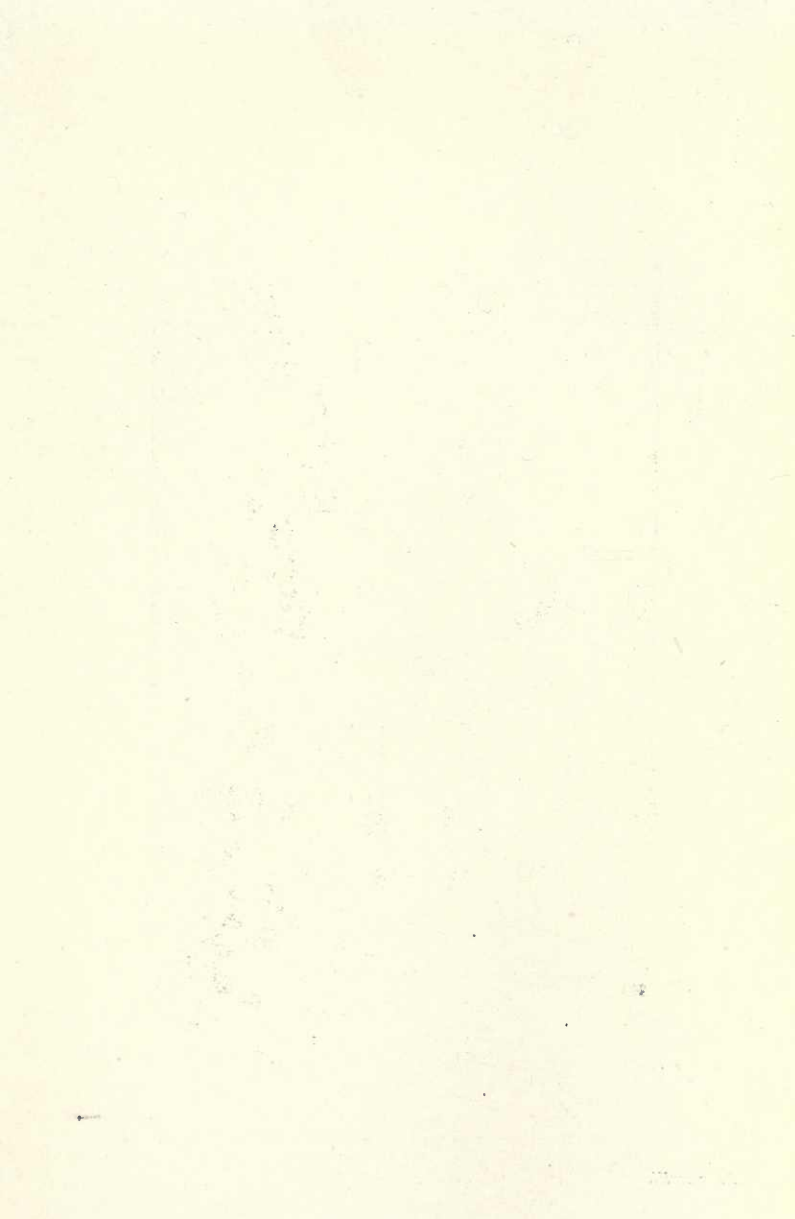
will be seen, both a delicate child and a poor man's son. Throughout all his life, indeed, he was never free from constitutional weakness; and was never in a better condition in the world, socially, than "no very weel-aff." Although he did not go to school until he was six, it is likely that his parents gave him a good deal of private instruction before that time at home. What renders this the more probable is that he had not been six months under his first teacher (a Mr. Philp, in Niddry's Wynd), when he was judged fit to be transferred to the High School, and entered in the first Latin Class. Here he went through the usual classical course of four years (1758-1761) under a teacher named John Gilchrist. What degree of proficiency he might have attained under ordinary circumstances, it is impossible to determine; but it is related to his credit, by Dr. Chambers and others, that, though frequently absent for a considerable period, in consequence of bad health, he nevertheless kept fully abreast of his companions, a temporary application being sufficient to bring him up to any point which the class had attained in his absence. At the same time, he acquired, in the leisure of confinement, a taste for general reading, and it is stated that the Bible was his favourite book, the Proverbs of Solomon claiming his very particular attention. From his very earliest years he proved of an enquiring and must-be-satisfied disposition; and Dr. Irving records that the interrogations which he put concerning any subject which attracted his notice often puzzled those who were much older than himself. An anecdote relating to his seventh or eighth year strikingly reveals his ingenuous and susceptible mind, or his curiously erratic and impulsive nature. He had been

reading in the Proverbs one day, when he suddenly appeared before his mother in tears, and besought her to chastise him. Surprised at a request so extraordinary, she enquired the cause of it, when he exclaimed, "O, mother! he that spareth the rod hateth the child!" It forms "a noticeable illustration," perhaps, as one biographer remarks, "of the vivid impression that his reading made." But another* may be nearer the truth, when he suggests that FERGUSON had already developed his talent for mimicry and humour, and that he was playing tricks with his pious mother. His High School master, Mr. John Gilchrist, is described by Henry Mackenzie, "The Man of Feeling," as "a good-humoured person with a good deal of comedy about him." FERGUSON, no doubt, proved an apt pupil in comic matters as well as in construing Latin. With regard to the High School curriculum of those days, "The Man of Feeling" says: "The scholars went through the four classes taught by the under-masters, reading the usual elementary Latin books—for at that time no Greek was taught in the High School—and so on up to Virgil and Horace, Sallust, and parts of Cicero. . . . The hours of attendance were from 7 to 9 a.m., and, after an hour for breakfast, from 10 to 12: then, after an interval of two hours for dinner, the scholars returned for two hours in the afternoon." This was pretty stiff daily work for an ailing boy, and it certainly required to be lightened by a little "comedy." In those days the High School lads were a disciplined republic, sometimes given to taking the law into

* Alexander Gordon, in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1894.



From Morison's Edition of Scottish Poets. Perth. 1789.



their own hands. When the "blackguards" of the Cowgate broke out into open attack, the "puppies"—that is to say, the High School bull-dogs—were wont to arise in their wrath and growl down the attack. Many a battle was thus fought, chronicled by no muse : and the "puppies," though the superior animals, did not always get the best of it. FERGUSSON was too young, and possibly too weak, to take part in these pitched battles, but he must frequently have heard the stones rattle, and seen the fists do their work. And even if he did not take part in the fighting himself, he was no doubt familiar with those who had been taught, as Darsie Latimer was by Alan Fairford, to "smoke a cobbler, spin a lozen, head a bicker, and hold the bannets"—in other words, to break a window, head a skirmish with stones, and hold the bonnet or handkerchief which used to divide High School boys when fighting.

During his term at the High School, it is interesting to learn that Master FERGUSSON in 1758 paid 1s., and in 1761 2s. 6d., to the School Library Fund—the former being the ordinary amount, and the latter so exceptional that only a Scottish nobleman is entered for a like payment. The fact reveals not more the boy's than the parents' love for, and belief in the value of books. Besides, the lad being "quick to learn and wise to know," his father had concluded to make a scholar of him : yea, father and mother together had resolved that one day he should "wag his pow in a poopit"; and they were prepared, doubtless, to make the necessary sacrifices, such as so many poor parents in Scotland did before their day, and have done since. Happily, the Fergussons were to be helped. Through the kindness

of Lord Finlater, whose factor Mrs. Fergusson's brother was in Aberdeenshire, a presentation to a bursary, or scholarship, was obtained in favour of ROBERT at the Grammar School of Dundee. This scholarship came from a mortification, or benefaction, founded by the Rev. David Ferguson, parish minister of Strathmartine, near Dundee, in the year 1695, which assigned 6,000 merks "for the use, maintenance, and education of two poor male children, not under the age of nine years at their admission, nor above the age of fourteen years while they are at school." The quaint and austere conditions of this Ferguson bequest, as I learn from a copy of the deed quoted by Mr. A. H. Millar, the historian,* are that the recipients are "to be of my own surname, and nearest of blood to me; whilk failing, any other two poor male children, begotten of good and honest parents, in ane lawful marriage." These children were to be "maintained, educated, and brought up in the Grammar School of Dundee, and to be lodged and boarded with one of the surname of Ferguson, in case there be any can do the same; and to furnish the said children with sufficient clothes and necessaries for their bodies, head, and feet—their coats being always of a grey colour, lined, with blue sleeves." The patrons had power to send such children as showed aptitude and learning to S. Leonard's College, St. Andrews, for four years; or, if they inclined to be tradesmen, to apprentice them to learn some trade, paying their apprentice fees out of the proceeds of the fund. By an express stipulation the patrons are empowered "to deprive and exclude from this Mortification such as are

* *Roll of Eminent Burgesses of Dundee* (1887).

children of thieves, night walkers, breakers of yards, drunkards, whore-masters, swearers, liars, or otherwise scandalous in their lives," and it is provided "that both of them own the Protestant religion."

While attending school in Dundee, the yet unfledged poet boarded with a person named Peter Murray. No more than this has been gathered of his Dundee life; except that in the fall of 1764, when it was discovered that the bursar had completed his fourteenth year, and could consequently be held no longer at the Grammar School, but having signified his intention to follow out his learning and go to the College of St. Andrews, the patrons recommended the said Peter Murray to "acquaint the boy's father of his intention, and to procure from the Presbitry of Dundee a certificate of his capacity for being put to the Colledge; upon which they would present him accordingly." It was his parents' desire—more than the boy's own, perhaps—that he should proceed to college. His progress in Dundee, as earlier in Edinburgh, had been rapid and praiseworthy—Dr. Irving and other biographers designate it "surprising"—and certificates of "full qualification" were easily obtained. It fell thus, that while on the 6th of December he "compeared before the Trustees of the Mortification" and stated formally that it was his wish to "pursue his learning," on the 7th of the same month he obtained the "missive letter" of presentation to the Principal and Masters of the University. But a few months earlier—perhaps in the period of school vacation—he accompanied his mother on a visit to his uncle, Mr. John Forbes of Round Lichnot, a farm in the neighbourhood of Old Meldrum, in Aberdeenshire. In a letter written to his

wife (from Warriston's Close, High Street, Edinburgh, where the family were now living) under date 17th August, William Fergusson says: "It gives me no small satisfaction to find that you have had so agreeable a meeting with your brother and sisters, and that Rob. has held out the journey." The reference to "Rob." and the "journey" hints at continued physical weakness. Anyway, this was probably FERGUSSON's first visit to Aberdeenshire. He was now in his parents' native region, as Alexander Gordon notes, and had opportunities of seeing the varied life of the stout-hearted country folks. It was the time when "bauks o' corn bent down wi' laded ear," of which he afterwards sang in his "Farmer's Ingle." The fields were white unto the harvest, and it is possible that he may have followed the reapers at their work, if he did not actually try his hand at binding and stooking the "bearded beir." And if he joined the workers thus through the day, he would as likely join the family at the hearth in the evening, when

" In rangles round, before the ingle's lowe,
Frae gudame's mouth auld warld tales they hear,
O' warlocks loupin' round the wirrikowe;
O' ghaists that win in glen and kirkyard drear;
Whilk touzles a' their tap, and gars them shak wi' fear!"

It was in the brief period here, or in like brief periods elsewhere, assuredly, that FERGUSSON gained his knowledge of country life—almost all he knew of it; yet several of his poems reveal such intimacy with rural ways and habits, and such a relish of country doings, that one is struck with astonishment at the quickness of his eye and the keenness of his ear.

From Round Lichnot he returned with his mother to Warriston's Close, and he resided there with his parents until February, 1765, when he proceeded to St. Andrews and became a student in the Humanity (Latin) and Greek Classes, under Professors Wilson and Morton. He does not seem, however, to have taken very kindly to the Classics; indeed, his first biographer, and intimate friend, Mr. Ruddiman, is responsible for the statement that FERGUSSON asserted "that Virgil and Horace were the only Latin authors he would ever look at while he was at the University." Whether this be true or not, it is certain that he was a considerable proficient in Mathematics, and it may be supposed that Natural Philosophy was a favourite study, for he commended himself very highly to Dr. Wilkie, who held the professorship of that subject in the University. The story has come down, indeed, that Wilkie made choice of him to read his lectures to his class, when sickness or other causes prevented his own performance of the duty. Very likely, however, it is but a story. Dr. Irving ridicules the idea of a youth of sixteen "mounting," as he expresses it, "the professorial rostrum"; and "besides the inadequacy of years," as Dr. Chambers sagely adds, "FERGUSSON possessed none of that gravity of demeanour which was calculated to secure the respectful attention of his compeers. His classical attainments were respectable; but for the maturer branches of scholastic and scientific knowledge he always expressed, with the petulance of a youth of lively parts, who did not wish to be subjected to the labour of hard study, a decided contempt. Dr. Wilkie's regards must, therefore, have been attracted by other qualifications than

those of the graver and more solid cast—namely, by the sprightly humour and uncommon powers of conversation for which FERGUSSON was already in a considerable degree distinguished.” The legend of his reading the lectures in public arose, perhaps, from his having been employed to transcribe them. Professor Vilant, in a letter to the poet’s nephew, James Inverarity, makes this, indeed, fairly clear. “A youthful frolicsome exhibition of your uncle,” he says, “first directed Dr. Wilkie’s attention to him, and he afterwards employed him one summer and part of another in transcribing a fair copy of his academical lectures.” That FERGUSSON would have read the lectures to the class, if he got the chance, there need, of course, be little doubt. His relish for practical joking was too keen to have allowed him to resist the opportunity. That he got the chance, however, is not likely. Dr. Wilkie “knew his man” too well. Doubtless the professor and his boy-student were on easy terms of friendship. For they were both poets*—both humorists—both great talkers and controversialists. Together they were accustomed to visit Wilkie’s farm, about four miles distant from St. Andrews, and make occasional week-end trips to Anstruther and elsewhere. The lad, indeed, had not been long at college when he distinguished himself as a versifier given to satire—a lively and impulsive boon companion—and became mixed up in occasional episodes which scarcely became the character of “Robert Fergusson, Student of Divinity.” Yet his satire and his tricks were executed ever in a spirit of true fun. One of the janitors, years

* See note to “An Eclogue to the Memory of Dr. William Wilkie,” page 67.

afterwards, described him to Mr. Inverarity, in a single sentence. He was asked if he recollected FERGUSON. "Bob Fergusson," he exclaimed; "that I do! Many a time I've put him to the door. Ah! he was a tricky callant, but a fine laddie for a' that." "And he seemed to feel," said the poet's nephew, "great pleasure in the recollection of so amiable a boy." Amiable he was, we may be sure. ROBERT FERGUSON's sprightly and kindly nature could never at any time allow him to be aught else; and the "random fits o' daffin'" which he manifested, and were so well remembered by his compeers and others, were likely no more than merely "random fits" in a prevailing atmosphere of serious study and severe academic discipline. That he was a distinguished student cannot be asserted; but the fact that he had never taken very warmly to the idea of entering the ministry of the Kirk must be allowed to count for something—and for a good deal of his frolicsomeness perhaps. Be that as it may, entertaining stories of his playful humour are preserved by his biographers. While at college, the young poet, Dr. Chambers tells, used to put in practice a frolic which marks the singular vivacity of his character. Whenever he received a remittance from his friends in Edinburgh, he hung out the money in a little bag attached by a string to the end of a pole fixed in the window of his little room; and there he would let it dangle for a whole day in the wind. He is supposed to have done this partly from puerile exultation in the possession of his wealth, and partly by way of making a bravado in the eyes of his companions; among whom, no doubt, the slenderness of their funds and the failure of supplies would be frequent subjects of raillery.

His talents of mimicry were great, but his sportive humour was ever too exuberant, and sometimes led him to overstep the bounds of justifiable indulgence. An instance of this is recorded by Professor Tennant in the *Edinburgh Literary Journal* (No. 164), to whom it was communicated by the Rev. Dr. James Brown, FERGUSSON's fellow-student at St. Andrews, who was also a poet, and who, from having kindred delights and sympathies, enjoyed much of his society. On the afternoon of a college holiday they took a walk together into the country, and, after perambulating many farms, and tripping with fraternal glee over field and hillock, they at last, being desirous of a little rest, bethought themselves of calling at a small farm-house, or pendicle, on the King's Muir of Dunino. On reaching the house, a frank and unceremonious conversation immediately took place, in the course of which it was discovered that a young person, a member of the family, was lying ill of fever. The playful FERGUSSON instantly took it into his head to profess himself a medical practitioner, and he started to his feet and begged to be shown to the sick bed. Approaching this, he felt the pulse of the patient, assumed a serious air, put the usual pathological interrogations, and pronounced his opinions with a pomp and dignity worthy of a true doctor of physic. In short, he personated his assumed character so perfectly, that his friend Brown, though somewhat vexed, was confounded into silent admiration of his dexterity. On leaving the house, however, Brown expostulated on the indefensibility of practising so boldly on the simplicity of an unsuspecting family, and of misleading their conceptions as to the cure of the distemper, by a stratagem on which, however

witty, neither of them could congratulate themselves. But the lecture was wasted. The impulse of the moment seems to have been at all times irresistible with FERGUSSON, without any dread or consideration of the consequences which his levity might produce. In illustration of this, there are various stories. His voice being good (he was an excellent singer, indeed), he was requested, oftener than was agreeable to him, to officiate as precentor at prayers. His wicked wit in time suggested a method of getting rid of the distasteful employment, which he did not scruple to put in practice, even although there was great danger that it would incense the heads of the college against him. It is customary in the Scottish churches for persons who are considered to be in a dangerous state of illness to request the prayers of the congregation on their behalf, which, in those days, it was the duty of the precentor publicly to intimate. One morning, accordingly, when FERGUSSON occupied the desk, and with the solemnity of tone usual on such occasions, pronounced:—"Remember in prayer, John Adamson, a young man [then present] of whom, from the sudden effects of inebriety, there appears but small hope of recovery"—any one can realize the shock such an intimation would produce, and no one will be astonished to learn that he was officially reprimanded for an act so closely bordering on profanity. It had the desired effect, however, FERGUSSON was relieved of his precentorship. In another outrage on decorum, before or after—and this time in rhyme—he was more successful. The monies bequeathed for the support of the bursars of the college were put into a common fund, which was styled Diet

Money.* Out of this were paid the class fees and the expenses for maintenance ; then, such balance as remained was divided equally among the professors. The temptation to feed the bursars sparingly, or with the coarsest food, was thus considerable. Rabbits, being easily obtainable, at a small outlay, had continued for a time the unvarying diet, and all were tired of them. FERGUSSON resolved on a bid for a change. It was the custom for the bursars to invoke the blessing at meals, each in his turn ; so, when it fell to the poet to be called on, he repeated these lines, which, doubtless, he had previously composed :—

“ For rabbits young, and for rabbits old,
For rabbits hot, and for rabbits cold,
For rabbits tender, and for rabbits tough,
Our thanks we render, for we’ve had enough.”

The presiding professor, we are told, sat aghast and silent. “*Senatus Academicus* was convened, and the venerable masters of the college deliberated as to how the offender should be punished. It was ultimately ruled that the graceless poet should not only escape censure, but that the vendor of rabbits should be informed that his supplies would be required less frequently.

“My father,” continues Dr. Rogers, “related another anecdote of FERGUSSON’s poetical sarcasm. Two young men from Forfarshire, who had been engaged in farming operations, entered the University, in which they became bursars. Their attainments were superficial,

*See *Leaves from My Autobiography*, by the Rev. Dr. Charles Rogers, where the story is told at great length, on the authority of the narrator’s aged father.

while their manners did not conciliate friendship. FERGUSSON, whom they offended, inscribed these lines on the door of their apartment :—

‘ Jamie Cobb and Will Mudie
Left the plough and came to study.’

“ Remarking the insult, they hastened to the Hebdomader, or professor in superintendence for the week, to enter a complaint. During their absence, the satirist completed his verse :—

‘ Will Mudie and Jamie Cobb
Never tried a worse job.’ ”

In addition to these boy-like pranks and freaks of fancy, there is a record of a row in the University one night, in which the poet bore a part, and, with other participators, had, in course, to “ thole ” the disgrace of expulsion. Being variously detailed, it has occasioned some controversy. But as recorded by Professor Vilant, who was teacher of mathematics in the college at the time, and remembered the particulars, the scene was no worse than may occur among vivacious students anywhere at any time. It happened in the year 1767, as Professor Vilant recollected, at the first institution of the prizes given by the Earl of Kinnoul, there was a meeting one night, after the determination of the prizes for that year, of the winners in one room of the United College, and a meeting of the losers in another room at a small distance. In consequence of some communication between the winners and the losers, a scuffle arose, which was reported to the masters of the College, and ROBERT FERGUSSON and some others who had appeared the most active were expelled. But next day, or the

day thereafter, they were all received back into the college upon promise of good behaviour for the future.

Of the progress made by him in his studies at St. Andrews we have no means of forming a very exact estimate. His time, however, does not seem to have been spent without some plans of serious application. A book which belonged to him, entitled, "A Defence of the Church Government, Faith, Worship, and Spirit of the Presbyterians," is preserved, the blank leaves of which were devoted by him to the purpose of receiving scraps of speeches, evidently the germs of a play which he meditated writing. To the extent of two acts, he had written besides a tragedy founded on the achievements and fate of Sir William Wallace, but abandoned the scheme on learning of another play on the same subject. There need be no regrets over the abandonment. It was an undertaking much too ambitious for his juvenile powers. But with the abandonment of Wallace—for what reason is not known—he abandoned at the same time the further pursuit of his academical career, and, on the expiry of his bursary, quitted St. Andrews, and returned to his mother's house, in Edinburgh. By this time his father had been two years in his grave. And now, if his prospects were not gloomy, his plans were without shape or form, and never really took any decided aim for his settlement in life. Schemes were propounded for him by interested friends—the career of a schoolmaster—the study of medicine—but neither appealed agreeably to his taste. After beating about for a time in the vain hope, as it proved, that something would "turn up," he set out on a visit to his maternal uncle, John Forbes, in Aberdeenshire, whom some four year earlier, as we have seen, he

visited in company with his mother. Mr. Forbes now, in addition to being farmer of Round Lichnot, and holding several lucrative factorships, was tenant also of the farm of Forrester Hill, in the same region, and was a man of considerable worldly substance. By his recommendation to Lord Finlater, FERGUSSON got his bursarship, and he had hopes now, perhaps, of procuring suitable employment through his uncle's influence. Though he stayed six months at Round Lichnot, however, nothing came to him in this way. And then the visit ended abruptly, in a painful rupture of their friendship. The story of the rupture has been told with varying details. Dr. Irving's account of it (in 1851 rejected by Dr. Grosart, and after fuller investigation accepted by the same authority before 1898) may be taken as correct. Mr. Forbes, Irving tells, at first treated his nephew with civility; although, instead of exerting himself, as he had opportunity, to promote his interest, he suffered him to remain six months in his house, and then dismissed him in a manner which reflects very little honour on his memory. His clothes were beginning to assume a threadbare appearance; and on this account he was deemed an improper guest for his purse-proud uncle's house. It is told, plus Irving, that, on a certain day when Lord Finlater and another local magnate were guests at the factor's dinner table, FERGUSSON, after an hour or two's diversion in the woods of Lichnot, appeared with his clothes showing signs of tear as well as wear, and the crisis could be no longer delayed. Indignantly his uncle ordered him from the room. The shy and sensitive youth was stung to the quick. He went forth, immediately packed up his little belongings

in a bundle, and set out for Edinburgh and home on foot. At a little solitary inn, not far off on the way of his journey, he sought shelter for a space, and procuring pen, ink, and paper, he wrote his uncle a letter full, it is said, of the most manly sentiments. After his departure, too, it seems, Mr. Forbes began to relent, and dispatched a messenger after him with "a few shillings, to bear his expenses upon the road ;" the poet was in a mighty rage, says Alexander Gordon, and refused to accept a penny. Dr. Irving says "this paltry present the lowness of his funds compelled him to accept." But no matter which may be correct, the important fact remains undisturbed that he walked the weary journey all the way to Edinburgh, and the fatigues of the road, added to the depression of his mind, had such an effect upon his delicate constitution that on his arrival at his mother's house he was sent to bed for several days. Here, in a period of convalescence, he endeavoured to console his grief by composing his poems on "The Decay of Friendship" and "Against Repining at Fortune." The story goes that while at Round Lichnot FERGUSSON was accustomed to assemble the servants who were detained from public worship on the Sabbaths, and taking his stand at the mouth of the peat-stack, he would address them for more than an hour at a time, in language so elequent and fervid that they were often seen bathed in tears. As regards his uncle's treatment, it may be, of course, that the matter-of-fact farmer and factor, discerning that his nephew was addicted to the silly practice, as he would esteem it, of writing poetry, and had neither the muscle nor the will, perhaps, to fill dung, or dig potatoes, saw little excuse for his existence. He should not have forgotten,

however, that he was his sister's son, and that he was young, and poor, and not strong.

A "sticket minister," FERGUSON had now to face the urgent problem of how to get a livelihood. If he did not work to-day he might starve to-morrow. So he took the first situation that came to his hand, which happened to be the post of "writer," or copyist, in the office of the Commissary Clerk of Edinburgh, Mr. Charles Abercromby. This was poorly-paid work, and although the poet was an expert penman, and through long and weary hours did write until his fingers ached, his remuneration never rose higher than a mere pittance. But the situation brought him into contact with persons who were connected with the Law, and he formed numerous friendships. He became a theatre-goer, too, and cultivated the society of "several players and musicians," with whom he spent convivial and not unprofitable hours, in so far as dallying with the Muses was concerned. Chief among those boon companions was Mr. William Woods, then the leading and favourite actor of the Edinburgh boards; and his intercourse with this amiable gentleman soon ripened into a warm mutual friendship, which did not cease until death drove his chilly finger to the heart of the gay and wonderful stripling. FERGUSON was now nineteen. A year earlier—in 1768—the brothers Ruddiman had started their *Weekly Magazine of Edinburgh Amusement*; and in 1771—though still working as a copying drudge—our poet began to make contributions to the pages of this popular and fairly well-conducted periodical. His first pieces were the pastorals, "Morning, Noon, and Night," which were published anonymously, with an editorial note of appreciation. Following these came

other pieces in English, equally imitative and artificial, by which he could never by any possibility have achieved fame : no such fame, anyway, as he enjoys by having it admitted to his credit that he handed Burns his poetic impulse. But, by and by, the youthful singer struck a new note. In 1772, "The Daft Days" appeared ; and this, followed by other poems of similar character, in the familiar Doric, of which he possessed such a rich vocabulary, immediately brought the whole of Scotland to his feet in worshipping attitude. Allan Ramsay had been fourteen years in his grave, and the Scottish lyre in the interval had remained silent but for a feeble touch now and again. Burns was not yet. FERGUSSON was hailed generally as Ramsay's worthy successor. Indeed, as one has said, if a Scots poet-laureateship had been vacant, he would have been voted the only worthy candidate for the bays. And the appointment, we will add, would have had more to be said for it than some laureateships with which reading has made the world familiar. In his "Leith Races," "The King's Birth-day," "Caller Oysters," "Hallow Fair," and the "Rising" and "Sitting of the Session," there are powers of humorous description exhibited which stamp their author as a poet of superior genius, even (as Chambers says) if the nervous sense of his "Braid Claith," "Caller Water," and other poems upon general subjects, and the homely grace of his "Farmer's Ingle," which describes in the most vivid and genuine colours, a scene worthy of the highest efforts of the muse, had not placed him unequivocally in that rank. By minor bardies as widely separated geographically as Berwick and Perth, his advent was hailed with enthusiasm ; and the "bucks"



R. Fergusson

From Grosart's Edition of the Works of Robert Fergusson. 1851.

of Edinburgh crowded round him, claiming his friendship, and soliciting the favour of his ever genial and rarely enlivening company. Had he not yielded to the seductions of the gay sparks of the city it had been better for him. Had he stood apart from the world as strongly as the world had so far stood apart from him, it had been a blessing. But we are not blaming him. He was young yet: only a mere stripling. Besides, he was endowed with social proclivities not easily held in check; and instead of being led, perhaps he was not infrequently a leader. And yet, by all appearance, there was no great excess after all. "The convivialities of FERGUSON," says Chambers, "have been generally described as bordering on excess, and as characterising himself in particular, amidst a population generally sober. The sober truth is, that the poor poet indulged exactly in the same way, and in general to the same extent, as other young men of that day. The want of public amusements, the less general taste for reading, and the limited accommodation of private houses in those days, led partly to a practice, which prevailed among all orders of people in Edinburgh, of frequenting taverns in the evening, for the sake of relaxation and exercise of the intellect." The favourite haunt of ROBERT FERGUSON, and many other persons of his own standing, was Lucky Middlemist's tavern in the Cowgate, which he celebrates in his poem on "Caller Oysters." He sings:—

" When big as burns the gutters rin,
 Gin ye hae catch'd a droukit skin,
 To Lucky Middlemist's loup in,
 And sit fu' snug
 Owre oysters and a dram o' gin,
 Or haddock lug.

“ When Auld Saint Giles, at aucht o'clock,
Gars merchant loons their shopies lock,
Then we adjourn wi' hearty fouk
To birl our bodles,
And get wherewi' to crack our joke,
And clear our noddles.”

One who almost nightly enjoyed his company has given particulars respecting the extent and nature of these convivialities. The entertainment, he says, almost invariably consisted of a few boards of raw oysters, porter, gin, and occasionally a rizzard haddock, which was neither more nor less than what formed the evening's enjoyment of most of the citizens of Edinburgh. The best gin was then sold at about five shillings a gallon, and accordingly the gill at Lucky Middlemist's cost only threepence. The whole debauch of the young men seldom came to more than sixpence or sevenpence. He distinctly recollected that FERGUSSON always seemed unwilling to spend more. They generally met at eight o'clock, and rose to depart at ten; but FERGUSSON was sometimes prevailed upon to outsit his friends, by other persons who came in later, and, for the sake of his company, entreated him to join them in further potations. The humour of his conversation, which was in itself the highest treat, frequently turned upon the odd and obnoxious characters who then abounded in the town. In the case, however, of the latter, he never permitted his satire to become in the least rancorous. He generally contented himself with conceiving them in ludicrous or awkward situations, such, for instance, as their going home at night, and having their clothes bleached by an impure ablution from the garrets—a very common occurrence

at the time, and the mention of which was sufficient to awaken the sympathies of all present.

The same evening-associate described to Dr. Chambers the poet's personal appearance. "In stature," he says, "FERGUSSON was about five feet nine, slender and handsome. His face never exhibited the least trace of red, but was perfectly and uniformly pale, or rather yellow. He had all the appearance of a person in delicate health; and, at last, he could not eat raw oysters, but was compelled, by the weakness of his stomach, to ask for them pickled. His forehead was elevated, and his whole countenance open and pleasing. He wore his own fair brown hair, with a long massive curl along each side of the head, and terminating in a queue, dressed with a black silk riband. His dress was never very good, but often much faded, and the white thread stockings, which he generally wore in preference to the more common kind of grey worsted, he often permitted to become considerably soiled before changing them."

As bearing further on the convivial and social side of his character, we should not omit to note that tradition, and every other testimony, ascribe to FERGUSSON an excellent voice, as well as a captivating manner of singing the simple melodies of his native land. Recognising this, the Cape Club, when he came to join that coterie of choice spirits, enrolled him under the honorary title of "Sir Precentor." His singing of Mallet's song, "The Birks of Invermay," it appears, long survived in the recollections of his associates, as a musical gem of the first lustre. Whether, however, he ever sang his own song, "My Ain Kind Deary, O," we do not hear. But such were his vocal powers and

attachment to Scots songs generally, as Sommers tells, that, in the course of a convivial frolic, he laid a wager with some of his friends that if they would furnish him with a certain number of printed ballads (no matter what kind) he would undertake to dispose of them as a street-singer, in the course of two hours. The bet was taken, and the next evening, being in the month of November, a large bundle of ballads was procured for him. He wrapped himself in a shabby great-coat, put on an old scratch wig, and in this disguised form, commenced his adventure at the Weigh-house, head of the West Bow. In his going down the Lawnmarket and High Street, he had the address to collect great multitudes around him, while he amused them with a variety of favourite Scots songs, by no means such as he had ballads for, and gained the wager, by disposing of the whole collection.

✓ | FERGUSSON'S ever-keen relish of practical joking led him into many queer frolics. His landlord happened to be a man very much given to intemperance, while at the same time he aspired to all the honours of a saint. One night he attempted to perform family worship in a state of complete intoxication, when, to his inconceivable horror, every sentence of his prayer was echoed by some unseen being at no great distance. Confounded with drunken terror, he ordered the family to retire, and "tak' awa' the buiks." It was FERGUSSON who thus alarmed him from a neighbouring closet. Afterwards the poor man gave his family an impressive lecture on the necessity of improving their ways, as he felt certain that something serious was about to befall them. He even unbosomed his own conscience to the waggish cause of all his terrors, and received, with

marks of extreme contrition, the absolution which the poet administered to him in consideration of his repentance. Several other such frolics are recorded.

His connection with the Cape Club has been mentioned. Edinburgh in those days had numerous clubs, some of them regulated under curious orders. There was "The Crochallan Fencibles"—a club of free-and-easy wits—to which Burns was introduced in 1787, by his friend William Smellie, the founder. Then there was a "Spendthrift Club," the members of which were not allowed to spend less than fourpence-halfpenny a night; a "Boar Club," the joke of which consisted in the members choosing for themselves, their localities and intercourse, expressions referring to the habits of pigs and boars; a "Dirty Club," where no member was allowed to appear with clean linen; and so on. In the "Cape Club"—claiming apparently the literary and artistic—nearly all the members bore the mock-title of knight. FERGUSSON, after for some time previously being a frequent and welcome visitor, became a member of the Cape on the 10th of October, in the year 1772, with the club-name of "Sir Precentor," in reference, doubtless, to his pronounced qualifications as a vocal entertainer; and, in his application for membership, it is worth noting, he was recommended by David Herd ("Sir Scrape-Graystiel"), the famous song-collector and editor, his intimate and, as we discover, admiring friend. In the introduction to his recently issued and interesting work, *Songs from David Herd's Manuscripts* (Edinburgh: William J. Hay), Dr. Hans Hecht, who supplies particular information on the point, reproduces in *fac-simile* the "Cape Petition" of the poet, which on the reverse side, along with the address, bears a slight

but whimsical and interesting character sketch of "Sir Precentor" in the attitude of song, jotted in a casual moment, presumably, by his fellow-knight, "Sir Brimstone" (Alexander Runciman, the painter). Lithographed copies of this sketch, together with FERGUSON'S signature, were, as reproduced here, put in circulation many years ago.

Sir Precentor



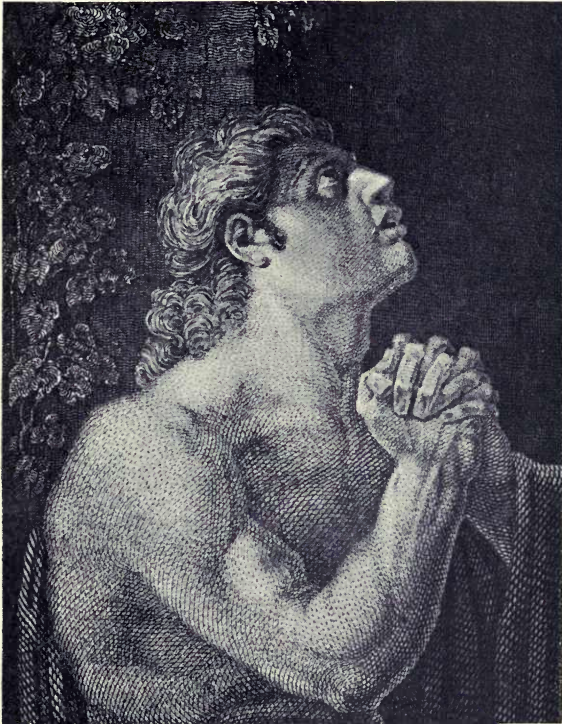
Ferguson

Dr. Hecht deserves thanks none the less for the *fac-simile* of the Petition, obverse and reverse, which shows the drawing in its original place, as well as for the Cape song by FERGUSSON (see page 212), rescued from the papers left by David Laing, and never before seen in print. The moral of the song, as Dr. Hecht mildly hints, does not commend itself to modern taste, but stomachs were stronger a hundred and fifty years ago.

A welcome figure in every social gathering, and appearing in many, and taking his glass freely—sometimes too freely—FERGUSSON was yet not neglecting his poet-craft. Every succeeding number of *Ruddiman's Magazine* had its poem from his pen. And he was standing stoutly to his office drudgery, and standing no less stoutly by his widowed mother, between whom and his sisters and he the most tenderly affectionate relationship was constantly maintained. Coffee-houses and club-rooms rang with the talk of his successive poems, and Walter Ruddiman seems to have fairly rewarded him for his contributions to the Magazine. If he did not receive large he received regular payment, with the addition of two suits of clothes—one every-day and one Sabbath suit—each year. Mr. Ruddiman himself further testifies that the profit, to the author, upon a little volume of his collected poems, published by subscription in 1773, was about £50. Dr. Chambers and others following his lead, were thus wrong in saying that probably FERGUSSON “never realised a single shilling by his writings.” Equally wrong, and cruelly slanderous, was Dr. Irving, by leaving the impression, as he did, that the £50 proved a curse rather than a blessing, in that the “drouthy” and “dissipated” poet spent it in “riotous living.” When, many years after,

Dr. Grosart read the passage to Miss Ruddiman (the publisher's daughter) her eyes, he says, filled with tears—she was then nearing ninety—and rising, to her feet, she said with emphasis, “No, sir, it is most untrue. I see Mr. Robert before me at this moment at the close of 1773, and I remember clearly the dear boy's delight as he tinkled the guineas and said, ‘My poor good mother shall have her full share.’” “And so it was (Grosart adds), as Mrs. Fergusson with a full heart after her son's death, told them all.”

What FERGUSSON most of all required about this time—we might say deserved—on behalf of his muse and himself was relief from “the daily drudgery of the desk's dead wood,” by the influence or assistance of a wealthy patron. Success in letters, generally speaking, was a vain effort in those days without such. But his cry, “Oh, sir, anything to forget my mother and these aching fingers!” fell on deaf ears. There is evidence that, unaided, he contemplated escape from the “aching fingers.” His brother Henry, who was eight years older than himself, had before this period been obliged, on account of some youthful indiscretions, to go to sea. Henry was a youth of considerable acquirements and ingenuity, and, in particular, had an extraordinary taste for fencing, which, indeed, he taught for a time. Some letters are extant from the young sailor to his mother and brother, and they certainly display powers of mind and habits of reflection which (as Chambers remarks), if discovered on ship-board, must have astonished his superiors. Whether it was the perusal of the letters that suggested the sea to the poet, we may not know, but that he contemplated the course of life pursued by his brother is certain. His



“THE PRODIGAL SON”

From Gray's Edition of the Poems of Robert Fergusson. 1821.

mind indeed had been pretty well made up when he wrote—

“ Fortune and Bob, e’er since his birth,
 Could never yet agree ;
 She fairly kick’d him from the earth,
 To try his fate at sea.”

He was not destined, however, to execute the resolution. As to a patron ; well, he did ultimately find one, *virtually*, though not *actually*. A Mr. Burnet, one of his early associates in Edinburgh, having gone to the East Indies, soon found himself on the road to affluence ; and remembering, or perhaps learning by letters from home, about the less fortunate situation of his gifted and esteemed friend, he sent a pressing invitation to FERGUSSON to come out to India ; and at the same time enclosed a draft for £100 to defray the expense of his outfit. This single ray of sunshine came, however, alas ! too late. Oh, the pity of it !—arriving only a few days after his death, which came about in a terrible and quite unexpected way.

Early in the year 1774, when his generally indifferent health was rather poorer than usual, he was induced to accompany some gentlemen, who were interested in the business of an election in one of the eastern counties of Scotland. Some time shortly before he had received “ serious impressions of religion,” and in a season of mental and physical prostration following the riot and excitement of the election, these “ serious impressions ” returned with such increased force and power that his reason was threatened. There is a story besides, which tells that, while in this disordered state, he happened one day to wander into the churchyard at Haddington, where he forgathered with the

venerable Dr. John Brown, the author of many well-known works in divinity, who at the time exercised the very respectable functions of a dissenting minister in that town. Dr. Brown was led by the scene to advert to the mortality of man, observing that they, too, in a short time, would be laid in the dust, and it was wise, therefore, that they should prepare for eternity. Dr. Brown, it is assumed, did not know to whom he spoke. As likely FERGUSON did not know his well-meaning interlocutor. But on a mind so prepared, the accidental remarks of the pious divine sank as deep as if they had been imprinted in characters of fire, and ROBERT FERGUSON returned home so sadly altered as to be in a state of despair. In the quiet of his mother's house, aided by the gentle ministrations of her who of all loved him best, he partially recovered. But ere long his mind received another shock from the following incident :—

“ In the room adjoining to that in which he slept, was a starling, which being seized one night by a cat that had found its way down the chimney, awakened Mr. FERGUSON by the most alarming screams. Having learned the cause of the alarm, he began seriously to reflect how often he, an accountable and immortal being, had in the hour of intemperance set death at defiance, though it was thus terrible, in reality, to an unaccountable and sinless creature. This brought to his recollection the conversation of the clergyman, which, aided by the solemnity of the midnight, wrought his mind up to a pitch of remorse that almost bordered on frantic despair. Sleep now forsook his eyelids ; and he rose in the morning, not as he had formerly done, to mix again with the social and the gay, but to be a

recluse from society, and to allow the remembrance of his past follies to prey upon his vitals. All his vivacity now forsook him ; those lips which were formed to give delight, were closed as by the hand of death, and on his countenance sat horror plumed." *

Henceforward he read no book but the copy of the Bible which his mother gifted to him when he set out to attend school in Dundee. The Rev. Dr. Erskine of Greyfriars was his constant and kindly visitor. He ceased to write poetry, and burned all his manuscripts. Invitations came asking him to join his old associates in the clubs, or at their houses ; but all, with an accusing look, were resolutely refused, until at last, when reason was again partially recovered, he yielded to an invitation more pressing and seductive than usual. Now fell the finishing blow. On leaving to return home, his feet caught in a stair carpet, and he was thrown to the bottom of the steps, receiving such injury about the head that he bled profusely. When borne home to his mother's house he could give no account of what had happened, being in a state of total insensibility. His reason was now to an almost hopeless degree destroyed. He passed days and nights in total abstinence from food, sometimes muttering dolefully to himself, and at other times becoming so outrageous that it required the strength of several men to keep him in his bed. Occasionally he sang his favourite melodies. In particular, he chanted "The Birks of Invermay," but now in such a style of pathos and tenderness that those who heard the notes could never forget the sound, From the

* Life by Mr. Inverarity, in Gleig's *Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica*.

distress into which his poor mother was plunged, and her inability to render him the attendance his condition demanded, she was obliged to take steps for his removal to the public asylum. His conveyance thither was effected by a kindly stratagem. On pretence of taking him on an evening to visit a friend, some of his more intimate acquaintances placed him in a sedan chair, and conveyed him to the place which he had long feared would be his final abode.

The poet's friend, Thomas Sommers, assisted by Dr. Chambers, and others, must be allowed to tell the rest.

"During the first night of his confinement," says Sommers, "we slept none; and when the keeper visited him in the morning, he found him walking along the stone floor of his cell, with his arms folded, and in sullen sadness, uttering not a word. After some minutes' silence, he clapped his right hand on his forehead, and complained much of pain. He asked the keeper who brought him there. He answered—'Friends.' 'Yes, friends, indeed,' replied ROBERT, 'they think I am too wretched to live, but you will soon see me *a burning and a shining light*.' 'You have been so already,' observed the keeper, alluding to his poems. 'You mistake me,' said the poet; 'I mean, you shall see and hear of me as a bright minister of the Gospel.'"

How the "sweet bells" were "jangled" and "out of tune" is revealed by various anecdotes that are related. On one occasion, when he had been reading, a cloud suddenly overshadowed the moon, and he started and exclaimed loudly, "Jupiter, snuff the moon!" as if the heavenly constellation had been

some vast candle. At another time, having plaited a crown very neatly from the straw of his cell, he put it on his head and strutted around proclaiming himself "a king! a king!"

"FERGUSSON," says Chambers, "continued about two months to occupy a cell in this gloomy mansion. Occasionally, when the comparative tranquillity of his mind permitted it, his friends were allowed to visit him. A few days before his dissolution his mother and sister found him lying on his straw bed, calm and collected. The evening was chill and damp; he requested his mother to gather the bed-clothes about him, and sit on his feet, for he said they were so very cold as to be almost insensible to the touch. She did so, and his sister took her seat by the bed-side. He then looked wistfully in the face of his affectionate parent, and said, 'Oh, mother, this is kind indeed.' Then addressing his sister he said, 'Might you not come frequently, and sit beside me; you cannot imagine how comfortable it would be; you might fetch your seam and sew beside me.' To this no answer was returned; an interval of silence was filled up by sobs and tears. 'What ails ye?' inquired the dying poet; 'wherefor sorrow for me, sirs? I am very well cared for here—I do assure you. I want for nothing—but it is cold—it is very cold. You know, I told you, it would come to this at last—yes, I told you so. Oh, do not go yet, mother—I hope to be soon—oh, do not go yet—do not leave me!' The keeper, however, whispered that it was time to depart, and this was the last time that FERGUSSON saw those beloved relatives."

Sommers thus describes his last interview with the poet, which took place in company with Dr. John

Aitken, another friend of the unfortunate lunatic. "We got immediate access to the cell, and found Robert lying with his clothes on, stretched upon a bed of loose uncovered straw. The moment he heard my voice he arose, got me in his arms, and wept. The doctor felt his pulse and declared it to be favourable. I asked the keeper (whom I formerly knew as a gardener) to allow him to accompany us into an adjoining back court, by way of taking the air. He consented. Robert took hold of me by the arm, placing me on his right, and the doctor on his left, and in this form we walked backward and forward along the court, conversing for nearly an hour : in the course of which many questions were asked both by the doctor and myself, to which he returned most satisfactory answers ; but he seemed very anxious to obtain his liberty. The sky was lowering, the sun being much obscured. Led by curiosity, and knowing his natural quickness, I asked him what hour of the day it might be. He stopped, and looking up with his face towards the south, while his hands were clasped, paused a little, and said it was within five minutes of twelve. The doctor looked his watch and exclaimed, 'It is just six minutes from twelve.' . . . Having passed about two hours with him on this visit, we found it necessary to take our leave, the doctor assuring him that he would soon be restored to his friends, and that I would visit again in a day or two. He calmly and without a murmur walked with us to the cell, and, upon parting, reminded the doctor to get him soon at liberty, and of mine to see him next day. Neither of us, however, had an opportunity of accomplishing our promise, for in a

few days thereafter, I received an intimation from the keeper that ROBERT FERGUSON had breathed his last."

This melancholy event took place on the 16th of October, 1774, when he had only a few weeks completed his twenty-fourth year. Verily, "it was not a life, but only a piece of childhood thrown away!" Three days afterwards—being followed thither from Bristo Port by a large company of sorrowing friends—his poor wasted body was laid to rest in the Canongate churchyard. In this humble and confined spot—yet not unmeet situation, lying as it does in the very heart of "Auld Reekie," the life of which pulses in every line of his Doric verse—FERGUSON'S "lone house of clay" remained without a mark for thirteen years, until Robert Burns, at his own expense, and acting on his own initiative, set up the simple monument which to this hour "directs pale Scotia's way, to pour her sorrows o'er her poet's dust."

As early as during his "heckling" days in the town of Irvine, the Ayrshire bard had been stimulated by his "elder brother in misfortune." Rhyme then he had all but abandoned, but meeting with FERGUSON'S Scots poems he strung anew, he tells, his "wildly sounding lyre with emulating vigour." In his first "Epistle to Lapraik," he refers to him as "Fergusson, the bauld an' slee," and in his "Epistle to William Simson," the Ochiltree schoolmaster, he exclaims with biting vigour :—

"O Fergusson ! thy glorious parts
 Ill suited law's dry, musty arts !
 My curse upon your whunstone hearts,
 Ye E'nbrugh gentry !
 The tythe o' what ye waste on cartes
 Wad stow'd his pantry !"

On a later date (19th March, 1787), when he presented Miss Carmichael, a young Edinburgh lady, who herself wrote verses, with a copy of FERGUSON'S poems,* he repeated the above sentiment in more elegant form, in the following lines, inscribed partly above and partly below the frontispiece portrait :—

“Curse on ungrateful man, that can be pleas'd,
And yet can starve the author of the pleasure !
O thou, my elder brother in misfortune,
By far my elder brother in the muse,
With tears I pity thy unhappy fate !
Why is the Bard unfitted for the world,
Yet has so keen a relish of its pleasures ?”

When, in the end of November, 1786, Burns made his first visit to the Scottish capital, he was not long in the city, we are told by Cunningham, who had special opportunities of knowing, until he found his way to the old churchyard in the Canongate. The bleak aspect of the unmarked grave, in a day of nipping cold, moved his big heart to tears, and he sobbed as he stood over it with uncovered head. Yea, kneeling down, he even embraced and kissed the sod. It was a beautiful and touching tribute. But his regard did not end with this emotional outburst. On the 6th of February following, Burns applied by petition to the churchyard managers of the Barony of the Canongate, craving permission to mark and render sacred for ever the spot where FERGUSON'S remains are laid. His petition is worth quoting : “Gentlemen,” he wrote, “I am sorry to be told, that the remains of ROBERT FERGUSON, the so justly celebrated poet, a man whose talent for ages to come will do honour to our Caledonian name, lie in

* Now in the possession of the Right Hon. the Earl of Rosebery.



FERGUSSON'S GRAVE IN THE CANONGATE CHURCHYARD,
EDINBURGH.

your churchyard among the ignoble dead, unnoticed and unknown. Some memorial to direct the steps of the lovers of Scottish song, when they shed a tear over the 'narrow house' of the bard who is no more, is surely a tribute due to FERGUSSON's memory; a tribute I wish to have the honour of paying. I petition you, then, gentlemen, to permit me to lay a simple stone over the revered ashes, to remain an inalienable property to his deathless fame."

The managers, at their next meeting, held on the 22nd of the same month, "in consideration of the laudable and disinterested motion of Mr. Burns, and the propriety of his request," resolved formally to grant permission. Burns accordingly employed his namesake, Robert Burn, architect, to provide and erect the very substantial memorial, which has been kept in the finest order through a well-conceived bequest by the widow of Hugh Williams, the distinguished painter of "Views in Greece."

The inscription on the face of the stone reads:—

HERE LIES

ROBERT FERGUSSON, POET.

Born September 5th, 1751.

Died October 16th, 1774.

"No sculptured Marble here, nor pompous lay,

'No storied Urn nor animated Bust';

This simple Stone directs pale Scotia's way

To pour her Sorrows o'er her Poet's Dust."

While on the back is inscribed:—

"By special grant of the Managers to ROBERT BURNS, who erected this stone, this Burial-place is to remain for ever sacred to the memory of ROBERT FERGUSSON."

The wrong birth-date will be noticed—1751, instead of 1750.

It deserves to be pointed out, as well, that two additional stanzas to the one on the monument were found in Burns's manuscript book of early poems, supposed to have been transcribed for Mrs. Dunlop, which read :—

“ She mourns, sweet tuneful youth, thy hapless fate ;
 Though all the powers of song thy fancy fired,
 Yet Luxury and Wealth lay by in state,
 And, thankless, starv'd what they so much admired.

“ This tribute, with a tear, now gives
 A brother Bard—he can no more bestow ;
 But dear to fame thy Song immortal lives,
 A nobler monument than Art can show.”

Further here—although there are other interesting particulars—I will only tell, as has been told frequently already, that Burns did not discharge the account for FERGUSSON's monument until February, 1792, and for the very good reason which he states. Writing to his friend, Peter Hill, bookseller, Edinburgh, he says :—“ I send you by the bearer, Mr. Clarke, a particular friend of mine, £5 10s. for acct. I owe to Mr. Robt. Burn, architect, for erecting the stone over poor FERGUSSON. He was two years in erecting it after I commissioned him for it, and I have been two years in paying him after he sent his account, so he and I are quits. He had the hardness to ask me interest on the sum ; but considering that the money was due by one Poet for putting a tombstone over another, he may, with grateful surprise, thank Heaven that ever he saw a farthing of it.” But that the architect would enjoy the poet's humour, if it was read to him when he got payment,

we need not doubt, for when sending the account he had facetiously appended the note :—"I shall be happy to receive orders of a like nature for as many of your friends that have gone hence as you please."

On an earlier page of this writing I have given a brief sketch of the personal appearance of FERGUSSON as it was communicated to Dr. Chambers by one of his evening-associates in Edinburgh. Sommers's account is somewhat more minute, and perhaps more reliable. "As to his external appearance," this faithful friend writes, "I have never yet seen a *like* portrait of him, excepting the one painted by Mr. Alexander Runciman. He was in person about five feet six inches high, and well shaped. His complexion fair, but rather pale. His eyes full, black, and piercing. His nose long, his lips thin, his teeth well set and white. His neck long and well proportioned. His shoulders narrow and his limbs long, but more sinewy than fleshy. His voice strong, clear, and melodious. Remarkably fond of old Scots songs, and the best singer of 'The Birks of Invermay' I ever heard. When speaking, he was quick, forcible, and complaisant. In walking, he appeared smart, erect, and unaffected. I passed many happy hours with him, not in dissipation and folly, but in useful conversation and in listening to the more inviting and rational displays of his wit, sentiment, and song; in the exercise of which he never failed to please, instruct, and charm."

Forming in some measure, as it does, a complement to the above, I am constrained to add the obituary notice of "ROBERT FERGUSSON, well known in the literary world for his poetical abilities," which appeared in *Ruddiman's Weekly Magazine*, written by Mr. Ruddi-

man, Jun., and which is of further interest as, slightly extended, it forms substantially the Life usually prefixed to the early editions of the Poems. "To attempt a character of this youthful bard," says the writer, "must be a vain essay, as it would be equally difficult to do justice to his merit. No colours but his own could paint him to the life, and we know none in his line of composition capable to sketch him out. His talent of versification in the Scots dialect has been exceeded by none, equalled by few. The subjects he chose were generally uncommon, often temporary. His images and sentiments were lively and striking, which he had a knack of clothing with most agreeable and natural expression. Had he enjoyed life and health to a maturer age, it is probable he would have revived our ancient Caledonian poetry, of late so much neglected and despised. His 'Hallow Fair,' 'Edinburgh Election,' 'Leith Races,' are master-pieces in this style, and will be lasting monuments of his genius and vivacity. For social life he possessed an amazing variety of qualifications. With the best good-nature and a great degree of modesty, he was always sprightly, always entertaining. His powers of song were very great in a double capacity. When seated, with some select companions, over a friendly bowl, his wit flashed like lightning, struck the hearers irresistibly, and set the table in a roar. But, alas! these engaging, nay, bewitching qualities, proved fatal to their owner, and shortened the period of his rational existence. So true is that observation of the poet—

'Great wit to madness sure is near ally'd,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide.'

Yet he found favour in the sight of Providence, who was pleased speedily to call him from a miserable state of being to a life of early immortality."

We have been seeing how Burns esteemed FERGUSON, what pity he felt for him in the poverty and coldness of his human surroundings, and how tenderly eager he was that the fame of his "elder brother in the Muse" should enjoy loving lodgment for all time in the hearts of his countrymen. The attitude was altogether most agreeably honest, as was every attitude in which Burns was ever found. That the graphic Doric verse of the young Edinburgh poet struck his Ayrshire successor and after-master with irresistible power there is ample evidence, the appreciative reference in the noble preface to the first edition of his poems, printed at Kilmarnock, not being the least convincing. Lockhart is of opinion that it was the accidental meeting with FERGUSON's works, and a personal sympathy with that poet's misfortunes, that largely determined the Scottish character of Burns's writings. Burns himself says as much. Sir Walter Scott thought, however, that the ploughman poet, with twenty times the ability of Ramsay or FERGUSON, talked of these poets as his models with too much humility. Sir Walter was right. He doubtless owed a good deal to both, as he owed something to every capable singer that ever sang in Scotland before his day; just as Shakespeare owed something to every worthy dramatist that ever wrote in England before his time. He was debtor often, and to many, certainly, for hints and suggestions; for the poetry of Burns is a stream fed by many streams. But he was the servile imitator of no man; and to whomsoever he was at any time in debt, it was but to the

extent of having that poet in his eye when writing, with a view to kindling at his flame. To Ramsay he owed little. To FERGUSON he owed more in the way of hints and suggestions, alike in subject and form and figure of speech, than to all else; and the influence which is marked on some of the best known of his Poems and Epistles is worth pointing out. The most obvious of all is "The Cottar's Saturday Night," as clearly suggested by "The Farmer's Ingle," as ever one poem was by another. And if the one poet ever measured himself on a level with the other, besides, it was here; for although Burns approached his subject with a higher and more passionate ideal than FERGUSON, as has been remarked, we may yet agree with Andrew Lang in thinking that the "farmer" is a more realistic personage than the "cottar." It is not extravagance to say, indeed, that no artist working with words—and FERGUSON'S estimate of the value of words was at all times wonderful, while his vocabulary was large—has excelled this youth of twenty in the descriptive quality of the following two stanzas. No marvel they inspired Burns to emulation. Supper is over in the house:—

"The fient a cheep's amang the bairnies now,
 For a' their anger's wi' their hunger gane:
 Aye maun the childer, wi' a fastin' mou',
 Grumble and greet, and mak an unco mane.
 In rangles round, before the ingle's lowe,
 Frae gudame's mouth auld warld tales they hear,
 O' warlocks loupin' round the wirrikow;
 O' ghaists, that win in glen and kirk-yard drear;
 Whilk touzles a' their tap, and gars them shak wi' fear!

"For weel she trows, that fiends and fairies be
 Sent frae the deil to fleetch us to our ill,

That kye hae tint their milk wi' evil ee,
 And corn been scowder'd on the glowin' kill.
 O mock na this, my friends, but rather mourn,
 Ye in life's brawest spring, wi' reason clear ;
 Wi' eild our idle fancies a' return,
 And dim our dolefu' days wi' bairnly fear ;
 The mind's aye cradled when the grave is near."

The poems, it will be noted, are in the same measure—no common one. They open each with a corresponding look out on external nature—they close each with a patriotic apostrophe. As palpably "The Holy Fair" was suggested by "Leith Races." The measure is again the same—they open not unlike, and the main idea in each bears striking features of relationship. Compare these two verses :—

(*Burns.*)

"My name is Fun—your cronie dear,
 The nearest friend ye hae ;
 An' this is Superstition here,
 An' that's Hipocrisy.
 I'm gaun to Mauchline 'holy fair'
 To spend an hour in daffin ;
 Gin ye'll go there, you runkl'd pair,
 We will get famous laughin
 At them this day."

(*Fergusson.*)

"I dwell amang the caller springs
 That weet the land o' Cakes,
 And aften tune my canty strings
 At bridals and late-wakes ;
 They ca' me Mirth ; I ne'er was ken'd
 To grumble or look sour,
 But blyth wad be a lift to lend,
 Gif ye wad sey my power
 An' pith this day."

Of course, we are referring here particularly to the matter of hint, or suggestion. Burns's poem fills by far the greater space, and discharges by a long way the larger function. FERGUSSON's is a mere fragment of idle rhyme by comparison. Then further in the way of suggestion — and suggestion merely — the immortal "Elegy on Captain Matthew Henderson" bears quite evident traces of being moulded on the "Elegy on the Death of Scots Music," as no less "The Brigs of Ayr" appear to have been suggested by "The Mutual Complaint of Plain-Stanes and Causey." Burns, in addition, received many minor hints, in familiar words and phrases, from FERGUSSON. But for all, surely no poet was ever more grateful, and no writer in the world ever put his borrowings to better use. It has all along been allowed to FERGUSSON, as the highest compliment the critic could pay him, that he handed Burns his poetical impulse, and that Burns took hints from him, and was ready on every suitable occasion to acknowledge him his peer in the realm of vernacular verse.

He was certainly not Burns's peer—in one realm or another. And though it may be pled for him that he died young, it is doubtful yet, although he had lived to be a hundred, whether he could ever have filled anything like the space in the heart and the mind of humanity that has been occupied for more than a century by the one and only singer entitled to the honourable designation of Scotland's National Poet.

While saying so, however, William Pitt's characterisation of Burns applies not inappropriately to FERGUSSON—if his Scots poems only are kept in view; and I lift it and lay it to his credit here without reserve, and say:—"I can think of no verse since Shakespeare's that

has so much the appearance of coming sweetly from Nature." Of no poet anywhere may it be said with more truth that "he did but sing because he must, and piped but as the linnet sang." His verse gushed from him, indeed, without effort. And how marvellously ripe was his thought for his years—how wide his range of knowledge—and with what magical effect did he conjure with Edinburgh's "brave metropolitan utterance." He says himself, referring to his muse :—

"At times when she may lowse her pack,
I'll grant that she can find a knack
To gar auld-warld wordies clack
In hamespun rhyme ;
While ilk ane at his billy's back
Keeps gude Scots time."

His knack, forsooth, was the gift of true genius. Hence the influence of his verse on Burns, as well as, perhaps, on Scott and Leyden and Hogg ; though on the three latter in lighter measure than on the first ; and hence its continuing power to charm and delight the minds of the poet's not too susceptible countrymen.

Mention has been made of the ripeness of his thought, together with the wideness of his knowledge. It has been common to remark on FERGUSON as if he saw Nature only from some lofty garret window ; but such as rate him so narrowly surely write without the volume of his poems at their elbow. He was very emphatically a city poet, to be sure—the laureate of Auld Reekie—but he looked at nature and country life, nevertheless, with an intimate and loving eye. His poem of "The Farmer's Ingle"—the best rounded and most complete picture from his pen—is swelling in every line with the very air of country life, and is embued from first to last

with genuine country thought and feeling. Two particular stanzas have already been quoted ; but when outside of these one lights on phrases like—"divots theekit frae the weet and drift"—"wi' butter'd bannocks now the girdle reeks"—"the cheering bicker gars them glibly gash"—"in its auld lerroch yet the deas remains"—and, "lang may his sock and cou'ter turn the glebe, and bauks o' corn bend down wi' laded ear"—it is realized that the subject is in the hands of one entirely to the manner born. And his knowledge of and sympathy with country life, and its ways and manners, are not manifest only in "The Farmer's Ingle," but are revealed quite as conspicuously in the odes to the Bee and to the Gowdspink, and in the "Eclogue to the Memory of Dr. William Wilkie," every line of which is marked with a Burns-like familiarity with all the objects of farm-life. Take but two brief examples from the Eclogue :—

"Though Summer's gane and we nae langer view
The blades o' clover wat wi' pearls o' dew,
Cauld winter's bleakest blast we'll eithly cower,
Our eldin's driven, an' our hairst is owre.
Our rucks fu' thick are stackit i' the yard,
For the Yule feast a sautit mart's prepared."

And:—

"Ye saw yoursel' how weel his mailin thrave,
Aye better faugh'd an' snodit than the lave ;
Lang had the thristles an' the dockens been
In use to wag their taps upon the green,
Where now his bonny rigs delight the view,
An' thrivin' hedges drink the caller dew."

Then, as to the ripeness of his thought, one is struck with admiration when lighting on such lines as—

"Till death slip sleely on and gie the hindmost wound,"

and—

“The mind’s aye cradled when the grave is near.”

Or, by finding such luminous pictures in a few words as—

“Upon the tap o’ ilka lum
The sun began to keek,”

and—

“Now morn, wi’ bonnie purpie-smiles,
Kisses the air-cock o’ St. Giles ;”

or—

“Cauld blaws the nippin’ north wi’ angry sough,
And showers his hailstones frae the castle cleugh
Owre the Greyfriars.”

It needs only to be asked for FERGUSON that he be read. So long as he is read he will surely not lack for ardent admirers. And Edinburgh people, above and beyond all, should cherish their laureate, for the grand old grey capital of the North has bred no more devoted son ; and none, assuredly, who has so eloquently set in moving verse the love he bore for the town and her citizens. To him the city was not merely his “own romantic town.” She was “the canty hole,” and

“Auld Reekie ! wale o’ ilka toun
That Scotland kens beneath the moon.”

Following here is the epitaph which his much esteemed and admiring friend, William Woods, the actor, composed for the poet immediately on hearing of his death. It has neither the melting fervour nor the poetical beauty of the one composed at a later date by Robert Burns, but it touches nervously on many particular features of the subject’s character, alike as a poet and a man, and may be allowed, not inappropriately, to close this writing :—

“Sacred to the memory of ROBERT FERGUSSON, who met a fate from which the possession of humble talents might have secured him. But with Nature’s most spontaneous gifts, he displayed, both in his poems and his conversation, strength without labour, and ease without affectation. To these shining qualities he added nobler; he was manly in his manners, open in his actions, sincere in his attachments, generous in his resentments; a good-humour’d satirist of folly, an enthusiastic lover of merit. But, thus adorned, wanting that persevering fortitude which often obtains patronage from the great, to Fortune’s lofty favours the child of nature was denied. His feeling soul, unable longer to sustain the impressions made on enlarged sensibility, and limited means, burst from its narrow prison of this world, to gain a better.”

PORTRAITS OF FERGUSSON.

THE various portraits of ROBERT FERGUSSON which have appeared, each in turn claimed to be authentic, present, when ranged together as in this volume, a face of such widely differing aspect, that comment on them individually is almost unavoidable. To say emphatically at this time of day which affords the correct, or most nearly accurate presentation of the poet, were, of course, no easy matter. While that is so, reconciliation of all, on the other hand, is obviously out of the question. Were the Grosart portrait, at page xxxiv., removed from the catalogue the difficulty would be greatly lessened. But Dr. Grosart, in 1851, held so stoutly for this being—by sanction of Miss Ruddiman—"the alone authenticated" and "only faithful" likeness, that even although it does not agree with contemporary accounts of the attractive nature of FERGUSSON's appearance, and has no feature really in common with the quite fascinating and undisputed Runciman portrait forming the frontispiece here, one hesitates to cast it utterly aside. If we would hesitate about casting it aside utterly, however, we would hesitate yet more about accepting it as a portrait (*vide* Dr. Grosart) that "*literally* represents the poet." It shows a face so weak and unattractive—so destitute of any suggestion of genius or character—and it bears so little resemblance, in nose, and mouth, and chin, to *any* of the other portraits—that one is all but forced to regard it as a caricature, and not a portrait at all.

I. The Runciman portrait, a lithographed copy of which faces the title-page in this volume, prepared at second-hand from the original painting in the National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh, can scarcely be denied the credit of being authentic. The late Dr. Grosart even, in February, 1897, when Mr. William Drummond Young, the well-known Edinburgh photo-artist, was preparing his justly celebrated photogravure from it, was constrained to proclaim it "beautiful as a work of art, and *true to the very life*." The painting came into public knowledge only shortly before the issue of Mr. Drummond Young's photogravure, when it was given on loan for exhibition in the institution named. It is the property of Miss Raeburn, the granddaughter of Sir Henry Raeburn—Scotland's Sir Joshua Reynolds—to whom it was presented by the artist. Where it had "lain" or "hung" unobserved in all the intervening years has not been explained. But it was at Chesterfield, the house of Raeburn's grandson, when Dr. John Brown wrote his prefatory note to the series of photographs from engravings after Raeburn, about thirty years ago. Dr. Brown says:—"At the fireside [in the dining-room] is a small head of FERGUSON the poet, by Runciman—intense and painful, the eyes full of perilous light and coming frenzy—in colour dingy beside the glow of Raeburn. It is not the same portrait as the one engraved in his works, also by Runciman." That it is not the same is clear. But apart from the "Sir Precentor" sketch (see page xl.) there was evidently a "drawing" of the poet by Alexander Runciman; and it is probably to this that FERGUSSON himself refers, in the "Codicil" to his "Last Will," when he writes:—

“ To Walter Ruddiman, whose pen
 Still screen'd me from the dunce's den,
 I leave of phiz a picture, saving
 To him the freedom of engraving
 Therefrom a copy, to embellish
 And give his work a smarter relish.”

This “ picture ” appears to have been delivered over to Mr. Ruddiman, indeed, and David Laing, of the Writers to the Signet's Library, was able to supply Dr. Grosart with some interesting particulars regarding it. Mr. Ruddiman, Laing said, had entrusted the portrait to Mr. James Cummyng; and while the second edition of the poems was in the press, in 1782, he addressed this card to Mr. Cummyng :—“ Tho. Ruddiman's compliments to Mr. Cummyng, begs he would look among his papers for a quarto book of drawings which T. R. left with Mr. C. some months ago. It contains a sketch of the likeness of R. FERGUSSON, whose works T. R. has nearly ready for publication, and wishes to have his head engraved with all speed. If Mr. C. will leave the book with his son, T. R. will send for it this afternoon, *Tuesday, 7th May, 1782.*” In a postscript to another letter to Cummyng, Ruddiman says :—“ The want of FERGUSSON's head is an infinite loss to me at present—*14th May, 1782.*”

The volume was issued without a portrait, so that Cummyng must have mislaid the drawing. But it turned up later, as we will see immediately. And taking that with the “ Sir Precentor ” sketch and the Runciman painting, it should be fairly evident to anyone with half an eye in his head that the portrait so highly lauded by Dr. Grosart in 1851 can have little claim to credit as “ the alone authenticated ” and “ only faithful ” likeness.

II. This (see page xviii.), was the first portrait of FERGUSSON that appeared in any volume of his poems. It is the one, besides, on which most of the subsequent portraits were based. In all likelihood it was prepared from the Runciman drawing. Where else could it come from? It was given as a frontispiece in the first part of *Poems on Various Subjects*, by ROBERT FERGUSSON, published by Morison & Son, Perth, in 1788. "I may state," says Dr. Grosart, "that Miss Ruddiman, Professor Vilant of St. Andrews, Mr. Howden, jeweller, and Mr. Spence of Edinburgh, all recognised a likeness in the portrait of Morison & Son, and its re-engravings. Still there was a something unsatisfactory, which is easily accounted for by the *improving* alterations made."

III. The Grosart portrait, a reproduction of which appears at page xxxiv., has been frequently referred to here. I call it the Grosart portrait, because it appears alone in the edition of *The Works of Robert Fergusson*, edited by the Rev. Alexander B. Grosart, LL.D., and published by Messrs. A. Fullarton & Co., London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, in 1851. Recommending it to the public in that work, the reverend editor remarks:—"The portrait which is given in the present edition is carefully and faithfully re-engraved from a private copper-plate, which belonged to Mr. Walter Ruddiman, Jun., and with which I was favoured by my venerable friend, the late Miss Ruddiman. An impression from this copper-plate of Mr. Ruddiman was framed and hung above the parlour mantel-piece, and it was regarded by the family as a correct portrait of the poet. The editor is of opinion that the 'drawing' referred to in Mr. Ruddiman's note to Mr.

Cummyng must have been subsequently recovered, and the copper-plate engraved therefrom. It is the alone authenticated portrait, and there cannot be a doubt that it faithfully—*literally* represents the poet.” That in 1851. So in 1897, Dr. Grosart surely became his own severest critic when, referring to the Runciman painting, he wrote:—“ All others have been put aside by the recovery of Runciman’s second long-hidden portrait—beautiful as a work of art, and true to the very life.” The one presents actually no feature in common with the other; and if the “drawing” referred to in Ruddiman’s note to Cummyng was subsequently recovered, it was the Perth portrait that was engraved from it, we may feel assured, and not the copper-plate over the Ruddiman mantel-piece. A comparison of the three noses should alone make that clear.

IV. In the *Life of Robert Fergusson*, by his friend Thomas Sommers, there is the following somewhat romantic account of a portrait of him taken by Runciman. “That artist,” says Sommers, “was at this time [1772-3] painting in his own house in the Pleasance, a picture on a half-length cloth, of the ‘Prodigal Son,’ in which his fancy and pencil had introduced every necessary object and circumstance suggested by the sacred passage. At his own desire I called to see it. I was much pleased with the composition, colouring, and admirable effect of the piece, at least what was done of it; but expressed my surprise at observing a large space in the centre, exhibiting nothing but chalk outlines of a human figure. He informed me that he had reserved that space for the prodigal, but could not find a young man whose personal form and

expressive features were such as he could approve of, and commit to the canvas. ROBERT FERGUSSON's face and figure instantly occurred to me : not from an idea that FERGUSSON's real character was that of a prodigal ; by no means ; but on account of his sprightly humour, personal appearance, and striking features. I asked Mr. Runciman if he knew the poet. He answered in the negative, but that he had often read and admired his poems. That evening at five I appointed to meet with him and the poet in a tavern, Parliament Close. We did so, and I introduced him. The painter was much pleased both with his figure and conversation. I intimated to FERGUSSON the business on which we met ; he agreed to sit next forenoon. I accompanied him for that purpose, and in a few days the picture strikingly exhibited the bard in the character of a prodigal, sitting on a grassy bank surrounded by swine, some of which were sleeping and others feeding ; his right leg over his left knee, eyes uplifted, hands clasped, tattered clothes, and with expressive countenance bemoaning his forlorn and miserable situation ! This picture, when finished, reflected high honour on the painter, being much admired. It was sent to the Royal Exhibition in London, where it was also highly esteemed, and there purchased by a gentleman of taste and fortune at a considerable price. I have often expressed a wish to see a print from it, but never had that pleasure, as it exhibited a portrait of my favourite bard which, for likeness, colouring, and expression, might have done honour to the taste and pencil of Sir Joshua Reynolds."

Mr. James Gray of the High School, Edinburgh, when, in 1821, he came to issue his edition of the

poems of FERGUSSON, explained in a prefatory note that the picture, of which Sommers gives the above curious account, had disappeared. But "the interesting engraving," he continues. "that is prefixed to the present volume [see page xliii.] is taken from a painting by the same artist, in which the return of the Prodigal is represented: and there is every reason to believe that the portrait of FERGUSSON was faithfully copied by Runciman from the former picture. This is now in the possession of David Steuart, Esq., of the Customs, Edinburgh." Of said picture, Mr. Steuart gave the following account:—

"It is five feet five inches broad by three feet eleven inches high; and was purchased by me in the year 1793 at the sale of the collection of medals, coins, and other articles, belonging to the late Mr. Cumming, secretary to the Antiquarian Society. I was informed at the time that the picture was originally intended to be placed in the English Chapel in the Cowgate, which is likely, as it is painted on a thick piece of copper to resist the injuries of time and weather, and is done with great care, being one of the most highly finished works of this much esteemed master. The subject seems to have been a favourite one with him, for, besides the drawing in my possession, he executed four, if not five, paintings of it, all differing from each other. The one in my possession is dated 1774. As Runciman was a long while before he met with a countenance to his liking for the Prodigal Son, there is every probability that being once satisfied he would again introduce the portrait of the poet in this picture. It is full of expression, and is a study that an artist of feeling would adopt *con amore*."

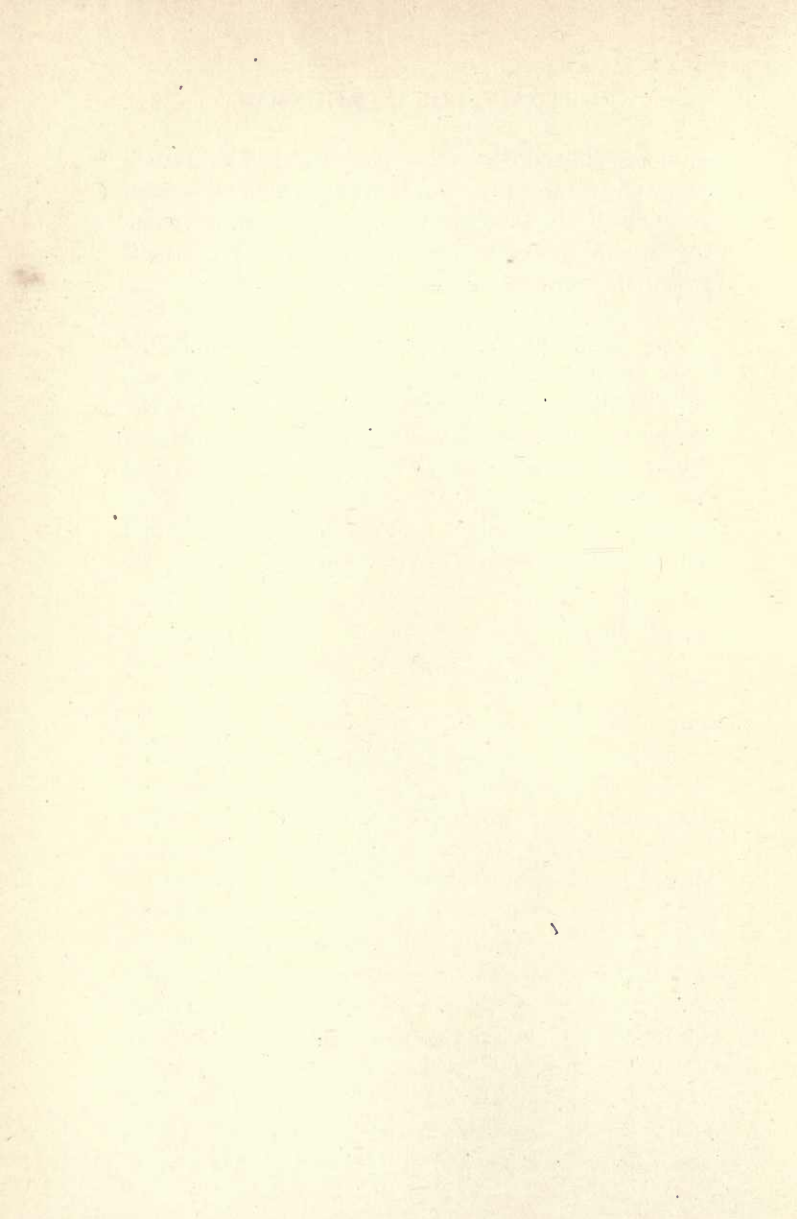
Perhaps. But, unless by the scantiness of its attire, the figure engraved from the picture affords almost no other suggestion of a Prodigal down in his luck. Fat and full of flesh as he is, he offers no idea of a person reduced to the condition of eating the husks which were the common feeding of the swine he had been appointed to herd. And that the physical weakling, ROBERT FERGUSON, was the model either for this picture, or the one on which it was based, I cannot believe. Look at the neck and the shoulders, and the arms and muscles of that figure. If there was a model for it at all, and he was of any service to the artist, the person selected to pose was either a champion Border wrestler, or one fit to establish a position for himself within the prize ring. He was not ROBERT FERGUSON, the poet, painted in one character or another by Alexander Runciman, the artist.

V. The "Sir Precentor" sketch (page xl.), slight as it is, being hurriedly executed for the diversion of the moment on the night (presumably) of FERGUSON'S admission to the Cape Club, is of very considerable interest, and is valuable besides as a help in the way of determining the true aspect of the poet. It agrees with the Runciman painting. It does not jar in any pronounced fashion with the face in the Perth portrait. Already in the introduction to this work, explanation has been made of how it was jotted by Runciman on the reverse side of the poet's petition for membership of the Cape, in October, 1772. "The drawing," says Professor Hecht, and we thoroughly appreciate his remark, "is exceedingly interesting. In all probability it is by Alexander Runciman, who, as we know,

was of the club Sir Brimstone, and it gives FERGUSSON's emaciated features in a well-chosen moment of animation, without the idealizing touch of Runciman's more elaborate oil portrait now in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery."

VI. Prefixed to Alexander Peterkin's edition of *The Works of Robert Fergusson*, printed by S. A. & H. Oddy, London, in 1807, there is a portrait which is not reproduced here, and because it is of no value or interest of any kind. It was prepared, Dr. Grosart tells, from the face of the sister of the poet, Mrs. Duval, who was supposed considerably to resemble her brother, and was induced thereby to sit.





EDITIONS OF THE POEMS OF FERGUSSON.

- I.—*Poems*. By Robert Fergusson. Edinburgh. Printed by Walter & Thomas Ruddiman. 1773. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 132. Glossary. Vignette in title-page (see reproduction as extra title-page in this volume). Published by subscription.
- II.—*Poems on Various Subjects*. By Robert Fergusson. Edinburgh. Printed by Walter & Thomas Ruddiman. 1779. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 151. Contains as preface a short sketch of Fergusson's life, written by Thomas Ruddiman. This, as Part II., is sometimes found bound up with *Poems* (No. I.) published in the author's lifetime. Both are rare.
- III.—*Poems on Various Subjects*. By Robert Fergusson. In two parts. The Second Edition. Edinburgh. Printed by T. Ruddiman, for J. Bell, J. Dickson, W. Creech, C. Elliot, P. Anderson, and J. Simpson. 1782. 1 vol. 12mo; pp., Part I., 105, Part II., 151. Memoir of No. II. reprinted. About seven thousand printed and sold.
- IV.—*Poems on Various Subjects*. By Robert Fergusson. In two parts. The Third Edition. Printed by T. Ruddiman & Co. 1785. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 240. Memoir reprinted. Again about seven thousand copies printed, which were sold in less than three years.

V.—*Poems on Various Subjects.* By Robert Fergusson.

In two parts. Perth. Printed by R. Morison, Junr., for R. Morison & Son, booksellers : and sold by J. Murray, No. 32 Fleet Street, London. Part I. [English poems]. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 104. 1788. Part II. [Scottish poems]. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 128. 1789. Memoir reprinted. The two parts are usually found in one volume. This edition contains the first printed portrait of Fergusson—"Mr. Robert Fergusson, ætatis xxiv. A. Birrel, sculpsit." Is likewise embellished [?] with two illustrations. Birrel after Collings, (1) to "The Simile"; (2) to the poem of "Hallow Fair."

VI.—*Poems on Various Subjects.* By Robert Fergusson.

In two parts. Paisley. Printed by J. Neilson, for R. Smith. 1796. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 226. Memoir reprinted.

VII.—*The Poetical Works of R. Fergusson.* Paisley.

Published by R. Smith, bookseller. 1799. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 236. Engraved title-page, and poor copy of the Perth portrait. Memoir reprinted.

VIII.—*Poems on Various Subjects.* By Robert Fergusson.

In two parts, embellished with engravings. Edinburgh. Printed by T. Ross & Sons, for W. Martin, South Bridge. 1799. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 208. Memoir reprinted. Portrait and illustrations of the Perth edition poorly re-engraved.

IX.—*Poems on Various Subjects.* By Robert Fergusson. St. Andrews. Printed by Mr. Francis Ray, for Tullis, Cupar-Fife. 1800. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 208. Contains portrait, stated to be “from the original drawing,” but which appears to be only a copy of that in the Perth edition. Memoir, a slight modification of the Ruddiman sketch.

X.—*The Poetical Works of Robert Fergusson.* With the life of the author. By David Irving. “Embellished with three elegant [?] engravings.” Glasgow. Printed by and for Chapman & Lang. 1800. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 193. Portrait, the Perth one, slightly idealised. Illustrations—(1) a grotesque drawing for “A Saturday’s Expedition”: (2) a scene for “The Farmer’s Ingle.”

XI.—*The Poetical Works of Robert Fergusson.* With his life. Alnwick. Printed by W. Davison. 2 vols. 12mo. 1802. This edition is embellished with a great variety of engravings on wood by Bewick. Contains likewise a supposititious vignette portrait, and the following copper-plate engravings: Vol. I., frontispiece, an illustration of “A Saturday’s Expedition”; Vol. II., frontispiece, an illustration of the “Ghaists,” and a vignette of Burns kneeling at the author’s grave. Life, a slightly modified reprint of Peterkin’s.

XII.—*The Works of Robert Fergusson.* With a short account of his life, and a concise glossary. Edinburgh. Printed for W. & J. Deas, front of the Royal Exchange. 1805. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 224. Life written with care. The Perth

portrait is prefixed, somewhat more improved, and accordingly more and more removed from fidelity.

XIII.—*The Poems of Robert Fergusson.* To which is prefixed a short sketch of the author's life. Edinburgh. Printed by Oliver & Co., Netherbow. 1806. 1 vol. 32mo. Supposititious portrait. The life is well written, and closes with a vigorous protest against the "foul calumnies" of Dr. Irving. The writer hopes "that the time shall come when justice shall be done to the deeply injured Fergusson."

XIV.—*The Works of Robert Fergusson.* To which is prefixed a sketch of the author's life. London. Printed for S. A. and H. Oddy, 27 Oxford Street. 1807. 1 vol. 8vo, pp. 364. Supposititious portrait. Life, by Alexander Peterkin, Esq., S.S.C, well meant, but bombastic and ridiculous.

XV.—*The Poems of Robert Fergusson.* In two parts. To which are prefixed a sketch of the author's life, and a cursory view of his writings. By James Bannington. London. Printed by A. Macpherson, Russell Court, Covent Garden. 1809. 1 vol. 12mo., pp. 232.

XVI.—*The Works of Robert Fergusson.* To which is prefixed a sketch of the author's life. "A new edition." Greenock. Printed by William Scott. 1810. 1 vol. 8vo. This is No. XIII. reproduced, having only a new title-page.

XVII.—*The Poems of Robert Fergusson.* In two parts. To which is prefixed a life of the author, and a sketch of his writings, with a copious glossary annexed. Philadelphia, U.S.A. Published by Benjamin Chapman. A. Small, Printer. 1815. pp. 332.

XVIII.—*The Works of Robert Fergusson.* With an account of his life. Glasgow. Printed by W. Falconer, 3 High Street. 1821. 1 vol. 12mo. Ruddiman's life-sketch.

XIX.—*The Works of Robert Fergusson.* With an account of his life. Glasgow. Printed by William Bilsland, Bookseller. 1821. 1 vol. 12mo. Ruddiman's life-sketch.

XX.—*The Works of Robert Fergusson.* With an account of his life. Edinburgh. Printed for James Robertson, Macredie, Skelly & Co., Waugh & Innes, and W. Oliphant, Edinburgh; and Ogle & Co., London. 1821. 1 vol. 12mo. Ruddiman's life-sketch.

Nos. XVIII., XIX. and XX. were one edition, consisting, it has been said, of eight thousand copies, and the different title-pages represent only the separate supplies.

XXI.—*The Poems of Robert Fergusson.* With a life of the author, and remarks on his genius and writings. By James Gray, Esq., of the High School, Edinburgh, author of "Cona," etc. Edinburgh. Printed for John Fairbairn, John Anderson, Jun.,

55 North Bridge Street, Oliver & Boyd, Mac-
redie & Co., Edinburgh : and T. Tegg, London.
1821. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 229. Large and small
paper. Frontispiece portrait of Fergusson as the
Prodigal Son [?]. "Engraved by J. Horsburgh,
from the original picture by Runciman in the
possession of David Steuart, Esq." See por-
traits.

XXII.—*Poems on Various Subjects.* By Robert Fergus-
son. Paisley. Neilson. 1825. 1 vol. 24mo.

XXIII.—*The Poetical Works of Robert Fergusson.* With
a portrait and memoir of the author, and notes
illustrating local and personal allusions. Edin-
burgh. Published by William and Robert
Chambers. 1840. Large 8vo, pp. 48. Brief
life-sketch. Re-issued in 1871. 12mo, pp. 191.

XXIV.—*The Works of Robert Fergusson.* With life of
the author, and an essay on his genius and writ-
ings, by A. B. G. [Alexander B. Grosart, LL.D.].
London, Edinburgh, and Dublin : A. Fullarton
and Co. 1851. 1 vol. 8vo, pp. cxliv. and
288. Frontispiece portrait, "Engraved by R.
Bell, after the original bequeathed by the Poet
to Mr. Ruddiman." Contains likewise vignette
of the grave of Fergusson, in the Canongate
Churchyard, Edinburgh. Edited with elaborate
care. Life the fullest (but not always reliable,
vide the author's own later writing in "Famous
Scots Series") that has yet appeared in any
edition of Fergusson's collected works.

- XXV.—*The Poems of Robert Fergusson*. To which is prefixed a sketch of the author's life. By Robert Aitken, M.A. Edinburgh. Riverside Press, W. H. White and Co. 1895. Cr. 8vo, pp. 186. Frontispiece portrait, from a Lizars' engraving. Very poor portrait. Life-sketch well written.
- XXVI.—*Scots Poems*. By Robert Fergusson. With portrait, from the Runciman painting, and glossary. William Blackwood & Sons. Edinburgh and London. 1898. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 156. No Life. No notes.

BOOKS ON FERGUSSON.

- I.—*The Life of Robert Fergusson, the Scottish Poet*. By Thomas Sommers, Burgess and Freeman of Edinburgh, and His Majesty's Glazier for Scotland. Printed for the author by C. Stewart. Sold by Messrs. Creech, Hill, Constable, and Manners and Miller, Edinburgh; Brash and Reid, Glasgow; and Longman and Lees, London. 1803. 1 vol. 12mo. pp. 64.
- II.—*Robert Fergusson*. By A. B. Grosart. Famous Scots Series. Published by Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, Edinburgh and London. 1898. 1 vol. 8vo. pp. 160.

P O E M S



POEMS OF ROBERT FERGUSSON.

SCOTS POEMS.

THE KING'S BIRTH-DAY IN EDINBURGH.

Oh ! qualis hurly-burly fuit, si forte vidisses.
Polemo-Middinia.

I SING the day sae aften sung,
Wi' which our lugs hae yearly rung,
In whase loud praise the Muse has dung
 A' kind o' print ;
But, wow ! the limmer's fairly flung ;
 There's naething in t.

I'm fain to think the joys the same
In London town as here at hame,
Whaur fouk o' ilka age and name,
 Baith blind and cripple,
Forgather aft, O fy for shame !
 To drink and tipple.

O Muse ! be kind, and dinna fash us
To flee awa beyont Parnassus,
Nor seek for Helicon to wash us,
 That heath'nish spring ;
Wi' Highland whisky scour our hawses,
 And gar us sing.

Begin, then, dame ! ye've drunk your fill ;
 You wouldna hae the tither gill ?
 You'll trust me, mair would do you ill,
 And ding ye doitet :
 'Troth, 'twould be sair against my will
 To hae the wyte o't.

Sing, then, how on the fourth o' June *
 Our bells screed aff a loyal tune ;
 Our ancient castle shoots at noon,
 Wi' flag-staff buskit,
 Frae which the sodger blades come down
 To cock their musket.

Oh willawins ! Mons Meg, † for you ;
 'Twas firin' crack'd thy muckle mou' ;
 What black mishanter gart ye spew
 Baith gut and ga' !
 I fear, they bang'd thy belly fu',
 Against the law.

* The King's birth-day.

† Mons Meg is an enormous and remarkable piece of ancient artillery which still points her "muckle mou'" from the ramparts of Edinburgh Castle towards the city. Some say she was made at Mons, in Flanders, and hence the name ; but Joseph Train, the antiquary, discovered that without doubt "this famous piece of artillery is a native of the land to which all its traditions belong." She was presented to King James II. in 1455, when he arrived with an army at Carlingwarth, to besiege William, Earl of Douglas, in the castle of Threave. Nearly eighteen feet long, small at the breech and large at the mouth, and composed of thick iron bars which appear to have been welded, and then bound together with strong hoops, the whole has the evidence of immense strength. The original name seems to have been The Mons ; Meg, so far as known, being first added by Drummond of Hawthornden in his history of the Jameses. When firing a salute to James, Duke of York, on his visit to Edinburgh in 1682, she burst. In 1754 she was removed to the Tower of London as "unservicable," but on the intervention of Sir Walter Scott was restored, with a new carriage. Fergusson paints very faithfully the whimsical notions entertained by the Scottish populace respecting this tremendous engine of war. In 1651 she was transported to Dunnotar, and tradition asserts that a shot from her mouth dismantled an English vessel in attempting to enter the harbour of Stonehaven. Such, however, was a modest claim for Meg compared with what in

Right seenil am I gien to bannin ;
 But, by my saul, ye was a cannon
 Could hit a man, had he been stannin
 In shire o' Fife,
 Sax lang Scots miles ayont Clackmannan,
 An' tak his life.

The hills in terror would cry out,
 And echo to thy dinsome rout ;
 The herds would gather in their nowt,
 That glowr'd wi' wonder
 Haffins afleyed to abide thereout
 To hear thy thunder.

Sing, likewise, Muse ! how blue-gown bodies,*
 Like scare-craws new ta'en down frae woodies,
 Come here to cast their clouted duddies,
 And get their pay :
 Than them what magistrate mair proud is
 On King's birth-day ?

the popular rhyme she is allowed to make in her own voice, which says :—

“ Powder me well and scour me clean,
 I'll lay a ball on Peebles green.”

* The blue-gowns, or king's beadsmen, were a set of privileged beggars peculiar to Scotland. Their numbers were the same as the years of the monarch's life, and on the sovereign's birth-day they were paid from the Scottish exchequer in Edinburgh as many pence as the king was years old, besides getting a sermon from one of the king's chaplains, a new dress of blue, and a good dinner. Edie Ochiltree, in *The Antiquary*, is described as a *blue-gown*. It used to be a very interesting sight, on a fine summer morning, between seven and eight o'clock, before the Canongate kirk bell began to ring for the appointed service, says Daniel Wilson, in his *Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time*, to see the strange groups of blue-gowns of all ages, from forty-five to ninety and upwards, assembling in front of the kirk. Venerable-looking men, bent with the weight of years, some lame, others blind, led by a boy or a wife—whose tartan or hodden grey told of the remote districts from whence they had come—or perhaps by a rough Highland dog, looking equally strange on the streets of the ancient burgh ; while all the old bede-men were clad in their monastic looking habits and with large badges on their breasts. It was curious thus to see pilgrims from the remotest parts of Scotland and the Isles—the men of another generation—annually returning to the capital, and each contriving to arrive there on the very day of the king's birth and bounty.

On this great day the city-guard,*
 In military art weel lear'd,
 Wi' powder'd pow, and shaven beard,
 Gang through their functions ;
 By hostile rabble seldom spar'd
 O' clarty unctions.

O soldiers ! for your ain dear sakes,
 For Scotland's, *alias* Land o' Cakes,
 Gie not her bairns sic deadly paiks,
 Nor be sae rude,
 Wi' firelock or Lochaber aix,†
 As spill their bluid.

Now round and round the serpents whiz,
 Wi' hissins' wrath and angry phiz ;
 Sometimes they catch a gentle gizz,
 Alack-a-day !
 And singe, wi' hair-devouring bizz,
 Its curls away.

Should th' owner patiently keek round,
 To view the nature o' his wound,
 Dead pussie, draigled through the pond,
 Taks him a lounder,
 Which lays his honour on the ground
 As flat's a flounder.

* The city-guard was an armed police, which existed in Edinburgh, from (probably) the reign of James VI. till the year 1817, when it was dissolved. It was composed of somewhat more than a hundred men, in three companies, the officers being generally decayed tradesmen, and the privates invalid members of Highland regiments. Upon the whole, it was a body as much laughed at as feared. Scott, in describing them in his *Heart of Midlothian*, adverts to the frequent notice which poor Fergusson takes of them, which, says the novelist, might have almost entitled him to be considered their poet-laureate.—*Robert Chambers.*

† The town-guard of Edinburgh were, till a late period, armed with this weapon when on their police duty. There was a hook at the back of the axe, which the ancient Highlanders used to assist them to climb over walls, fixing the hook upon it, and raising themselves by the handle. The axe, which was also much used by the natives of Ireland, is supposed to have been introduced into both countries from Scandinavia.—*Sir Walter Scott, Note in Waverley.*

The Muse maun also now implore
Auld wives to steek ilk hole and bore ;
If baudrins slip but to the door,
 I fear, I fear,
She'll no lang shank upon all four
 This time o' year.

Neist day ilk hero tells his news,
O' crackit crowns and broken brows,
And deeds that here forbid the Muse
 Her theme to swell,
Or time mair precious to abuse,
 Their crimes to tell ;

She'll rather to the fields resort,
Where music gars the day seem short ;
Where doggies play, and lambies sport,
 On gowany braes ;
Where peerless Fancy hauds her court,
 And tunes her lays.

THE DAFT DAYS.*

Now mirk December's dowie face
Glowers owre the rigs wi' sour grimace,
While, through his *minimum* o' space,
 The bleer-ee'd sun,
Wi' blinkin' light and stealin' pace,
 His race doth run.

Frae naked groves nae birdie sings ;
To shepherd's pipe nae hillock rings ;

* The festive season in Scotland, embracing Christmas or Yule, Hogmanay, the New Year, and Handsel-Monday, have been denominated the "Daft Days," on account of the mad frolics by which they were wont to be distinguished.

The breeze nae odorous flavour brings
 Frae Borean cave ;
And dwynin' Nature droops her wings,
 Wi' visage grave.

Mankind but scanty pleasure glean
Frae snawy hill or barren plain,
When winter, 'midst his nippin' train,
 Wi' frozen spear,
Sends drift owre a' his bleak domain,
 And guides the weir.

Auld Reekie ! thou'rt the canty hole,
A bield for mony a cauld-rife soul,
Wha snugly at thine ingle loll,
 Baith warm and couth ;
While round they gar the bicker roll,
 To weet their mouth.

When merry Yule-day comes, I trow,
You'll scantlins find a hungry mou' ;
Sma' are our cares, our stamacks fu'
 O' gusty gear,
And kickshaws, strangers to our view
 Sin' fernyear.

Ye browster wives ! now busk ye braw,
And fling your sorrows far awa' ;
Then, come and gie's the tither blaw
 O' reaming ale,
Mair precious than the well o' Spa,
 Our hearts to heal.

Then, though at odds wi' a' the warl',
Amang oursels we'll never quarrel ;
Though discord gie a canker'd snarl
 To spoil our glee,
As lang's there's pith into the barrel,
 We'll drink and gree.

Fiddlers ! your pins in temper fix,
And rozet weel your fiddlesticks,
But banish vile Italian tricks
 Frae out your quorum ;
Nor fortes wi' pianos mix—
 Gie's Tullochgorum.*

For nought can cheer the heart sae weel
As can a canty Highland reel ;
It even vivifies the heel
 To skip and dance :
Lifeless is he wha canna feel
 Its influence.

Let mirth abound ; let social cheer
Invest the dawnin' o' the year ;
Let blythesome innocence appear,
 To crown our joy ;
Nor envy, wi' sarcastic sneer,
 Our bliss destroy.

And thou, great god of *aqua vitæ* !
Wha sway'st the empire o' this city—
When fou, we're sometimes capernoity—
 Be thou prepar'd
To hedge us frae that black banditti,
 The City Guard.

* Originally employed as such by the author, this stanza is generally prefixed in the form of a motto to the immortal "Tulloch-gornm" (that "first of Scottish songs," as Burns calls it), by the Rev. John Skinner of Linshart.

THE FARMER'S INGLE.

Et multo in primis hilarans convivium Baccho,
Ante focum, si frigus erit.—*Virg. Buc.*

WHEN gloamin' grey out-owre the welkin keeks ; *
When Batie ca's his owsen to the byre ;
When Thrasher John, sair dung, his barn-door
steeks,
And lusty lasses at the dightin' tire ;
What bangs fu' leal the e'enin's coming cauld,
And gars snaw-tappit winter freeze in vain ;
Gars dowie mortal look baith blythe and bauld,
Nor fley'd wi' a' the poortith o' the plain ;
Begin, my Muse ! and chaunt in hamely strain.

Frae the big stack, weel winnow't on the hill,
Wi' divots theekit frae the weet and drift ;
Sods, peats and heathery truffs the chimley fill,
And gar their thickening smeeek salute the lift,
The gudeman, new come hame, is blythe to find,
When he out-owre the hallan flings his een,
That ilka turn is handled to his mind ;
That a' his housie looks sae cosh and clean ;
For cleanly house loes he, though e'er so mean.

Weel kens the gudewife that the pleughs require
A heartsome meltith, and refreshing synd
O' nappy liquor, owre a bleezin' fire ;
Sair wark and poortith downa weel be join'd.
Wi' butter'd bannocks now the girdle reeks ;
I' the far nook the bowie briskly reams ;
The readied kail stand by the chimley cheeks,
And haud the riggin het wi' welcome streams,
Whilk than the daintiest kitchen nicer seems.

* The second stanza of Burns's "Cottar's Saturday Night," it will be observed, bears considerable resemblance, in thought and expression, to the opening lines here. It might be argued indeed, as has been often hinted, that the earlier poem inspired the later.

Frae this let gentler gabs a lesson lear :
Wad they to labouring lend an eident hand,
They'd rax fell strang upon the simplest fare,
Nor find their stamacks ever at a stand.
Fu' hale and healthy wad they pass the day ;
At night in calmest slumbers dose fu' sound ;
Nor doctor need their weary life to spae,
Nor drogs their noddle and their sense confound,
Till death slip sleely on, and gie the hindmost
wound.

On sicken food has mony a doughty deed
By Caledonia's ancestors been done ;
By this did mony a wight fu' weirlike bleed
In brulzies frae the dawn to set o' sun.
'Twas this that braced their gardies, stiff and strang,
That bent the deadly yew in ancient days ;
Laid Denmark's daring sons on yird along ;
Gar'd Scottish thristles bang the Roman bays ;
For near our crest their heads they doughtna raise.

The couthy cracks begin when supper's owre ;
The cheering bicker gars them glibly gash
O' simmer's showery blinks, and winter sour,
Whase floods did erst their mailin's produce hash.
'Bout kirk and market eke their tales gae on ;
How Jock woo'd Jenny here to be his bride ;
And there how Marion, for a bastard son,
Upon the cutty stool was forced to ride,
The waefu' scauld o' our Mess John to bide.

The fient a cheep's amang the bairnies now,
For a' their anger's wi' their hunger gane :
Aye maun the childer, wi' a fastin mou',
Grumble and greet, and mak an unco mane.
In rangles round, before the ingle's lowe,
Frae gudame's mouth auld warld tales they hear,
O' warlocks loupin' round the wirrikow ;
O' ghaists, that win in glen and kirk-yard drear ;
Whilk touzles a' their tap, and gars them shak
wi' fear !

For weel she trows, that fiends and fairies be
 Sent frae the deil to fleetch us to our ill,
 That kye hae tint their milk wi' evil ee,
 And corn been scowder'd on the glowin' kill.
 Oh mock na this, my friends, but rather mourn,
 Ye in life's brawest spring, wi' reason clear ;
 Wi' eild our idle fancies a' return,
 And dim our dolefu' days wi' bairnly fear ;
 The mind's aye cradled when the grave is near.

Yet thrift, industrious, bides her latest days,
 Though age her sair-dow'd front wi' runcles wave ;
 Yet frae the russet lap the spindle plays,
 Her e'enin' stent reels she as weel's the lave.
 On some feast-day, the wee things buskit braw,
 Shall heeze her heart up wi' a silent joy,
 Fu' cadgie that her head was up and saw
 Her ain spun cleedin' on a darling oye,
 Careless tho' death should mak the feast her foy.

In its auld lerroch yet the deas remains,
 Where the gudeman aft streeks him at his ease ;
 A warm and canny lean for weary banes
 O' labourers dyolt upon the weary leas.
 Round him will baudrons and the collie come,
 To wag their tail, and cast a thankfu' ee
 To him wha kindly throws them mony a crum
 O' kebbuck whang'd, and dainty fadge, to pree ;
 This a' the boon they crave, and a' the fee.

Frae him the lads their mornin' counsel tak—
 What stacks he wants to thrash, what rigs to till ;
 How big a birn maun lie on Bassie's back,
 For meal and mu'ter to the thirlin' mill.
 Neist, the gudewife her hirelin' damsels bids
 Glow'r through the byre, and see the hawkies
 bound ;
 Tak tent, case Crummy tak her wonted tids,
 And ca' the laiglen's treasure on the ground ;
 Whilk spills a kebbuck nice, or yellow pound.

Then a' the house for sleep begin to grien,
 Their joints to slack frae industry a while ;
 The leaden god fa's heavy on their een,
 And hafflins steeks them frae their daily toil ;
 The cruizy, too, can only blink and bleer,
 The reistit ingle's done the maist it dow ;
 Tacksman and cottar eke to bed maun steer,
 Upon the cod to clear their drumly pow,
 Till waken'd by the dawnin's ruddy glow.

Peace to the husbandman, and a' his tribe,
 Whase care fells a' our wants frae year to year ;
 Lang may his sock and cou'ter turn the glebe,
 And banks o' corn bend down wi' laded ear.
 May Scotia's simmers aye look gay and green ;
 Her yellow hairsts frae scowry blasts decreed !
 May a' her tenants sit fu' snug and bien,
 Frae the hard grip o' ails and poortith freed,
 And a lang lasting train o' peacefu' hours succeed !

CALLER OYSTERS.

Happy the man who, free from care and strife,
 In silken or in leathern purse retains
 A splendid shilling. He nor hears with pain
 New oysters cried, nor sighs for cheerful ale.

—*Phillips.*

Of a' the waters that can hobble
 A fishin' yole or sa'mon coble,
 And can reward the fisher's trouble,
 Or south or north,
 There's nane sae spacious and sae noble,
 As Frith o' Forth.

In her the skate and codlin sail ;
 The eel, fu' souple, wags her tail ;
 Wi' herrin', fleuk, and mackarel,
 And whitens dainty ;
 Their spindle-shanks the labsters trail,
 Wi' partans plenty.

Auld Reekie's sons blythe faces wear ;
September's merry month is near,
That brings in Neptune's caller cheer,
New oysters fresh ;
The halesomest and nicest gear
O' fish or flesh.

O ! then, we needna gie a plack
For dand'rin mountebank or quack,
Wha o' their drogs sae bauldly crack,
And spread sic notions,
As gar their feckless patients tak
Their stinkin' potions.

Come, prie, frail man ! for gin thou art sick,
The oyster is a rare cathartic,
As ever doctor patient gart lick
To cure his ails ;
Whether you hae the head or heart ache,
It never fails.

Ye tipplers ! open a' your poses ;
Ye wha are fash'd wi' ploukie noses ;
Fling owre your craig sufficient doses ;
You'll thole a hunder,
To fleg awa your simmer roses,
And naething under.

When big as burns the gutters rin,
If ye hae catch'd a droukit skin,
To Luckie Middlemist's * loup in,
And sit fu' snug
Owre oysters and a dram o' gin,
Or haddock lug.

When auld Saunt Giles, at aught o'clock,
Gars merchant louns their shopies lock,

* A famous oyster-tavern of Fergusson's time, situated in the Cowgate, where it is now crossed by the South Bridge.

There we adjourn wi' hearty fouk
 To birle our bodles,
And get wharewi' to crack our joke,
 And clear our noddles.

When Phœbus did his winnocks steek,
How often at that ingle cheek
Did I my frosty fingers beek,
 And prie gude fare !
I trow, there was nae hame to seek,
 When stechin there.

While glaikit fools, owre rife o' cash,
Pamper their wames wi' fousome trash,
I think a chiel' may gaily pass,
 He's no ill boden,
That gusts his gab wi' oyster-sauce,
 And hen weel sodden.

At Musselbrough, and eke Newhaven,
The fisherwives will get top livin',
When lads gang out on Sundays' even
 To treat their joes,
And tak o' fat Pandores * a prieven,
 Or mussel brose.

Then, sometimes, ere they flit their doup,
They'll aiblins a' their siller coup,
For liquor clear frae cutty stoup,
 To weet their wizen,
And swallow owre a dainty soup,
 For fear they gizen.

A' ye wha canna stand sae sicker,
When twice you've toom'd the big-ars'd bicker,
Mix caller oysters wi' your liquor,
 And I'm your debtor,
If greedy priest or drouthy vicar
 Will thole it better.

* A certain favourite kind of oysters.

BRAID CLAITH.

YE wha are fain to hae your name
 Wrote in the bonnie book o' fame,
 Let merit nae pretension claim
 To laurell'd wreath,
 But hap ye weel, baith back and wame,
 In gude braid claith.

He that some ells o' this may fa', †
 And slae-black hat on pow like snaw,
 Bids bauld to bear the gree awa,
 Wi' a' this graith,
 When bienly clad wi' shell fu' braw
 O' gude braid claith.

† This line, as Dr. Grosart points out, elucidates an expression in Burns which is somewhat obscure, if left unexplained, as it very often is. The word "fa'," at the end, evidently means *posse's*. Burns, in his noble song of "Honest Poverty," says—

"A king may mak' a belted knight,
 A marquis, duke, an' a' that;
 But an honest man's aboon his might,
 Gude faith, he mauna fa' that."

Has the same word again the same meaning? Some say yes, some say no. In Wood's *Songs of Scotland*, edited by George Farquhar Graham, the following explanation is given:—"The meaning of the expression 'he mauna fa' that,' is obscure. Jamieson's *Dictionary* does not explain the phrase, though the line is given. In common glossaries to Burns, the word '*fa*' is explained by *fall*, *lot*. Neither of these would make sense in Burns' line. *Try*, *attempt*, *venture*, is evidently the only satisfactory meaning of 'fa' in that place. The expression occurs long before Burns' poetizing days, in the old song beginning 'Tho' Geordie reigns in Jamie's stead.' See the second volume of Ritson's *Scottish Songs*, page 104—

'The whigs think a' that weal is won,
 But faith they ma'na fa' that.'

Or, as Hogg, in the second series of his *Jacobite Relics*, page 56, gives it, '*maunna fa' that*.' Here the phrase is equally obscure as in Burns' song, but the meaning seems to be 'they must not venture to believe that.'

Waesuck for him wha has nae feck o't !
For he's a gowk they're sure to geck at ;
A chiel that ne'er will be respeckit
While he draws breath,
Till his four quarters are bedeckit
Wi' gude braid claith.

On Sabbath-days the barber spark,
When he has done wi' scrapin' wark,
Wi' siller broachie in his sark,
Gangs trigly, faith !
Or to the Meadows,* or the Park, †
In gude braid claith.

Weel might ye trow, to see them there,
That they to shave your haffits bare,
Or curl and sleek a pickle hair,
Would be right laith,
When pacin' wi' a gawsy air
In gude braid claith.

If ony mettled stirrah grien
For favour frae a lady's een,
He maunna care for bein' seen
Before he sheath
His body in a scabbard clean
O' gude braid claith.

For, gin he come wi' coat thread-bare,
A feg for him she winna care,
But crook her bonny mou fu' sair,
And scauld him baith :
Wooers should aye their travel spare,
Withoot braid claith.

* A promenade to the south of Edinburgh.

† The King's Park—another promenade.

Braid claith lends fouk an unco heeze ;
 Maks mony kail-worms butterflees ;
 Gies mony a doctor his degrees,
 For little skaith :
 In short, you may be what you please,
 Wi' gude braid claith.

For tho' ye had as wise a snout on,
 As Shakespeare or Sir Isaac Newton,
 Your judgment fouk would hae a doubt on,
 I'll tak' my aith,
 Till they could see ye wi' a suit on
 O' gude braid claith.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF SCOTS MUSIC.

Mark it, Cæsario ! it is old and plain,
 The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,
 And the free maids that weave their thread with bones,
 Do use to chant it.—*Shakspeare's Twelfth Night.*

ON Scotia's plains, in days of yore,
 When lads and lasses tartan wore,
 Saft Music rang on ilka shore,
 In hamely weed ;
 But Harmony is now no more,
 And Music dead.

Round her the feather'd choir would wing ;
 Sae bonnily she wont to sing,
 And sleely wake the sleepin' string,
 Their sang to lead,
 Sweet as the zephyrs o' the Spring ;
 But now she's dead.

Mourn, ilka nymph, and ilka swain,
 Ilk sunny hill and dowie glen ;

Let weepin' streams and naiads drain
 Their fountain-head ;
 Let echo swell the dolefu' strain,
 Sin' Music's dead.

When the saft vernal breezes ca'
 The grey-hair'd Winter's fogs awa,
 Naebody then is heard to blaw,
 Near hill or mead,
 On chaunter, or on aiten straw,
 Sin' Music's dead.

Nae lasses now, on simmer days,
 Will lilt at bleachin' o' their claes,
 Nae herds on Yarrow's bonny braes,
 Or banks o' Tweed,
 Delight to chaunt their hamely lays,
 Sin' Music's dead.

At gloamin' now, the bagpipe's dumb,
 When weary owsen hameward come ;
 Sae sweetly as it wont to bum,
 And pibrochs screed ;
 We never hear its warlike hum ;
 For Music's dead.

Macgibbon's * gane ! ah ! waes my heart !
 The man in music maist expert ;
 Wha could sweet melody impart,
 And tune the reed,
 Wi' sic a slee and pawky art ;
 But now he's dead.

* William Macgibbon was for many years leader of the orchestra of the Gentlemen's Concert at Edinburgh, and was thought to play the music of Correlli, Geminiani, and Handel, with great execution and judgment. His sets of Scotch tunes, with variations and basses, are well known. He composed a set of sonatas or trios for two violins and a bass, which were esteemed good.—*William Tytler, in the Transactions of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries*, vol. i. He died in 1756.

Ilk carlin' now may grunt and grane,
 Ilk bonnie lassie mak great maen;
 Sin' he's awa, I trow, there's nane
 Can fill his stead;
 The blythest sangster on the plain!
 Alack, he's dead!

Now foreign sonnets bear the gree,
 And crabbit, queer variety
 O' sounds fresh sprung frae Italy;
 A bastard breed!
 Unlike that saft-tongued melody,
 Which now lies dead.

Could lav'rocks, at the dawnin' day,
 Could linties, chirmin' frae the spray,
 Or todlin' burns, that smoothly play
 Owre gowden bed,
 Compare wi' "Birks o' Indermay"?
 But now they're dead.

O Scotland! that could ance afford
 To bang the pith o' Roman sword,
 Winna your sons, wi' joint accord,
 To battle speed,
 And fight till Music be restored,
 Which now lies dead!

HALLOWFAIR.*

At Hallowmas, when nights grow lang,
 And starnies shine fu' clear;
 When fouk, the nippin' cauld to bang,
 Their winter hap-warms wear;

* A market held in November in the outskirts of Edinburgh.

Near Edinburgh a fair there hauds,
 I wat there's nane whase name is,
 For strappin' dames and sturdy lads,
 And cap and stoup, mair famous
 Than it that day.

Upon the tap o' ilka lum
 The sun began to keek,
 And bade the trig-made maidens come
 A sightly joe to seek
 At Hallowfair, where browsters rare
 Keep gude ale on the gantries,
 And dinna scrimp ye o' a skair
 O' kebbucks frae their pantries,
 Fu' saut that day.

Here country John, in bonnet blue,
 And eke his Sunday's claes on,
 Rins after Meg wi' rokelay new,
 And sappy kisses lays on :
 She'll tauntin' say, "Ye silly coof!
 Be o' yer gab mair sparin' :"
 He'll tak' the hint, and creish her loof
 Wi' what will buy her fairin',
 To chow that day. •

Here chapman billies tak their stand,
 And show their bonny wallies ;
 Wow ! but they lie fu' gleg aff hand
 To trick the silly fallows :
 Heh, sirs ! what cairds and tinklers come,
 And ne'er-do-weel horse-coupers,
 And spae-wives fenzying to be dumb,
 Wi' a' siclike landloupers,
 To thrive that day !

Here Sawny cries, frae Aberdeen,
 "Come ye to me fa need ;
 The brawest shanks that e'er were seen
 I'll sell ye cheap and guid :

I wyt they are as pretty hose
 As come frae weyr or leem :
 Here, tak a rug, and show's your pose ;
 Forseeth, my ain's but teem
 And light this day."

Ye wives, as ye gang through the fair,
 O mak your bargains hooly !
 O' a' thir wylie louns beware,
 Or, fegs ! they will ye spulzie.
 For fernyear Meg Thamson got
 Frae thir mischievous villains,
 A scaw'd bit o' a penny note,
 That lost a score o' shillin's
 To her that day.

The dinlin drums alarm our ears ;
 The serjeant screechs fu' loud,
 " A' gentlemen and volunteers
 That wish your country gude,
 Come here to me, and I sall gie
 Twa guineas and a crown ;
 A bowl o' punch, that, like the sea,
 Will soom a lang dragoon
 • Wi' ease this day."

Without, the cuissers prance and nicker,
 And owre the lea-rig scud ;
 In tents, the carles bend the bicker,
 And rant and roar like wud.
 Then there's sic yellochin and din,
 Wi' wives and wee-anes gabblin',
 That ane might trow they were akin
 To a' the tongues at Babylon,
 Confus'd that day.

When Phœbus ligs in Thetis' lap,
 Auld Reekie gies them shelter,
 Where cadgily they kiss the cap,
 And ca't round helter-skelter,

Jock Bell gaed furth to play his freaks ;
Great cause he had to rue it ;
For frae a stark Lochaber axe
He gat a clamihewit
Fu' sair that night.

"Ohon!" quo' he, "I'd rather be
By sword or bagnet stickit,
Than hae my crown or body wi'
Sic deadly weapon nickit."
Wi' that he gat anither straik
Mair weighty than before,
That gar'd his feckless body ache,
And spew the reekin' gore
Fu' red that night.

He pechin' on the causey lay,
O' kicks and cuffs weel sair'd ;
A Highland aith the serjeant gae,
"She man pe see our guard."
Out spak the weirlike corporal,
"Pring in ta drucken sot ;"
They trail'd him ben, and, by my saul,
He paid his drucken groat
For that neist day.

Gude fouk ! as ye come frae the fair,
Bide yont frae this black squad ;
There's nae sic savages elsewhere
Allow'd to wear cockade.
Than the strong lion's hungry maw
Or tusk o' Russian bear,
Frae their wanruly fellin' paw
Mair cause ye hae to fear
Your death that day.

A wee soup drink does unco weel,
To haud the heart aboon ;
It's gude, as lang's a canny chiel'
Can stand steeve in his shoon.

But if a birkie's owre weel sair'd,
 It gars him aften stammer
 To plays that bring him to the Guard,
 And eke the Council Chaumer,
 Wi' shame that day.

HALLOWFAIR.*

SONG.

TUNE—"Fy let us a' to the Bridal."

THERE'S fouth o' braw Jockies and Jennies
 Comes weel-busket into the fair,
 With ribbons on their cockernonies,
 And fouth o' fine flour on their hair.
 Maggie, she was sae weel-buskit,
 That Willie was ty'd to his bride ;
 The pownie was ne'er better whi'skit
 Wi' cudgel that hung frae his side.
 Sing farrel, etc.

But Maggie was wondrous jealous
 To see Willie buskit sae braw :
 And Sawney he sat in the alehouse
 And hard at the liquor did ca'.
 There was Geordie that weel loo'd his lassie,
 He took the pint stoup in his arms,
 He hugg'd it, and said, Trouth, they're saucy
 That loo's na a gude faither's bairn.
 Sing farrel, etc.

* This is a second and perhaps later effusion under the title, and treating of the subject of "Hallowfair," and this time fitted to a popular tune, for the purpose of singing, although, withal, the lines are not so felicitous as those of the poem which it follows. It appears in no edition of Fergusson previous to 1851. Stenhouse, in his notes to Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*, notwithstanding, assigned it positively to Fergusson, on the authority (it is understood), of David Herd, who died as late as 1810. It was first printed in Herd's collection of *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs and Ballads*, published in 1776. In the *Museum* it is adapted to an old tune called "Wally Honey," taken from Oswald's *Caledonian Pocket Companion*.

There was Wattie the muirland laddie,
That rides on the bonny grey cowl,
With sword by his side like a cadie,
To drive in the sheep and the nowt.
His doublet sae weel it did fit him,
It scarcely cam' down to mid-thie,
With hair pouther'd, hat, and a feather,
And hausing at curpan and tee.

Sing farrel, etc.

But Bruckie play'd boo to Bausie,
And aff scour'd the cowl like the win';
Puir Wattie, he fell on the causie,
And birzed a' the banes in his skin.
His pistols fell out o' the houlsters,
And were a' bedaubed wi' dirt;
The folk they cam' round him in clusters,
Some leuch, and cry'd, Lad, was you hurt?

Sing farrel, etc.

But the cowl wad let naeboddy steer him,
He was aye sae wanton and skeigh;
The packmen's stands he o'erturn'd them,
And gar'd a' the Jocks stand abeigh
Wi' sniring behind and before him,
For sic is the metal o' brutes.
Puir Wattie, and wae's me for him,
Was fain to gang him in his boots.

Sing farrel, etc.

Now, it was late in the ev'ning,
And boughting-time was drawing near,
The lasses had stench'd their griening
Wi' fouth o' braw apples and beer.
There was Lillie, and Tibbie, and Sibbie,
And Ceicy on the spinnel could spin,
Stood glow'ring at signs and glass winnocks,
But deil a ane bade them come in.

Sing farrel, etc.

God guide's ! saw ye ever the like o't ?
 See, yonder's a bonny black swan ;
 It glow'rs as't wad fain be at us :
 What's yon that it hauds in its hands ?
 Awa', daft gowk, cries Wattie,
 They're a' but a rickle o' sticks ;
 See, there is Bill, Jock, and auld Hackie,
 And yonder's Mess John and auld Nick.
 Sing farrel, etc.

Quoth Maggie, come buy us our fairing :
 And Wattie right sleely could tell,
 I think thou'rt the flower o' the clachan,
 In truth, now, I'se gie ye mysel'.
 But wha wad e'er thought it o' him,
 That e'er he had rippled the lint ?
 Sae proud was he o' his Maggie
 Though she did baith scalie and squint.
 Sing farrel, etc.

ODE TO THE BEE.

HERDS ! blythesome tune your canty reeds,
 And welcome to the gowany meads
 The pride o' a' the insect thrang,
 A stranger to the green sae lang.
 Unfauld ilk buss, and ilka brier,
 The bounties o' the gleesome year,
 To him whase voice delights the spring ;
 Whase soughs the softest slumbers bring.
 The trees in simmer cleedin' drest,
 The hillocks in their greenest vest,
 The brawest flowers rejoic'd we see
 Disclose their sweets, and ca' on thee,
 Blythely to skim on wanton wing
 Through a' the fairy haunts o' Spring.

When fields hae got their dewy gift,
 And dawnin' breaks upon the lift,
 Then gang your ways through hight and how,
 Seek caller haugh or sunny knowe,
 Or ivy craig, or burn-bank brae,
 Where industry shall bid you gae,
 For hiney, or for waxen store,
 To ding sad poortith frae your door.

Could feckless creature, man, be wise,
 The simmer o' his life to prize,
 In winter he might fend fu bauld,
 His eild unkenn'd to nippin' cauld;
 Yet thae, alas! are antrin fouk
 That lade their scape wi' winter stock.
 Auld age maist feckly glow'rs right dour
 Upon the ailings o' the poor,
 Wha hope for nae comforting, save
 That dowie, dismal house, the grave.
 Then, feeble man! be wise; tak tent
 How industry can fetch content:
 Behold the bees where'er they wing,
 Or through the bonnie bowers o' spring,
 Where violets or where roses blaw,
 And siller dew-drops nightly fa',
 Or when on open bent they're seen,
 On heather hill or thistle green;
 The hiney's still as sweet that flows
 Frae thistle cauld, or kendlin rose.

Frae this the human race may learn
 Reflection's hiney'd draps to earn,
 Whether they tramp life's thorny way,
 Or through the sunny vineyard stray.

Instructive bee! attend me still;
 Owre a' my labours sey your skill:
 For thee shall hineysuckles rise,
 Wi' ladin' to your busy thighs,
 And ilka shrub surround my cell,
 Whereon ye like to hum and dwell:
 My trees in bourachs owre my ground,
 Shall fend ye frae ilk blast o' wind;

Nor e'er shall herd, wi' ruthless spike,
 Delve out the treasure frae your bike,
 But in my fence be safe, and free
 To live, and work, and sing, like me.

Like thee, by fancy wing'd, the Muse
 Scuds ear' and heartsome owre the dews,
 Fu' vogie and fu' blythe to crap
 The winsome flowers frae nature's lap,
 Twinin' her livin' garlands there,
 That lyart time can ne'er impair.

ON SEEING A BUTTERFLY IN THE STREET.

DAFT gowk ! in macaroni dress,
 Are ye come here to shaw your face,
 Bowden wi' pride o' simmer gloss,
 To cast a dash at Reekie's cross,
 And glow'r at mony a twa-legged creature,
 Flees braw by art, though worms by nature !

Like country laird in city cleedin',
 Ye're come to town, to lear good breedin' ;
 To bring ilk darlin' toast and fashion
 In vogue amang the flee creation,
 That they, like buskit belles and beaux,
 May crook their mou' fu' sour at those
 Whase weird is still to creep, alas !
 Unnoticed, 'mang the humble grass ;
 While you, wi' wings new buskit trim,
 Can far frae yird and reptiles skim ;
 Newfangle grown wi' new-got form,
 You soar aboon your mither worm.

Kind Nature lent, but for a day,
 Her wings, to mak ye sprush and gay ;
 In her habiliments a while
 Ye may your former sel' beguile,
 And ding awa' the vexin' thought

O' hourly dwynin' into nought,
By beengin' to your foppish brithers,
Black corbies dress'd in peacock's feathers.
Like thee, they dander here and there,
When simmer's blinks are warm and fair,
And loe to snuff the healthy balm
When e'enin' spreads her wings sae calm ;
But when she girns and glow'rs sae dour
Frae Borean houff in angry shower,
Like thee, they scour frae street or field,
And hap them in a lyther bield ;
For they were never made to dree
The adverse gloom o' Fortune's ee ;
Nor ever pried life's pinin' woes ;
Nor pu'd the prickles wi' the rose.

Poor butterfly ! thy case I mourn ;
To green kail-yard and fruits return,
How could you troke the mavis' note
For " Penny pies, all piping hot ? "
Can lintie's music be compar'd
Wi' gruntles frae the City Guard ?
Or can our flowers, at ten hours' bell,
The gowan or the spink excel ?

Now should our sclates wi' hailstanes ring,
What cabbage fauld wad screen your wing ?
Say, flutterin' fairy, were't thy hap
To light beneath braw Nanny's cap,
Wad she, proud butterfly of May !
In pity, let you skaithless stay ?
The furies glancin' frae her een
Wad rug your wings o' siller sheen,
That, wae for thee ! far, far outvie
Her Paris artist's finest dye ;
Then a' your bonnie sprains wad fall,
And you a worm be left to crawl.

To sic mishanter rins the laird
Who quats his ha'-house and kail-yard ;
Grows politician ; scours to court,
Where he's the lauchin'-stock and sport
O' ministers, wha jeer and jibe,

And heese his hopes wi' thought o' bribe ;
 Till, in the end, they flae him bare,
 Leave him to poortith and to care.
 Their fleetchin' words owre late he sees,
 He trudges hame—repines—and dies.

Sic be their fa' wha dirk there-ben
 In blackest business no their ain ;
 And may they scaud their lips fu' leal,
 That dip their spoons in ither's kail.

ODE TO THE GOWDSPINK.*

FRAE fields where Spring her sweets has blawn
 Wi' caller verdure owre the lawn,
 The gowdspink comes in new attire,
 The brawest 'mang the whistling choir,
 That ere the sun can clear his een,
 Wi' glib notes sain the simmer's green.

Sure, Nature herried mony a tree,
 For sprains and bonnie spats to thee ;
 Nae mair the rainbow can impart
 Sic glowin' ferlies o' her art,
 Whase pencil wrought its freaks at will
 On thee, the sey-piece o' her skill.
 Nae mair, through straths in simmer dight,
 We seek the rose to bless our sight ;
 Or bid the bonny wa'-flowers sprout
 On yonder ruin's lofty snout.
 Thy shinin' garments far outstrip
 The cherries upon Hebe's lip,
 And fool the tints that nature chose
 To busk and paint the crimson rose.
 'Mang men, wae's heart ! we aften find
 The brawest dressed want peace o' mind ;

*The goldfinch, variously known as the goldie, the gowdie, the goldspink, and the gowdspink.

While he that gangs wi' ragged coat
Is weel contentit wi' his lot.
When wand, wi' glewy birdlime set,
To steal far aff your dautit mate,
Blythe wad you change your cleedin' gay
In lieu of lav'rock's sober gray.
In vain through woods you sair may ban
The envious treachery o' man,
'That, wi' your gowden glister ta'en,
Still haunts you on the simmer's plain,
And traps you 'mang the sudden fa's
O' winter's dreary dreepin' snaws.
Now steekit frae the gowany field,
Frae ilka fav rite houff and bield ;
But mergh, alas ! to disengage
Your bonnie buik frae fetterin' cage,
Your freeborn bosom beats in vain
For darlin' liberty again.
In window hung, how aft we see
Thee keek around at warblers free,
That carol saft, and sweetly sing
Wi' a' the blytheness o the spring !
Like Tantalus they hing you here,
To spy the glories o' the year ;
And though you're at the burnie's brink,
They downa suffer you to drink.

Ah, Liberty ! thou bonny dame,
How wildly wanton is thy stream,
Round whilk the birdies a' rejoice,
And hail you wi' a gratefu' voice !
The gowdspink chatters joyous here,
And courts wi' gleesome sangs his peer ;
The mavis, frae the new-bloom'd thorn,
Begins his lauds at ear'est morn ;
And herd louns, loupin' owre the grass,
Need far less fleetchin' till their lass,
'Than paughty damsels bred at courts,
Wha thraw their mou's, and tak the dorts :
But, reft of thee, fient flee we care
For a' that life ahint can spare.

The gowdspink, that sae lang has kenn'd
 Thy happy sweets (his wonted friend),
 Her sad confinement ill can brook
 In some dark chamber's dowie nook.
 Though Mary's hand his neb supplies,
 Unkenn'd to hunger's painfu' cries,
 Even beauty canna cheer the heart
 Frae life, frae liberty apart :
 For now we tyne its wonted lay,
 Sae lightsome sweet, sae blythely gay.

Thus, Fortune aft a curse can gie,
 To wile us far frae liberty ;
 Then tent her syren smiles wha list,
 I'll ne'er envy your girnel's grist :
 For when fair freedom smiles nae mair,
 Care I for life ? Shame fa' the hair ;
 A field o'ergrown wi' rankest stubble,
 The essence of a paltry bubble !

CALLER WATER.

WHEN father Adie first put spade in
 The bonnie yard o' ancient Eden,
 His amry had nae liquor laid in
 To fire his mou' ;
 Nor did he thole his wife's upbraidin',
 For bein' fou.

A caller burn o' siller sheen,
 Ran cannily out-owre the green ;
 And when our gutcher's drouth had been
 To bide right sair,
 He loutit down, and drank bedeen
 A dainty skair.

His bairns had a', before the flood,
 A langer tack o' flesh and blood,

And on mair pithy shanks they stood
Than Noah's line,
Wha still hae been a feckless brood,
Wi' drinkin' wine.

The fuddlin' bardies, now-a-days,
Rin maukin-mad in Bacchus' praise ;
And limp and stoiter through their lays
Anacreontic,
While each his sea of wine displays
As big's the Pontic.

My Muse will no gang far frae hame,
Or scour a' airths to hound for fame ;
In troth, the jillet ye might blame
For thinkin' on't,
When eithly she can find the theme
O' *aquafont*.

This is the name that doctors use,
Their patients' noddles to confuse :
Wi' simples clad in terms abstruse,
They labour still
In kittle words to gar you roose
Their want o' skill.

But we'll hae nae sic clitter-clatter ;
And, briefly to expound the matter,
It shall be ca'd gude caller water ;
Than whilk, I trow,
Few drugs in doctor's shops are better
For me or you.

Though joints be stiff as ony rung,
Your pith wi' pain be sairly dung,
Be you in caller water flung
Out-owre the lugs,
'Twill mak you souple, swack, and young,
Withouten drugs.

Though cholic or the heart-scad tease us ;
Or ony inward dwaam should seize us ;
It masters a' sic fell diseases
 That would ye spulzie,
And brings them to a canny crisis
 Wi' little tulzie.

Were't no for it, the bonnie lasses
Wad glow'r nae mair in keekin'-glasses ;
And soon tyne dint o' a' the graces
 That aft conveen,
In gleefu' looks, and bonnie faces,
 To catch our een.

The fairest, then, might die a maid,
And Cupid quit his shootin' trade ;
For wha, through clarty masquerade,
 Could then discover
Whether the features under shade
 Were worth a lover ?

As simmer rains bring simmer flowers,
And leaves to cleed the birken bowers,
Sae beauty gets by caller showers
 Sae rich a bloom,
As for estate, or heavy dowers,
 Aft stands in room.

What maks Auld Reekie's dames sae fair ?
It canna be the halesome air ;
But caller burn, beyond compare,
 The best o' onie,
That gars them a' sic graces skair,
 And blink sae bonnie.

On Mayday, in a fairy ring,
We've seen them round St. Anthon's spring,*

* St. Anthony's Well, a beautiful small spring, on Arthur's Seat, near Edinburgh, and a favourite resort of the youth of the city for the purpose of gathering May dew, as described.

Frae grass the caller dew-drops wring
 To weet their een,
 And water, clear as crystal spring,
 To synd them clean.

O may they still pursue the way,
 To look sae feat, sae clean, sae gay !
 Then shall their beauties glance like May ;
 And, like her, be
 The goddess of the vocal spray,
 The Muse and me.

THE SITTING OF THE SESSION.

PHŒBUS, sair cow'd wi' simmer's hight,
 Cowers near the yird wi' blinkin' light ; *
 Cauld shaw the haughs, nae mair bedight
 Wi' simmer's claes,
 Which heese the heart o' dowie wight
 That through them gaes.

Weel leese me o' you, business, now ;
 For ye'll weet mony a drouthy mou,
 That's lang a-gizzenin gane for you,
 Withouten fill
 O' dribbles frae the gude brown cow,
 Or Highland gill.

The Court o' Session, weel wat I,
 Pits ilk chiel's whittle i' the pie ;
 Can criesh the slaw-gaun wheels when dry,
 Till Session's done ;
 Though they'll gie mony a cheep and cry,
 Or twalt o' June.

* The Court of Session was then opened for the winter term on the 12th of November.

Ye benders a', that dwell in joot,
 You'll tak your liquor clean cap out ;
 Synd your mouse-webs wi' reemin' stout,
 While ye hae cash,
 And gar your cares a' tak the rout,
 And thumb ne'er fash.

Rob Gibb's * grey gizz, new frizzled fine,
 Will white as ony snaw-ba' shine ;
 Weel does he lo'e the lawen coin,
 When dossied down,
 For whisky gills, or dribs o' wine,
 In cauld forenoon.

Bar-keepers, now at outer door,
 Tak tent as fouk gang back and fore ;
 The fient ane there but pays his score ;
 Nane wins toll-free ;
 Though ye've a cause the house before,
 Or agent be.

Gin ony here wi' canker knocks,
 And hasna loused his siller pocks,
 Ye needna think to fleetch or cox ;
 " Come, shaw's your gear :
 Ae scabbit yowe spills twenty flocks ;
 Ye'se no be here."

Now, at the door, they'll raise a plea ;
 Crack on, my lads ! for flytin's free ;
 For gin ye should tongue-tackit be,
 The mair's the pity,
 When scauldin but and ben we see,
 Pendente lite.

* The keeper of a tavern in the *Outer House*, as the old Parliament Hall of Edinburgh is denominated, to distinguish it from the Inner House, where the fifteen lords sat in judgment. This Outer House, like Westminster Hall in old times, was then partly occupied by a range of little shops.—*Robert Chambers.*

The lawyers' skelfs, and printers' presses,
Grain unco sair wi' weighty cases ;
The clerk in toil his pleasure places,
 To thrive bedeen :
At five-hours' bell scribes shaw their faces,
 And rake their een.

The country fouk to lawyers crook—
“ Ah, weels-me o' your bonnie buik !
The benmost part o' my kist-nook
 I'll ripe for thee,
And willin, ware my hindmost rook
 For my decree.”

But law's a draw-well unco deep,
Withouten rim fouk out to keep ;
A donnart chiel, when drunk may dreep
 Fu' sleely in,
But finds the gate baith stey and steep,
 Ere out he win.

THE RISING OF THE SESSION.

To a' men livin' be it kend,
The Session now is at an end,
Writers, your finger-nebs unbend,
 And quat the pen,
Till Time, wi' lyart pow, shall send
 Blythe June again. *

Tired o' the law, and a' its phrases,
The wily writers, rich as Cræsus,
Hurl frae the town in hackney chaises,
 For country cheer :
The powny that in spring-time grazes,
 Thrives a' the year.

* The summer session then commenced on the 12th of June.

Ye lawyers, bid fareweel to lies ;
 Fareweel to din ; fareweel to fees :
 The canny hours o' rest may please,
 Instead o' siller ;
 Hain'd mu'ter hauds the mill at ease,
 And fends the miller.

Blythe they may be wha wanton play
 In Fortune's bonnie blinkin' ray ;
 Fu' weel can they ding dool away
 Wi' comrades couthy,
 And never dree a hungert day,
 Or e'enin' drouthy.

Ohon the day ! for him that's laid
 In dowie poortith's cauldride shade ;
 Aiblins owre honest for his trade,
 He racks his wits
 How he may get his buik weel clad,
 And fill his guts.

The farmers' sons, as yap as sparrows,
 And glad, I trow, to flee the barras,
 And whistle to the pleugh and harrows
 At barley seed :
 What writer wadna gang as far as
 He could for bread ?

After their yokin, I wat weel,
 They'll stoo the kebbuck to the heel ;
 Eith can the pleugh-stilts gar a chiel
 Be unco vogie
 Clean to lick aff his crowdie-meal,
 And scart his cogie.

Now mony a fallow's dung adrift
 To a' the blasts beneath the lift ;
 And though their stamack's aft in tift
 In vacance time,
 Yet seenil do they ken the rift
 O' stappit wame.

Now, gin a notar should be wanted,
You'll find *the Pillars* * gaily planted :
For little thing protests are granted
 Upon a bill,
And weightiest matters covenanted
 For half a gill.

Naebody tak's a mornin' drib
O' Holland gin frae Robin Gibb ;
And, though a dram to Rob's mair sib
 Than is his wife,
He maun tak time to daut his rib,
 Till siller's rife.

This vacance is a heavy doom
On Indian Peter's coffee-room, †
For a' his china pigs are toom ;
 Nor do we see
In wine the sucker biskets soum,
 As light's a flee.

But stop, my Muse ! nor mak a mane ;
Pate doesna fend on that alane ;

* An arcade skirting the passage leading into the Parliament Close—a great haunt of low writers, as intimated in the text.

† Peter Williamson, who, like Robin Gibb, kept a small tavern in the *Outer House*. He was a somewhat notable person, having been kidnapped in his boyhood from Aberdeen, and sold to a planter in the American colonies. Later he was stolen by Indian savages, among whom he lived for a number of years, and whose dresses and customs he afterwards exhibited before the citizens of Edinburgh. A little book describing his adventures, written by himself, has sold through many editions. Williamson, in 1772, compiled and published the first street directory for the Scottish capital. He also established a penny postal system for Edinburgh and its environs, ere yet had dawned the day of the national penny post. When the Government took the postal system into their own hands, they rewarded Peter with a pension for life. He died at Edinburgh, leaving behind him a good character, on the 19th January, 1799, aged sixty-nine. There is a portrait of him in Kay, in conversation with Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller.

He can fell twa dogs wi' ae bane,
 While ither fouk
 Maun rest themsel's content wi' ane,
 Nor farer troke.

Ye change-house keepers, never grumble,
 Though you a while your bickers whumble,
 Be unco patientfu' and humble,
 Nor mak' a din,
 Though good joot binna ken'd to rumble
 Your wame within.

You needna grudge to draw your breath
 For little mair than half a reath;
 Then, gin we a' be spared frae death,
 We'll gladly prie
 Fresh noggins o' your reamin' graith
 Wi' blythesome glee.

LEITH RACES.*

IN July month, ae bonny morn,
 When Nature's rokelay green
 Was spread owre ilka rig o' corn,
 To charm our rovin' een;
 Glowrin' about, I saw a queen,
 The fairest 'neath the lift;
 Her een were o' the siller sheen,
 Her skin like snawy drift,
 Sae white that day.

* The opening stanzas of this poem have been greatly admired; and, it is quite apparent, served as a model to Burns in his composition of "The Holy Fair."

Quo' she, " I ferly unco sair,
 That ye should musin' gae ;
 Ye wha hae sung o' Hallowfair, ✓
 Her winter's pranks and play ;
 When on Leith sands the racers rare
 Wi' jockey louns are met,
 Their orra pennies there to ware,
 And drown themselves in debt
 Fu' deep that day."

" And wha are ye, my winsome dear,
 That taks the gate sae early ?
 Where do ye win, gin ane may speir ;
 For I richt meikle ferly, ✓
 That sic braw buskit laughin' lass
 Thir bonny blinks should gi'e,
 And loup, like Hebe, owre the grass,
 As wanton, and as free
 Frae dool this day ? "

" I dwell amang the caller springs
 That weet the Land o' Cakes, ✓
 And aften tune my canty strings
 At bridals and late-wakes.
 They ca' me MIRTH;—I ne'er was ken'd
 To grumble or look sour ;
 But blythe wad be a lift to lend,
 Gif ye wad sey my power
 And pith this day."

" A bargain be't ; and, by my fegs !
 Gif ye will be my mate,
 Wi' you I'll screw the cheery pegs ; ✓
 Ye shanna find me blate.
 We'll reel and ramble through the sands,
 And jeer wi' a' we meet :
 Nor hip the daft and gleesome bands
 That fill Edina's street
 Sae thrang this day."

Ere servant-maids had wont to rise
 To seeth the breakfast kettle,
 Ilk dame her brawest ribbons tries,
 To put her on her mettle,
 Wi' wiles some silly chiel to trap
 (And troth he's fain to get her) ;
 But she'll craw kniefly in his crap,
 When, wow ! he canna flit her
 Frae hame that day.

Now mony a scaw'd and bare-ars'd loun
 Rise early to their wark :
 Eneugh to fley a muckle town,
 Wi' dinsome squeel and bark.
 "Here is the true and faithfu' list
 O' noblemen and horses ;
 Their eild, their weight, their height, their grist,
 That rin for plates or purses,
 Fu' fleet this day."

To whisky plouks that brunt for ouks
 On town-guard sodgers' faces,
 Their barber bauld his whittle crooks,
 And scrapes them for the races.
 Their stumps, erst used to philabegs,
 Are dight in spatterdashes,
 Whase barken'd hides scarce fend their legs
 Frae weet and weary plashes
 O' dirt that day.

"Come, hafe a care," the captain cries,
 "On guns your bagnets thraw ;
 Now mind your manual exercise,
 And marsh down raw by raw."
 And as they march he'll glower about,
 Tent a' their cuts and scars ;
 'Mang them full mony a gawsy snout
 Has gush't in birth-day wars,
 Wi' bluid that day.

"Her nainsel maun be carefu' now,
 Nor maun she pe mislear'd,
 Sin' baxter lads hae seal'd a vow
 To skelp and clout the guard."
 I'm sure Auld Reekie kens o' nane
 That would be sorry at it,
 Though they should dearly pay the kain,
 And get their tails weel sautit
 And sair thir days.

The tinkler billies i' the Bow,*
 Are now less eident clinkin',
 As lang's their pith or siller dow,
 They're daffin' and they're drinkin'.
 Bedown Leith Walk what bourrachs reel,
 O' ilka trade and station,
 That gar their wives and childer feel
 Toom wames for their libation
 O' drink thir days !

The browster wives thegither harl
 A' trash that they can fa' on ;
 They rake the grounds o' ilka barrel,
 To profit by the lawin :
 For weel wat they, a skin leal het
 For drinkin' needs nae hire :
 At drumbly gear they tak nae pet ;
 Foul water slockens fire
 And drouth thir days.

They say, ill ale has been the dead
 O' mony a bierdly loon ;
 Then dinna gape like gleds, wi' greed,
 To sweel hale bickers down.

* The West Bow, a street then chiefly occupied by white-iron smiths or "tinklers."

Gin Lord send mony ane the morn,
 They'll ban fu' sair the time
 That e'er they toutit aff the horn,
 Which wambles through their wame
 Wi' pain that day.

The Buchan bodies, through the beach,
 Their bunch o' findrans * cry ;
 And skirl out bauld, in Norlan' speech,
 "Gueed speldins ;—fa will buy ?"
 And, by my saul, they're nae wrang gear
 To gust a stirrah's mou ;
 Weel staw'd wi' them, he'll never speir
 The price o' being fu'
 Wi' drink that day.

Now wily wights at rowly-powl,
 And flingin' o' the dice,
 Here break the banes o' mony a soul
 Wi' fa's upon the ice.
 At first, the gate seems fair and straucht,
 Sae they haud fairly till her :
 But, wow ! in spite o' a' their maucht,
 They're rookit o' their siller
 And gowd thir days.

Around, where'er you fling your een,
 The hacks like wind are scourin' :
 Some chaises honest fouk contain,
 And some hae mony a whore in.
 Wi' rose and lily, red and white,
 They gie themsels sic fit airs,
 Like Dian, they will seem perfite ;
 But it's nae gowd that glitters
 Wi' them thir days.

The Lion here, wi' open paw,
 May cleek in mony hunder,

* Finnan haddocks, or *speldings*, a kind of dried fish

Wha geck at Scotland and her law,
 His wily talons under :
 For, ken, though Jamie's laws are auld
 (Thanks to the wise recorder !)
 His Lion yet roars loud and bauld,
 To haud the whigs in order,
 Sae prime this day.

To town-guard drum o' clangour clear,
 Baith men and steeds are raingit :
 Some liveries red or yellow wear,
 And some are tartan spraingit.
 And now the red—the blue e'en now—
 Bids fairest for the market ;
 But ere the sport be done, I trow,
 Their skins are gaily yarkit
 And peel'd thir days.

Siclike in Robinhood debates,*
 When twa chiels hae a pingle ;
 E'en now some coulie gets his aits,
 And dirt wi' words they mingle ;
 Till up louns he, wi' diction fu',
 There's lang and dreech contestin' ;
 For now they're near the point in view,
 Now ten miles frae the question
 In hand that night.

The races owre, they hale the dules
 Wi' drink o' a' kin-kind :
 Great feck gae hirplin' hame like fools,
 The cripple lead the blind.
 May ne'er the canker o' the drink
 E'er mak our spirits thrawart,
 'Case we get wherewitha' to wink
 Wi' een as blue's a blawart,
 Wi' straits thir days !

* Alluding to a debating society of that name in Edinburgh, which was afterwards called the Pantheon.

THE ELECTION.

Nunc est bibendum, et bendere Bickerum magnum ;
Cavete town-guardum, Dougal Geddum atque Campbellum.

REJOICE, ye burghers, ane an' a',
Lang look'd for's come at last ;
Sair were your backs held to the wa'
Wi' poortith and wi' fast.
Now ye may clap your wings and craw,
And gaily busk ilk feather,
For Deacon Cocks hae pass'd a law,
To rax and weet your leather
Wi' drink thir days.

"Haste, Epps," quo' John, "and bring my gizz ;
Tak tent ye dinna't spulzie ;
Last night the barber gae't a frizz,
And straikit it wi' ulzie.
Hae done your parritch, lassie Lizz,
Gie me my sark and gravat ;
I'se be as braw's the Deacon is
When he taks affidavit
O' faith the day."

"Whar's Johnny gaun," cries neebour Bess,
"That he's sae gaily bodin,
Wi' new-kaimed wig, weel syndet face,
Silk hose, for hamely hodin ?"
"Our Johnny's nae sma' drink, you'll guess ;
He's trig as ony muircock,
And forth to mak a Deacon, lass ;
He downa speak to poor fouk
Like us the day."

The coat ben-by i' the kist-nook,
That's been this towmonth swarmin',
Is brought ance mair thereout to look,
To fleg awa the vermin.

Menzies o' moths and flaes are shook,
 And i' the floor they howder,
 Till, in a birn, beneath the crook,
 They're singit wi' a scowder
 To death that day.

The canty cobbler quats his sta',
 His roset and his lingans;
 His buik has dree'd a sair, sair fa'
 Frae meals o' bread and ingans.
 Now he's a pow o' wit and law,
 And taunts at soles and heels;
 To Walker's * he can rin awa,
 There whang his creams and jeels
 Wi' life that day.

The lads in order tak their seat;
 (The deil may claw the clungest!)
 They stech and connach sae the meat,
 Their teeth mak mair than tongue haste,
 Their claes sae cleanly dight and feat,
 And eke their craw-black beavers,
 Like maisters' mows hae fund the gate
 To tassels teuch wi' slavers
 Fu' lang that day.

The dinner done, for brandy strang
 They cry, to weet their thrapple;
 To gar the stamack bide the bang,
 Nor wi' its ladin' grapple.
 The grace is said—it s nae owre lang—
 The claret reams in bells.
 Quo' Deacon, "Let the toast round gang—
 Come—Here's our Noble Sel's
 Weel met the day!"

* The hotel in Prince's Street where the entertainment took place after the election.

"Weels me o' drink," quo' Cooper Will,
 "My barrel has been geyz'd aye,
 And hasna gotten sic a fill,
 Sin' fu' on Handsel-Teysday.
 But maks-na—now it's got a sweet;
 Ae gird I shanna cast, lad!
 Or else I wish the horn'd deil
 May Will wi' kittle cast dad
 To hell the day!"

The magistrates fu' wily are,
 Their lamps are gaily blinkin';
 But they might as leive burn elsewhere,
 When fouk's blind fu' wi' drinkin'.
 Our Deacon wadna ca' a chair—
 The foul ane durst him na-say!—
 He took shanks-naig—but, fient may care!
 He arslins kiss'd the causey
 Wi' bir that night.

Weel lees me o' you, souter Jock!—
 For tricks ye buit be tryin';
 When grapin' for his ain bed-stock,
 He fa's where Will's wife's lyin':—
 Will comin' hame wi' ither fouk
 He saw Jock there before him;
 Wi' maister laiglen, like a brock,
 He did wi' stink maist smore him,
 Fu' strang that night.

Then wi' a souple leathern whang
 He gart them fidge and girn aye,
 "Faith, chiel! ye's no for naething gang,
 Gin ye maun reel my pirny."
 Syne wi' a muckle elshin lang
 He brogit Maggie's hurdies;
 And, cause he thought her i' the wrang,
 There passed nae bonnie wordies
 'Mang them that night.

Now, had some laird his lady fand
In sic unseemly courses,
It might hae lows'd the haly hand
Wi' law-suits and divorces :
But the neist day they a' shook hands,
And ilka crack did sowder ;
While Meg for drink her apron pawns,
For a' the gudeman cow'd her,
Whan fu' last night.

Glowr round the causey, up and down,
What mobbin' and what plottin',
Here, politicians bribe a loun
Against his saul for votin',
The gowd that inlakes half-a-crown,
Thir blades lug out to try them ;
They pouch the gowd, nor fash the town
For weights and scales to weigh them
Exact that day.

Then Deacons at the council stent
To get themsels presentit ;
For towmonths twa their saul is lent,
For the town's gude indentit.
Lang's their debatin' thereanent,
About protests they're bauthrin' ;
While Sandy Fife,* to mak content,
On bells plays " Clout the Caudron "
To them that day.

Ye louns that troke in doctors' stuff,
You'll now hae unco slaisters ;
When windy blaws their stamacks puff,
They'll need baith pills and plaisters ;

* The ringer of St. Giles's music bells.

For though, e'en now, they look right bluff,
 Sic drinks, ere hillocks meet,
 Will hap some Deacons in a truff,
 Inrow'd in the lang leet *
 O' death yon night.

TO THE TRON-KIRK BELL.

WANWORDY, crazy, dinsome thing,
 As e'er was fram'd to jow or ring,
 What gar'd them sic in steeple hing,
 They ken themsel' ;
 But weel wat I, they couldna bring
 Waur sounds frae hell.

What deil are ye ? that I should ban ;
 You're neither kin to pat nor pan ;
 Nor ulzie pig, nor maister-can,
 But weel may gie
 Mair pleasure to the ear o' man
 Than stroke o' thee.

Fleece-merchants may look bauld, I trow,
 Sin' a' Auld Reekie's childer now
 Maun stap their lugs wi' teats o' woo,
 Thy sound to bang,
 And keep it frae gaun through and through
 Wi' jarrin' twang.

* In the business of an Edinburgh municipal election, according to the old mode, a large list of eligible persons first presented by the trades, that the magistrates might shorten it, was called the *long leet*. When abridged, it was called the *short leet*. The word is from the French *élite*, choice persons. Death's endless list is here, with happy humour, called his *lang leet*.—*Robert Chambers*.

Your noisy tongue, there's nae abidin't ;
 Like scauldin' wife's, there is nae guidein't ;
 When I'm 'bout ony business eident,
 It's sair to thole ;
 To deave me, then, ye tak a pride in't,
 Wi' senseless knoll.

O ! were I provost o' the town,
 I swear by a' the powers aboon,
 I'd bring ye wi' a reesle down ;
 Nor should you think
 (Sae sair I'd crack and clour your crown)
 Again to clink.

For when I've toom'd the meikle cap,
 And fain would fa' owre in a nap,
 Troth, I could doze as sound's a tap,
 Were't no for thee,
 That gies the tither weary chap
 To wauken me.

I dreamt ae night I saw Auld Nick :
 Quo' he—" This bell o' mine's a trick,
 A wily piece o' politic,
 A cunnin' snare,
 To trap fouk in a cloven stick,
 Ere they're aware.

" As lang's my dautit bell hings there,
 A' body at the kirk will skair :
 Quo' they, gif he that preaches there
 Like it can wound,
 We downa care a single hair
 For joyfu' sound."

If magistrates wi' me would 'gree
 For aye tongue-tackit should you be ;
 Nor fleg wi' anti-melody
 Sic honest fouk,
 Whase lugs were never made to dree
 Thy doolfu' shock.

But far frae thee the bailies dwell,
 Or they would scunner at your knell;
 Gie the foul thief his riven bell,
 And then, I trow,
 The byword hauds, "The deil himsel'
 Has got his due." *

MUTUAL COMPLAINT OF PLAINSTANES AND CAUSEY.

IN THEIR MOTHER-TONGUE.

SINCE Merlin † laid Auld Reekie's causey,
 And made her o' his wark right saucy,
 The spacious street and gude plainstones
 Were never kenn'd to crack but ance;
 Whilk happen'd on the hinder night,
 When Fraser's ‡ ulie tint its light.

* The Tron Church, in the High Street of Edinburgh, was built in 1647, but not completely finished till 1663. Its bell, which cost 1400 merks, or £82 10s. 2½d., was put up in 1673. This useful, but, if we are to believe Fergusson, unpleasant servant of the public, came to an untimely end, November 16, 1724, when, the steeple having caught fire in the midst of the wide-spread conflagration which then befell the city, the bell was melted by the flames, and fell in masses upon the floor below. Many citizens of Edinburgh, from an affectionate regard for the object of Fergusson's whimsical vituperations, obtained pieces of the metal, from which they formed cups, hand-bells, and other such utensils, with commemorative inscriptions. Such was the end of this "wanwordy, crazy, dinsome thing."—*Robert Chambers*.

† There is a tradition in Edinburgh, noticed by Maitland, that the High Street was first paved by a Frenchman named Merlin, from whom a wynd or alley near the Tron Church took its name, in consequence of his having been buried at the head of it under his own work. A peculiar arrangement of the stones marked the spot where Merlin was understood to lie, down to a period within the recollection of old people.—*Robert Chambers*.

‡ The contractor for the lamps.

O' Highland sentries nane were waukin'
 To hear their cronies glibly taukin';
 For them this wonder might hae rotten,
 And, like night robbery, been forgotten,
 Hadna a caddie, wi' his lantern,
 Been gleg enough to hear them bant'rin',
 Wha cam to me neist mornin' early
 To gie me tidings o' this ferly.
 Ye tauntin' louns, trow this nae joke,
 For ance the ass of Balaam spoke,
 Better than lawyers do, forsooth,
 For it spak naething but the truth!
 Whether they follow its example,
 You'll ken best when you hear the sample.

PLAINSTANES.

My friend ! thir hunder years, and mair,
 We've been forfoughen late and ear';
 In sunshine and in weety weather,
 Our thrawart lot we bure thegither.
 I never growl'd, but was content
 When ilk ane had an equal stent;
 But now to flyte, I'se e'en be bauld,
 When I'm wi' sic a grievance thrall'd.
 How 'haps it, say, that mealy bakers,
 Hair-kaimers, creishy gizzy-makers,
 Should a' get leave to waste their pouthers
 Upon my beaux' and ladie's shouthers?
 My travellers are fley'd to dead
 Wi' creels wanchancy, heap'd wi' bread,
 Frae whilk hing down uncanny nicksticks,
 That aften gie the maidens sic licks
 As mak them blythe to screen their faces
 Wi' hats and muckle maun bon-graces,
 And cheat the lads that fain would see
 The glances o' a pawky e'e,
 Or gie their loves a wily wink,
 That erst might lend their hearts a clink !

Speak, was I made to dree the ladin'
 O' Gallic chairman heavy treadin',
 Wha in my tender buke bore holes
 Wi' waefu' tackets i' the soles
 O' brogs, whilk on my body tramp,
 And wound like death at ilka clamp?

CAUSEY.

Weel crackit, friend!—It aft hauds true,
 Wi' naething fouk mak maist ado.
 Weel ken ye, though ye doughtna tell,
 I pay the sairest kain mysel'.
 Owre me, ilk day, big waggons rumble,
 And a' my fabric birze and jumble.
 Owre me the muckle horses gallop,
 Eneugh to rug my very saul up;
 And coachmen never trow they're sinnin'
 While down the street their wheels are spinnin'.
 Like thee, do I not bide the brunt
 O' Highland chairman's heavy dunt?
 Yet I hae never thought o' breathing
 Complaint, or makin' din for naething.

PLAINSTANES.

Haud sae, and let me get a word in.
 Your back's best fitted for the burden:
 And I can eithly tell you why—
 Ye're doughtier by far than I:
 For whinstanes houkit frae the Craigs*
 May thole the prancin' feet o' naigs,
 Nor ever fear uncanny hotches
 Frae clumsy carts or hackney coaches;
 While I, a weak and feckless creature,
 Am moulded by a safer nature.
 Wi' mason's chisel dightened neat,
 To gar me look baith clean and feat,

* Salisbury Craigs.

I scarce can bear a sairer thump
 Than comes frae soul of shoe or pump.
 I grant, indeed, that now and then
 Yield to a patten's pith I maun ;
 But pattens, though they're aften plenty,
 Are aye laid down wi' feet fu' tenty ;
 And strokes frae ladies, though they're teazin',
 I freely maun avow, are pleasin'.

For what use was I made, I wonder ?
 It wasna tamely to chap under
 The weight o' ilka codroch chiel,
 That does my skin to targets peel,
 But, if I guess aright, my trade is
 To fend frae skaith the bonny ladies ;
 To keep the bairnies free frae harms
 When airin' i' their nurses' arms ;
 To be a safe and canny bield
 For growin' youth and droopin' eild.

Tak, then, frae me the heavy load
 O' burden-bearers heavy shod ;
 Or, by my troth, the gude auld town sall
 Hae this affair before the Council.

CAUSEY.

I dinna care a single jot,
 Though summon'd by a shelly-coat ;
 Sae leally I'll propone defences,
 As get ye flung for my expenses.
 Your libel I'll impugn *verbatim*,
 And hae a *magnum damnum datum* :
 For though frae Arthur's-Seat I sprang
 And am in constitution strang.
 Would it no fret the hardest stane
 Beneath the Luckenbooths * to grane ?

* A series of tenements which rose nearly to the height of the adjacent houses, built within a few yards of the church of St. Giles, headed at their western extremity by the Old Tolbooth of Edinburgh.

Though magistrates the Cross * discard,
 It maksna when they leave the Guard †—
 A lumbbersome and stinkin' biggin'
 That rides the sairest on my riggin'.
 Poor me ower meikle do ye blame
 For tradesmen trampin' on your wame ;
 Yet a' your advocates and braw fouk,
 Come still to me 'twixt ane and twa 'clock,
 And never yet were ken'd to range
 At Charlie's statue or Exchange ‡
 Then tak your beaux and macaronies ;
 Gie me trades-fouk and country Johnnies ;
 The diel's in't gin ye dinna sign
 Your sentiments conjunct wi' mine.

PLAINSTANES.

Gin we twa could be as auldfarrant
 As gar the Council gie a warrant,
 Ilk loun rebellious to tak
 Wha walks not in the proper track,
 And o' three shillin's Scottish souk him,
 Or in a water-hole sair douk him ;

* The Market-Cross had been removed in 1752, as touchingly lamented by Sir Walter Scott, at whose palatial seat of Abbotsford the ornamental stones of it are still preserved.

“ Dun Edin's Cross, a pillar'd stone,
 Rose on a turret octagon ;
 But now is razed that monument,
 Whence royal edicts rang,
 And voice of Scotland's law was sent
 In glorious trumpet clang.
 O ! be his tomb as lead to lead,
 Upon its dull destroyer's head !—
 A minstrel's malison is said.”

—*Marmion*, canto v., v. 25.

† The Guard-House was a long, low, ugly building, removed in 1787-8.

‡ Two places, laid with *plainstones* for the convenience of the merchants, who, however, could never be prevailed upon to take advantage of them, but held to their old haunt on the *causey* near the Cross.—*Robert Chambers*.

This might assist the poor's collection,
And gie baith parties satisfaction.

CAUSEY.

But first, I think, it will be good
To bring it to the Robinhood,*
Where we sall hae the question stated,
And keen and crabbitly debated—
Whether the provost and the bailies,
For the town's gude whase daily toil is,
Should listen to our joint petitions,
And see obtemper'd the conditions.

PLAINSTANES.

Content am I. But east the gate is
The sun, wha taks his leave of Thetis,
And comes to wauken honest fouk,
That gang to wark at sax o'clock.
It sets us to be dumb a while,
And let our words gie place to toil.

A DRINK ECLOGUE.

LANDLADY, BRANDY, AND WHISKY.

ON auld worm-eaten skelf, in celler dunk,
Where hearty benders synd their drouthy trunk,
Twa chappin bottles pang'd wi' liquor fu'—
Brandy the tane, the tither whisky blue—
Grew canker'd; for the twa were het within,
And het-skinn'd fouk to flytin' soon begin.
The Frenchman fizz'd, and first wad foot the field,
While paughty Scotsman scorn'd to beenge or yield,

* The debating society already referred to, afterwards called the Pantheon.

BRANDY.

Black be your fa', ye cottar loun mislear'd !
 Blawn by the porters, chairmen, city guard :
 Hae ye nae breedin', that ye cock your nose
 Against my sweetly gusted cordial dose ?
 I've been near pawky courts, and, aften there,
 Hae ca'd hysterics frae the dowie fair ;
 And courtiers aft gaed greinin for my smack,
 To gar them bauldly glower and gashly crack.
 The priest, to bang mishanters black, and cares,
 Has sought me in his closet for his prayers.
 What tig then taks the fates, that they can thole
 Thrawart to fix me in this weary hole,
 Sair fash'd wi' din, wi' darkness, and wi' stinks,
 Where cheery daylight through the mirk ne'er blinks ?

WHISKY.

But ye maun be content, and maunna rue,
 Though erst ye've bizz'd in bonny madam's mou'.
 Wi' thoughts like thae, your heart may sairly dunt :
 The warld's now chang'd ; it's no like use and wont ;
 For here, wae's me ! there's nouthier lord nor laird
 Come to get heart-scad frae their stamack skair'd.
 Nae mair your courtier louns will shaw their face,
 For they glower eery at a friend's disgrace.
 But heese your heart up :—When at court you hear
 The patriot's thrapple wat wi' reamin' beer ;
 When chairman, weary wi' his daily gain,
 Can synd his whistle wi' the clear champaign ;
 Be hopefu', for the time will soon row round,
 When you'll nae langer dwell beneath the ground.

BRANDY.

Wanwordy gowk ! did I sae aften shine
 Wi' gowden glister through the crystal fine,
 To thole your taunts, that seenil hae been seen
 Awa frae luggie, quegh, or truncher treein ;

Gif honour would but let, a challenge should
 Twin ye o' Highland tongue and Highland blude ;
 Wi' cairds like thee I scorn to file my thumb ;
 For gentle spirits gentle breedin' doom.

WHISKY.

Truly, I think it right you get your alms,
 Your high heart humbled amang common drams.
 Braw days for you, when fools, newfangle fain,
 Like ither countries better than their ain :
 For there ye never saw sic chancy days,
 Sic balls, assemblies, operas, or plays.
 Hame-owre, langsyne, you hae been blythe to pack
 Your a' upon a sarkless sodger's back.
 For you, thir lads, as weel-lear'd travellers tell,
 Had sell'd their sarks, gin sarks they'd had to sell.

But worth gets poortith and black burnin' shame
 To daunt and drivel out a life at hame.
 Alake ! the byword's owre weel kenn'd throughout,
 " Prophets at hame are held in nae repute."
 Sae fair'st wi' me, though I can heat the skin,
 And set the saul upon a merry pin,
 Yet I am hameil ; there's the sour mischance !
 I'm no frae Turkey, Italy, or France ;
 For now our gentles' gabs are grown sae nice,
 At thee they tout, and never spier my price.
 Witness ;—for thee they height their tenants' rent,
 And fill their lands wi' poortith, discontent ;—
 Gar them owre seas for cheaper mailins hunt,
 And leave their ain as bare's the Cairn-o-Mount. *

BRANDY.

Though lairds tak toothfu's o' my warmin' sap,
 This dwines nor tenant's gear, nor cows their crap.
 For love to you, there's mony a tenant gaes
 Bare-ars'd and barefoot owre the Highland braes ;

* A noted member of the Grampian range.

For you, nae mair the thrifty gudewife sees
 Her lasses kirk, or birze the dainty cheese ;
 Crummie nae mair for Jenny's hand will crune
 Wi' milkness dreepin' frae her teats adown ;
 For you, owre ear' the ox his fate partakes,
 And fa's a victim to the bluidy axe.

WHISKY.

Wha is't that gars the greedy bankers prieve
 The maiden's tocher, but the maiden's leave ?
 By you when spulzied o' her charmin' pose,
 She tholes, in turn, the taunt o' cauldrie joes.
 Wi' skelps like this fouk sit but seenil down
 To wether-gammon, or howtowdy brown,
 Sair dung wi' dule, and fley'd for comin' debt,
 They gar their mou'-bits wi' their incomes mett ;
 Content eneugh, if they hae wherewithal
 Scrimply to tack their body and their saul.

BRANDY.

Frae some poor poet, owre as poor a pot,
 Ye've lear'd to crack sae crouse, ye haveril Scot !
 Or burgher politician, that imbrues
 His tongue in thee, and reads the claikein' news ;
 But wae's heart for you ! that for aye maun dwell
 In poet's garret, or in chairman's cell,
 While I shall yet on bien-clad tables stand,
 Bouden wi' a' the daintiths o' the land.

WHISKY.

Troth, I hae been ere now the poet's flame,
 And heez'd his sangs to mony blythesome theme.
 Wha was't gar'd Allie's * chaunter chirm fu' clear ;
 Life to the saul, and music to the ear ?

* Allan Ramsay.

Nae stream but kens, and can repeat the lay
To shepherds streekit on the simmer brae,
Wha to their whistle wi' the lav'rock bang,
To wauken flocks the rural fields amang.

BRANDY.

But here's the browster-wife, and she can tell
Wha's won the day, and wha should bear the bell.
Hae done your din, and let her judgment join
In final verdict 'twixt your plea and mine.

LANDLADY.

In days o' yore I could my livin' prize,
Nor fash'd wi' dolefu' gaugers, or excise ;
But, now-a-days, we're blythe to lear the thrift
Our heads 'boon licence and excise to lift.
Inlakes o' brandy we can soon supply
By whisky tinctur'd wi' the saffron's dye.
Will you your breedin' threep, ye mongrel loun !
Frae hame-bred liquor dyed to colour brown ?
So flunky braw, when dress'd in master's claes,
Struts to Auld Reekie's Cross on sunny days,
Till some auld comrade, aiblins out o' place,
Near the vain upstart shaws his meagre face ;
Bumbaz'd he louns frae sight, and jooks his ken,
Fley'd to be seen amang the tassell'd train.

TO THE PRINCIPAL AND PROFESSORS
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS ON THEIR SUPERB
TREAT TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.*

ST. ANDREWS town may look right gawsy ;
 Nae grass will grow upon her cawsey,
 Nor wa'-flower o' a yellow dye,
 Glowr dowie owre her ruins high ;
 Sin' Samy's head, weel pang'd wi' lear,
 Has seen the Alma Mater there.
 Regents, my winsome billy boys !
 'Bout him you've made an unco noise ;
 Nae doubt for him your bells wad clink
 To find him upon Eden's † brink ;
 And a' things nicely set in order,
 Wad keep him on the Fifan border,
 I'se warrant, now, frae France and Spain
 Baith cooks and scullions, mony ane,
 Wad gar the pats and kettles tingle
 Around the college kitchen ingle,
 To fleg frae a' your craigs the roup
 Wi' reekin' het and creeshy soup ;
 And snails and puddocks mony hunder
 Wad beekin' lie the hearth-stane under ;
 Wi' roast and boil'd and a' kin-kind,
 To heat the body, cool the mind.

But hear, my lads ! gin I'd been there,
 How I wad trimm'd the bill o' fare !
 For ne'er sic surly wight as he
 Had met wi' sic respect frae me.

* The professors entertained us with a very good dinner. Present : Murison, Shaw, Cooke, Hill, Haddo, Watson, Flint, Brown.—*Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides, Sub Thursday, 19th August (1773).*

† A river near St. Andrews.

Mind ye what Sam, the lying loun,
 Has in his Dictionar laid down?—
 That aits, in England, are a feast
 To cow and horse, and sicken beast;
 While in Scots ground this growth was common
 To gust the gab o' man and woman.*
 Tak tent, ye regents! then, and hear
 My list o' gudely hameil gear,
 Sic as hae aften rax'd the wame
 O' blyther fallows mony time:
 Mair hardy, souple, steeve, and swank,
 Than ever stood on Samy's shank.

Imprimis, then, a haggis fat,
 Weel tottled in a seethin' pat,
 Wi' spice and ingans weel ca'd through,
 Had help'd to gust the stirrah's mou',
 And placed itsel' in truncher clean
 Before the gilpy's glowrin' een.

Secundo, then, a gude sheep's head,
 Whase hide was singit, never flead,
 And four black trotters clad wi' girsle,
 Bedown his throat had learn'd to hirsle.
 What think ye, neist, o' gude fat brose
 To clag his ribs? a dainty dose!
 And white and bluidy puddins routh,
 To gar the doctor skirl, O Drouth!
 When he could never hope to merit
 A cordial glass o' reamin' claret,
 But throw his nose, and brize, and pegh,
 Owre the contents o' sma' ale quegh.
 Then let his wisdom girn and snarl
 Owre a weel-tostit girdle farl,

* This is literally "surly Sam's" opprobrious definition of the word "oats" embraced in the first, and retained in several of the earlier editions of his yet marvellous Dictionary; although in course of time—perhaps after the witty Scots lord remarked, in retaliation, "And where will you see such men and such horses?"—it was silently suppressed.



And learn, that, maugre o' his wame,
Ill bairns are aye best heard at hame.

Drummond, lang syne, o' Hawthornden,
The wilyest and best o' men,
Has gi'en you dishes ane or mae,
That wad hae gar'd his grinders play,
Not to "Roast Beef," * old England's life,
But to the auld "East Nook o' Fife," *
Where Craillian crafts could weel hae gi'en
Skate rumples to hae clear'd his een ;
Then, neist, when Samy's heart was faintin',
He'd lang'd for skate to mak him wanton.
Ah, willawins for Scotland now !
When she maun stap ilk birky's mou'
Wi' eistacks, grown, as 'twere in pet,
In foreign land, or green-house het,
When cog o' brose and cutty spoon
Is a' our cottar childer's boon,
Wha through the week, till Sunday's peal,
Toil for pease-cods and gude lang kail.

Devall then, sirs, and never send
For dainties to regale a friend,
Or, like a torch at baith ends burnin',
Your house will soon grow mirk and mournin' !

What's this I hear some cynic say ? †
Robin, ye loun ! it's nae fair play ;
Is there nae ither subject rife
To clap your thumb upon but Fife ?
Gie owre, young man ! you'll meet your cornin',
Than caption waur, or charge o' hornin'.
Some canker'd, surly, sour-mou'd carlin,
Bred near the abbey o' Dumfarline,

* Alluding to two tunes under these titles.

† The poet alludes to a gentleman in Dunfermline, who sent him a challenge, being highly offended at the concluding reflection in the "Expedition to Fife."

Your shouthers yet may gie a lounder,
And be o' verse the mal-confounder.

Come on, ye blades ! but, ere ye tulzie,
Or hack our flesh wi' sword or gullie,
Ne'er shaw your teeth, nor look like stink,
Nor owre an empty bicker blink :
What weets the wizen and the wame,
Will mend your prose, and heal my rhyme.

ELEGY ON JOHN HOGG,

LATE PORTER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.*

DEATH, what's ado ? the de'il be licket,
Or wi' your stang you ne'er had pricket,
Or our auld *Alma Mater* tricket
O' poor John Hogg,
And trail'd him ben through your mirk wicket,
As dead's a log.

* In a note respecting this interesting functionary, communicated by John Buddo, Esq., Writer, St. Andrews, to Dr. Grosart, in or about 1851, John is described as a great favourite with the students. He was what is known in Scotland as a "bien bodie," being proprietor of a considerable patch of land in the neighbourhood, as well as the owner of some house property in North Street, St. Andrews. While regularly careful, even to the verge of parsimoniousness, his "winsome Kate," on the other hand, was rather inclined to be "the leddy." At one time Mrs. Hogg wanted to get a black silk bonnet ; but John said, "Na, what mair wad the regents' wives hae ?" meaning the Professors, who were then called regents. She often further, it was said, urged John to allow her tea, which, in those days, was not every one's beverage ; but in this she was indulged seldom, and when the outlay was made he pinched her in the article of white bread, holding her strictly to bannocks or oat cakes. "Winsome Kate," whose name was Catharine Gourlay, after "death John's haffit ga'e a clout," married Dean of Guild Landale, a dyer in St. Andrews. She survived Mr. Landale also, and after his death kept a sewing school.

Now ilka glaikit scholar loun
 May daunder wae wi' duddy gown ;
 Kate Kennedy * to dowie crune
 May mourn and clink,
 And steeples o' Saunt Andrew's town
 To yird may sink.

Sin' Pauly Tam,† wi' canker'd snout,
 First held the students in about,
 To wear their claes as black as soot,
 They ne'er had reason,
 Till death John's haffit gae a clout
 Sae out o' season.

When regents met at common schools,
 He taught auld Tam to hale the dules,
 And eident to row right the bowls,
 Like ony emmack ;
 He kept us a' within the rules
 Strict academic.

Heh ! wha will tell the students now
 To meet the Pauly cheek for chow,
 When he, like frightsome wirrikow,
 Had wont to rail,
 And set our stamacks in a low,
 Or we turn'd tail ?

Ah, Johnny ! aften did I grumble
 Frae cozy bed fu' ear' to tumble,
 When art and part I'd been in some ill,
 Troth, I was swear ;
 His words they brodit like a wumill
 Frae ear to ear.

* A bell in the college steeple.

† A name given by the students to one of the members of the University.

When I had been fu' laith to rise,
John then begude to moralise :
" The tither nap, the sluggard cries,
And turns him round ;
Sae spake auld Solomon the wise,
Divine profound ! "

Nae dominie, or wise Mess John,
Was better lear'd in Solomon ;
He cited proverbs, one by one,
Ilk vice to tame ;
He gar'd ilk sinner sigh and groan,
And fear hell's flame.

" I hae nae meikle skill," quo' he,
" In what ye ca' philosophy ;
It tells, that baith the earth and sea
Rin round about ;
Either the Bible tells a lie,
Or ye're a' out.

" It's i' the Psalms o' David writ,
That this wide world ne'er should flit,
But on the waters coshly sit
Fu' steeve and lastin' :
And was na he a head o' wit,
At sic contestin' ? "

On e'enin's cauld wi' glee we'd trudge
To heat our shins in Johnny's lodge ;
The de'il ane thought his bum to budge,
Wi' siller on us ;
To claw het pints we'd never grudge
O' *molationis*.

Say, ye red gowns ! that aften here
Hae toasted bakes to Katie's beer,

Gin e'er thir days hae had their peer,
Sae blythe, sae daft ?
You'll ne'er again, in life's career,
Sit half sae saft.

Wi' haffit locks, sae smooth and sleek,
John looked like ony ancient Greek ;
He was a Naz'rene a' the week,
And doughnta tell out
A bawbee Scots to scrape his cheek
Till Sunday fell out.

For John aye lo'ed to turn the pence ;
Thought poortith was a great offence :
"What recks though ye ken mood and tense ?
A hungry wame
For gowd wad wi' them baith dispense
At ony time.

"Ye ken what ails maun aye befall
The chiel that will be prodigal ;
When waisted to the very spaul
He turns his tusk
(For want o' comfort to his saul)
To hungry husk."

Ye royit louns ! just do as he'd do :
For mony braw green shaw and meadow
He's left to cheer his dowie widow,
His winsome Kate,
That to him proved a canny she-dow,
Baith ear' and late.

AN ECLOGUE

TO THE MEMORY OF DR. WILLIAM WILKIE, LATE
PROFESSOR OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.*

GEORDIE AND DAVIE.

GEORDIE.

BLAW saft, my reed, and kindly, to my maen ;
Weel may ye thole a saft and dowie strain.
Nae mair to you shall shepherds, in a ring,
Wi' blytheness skip, or lasses lilt and sing ;
Sic sorrow now maun sadden ilka ee,
And ilka waefu' shepherd grieve wi' me.

DAVIE.

Wherefore begin a sad and dowie strain,
Or banish liltin' frae the Fifan plain ?
Though simmer's gane, and we nae langer view
The blades o' clover wat wi' pearls o' dew,
Cauld winter's bleakest blasts we'll eithly cower,
Our elden's driven, and our hairst is owre ;
Our rucks fu' thick are stackit i' the yard,
For the Yule feast a sautit mart's prepared ;
The ingle-nook supplies the simmer fields,
And aft as mony gleefu' moments yields.

* William Wilkie, D.D., the son of a farmer, and born at Echlin, in the parish of Dalmeny, in 1721, enjoyed some temporary fame as a poet, an eccentric, and a wit. He was author of an epic poem in nine books, in the manner of Homer, published in 1757, under the title of *Epigoniad*, which is long since forgotten. A later publication from his pen—*Moral Fables in Verse*—dedicated to his only patron, the Earl of Lauderdale, has shared the same fate. He was elected Professor of Natural Philosophy in St. Andrews in 1759, and died in 1772. Fergusson had been his pupil, and probably owed some obligations to him. It has been said, indeed, that from being "a fellow of infinite jest," the student recommended himself very strongly to the Professor, who frequently employed him to read his academical prelections in the class-room—which, however, is not a likely story.

Swith, man ! fling a' your sleepy springs awa',
 And on your canty whistle gie's a blaw.
 Blytheness, I trow, maun lighten ilka ee ;
 And ilka canty callant sing like me.

GEORDIE.

Na, na ! a canty spring wad now impart
 Just threefauld sorrow to my heavy heart.
 Though to the weet my ripen'd aits had fa'n,
 Or shake-winds owre my rigs wi' pith had blawn ;
 To this I could hae said, " I carena by,"
 Nor fund occasion now my cheeks to dry.
 Crosses like thae, or lack o' warld's gear,
 Are naething, when we tyne a friend that's dear.
 Ah ! waes me for you, Willie ! mony a day
 Did I wi' you on yon broom-thackit brae
 Hound aff my sheep, and let them careless gang,
 To harken to your cheery tale or sang—
 Sangs that for aye, on Caledonia's strand,
 Shall sit the foremost 'mang her tunefu' band.

I dreamt yestreen his deadly wraith I saw
 Gang by my een, as white's the driven snaw ;
 My collie, Ringie, youf'd and yowl'd a' night,
 Cower'd and crap near me, in an unco fright ;
 I waken'd fley'd and shook baith lith and limb,
 A cauldness took me, and my sight grew dim ;
 I kent that it forspak approachin' wae,
 When my poor doggie was disturbit sae.
 Nae sooner did the day begin to dawn,
 Than I beyont the knowe fu' speedy ran,
 Where I was keppit wi' the heavy tale
 That sets ilk dowie sangster to bewail.

DAVIE.

And wha on Fifan bents can weel refuse
 To gie the tear o' tribute to his Muse ?—
 Fareweel ilk cheery spring, ilk canty note ;
 Be daffin and ilk idle play forgot :

Bring, ilka herd, the mournfu', mournfu' boughs ;
 Rosemary sad, and ever-dreary yews ;
 Thae let be steepit i' the saut, saut tear,
 To weet wi' hallow'd draps his sacred bier,
 Whase sangs will aye in Scotland be revered,
 While slaw-gaun owsen turn the flowery swaird ;
 While bonnie lambies lick the dew's o' spring ;
 While gaudsman whistle, or while birdies sing.

GEORDIE.

'Twas na for weel-timed verse, or sangs alane,
 He bure the bell frae ilka shepherd swain ;
 Nature to him had gi'en a kindly lore,
 Deep a' her mystic ferlies to explore :
 For a' her secret workings he could gie
 Reasons that wi' her principles agree.
 Ye saw yoursel' how weel his mailin thrave ;
 Aye better faugh'd and snodit than the lave :
 Lang had the thistles and the dockans been
 In use to wag their taps upon the green,
 Whare now his bonnie rigs delight the view,
 And thrivin' hedges drink the caller dew.*

DAVIE.

They tell me, Geordie, he had sic a gift,
 That scarce a starnie blinkit frae the lift,
 But he would some auld warld name for't find
 As gart him keep it freshly in his mind.
 For this, some ca'd him an uncanny wight ;
 The clash gaed round, "he had the second sight ;"
 A tale that never fail'd to be the pride
 O' grannies spinnin' at the ingle-side.

GEORDIE.

But now he's gane ; and fame, that, when alive,
 Seenil lets ony o' her vot'ries thrive,

* Dr. Wilkie had a farm near St. Andrews, on which he made great improvements.

Will frae his shinin' name a' motes withdraw,
 And on her loudest trump his praises blaw.
 Lang may his sacred banes untroubled rest !
 Lang may his truff in gowans gay be drest !
 Scholars, and bards unheard o' yet shall come
 And stamp memorials on his grassy tomb,
 Which in yon ancient kirkyard shall remain,
 Famed as the urn that hauds the Mantuan swain.

ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF MR. DAVID GREGORY, LATE PROFESSOR
 OF MATHEMATICS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.*

Now mourn, ye college masters a' !
 And frae your een a tear let fa' ;
 Famed Gregory death has taen awa'
 Without remeid ;
 The skaith ye've met wi's nae that sma',
 Sin' Gregory's dead.

The students, too, will miss him sair ;
 To school them weel his eident care ;
 Now they may mourn for ever mair ;
 They hae great need ;
 They'll hip the maist feck o' their lear,
 Sin' Gregory's dead.

He could, by Euclid, prove lang syne,
 A gangin' point composed a line.
 By numbers, too, he could divine,
 When he did read,
 That three times three just made up nine ;
 But now he's dead.

* Gregory died in 1765.

In algebra weel skill'd he was,
 And kent fu' weel proportion's laws ;
 He could mak clear baith B's and A's
 Wi' his lang head ;
 Rin owre surd roots, but cracks or flaws ;
 But now he's dead.

Weel versed was he in architecture,
 And kent the nature o' the sector ;
 Upon baith globes he weel could lecture,
 And gar's tak heed ;
 O' geometry he was the Hector :
 But now he's dead.

Sae weel's he'd fley the students a',
 When they were skelpin' at the ba' ;
 They took leg-bail, and ran awa'
 Wi' pith and speed :
 We winna get a sport sae braw,
 Sin' Gregory's dead.

Great 'casion hae we a' to weep,
 And cleed our skins in mournin' deep,
 For Gregory death will fairly keep,
 To tak his nap :
 He'll till the resurrection sleep,
 As sound's a tap.

AN ECLOGUE.

WILLIE AND SANDY.

'Twas e'enin' when the spreckled gowdspink sang ;
 When new-fa'en dew in blobs o' crystal hang ;
 Then Will and Sandy thought they'd wrought enough,
 And lows'd their sair-toil'd owsen frae the pleugh.

Before they ca'd their cattle to the town,
 The lads, to draw their breath, e'en sat them down ;
 To the stiff sturdy aik they lean'd their backs,
 While honest Sandy thus began the cracks.

SANDY.

Once I could hear the lavrock's shrill-tuned throat,
 And listen to the clatterin' gowdspink's note :
 Once I could whistle cantily as they,
 To owsen, as they till'd my raggit clay :
 But now, I would as lieve maist lend my lugs
 To tuneless puddocks croakin' i' the bogs.
 I sigh at hame ; a-field I'm dowie too ;
 To sowf a tune I'll never crook my mou.

WILLIE.

Foul fa' me ! gif your bridal hadna been
 Nae langer bygane than sin' Hallowe'en,
 I could hae tell't you, but a warlock's art,
 That some daft lightlyin quean had stown your heart :
 Our beasties here will take their e'enin' pluck ;
 And now, sin' Jock's gane hame the byres to muck,
 Fain would I houp my friend will be inclined
 To gie me a' the secrets o' his mind :
 Heh, Sandy, lad ! what dool's come owre ye now,
 That you to whistle ne'er will crook your mou ?

SANDY.

Ah, Willie, Willie ! I may date my wae
 Frae what betid me on my bridal day ;
 Sair may I rue the hour in which our hands
 Were knit thegither in the haly bands :
 Sin' that I thrive sae ill, in troth, I fancy,
 Some fiend or fairy, nae sae very chancy,
 Has driven me, by pawky wiles uncommon,
 To wed this flytin' fury o' a woman.

WILLIE.

Ah, Sandy ! aften hae I heard you tell,
Amang the lasses a' she bure the bell ;
And say, the modest glances o' her een
Far dang the brightest beauties o' the green :
You ca'd her aye sae innocent, sae young,
I thought she kenn'd na how to use her tongue.

SANDY.

Before I married her, I'll tak my aith,
Her tongue was never louder than her breath ;
But now it's turn'd sae souple and sae bauld,
That Job himsel could scarcely thole the scauld.

WILLIE.

Let her yelp on ; be you as calm's a mouse,
Nor let your whisht be heard into the house :
Do what she can, or be as loud's she please,
Ne'er mind her flytes, but set your heart at ease :
Sit down and blaw your pipe, nor fash your thumb,
And there's my hand, she'll tire and soon sing dumb.
Sooner should winter's cauld confine the sea,
And let the sma'est o' our burns rin free ;
Sooner at Yule-day shall the birk be drest,
Or birds in sapless busses big their nest,
Before a tonguey woman's noisy plea
Should ever be a cause to daunton me.

SANDY.

Weel could I this abide ; but oh ! I fear
I'll soon be twin'd o' a' my warldly gear.
My kirstaff now stands gizzen'd at the door ;
My cheese-rack toom, that ne'er was toom before ;
My kye may now rin rowtin' to the hill,
And on the naked yird their milkness spill :
She seenil lays her hand upon a turn ;
Neglects the kebbuck, and forgets the kirm.
I vow, my hair-mould milk would poison dogs,
As it stands lapper'd i' the dirty cogs.

Before the seed, I sell'd my ferra cow,
 And wi' the profit coft a stane o' woo' ;
 I thought, by priggin', that she might hae spun
 A plaidie, light, to screen me frae the sun ;
 But though the siller's scant, the cleedin' dear,
 She hasna ca'd about a wheel the year.
 Last ouk but ane I was frae hame a day,
 Buying a threave or twa o' beddin' strae :
 O' ilka thing the woman had her will ;
 Had fouth o' meal to bake, and hens to kill ;
 But hyne awa' to Edinbrough scour'd she
 To get a makin' o' her fav'rite tea ;
 And 'cause I leftna her the weary clink,
 She sell't the very trunchers frae my bink.

WILLIE.

Her tea ! ah, wae betide sic costly gear,
 Or them that ever wad the price o't spier !
 Sin' my auld gutcher first the warld knew,
 Fouk hadna fund the Indies, whare it grew.
 I mind mysel', it's nae sae lang sin' syne,
 When auntie Marion did her stamack tyne,
 That Daws, our gard'ner, cam frae Applebog,
 And gae her tea to tak by way o' drog.

SANDY.

When ilka herd for cauld his fingers rubs,
 And cakes o' ice are seen upo' the dubs ;
 At mornin', when frae pleugh or fauld I come,
 I'll see a braw reek rising frae my lum,
 And aiblins think to get a rantin' blaze,
 To fley the frost awa', and toast my taes ;
 But when I shoot my nose in, ten to ane
 If I weelfar'dly see my ain hearthstane.
 She round the ingle wi' her gimmers sits,
 Crammin' their gebbies wi' her nicest bits ;
 While the gudeman out-by maun fill his crap
 Frae the milk coggie or the parritch cap.

WILLIE.

Sandy, gif this were ony common plea,
 I should the lealest o' my counsel gie ;
 But mak or meddle betwixt man and wife
 Is what I never did in a' my life.
 It's wearin' on now to the tail o' May,
 And just between the bear-seed and the hay ;
 As lang's an orra mornin' may be spared,
 Stap your wa's east the haugh, and tell the laird ;
 For he's a man weel versed in a' the laws,
 Kens baith their outs and ins, their cracks and flaws ;
 And aye right gleg, when things are out o' joint,
 At settlin' o' a nice or kittle point.
 But yonder's Jock ; he'll ca' your owsen hame,
 And tak thir tidings to your thrawart dame,
 That ye're awa' ae peacefu' meal to prie,
 And tak your supper, kail or sowens, wi' me.

THE GHAISTS :

A KIRK-YARD ECLOGUE.

Did you not say, in good Anne's day,
 And vow, and did protest, sir,
 That when Hanover should come o'er,
 We surely should be blest, sir ?—

An auld sang made new again.

Where the braid planes in dowie murmurs wave
 The ancient taps out-owre the cauld-clad grave,
 Where Geordie Girdwood,* mony a lang spun day,
 Houkit for gentlest banes the humblest clay,
 Twa sheeted ghaists, sae grisly and sae wan,
 'Mang lanely tombs their douff discourse began.

* A noted and characteristic grave-digger of old Edinburgh, who, in the course of a long professional career, is alleged to have turned over Greyfriars churchyard no fewer than seven times.

WATSON. *

Cauld blows the nippin' north wi' angry sough,
 And showers his hailstones frae the castle cleugh
 Owre the Greyfriars, where, at mirkest hour,
 Bogles and spectres wont to tak their tour,
 Harlin' the pows and shanks to hidden cairns,
 Amang the hamlocks wild and sun-burnt ferns ;
 But nane the night, save you and I, hae come
 Frae the drear mansions o' the midnight tomb.
 Now when the dawnin's near, when cock maun crow,
 And wi' his angry bougil gar's withdraw,
 Ayont the kirk we'll stap, and their tak bield,
 While the black hours our nightly freedom yield.

HERIOT.

I'm weel content : but binna cassen down,
 Nor trow the cock will ca' ye hame owre soon ;
 For, though the eastern lift betokens day,
 Changing her rokelay black for mantle grey,
 Nae weirlike bird our knell of parting rings,
 Nor sheds the caller moisture frae his wings.
 Nature has changed her course ; the birds o' day
 Dozin' in silence on the bending spray,
 While owlets round the craigs at noontide flee,
 And bluidy hawks sit singin' on the tree.
 Ah, Caledon ! the land I ance held dear,
 Sair mane mak I for thy destruction near ;
 And thou, Edina ! ance my dear abode,
 When royal Jamie sway'd the sovereign rod.
 In thae blest days weel did I think bestow'd
 To blaw thy poortith by wi' heaps o' gowd ;
 To mak thee sonsy seem wi' mony a gift,
 And gar thy stately turrets speel the lift.

*The interlocutors in this poem are George Heriot and George Watson, the founders of two well-known institutions in Edinburgh for the support and education of the sons of decayed citizens. These institutions, or hospitals, are closely adjacent to Grayfriars church-yard.

In vain did Danish Jones, wi' gimgrack pains,
 In Gothic sculpture fret the pliant stanes ; *
 In vain did he affix my statue here,
 Brawly to busk wi' flowers ilk coming year—
 My towers are sunk ; my lands are barren now ;
 My fame, my honour, like my flowers maun dow.

WATSON.

Sure, Major Weir,† or some sic warlock wight,
 Has flung beguillin' glamour owre your sight ;
 Or else some kittle cantrip, thrown, I ween,
 Has bound in myrlgoes my ain twa een :
 If ever aught frae sense could be believed
 (And seenil hae my senses been deceived),
 This moment owre the tap o' Adam's tomb,‡
 Fu' easy can I see your chiefest dome.
 Nae corbie fleein' there, nor croupin' craws,
 Seem to forspeak the ruin o' thy ha's,
 But a' your towers in wonted order stand,
 Steeve as the rocks that hem our native land.

HERIOT.

Think na I vent my well-a-day in vain :
 Kent ye the cause, ye sure wad join my maen.
 Black be the day, that ere to England's ground
 Scotland was eikit by the Union's bond !
 For mony a menzie of destructive ills
 The country now maun brook frae mortmain bills,

* Heriot's Hospital is said to have been designed by Inigo Jones.

† Major Weir was a notorious wizard, the weird stories of whom haunt every close of old Edinburgh. His name figures in Sinclair's *Invisible World Discovered*, and other such works. Upon his own and his sister's confessions of witchcraft they were together brought up for trial, in April, 1670. He was sentenced to be strangled and burnt, and his sister to be hanged. The sentences were accordingly carried into execution.

‡ A conspicuous mausoleum belonging to the family of William Adam of Maryborough, architect.

That void our test'ments, and can freely gie
 Sic will and scoup to the ordain'd trustee,
 That he may tir our stateliest riggings bare,
 Nor acres, houses, wood, nor fishings spare,
 Till he can lend the stoiterin' state a lift,
 Wi' gowd in goupins, as a grassum gift ;
 In lieu o' whilk, we maun be weel content
 To tyne the capital for *three per cent*.
 A doughty sum, indeed, when now-a-days
 They raise provisions as the stents they raise ;
 Yoke hard the poor, and let the rich chieles be
 Pamper'd at ease by ithers' industry.

Hale interest for my fund can scantily now
 Cleed a' my callants' backs, and stap their mou.
 How maun their wames wi' sairest hunger slack,
 Their duds in targets flaff upon their back,
 When they are doom'd to keep a lastin' Lent,
 Starvin' for England's weel at *three per cent* !

WATSON.

Auld Reekie, then, may bless the gowden times,
 When honesty and poortith baith are crimes.
 She little kenn'd, when you and I endow'd
 Our hospitals for back-gaun burghers' gude,
 That e'er our siller or our lands should bring
 A gude bien livin' to a back-gaun king ;
 Wha, thanks to ministry ! is grown sae wise,
 He downa chew the bitter cud o' vice :
 For if frae Castlehill to Netherbow,
 Wad honest houses bawdy-houses grow,
 The crown wad never speir the price o' sin,
 Nor hinder youngers to the de'il to rin ;
 But if some mortal grein for pious fame,
 And leave the poor man's prayer to sain his name,
 His gear maun a' be scatter'd by the claws
 O' ruthless, ravenous, and harpy laws.
 Yet should I think, although the bill tak place,
 The council winna lack sae meikle grace
 As let our heritage at wanworth gang,

Or the succeeding generations wrang
 O' braw bien maintenance, and walth o' lear,
 Whilk else had drappit to their children's skair ;
 For mony a deep, and mony a rare engine
 Hae sprung frae Heriot's wark, and sprung frae
 mine.

HERIOT.

I find, my friend, but ye but little ken,
 There's e'enow on the earth a set o' men,
 Wha, if they get their private pouches lined,
 Gi'e na a winnel-strae for a' mankind.
 They'll sell their country, flae their conscience bare,
 To gar the weigh-bauk turn a single hair.
 The government need only bait the line
 Wi' the prevailin' flie—the gowden coin !
 Then our executors and wise trustees
 Will sell them fishes in forbidden seas :
 Upon their dwinin' country girn in sport ;
 Laugh in their sleeve, and get a place at court.

WATSON.

Ere that day come, I'll 'mang our spirits pick
 Some ghaist that trokes and conjures wi' Auld Nick,
 To gar the wind wi' rougher rumbles blaw,
 And weightier thuds than ever mortal saw ;
 Fire-flaught and hail, wi' tenfauld fury's fires,
 Shall lay yird-laigh Edina's airy spires :
 Tweed shall rin rowtin' down his banks out-owre,
 Till Scotland's out o' reach o' England's power,
 Upon the briny Borean jaws to float,
 And mourn in dowie soughs her dowie lot.

HERIOT.

Yonder's the tomb o' wise Mackenzie * famed,
 Whase laws rebellious bigotry reclaim'd ;

* Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, king's advocate or public prosecutor in the persecuting reigns of Charles II. and James II.

Free'd the hale land o' covenantin' fools,
 Wha erst hae fash'd us wi' unnumber'd dools.
 Till night we'll tak the swaird aboon our pows,
 And then, whan she her ebon chariot rows,
 We'll travel to the vau't wi' stealin' stap,
 And wauk Mackenzie frae his quiet nap;
 Tell him our ails, that he, wi' wonted skill,
 May fleg the schemers o' the mortmain bill.

VERSES ON VISITING DUMFRIES.*

THE gods, sure, in some canny hour,
 To bonny Nith ha'e ta'en a tour,
 Where bonny blinks the caller flow'r
 Beside the stream;
 And sportive there ha'e shawn their pow'r
 In fairy dream!

Had Kirkhill † here but kent the gait,
 The beauties on Dumfries that wait,
 He'd never turn'd his canker'd pate,
 O' satire keen,
 When ilka thing's sae trig and feat
 To please the een.

* The visit which occasioned these sprightly verses, says Dr. Grosart, was paid in 1773. The poet was accompanied by a Lieutenant Wilson, R.N. The two friends had *walked all the way* from the Capital to renew their acquaintance with Charles Salmon, a fellow poet, who had left Edinburgh to pursue the business of a printer with Mr. Jackson, the spirited publisher of the *Dumfries Weekly Magazine*. Proud of his visitors, Salmon introduced the poet to his numerous admirers in Dumfries; and Fergusson was treated with the most flattering and *over-kind* distinction. In the hour of parting, being asked to leave some memorial of his Nithsdale "visit," he wrote on the instant the present verses.

So far as known, they were first published in the *Life of Fergusson in the Lives of the Scottish Poets*, 3 vols., 12mo, London, 1822, having been supplied to the editor by John Mayne, the author of "The Siller Gun."

† Churchill, the satirist.

I ken the stirrah loo'd fu' weel
 Amang the drinking louns to reel ;
 On claret brown or porter sweel,
 Whilk he cou'd get ;
 After a shank o' beef he'd peel,
 His craig to whet.

Marshals and Bushbys * then had fund
 Some kitchen gude to lay the grund,
 And Cheshire mites wi' skill to hund,
 And fley awa'
 The heart-scad and a scud o' wund
 Frae stamack raw !

Had Horace liv'd, that pleasant sinner,
 Wha lov'd gude wine to synd his dinner,
 His muse, though dowf, the deil be in her,
 Wi' blythest sang,
 The drink wad round Parnassus rin her
 Ere it were lang !

Nae mair he'd sung to auld Mecænas,
 The blinking een o' bonny Venus,
 His leave at ance he wad ha'e ta'en us
 For claret here,
 Which Jove and a' his gods still rain us
 Frae year to year !

O ! Jove, man ! gie's some orra pence,
 Mair siller, and a wee mair sense,
 I'll big to you a rural spence,
 And bide a' simmer ;
 And cauld frae saul and body fence
 Wi' frequent brimmer !

* Two inn-keepers in Dumfries.

AULD REEKIE.*

AULD Reekie ! wale o' ilka town
 That Scotland kens beneath the moon ;
 Where couthy chieils at e'enin' meet,
 Their bizzin' craigs and mous to weet ;
 And blythely gar auld care gae by
 Wi' blinkit and wi' bleerin' eye.
 Ower lang frae thee the muse has been
 Sae frisky on the simmer's green,
 When flowers and gowans wont to glent
 In bonnie blinks upon the bent ;
 But now the leaves o' yellow dye,
 Peel'd frae the branches, quickly fly ;
 And now frae nouthur bush nor brier
 The speckled mavis greets your ear ;

* This poem, forming a curious memorial of Edinburgh in its old state, was evidently originally intended to be of considerable length. Down to the lines—

“ While our new city spreads around
 Her bonny wings on fairy ground,”—

it was published in a small tract in 1773, as “Canto I.,” with the modest dedication :—“ To Sir William Forbes, Baronet, this Poem is most respectfully dedicated, by his most obedient and very humble servant, the Author.” Dr. David Irving tells (though without stating his authority) that Sir William despised

“ The poor ovations of a minstrel's praise,”

and that the result was, that, unencouraged, the design was left uncompleted. The few additions and corrections first appeared in Ruddiman's supplement to Part I. of the Poems, 1779.

As to the origin of the familiar and not inappropriate appellation of “Auld Reekie” for Edinburgh, which is as old at least as the reign of Charles II., history and tradition alike are dumb. Of course, we have all heard the story of the old gentleman in Fife who regulated the time of his evening worship in summer by the appearance of the thickening smoke over the city in the late twilight, and who would call in the family, saying, “It's time noo, bairns, to tak' the beuks an' gang to our beds, for yonder's Auld Reekie, I see, putting on her nicht-cap ;” but we hesitate to believe that the *soubriquet* was employed there for the first time : hesitate no less, either, although convinced that it was the prevailing smoke that suggested the word “Reekie.”

Nor bonnie blackbird skims and roves
To seek his love in yonder groves.
Then, Reekie, welcome ! Thou canst charm,
Unfleggit by the year's alarm.
Not Boreas, that sae snelly blows,
Dare here pap in his angry nose ;
Thanks to our dads, whase biggin' stands
A shelter to surrounding lands !

Now morn, wi' bonnie purpie-smiles
Kisses the air-cock o' St. Giles ;
Rakin' their een, the servant lasses
Early begin their lies and clashes.
Ilk tells her friend o' saddest distress,
That still she bruiks frae scoulin' mistress ;
And wi' her joe, in turnpike stair,
She'd rather snuff the stinkin' air,
As be subjected to her tongue,
When justly censured in the wrong.

On stair, wi' tub or pat in hand,
The barefoot housemaids lo'e to stand,
That antrin fouk may ken how snell
Auld Reekie will at mornin' smell :
Then, wi' an inundation big as
The burn that 'neath the Nor' Loch brig is,
They kindly shower Edina's roses,
To quicken and regale our noses.
Now some for this, wi' satire's leesh,
Hae gien auld Edinburgh a creesh :
But without sourin' nought is sweet ;
The mornin' smells that hail our street
Prepare and gently lead the way
To simmer canty, braw, and gay.
Edina's sons mair eithly share
Her spices and her dainties rare,
Than he that's never yet been call'd
Aff frae his plaidie or his fauld.

Now stairhead critics, senseless fools,
Censure their aim, and pride their rules,
In Luckenbooths, wi' glowrin' eye,
Their neighbour's sma'est faults descry.

If ony loun should dander there,
 O' awkward gait and foreign air,
 They trace his steps, till they can tell
 His pedigree as weel's himsel'.

When Phœbus blinks wi' warmer ray,
 And schools at noon-day get the play,
 Then bus'ness, weighty bus'ness, comes ;
 The trader glowers—he doubts, he hums.
 The lawyers eke to Cross repair,
 Their wigs to shaw, and toss an air ;
 While busy agent closely plies,
 And a' his kittle cases tries.

Now night, that's cunzied chief for fun,
 Is wi' her usual rites begun :
 Through ilka gate the torches blaze,
 And globes send out their blinkin' rays.
 The usefu' cadie plies in street,
 To bide the profits o' his feet ;
 For, by thir lads Auld Reekie's fouk
 Ken but a sample o' the stock
 O' thieves, that nightly wad oppress,
 And mak baith goods and gear the less.
 Near him the lazy chairman stands,
 And wats na how to turn his hands,
 Till some daft birkie, rantin' fou,
 Has matters somewhere else to do ;—
 The chairman willing gies his light
 To deeds o' darkness and o' night.

It's never saxpence for a lift
 That gars thir lads wi' fu'ness rift ;
 For they wi' better gear are paid,
 And whores and culls support their trade.

Near some lamp-post, wi' dowie face,
 Wi' heavy een and sour grimace,
 Stands she, that beauty lang had kenn'd,
 Whoredom her trade, and vice her end.
 But see where now she wins her bread
 By that which nature ne'er decreed,
 And sings sad music to the lugs,
 'Mang bourachs o' damn'd whores and rogues.

Whene'er we reputation lose,
 Fair chastity's transparent gloss !
 Redemption seenil kens the name,
 But a's black misery and shame.

Frae joyous tavern, reelin' drunk,
 Wi' fiery phiz, and een half sunk,
 Behold the bruiser, fae to a'
 That in the reek o' gardies fa' !
 Close by his side, a feckless race
 O' macaronies shew their face,
 And think they're free frae skaith, or harm,
 While pith befriends their leader's arm.
 Yet fearfu' aften o' their maught,
 They quat the glory o' the faught
 To this same warrior wha led
 Thae heroes to bright honour's bed ;
 And aft the hack o' honour shines
 In bruiser's face wi' broken lines.
 O' them sad tales he tells anon,
 When ramble and when fighting's done ;
 And, like Hectorian, ne'er impairs
 The brag and glory o' his sairs.

When feet in dirty gutters plash,
 And fouk to wale their fitstaps fash ;
 At night, the macaroni drunk,
 In pools or gutters afitimes sunk :
 Hegh ! what a fright he now appears,
 When he his corpse dejected rears !
 Look at that head, and think if there
 The pommet slaister'd up his hair !
 The cheeks observe, where now could shine
 The scancin' glories o' carmine ?
 Ah, legs ! in vain the silk-worm there
 Display'd to view her eident care ;
 For stink instead of perfumes grow,
 And clarty odours fragrant flow.

Now, some to porter, some to punch,
 Some to their wife, and some their wench,
 Retire, while noisy ten hours' drum
 Gars a' your trades gae danderin' hame.

Now, mony a club, jocose and free,
 Gie a' to merriment and glee ;
 Wi' sang and glass they fley the power
 O' care, that wad harass the hour ;
 For wine and Bacchus still bear down
 Our thrawart fortune's wildest frown :
 It maks you stark, and bauld, and brave,
 Even when descending to the grave.

Now some, in Pandemonium's shade,*
 Resume the gormandising trade ;
 Where eager looks, and glancin' een,
 Forspeak a heart and stamack keen.
 Gang on, my lads ! it's lang sinsyne
 We kenn'd auld Epicurus' line ;
 Save you, the board wad cease to rise,
 Bedight wi' daintiths to the skies ;
 And salamanders cease to swill
 The comforts o' a burning gill.

But chief, oh Cape !* we crave thy aid,
 To get our cares and poortith laid.
 Sincerity and genius true,
 O' knights have ever been the due.
 Mirth, music, porter deepest dyed,
 Are never here to worth denied ;
 And health, o' happiness the queen,
 Blinks bonny wi' her smile serene.

Though joy maist part Auld Reekie owns
 Eftsoons she kens sad sorrow's frowns.
 What group is yon sae dismal, grim,
 Wi' horrid aspect, cleedin' dim ?
 Says Death, " They're mine, a dowie crew,
 To me they'll quickly pay their last adieu."

* Pandemonium and the Cape were two social clubs. All the shops in the town were then shut at eight o'clock ; and from that hour till ten (*vide Traditions of Edinburgh*), when the drum of the Town-guard announced at once a sort of licence for the deluging of the street with nuisances, and a warning of the inhabitants home to their beds—unrestrained scope was given to the delights of the table. No tradesman thought of going home to his family till after he had spent an hour or two at his club. This was universal and unfailing.

How come mankind, when lacking woe,
 In saulie's face their hearts to show ;
 As if they were a clock to tell
 That grief in them had rung her bell ?
 Then, what is man ?—why a' this fraise ?
 Life's spunk decay'd, nae mair can blaze.
 Let sober grief alane declare
 Our fond anxiety and care ;
 Nor let the undertakers be
 The only waefu' friends we see.

Come on, my Muse, and then rehearse
 The gloomiest theme in a' your verse.
 In morning, when ane keeks about,
 Fu' blythe and free frae ail, nae doubt,
 He lippens no to be misled
 Amang the regions o' the dead ;
 But straight a painted corp he sees,
 Lang streekit 'neath its canopies.
 Soon, soon will this his mirth control,
 And send damnation to his soul :
 Or when the dead-deal (awfu' shape !)
 Maks frightened mankind girn and gape,
 Reflection then his reason sours,
 For the neist dead-deal may be ours.
 When Sybil led the Trojan down
 To haggard Pluto's dreary town,
 Shapes waur nor thae, I freely ween,
 Could never meet the soldier's een.

If kail sae green, or herbs, delight,
 Edina's street attracts the sight : *
 Not Covent-garden, clad sae braw,
 Mair fouth o' herbs can eithly shaw ;
 For mony a yard is here sair sought,
 That kail and cabbage may be bought,
 And healthfu' salad to regale,
 When pamper'd wi' a heavy meal.

* The High Street between the Tron Church and St. Giles's was then a vegetable market.

Glowr up the street in simmer morn,
 The birks sae green, and sweet-brier thorn.
 Wi' spraingit flowers that scent the gale,
 Ca' far awa' the mornin' smell,
 Wi' which our ladies' flower-pat's fill'd,
 And every noxious vapour kill'd.
 Oh, Nature! canty, blythe, and free,
 Where is there keeking-glass like thee?
 Is there on earth that can compare
 Wi' Mary's shape, and Mary's air,
 Save the empurpled speck, that grows
 In the saft faulds o' yonder rose?
 How bonny seems the virgin breast,
 When by the lilies here carest,
 And leaves the mind in doubt to tell,
 Which maist in sweets and hue excel.

Gillespie's snuff* should prime the nose
 O' her that to the market goes,
 If she wad like to shun the smells
 That float around frae market cells;
 Where wames o' painches' sav'ry scent
 To nostrils gie great discontent.
 Now wha in Albion could expect
 O' cleanliness sic great neglect?
 Nae Hottentot that daily lairs
 'Mang tripe, and ither clarty wares,
 Hath ever yet conceived or seen,
 Beyond the Line, sic scenes unclean.

On Sunday here, an alter'd scene
 O' men and manners meets our een.
 Ane wad maist trow some people chose
 To change their faces wi' their clo'es,
 And fain wad gar ilk neibour think
 They thirst for goodness as for drink;
 But there's an unco dearth o' grace,
 That has nae mansion but the face,

* Two brothers Gillespie, who realised a large fortune as tobaccoists in Edinburgh. Their portraits are given in Kay, where interesting memorabilia concerning them will also be found.

And never can obtain a part
In benmost corner o' the heart.
Why should religion mak us sad,
If good frae virtue's to be had ?
Na, rather gleefu' turn your face,
Forsake hypocrisy, grimace ;
And never have it understood
You fleg mankind frae being good.

In afternoon, a' brawly buskit,
The joes and lasses loe to frisk it.
Some tak a great delight to place
The modest bon-grace owre the face ;
Though you may see, if so inclined,
The turning o' the leg behind.
Now Comely-garden and the Park
Refresh them, after forenoon's wark :
Newhaven, Leith, or Canonmills,
Supply them in their Sunday's gills ;
Where writers aften spend their pence,
To stock their heads wi' drink and sense.

While danderin' cits delight to stray
To Castlehill or public way,
Where they nae other purpose mean,
Than that fool cause o' being seen,
Let me to Arthur's Seat pursue,
Where bonnie pastures meet the view,
And mony a wild-lorn scene accrues,
Befitting Willie Shakspeare's muse.
If fancy there would join the thrang,
The desert rocks and hills amang,
To echoes we should lilt and play,
And gie to mirth the lee-lang day.

Or should some canker'd biting shower
The day and a' her sweets deflower,
To Holyrood-house let me stray,
And gie to musing a' the day ;
Lamenting what auld Scotland knew,
Bien days for ever frae her view.
O Hamilton, for shame ! the Muse
Would pay to thee her couthy vows,

Gin ye wad tent the humble strain,
 And gie's our dignity again :
 For, oh, wae's me ! the thistle springs
 In domicile o' ancient kings,
 Without a patriot to regret
 Our palace and our ancient state.

Blest place ! where debtors daily run,
 To rid themsels frae jail and dun.*
 Here, though sequester'd frae the din
 That rings Auld Reekie's wa's within ;
 Yet they may tread the sunny braes,
 And bruik Apollo's cheery rays ;
 Glowr frae St. Anthon's grassy height,
 Ower vales in simmer claes bedight ;
 Nor ever hing their head, I ween,
 Wi' jealous fear o' being seen.
 May I, whenever duns come nigh,
 And shake my garret wi' their cry,
 Scour here wi' haste, protection get,
 To screen mysel' frae them and debt ;
 To breathe the bliss o' open sky,
 And Simon Fraser's bolts defy.†

Now gin a loun should hae his claes
 In threadbare autumn o' their days,
 St. Mary, broker's guardian saunt,
 Will satisfy ilk ail and want ; ‡
 For mony a hungry writer there
 Dives down at night, wi' cleedin' bare,
 And quickly rises to the view
 A gentleman, perfite and new.
 Ye rich fouk, look na wi' disdain
 Upon this ancient brokage lane,
 For naked poets are supplied
 Wi' what you to their wants denied.

* The precincts of Holyrood Palace were in those days a sanctuary for debtors, who were jestingly called Abbey-lairds.

† The keeper of the Tolbooth.

‡ St. Mary's Wynd—a mean street in Edinburgh, exclusively occupied by dealers in old clothes.

Peace to thy shade, thou wale o' men,
 Drummond ! * relief to poortith's pain :
 To thee the greatest bliss we owe,
 And tribute's tear shall gratefu' flow ;
 The sick are cured, the hungry fed,
 And dreams o' comfort tend their bed.
 As lang as Forth weets Lothian's shore,
 As lang's on Fife her billows roar,
 Sae lang shall ilk whase country's dear,
 To thy remembrance gie a tear.
 By thee, Auld Reekie thrive and grew
 Delightfu' to her childer's view ;
 Nae mair shall Glasgow striplings threap
 Their city's beauty and its shape,
 While our new city spreads around
 Her bonny wings on fairy ground. †

But provosts now, that ne'er afford
 The sma'est dignity to lord,
 Ne'er care though every scheme gae wild
 That Drummond's sacred hand has cull'd.
 The spacious brig ‡ neglected lies,
 Though plagued wi' pamphlets, dunn'd wi' cries ;
 They heed not, though destruction come
 To gulp us in her gaunting womb.
 Oh, shame ! that safety canna claim
 Protection from a provost's name ;
 But hidden danger lies behind,
 To torture and to fleg the mind.
 I may as weel bid Arthur's Seat
 To Berwick Law mak gleg retreat,
 As think that either will or art
 Shall get the gate to win their heart :
 For politics are a' their mark,

* George Drummond, a benevolent chief magistrate of Edinburgh, who was chiefly instrumental in the establishment of an infirmary in his native city, and in the extension of the city over the grounds to the north.

† Here the poem as Canto I. ended.

‡ In allusion to the state of the North Bridge after its fall.

Bribes latent, and corruption dark.
 If they can eithly turn the pence,
 Wi' city's good they will dispense,
 Nor care though a' her sons were lair'd
 Ten fathom i' the auld kirkyard.

To sing yet meikle does remain,
 Undecent for a modest strain ;
 And since the poet's daily bread is
 The favour o' the Muse or ladies,
 He downa like to gie offence
 To delicacy's tender sense ;
 Therefore the stews remain unsung,
 And bawds in silence drop their tongue.

Reekie, fareweel ! I ne'er could part
 Wi' thee, but wi' a dowie heart :
 Aft frae the Fife coast I've seen
 Thee towerin' on thy summit green ;
 So glowr the saints when first is given
 A favourite keek o' glore and heaven.
 On earth nae mair they bend their een,
 But quick assume angelic mien ;
 So I on Fife wad glowr no more,
 But gallop to Edina's shore.

HAME CONTENT,

A SATIRE.

To all whom it may concern.

SOME fouk, like bees, fu' glegly rin
 To bykes bang'd fu' o' strife and din,
 And thieve and huddle, crumb by crumb,
 Till they have scraped the dautit plumb ;
 Then crawl fell crouselly o' their wark,
 Tell owre their turners, mark by mark,
 Yet darena think to lowse the pose,
 To aid their neighbours' ails and woes.

Gif gowd can fetter thus the heart,
 And gar us act sae base a part,
 Shall man, a niggard, near-gaun elf!
 Rin to the tether's end for pelf;
 Learn ilka cunzied scoundrel's trick;
 When a's done, sell his saul to Nick?
 I trow they've coft the purchase dear,
 That gang sic lengths for warldly gear.

Now when the dog-day heats begin
 To birsle and to peel the skin,
 May I lie streekit at my ease
 Beneath the caller shady trees
 (Far frae the din o' Borrowstown),
 Where water plays the haughs bedown;
 To jouk the simmer's rigour there,
 And breathe a while the caller air,
 'Mang herds, and honest cottar fouk,
 That till the farm and feed the flock;
 Careless o' mair, wha never fash
 To lade their kist wi' useless cash,
 But thank the gods for what they've sent
 O' health eneugh, and blythe content,
 And pith that helps them to stravaig
 Ower ilka cleugh and ilka craig;
 Unkenn'd to a' the weary granes
 That aft arise frae gentler banes,
 On easy chair that pamper'd lie,
 Wi' baneful viands gustit high,
 And turn and fauld their weary clay,
 To rax and gaunt the live-lang day.

Ye sages, tell, was man e'er made
 To dree this hatefu' sluggard trade?
 Steekit frae nature's beauties a',
 That daily on his presence ca';
 At hame to girn, and whinge, and pine
 For fav'rite dishes, fav'rite wine:
 Come, then, shake aff thir sluggish ties,
 And wi' the bird o' dawning rise!
 On ilka bauk the clouds hae spread
 Wi' blobs o' dew a pearly bed;

Frae faulds nae mair the owsen rout,
 But to the fatt'ning clover lout,
 Whare they may feed at heart's content,
 Unyokit frae their winter's stent.

Unyoke then, man, and binna sweer,
 To ding a hole in ill-hain'd gear !
 O think that eild, wi' wily fit,
 Is wearing nearer bit by bit !
 Gin yence he claws you wi' his paw,
 What's siller for ? Fiend haet ava ;
 But gowden playfair, that may please
 The second charger till he dies.

Some daft chiel reads, and taks advice :
 The chaise is yokit in a trice ;
 Awa' drives he like huntit de'il,
 And scarce tholes time to cool his wheel,
 Till he's, Lord kens how far awa' !
 At Italy or well o' Spa,
 Or to Montpelier's safter air ;
 For far-aff fowls hae feathers fair.

There rest him weel ; for eith can we
 Spare mony glaikit gowks like he ;
 They'll tell whare Tiber's waters rise ;
 What sea receives the drumly prize,
 That never wi' their feet hae met
 The marches o' their ain estate.

The Arno and the Tiber lang
 Hae run fell clear in Roman sang ;
 But, save the reverence o' school's,
 They're baith but lifeless, dowie pools.
 Dought they compare wi' bonnie Tweed,
 As clear as ony lammer-bead ?
 Or are their shores mair sweet and gay
 Than Fortha's haughs or banks o' Tay ?
 Tho' there the herds can jink the showers
 'Mang thriving vines and myrtle bowers,
 And blaw the reed to kittle strains,
 While echo's tongue commends their pains ;
 Like ours, they canna warm the heart
 Wi' simple, saft bewitching art.

On Leader haughs and Yarrow braës,
Arcadian herds wad tyne their lays,
To hear the mair melodious sounds
That live on our poetic grounds.

Come, Fancy ! come, and let us tread
The simmer's flow'ry velvet bed,
And a' your springs delightfu' lowse
On Tweeda's bank or Cowdenknowes.
That, taen wi' thy enchanting sang,
Our Scottish lads may round ye thrang,
Sae pleas'd they'll never fash again
To court you on Italian plain ;
Soon will they guess ye only wear
The simple garb o' nature here ;
Mair comely far, and fair to sight,
When in her easy cleedin' dight,
Than in disguise ye was before
On Tiber's or on Arno's shore.

O Bangour ! * now the hills and dales
Nae mair gie back thy tender tales !
The birks on Yarrow now deplore,
Thy mournfu' muse has left the shore,
Near what bright burn or crystal spring,
Did you your winsome whistle hing ?
The muse shall there, wi' watery ee,
Gie the dunk swaird a tear for thee ;
And Yarrow's genius, dowie dame !
Shall there forget her blude-stain'd stream,
On thy sad grave to seek repose,
Who mourn'd her fate, condol'd her woes.

HORACE, ODE XI., LIB. I.

NE'ER fash your thumb what gods decree
To be the weird o' you or me,
Nor deal in cantrip's kittle cunning
To speir how fast your days are running ;

* William Hamilton of Bangour, author of the beautiful ballad
"The Braes of Yarrow."

But patient lippen for the best,
 Nor be in dowie thought opprest.
 Whether we see mair winter's come,
 Than this that spits wi' canker'd foam.
 Now moisten weel your geyzen'd wa's
 Wi' couthy friends and hearty blaws;
 Ne'er let your hope o'ergang your days,
 For eild and thraldom never stays;
 The day looks gash, toot aff your horn,
 Nor care ae strae about the morn.

MY AIN KIND DEARY, O! *

SONG.

WILL ye gang o'er the lee-rigg,
 My ain kind deary, O!
 And cuddle there sae kindly
 Wi' me, my kind deary, O!
 At thornie dike, and birken tree,
 We'll daff, and ne'er be weary, O;
 They'll scug ill een frae you and me,
 Mine ain kind deary, O!

* No previous edition of Fergusson, with the single exception of the one issued under the very capable editorial supervision of Dr. A. B. Grosart, embraces a copy of this long familiar song, which unmistakably served as the model for Burns when he came to write his immortal lyric on the same theme. The verses are given here exactly as they appear—in their original form—in Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*, whence they were communicated by Burns, and in the notes to which it is stated that "the verses beginning 'Will ye gang o'er the lea rig' were written by Robert Fergusson in one of his merry humours." In composing his song (albeit in a "merry humour!") Fergusson, no less than Burns, as it appears, fructified on a yet earlier hint, embraced in a set of verses the following fragment of which alone has been preserved—

Nae herds wi' kent, or colly there,
 Shall ever come to fear ye, O ;
 But lav'rocks, whistling in the air
 Shall woo, like me, their deary, O !
 While others herd their lambs and ewes,
 And toil for warld's gear, my jo,
 Upon the lee my pleasure grows
 Wi' you, my kind deary, O !

“ I'll rowe thee o'er the lea-rig,
 My ain kind dearie, O !
 I'll rowe thee o'er the lea-rig,
 My ain kind dearie, O.
 Altho' the night were ne'er sae wat,
 And I were ne'er sae weary, O,
 I'll rowe thee o'er the lea-rig,
 My ain kind dearie, O.”

In Whitelaw's *Book of Scottish Song*, as in other Collections, three double stanzas of inferior merit, from the tinkering hand of William Reid of Glasgow, are tagged on to Fergusson's performance. George Farquhar Graham, with still worse taste, suggests them in a note as a suitable continuation of Burns's exquisite lyric. They are never sung, and are appended here solely for the sake of comparison :—

- “ At gloamin', if my lane I be,
 Oh, but I'm wondrous eerie, O :
 And mony a heavy sigh I gi'e,
 When absent frae my dearie, O ;
 But seated 'neath the milk-white thorn,
 In ev'ning fair and clearie, O,
 Enraptur'd, a' my cares I scorn,
 When wi' my kind dearie, O.
- “ Whare through the birks the burnie rows,
 Aft ha'e I sat fu' cheerie, O,
 Upon the bonnie greensward howes,
 Wi' thee, my kind dearie, O,
 I've courted till I've heard the crow
 Of honest Chanticleerie, O,
 Yet never miss'd my sleep ava,
 When wi' my kind dearie, O.
- “ For though the night were ne'er sae dark,
 And I were ne'er sae weary, O,
 I'd meet thee on the lea rig,
 My ain kind dearie, O,
 While in this weary warld of wae,
 This wilderness sae dreary, O,
 What makes me blythe, and keeps me sae ?
 'Tis thee, my kind dearie, O.”

TO MY AULD BREEKS.*

Now gae your wa's—though ance as gude
As ever happit flesh and blude,
Yet part we maun.—The case sae hard is
Amang the writers and the bardies,
That lang they'll bruik the auld, I trow,
Or neibours cry, "We'll bruik the new!"
Still makin' tight, wi' tither steek,
The tither hole, the tither eke,
To bang the bir o' winter's anger,
And haud the hurdies out o' langer.

Siclike some weary wight will fill
His kyte wi' drogs frae doctor's bill,
Thinkin' to tack the tither year
To life, and look baith hale and fier,
Till at the lang-run death dirks in,
To birze his saul ayont his skin.

You needna wag your duds o' clouts,
Nor fa' into your dorty pouts,
To think that erst you've hain'd my tail
Frae wind and weet, frae snaw and hail,
And for reward, when bald and hummil,
Frae garret high to dree a tummil.
For you I cared, as lang's ye dow'd
Be lined wi' siller or wi' gowd:
Now to befriend, it wad be folly,
Your raggit hide and pouches holey;
For wha but kens a poet's placks
Get mony weary flaws and cracks,
And canna thole to hae them tint,
As he sae seenil sees the mint?
Yet round the warld keek, and see
That ithers fare as ill as thee;

* This poem was the last Scottish piece of Fergusson's which appeared in *Ruddiman's Magazine*; and only his "Last Will" and "Codicil" (which are not in the vernacular), followed.

For weel we loe the chiel we think
 Can get us tick, or gie us drink,
 Till o' his purse we've seen the bottom,
 Then we despise, and hae forgot him.

Yet gratefu' hearts, to mak amends,
 Will aye be sorry for their friends,
 And I for thee ;—as mony a time
 Wi' you I've speel'd the braes o' rhyme,
 Where, for the time, the muse ne'er cares
 For siller, or sic guilefu' wares,
 Wi' whilk we drumly grow, and crabbit,
 Dour, capernoited, thrawin'-gabbit ;
 And brither, sister, friend, and fae,
 Without remeid of kindred, slay.
 You've seen me round the bickers reel
 Wi' heart as hale as temper'd steel,
 And face sae open, free, and blythe,
 Nor thought that sorrow there could kyth ;
 But the niest moment this was lost,
 Like gowan in December's frost.

Could prick-the-louse but be sae handy
 As mak the breeks and claes to stand aye.
 Through thick and thin wi' you I'd dash on,
 Nor mind the folly o' the fashion :
 But, hegh ! the times' *vicissitudo*
 Gars ither breeks decay, as you do.
 The macaronies, braw and windy,
 Maun fail—*Sic transit gloria mundi* !
 Now, speed you to some madam's chaumer
 That butt and ben rings dule and clamour ;
 Ask her, in kindness, if she seeks
 In hidling ways to wear the breeks.
 Safe you may dwell, though mould and motty,
 Beneath the veil o' under-coatie :
 For this, mair fau'ts nor yours can screen •
 Frae lover's quickest sense, his een.

Or, if some bard, in lucky times,
 Should profit meikle by his rhymes,
 And pace awa', wi' smirky face,
 In siller or in gowden lace,

Glowr in his face, like spectre gaunt,
Remind him o' his former want,
To cow his daffin' and his pleasure,
And gar him live within the measure.

So Philip, it is said, who would ring
Ower Macedon a just and gude king,
Fearing that power might plume his feather,
And bid him stretch beyond the tether,
Ilk morning to his lug would ca'
A tiny servant o' his ha',
To tell him to improve his span,
For Philip was, like him, a man.

MY LAST WILL.

WHILE sober folks, in humble prose,
Estate, and goods, and gear dispose,
A poet surely may disperse
His moveables in doggerel verse ;
And fearing death my blood will fast chill,
I hereby constitute my last Will.

Then, wit ye me to have made o'er
To Nature my poetic lore ;
To her I give and grant the freedom
Of paying to the bards who need 'em
As many talents as she gave,
When I became the Muse's slave.

Thanks to the gods, who made me poor,
No lukewarm friends molest my door,
Who always show a busy care
For being legatee or heir.
Of this stamp none will ever follow
The youth that's favour'd by Apollo.

But to those few who know my case,
Nor thought a poet's friend disgrace,

The following trifles I bequeath,
 And leave them with my kindest breath ;
 Nor will I burden them with payment
 Of debts incurr'd, or coffin raiment.
 As yet 'twas never my intent
 To pass an Irish compliment.

To Jamie Rae,* who oft *jocosus*
 With me partook of cheering doses,
 I leave my snuff-box, to regale
 His senses after drowsy meal,
 And wake remembrance of a friend
 Who loved him to his latter end :
 But if this pledge should make him sorry,
 And argue like *memento mori*,
 He may bequeath't 'mong stubborn fellows
 To all the finer feelings callous,
 Who think that parting breath's a sneeze
 To set sensations all at ease.

To Oliphant,† my friend, I legate
 Those scrolls poetic which he may get,
 With ample freedom to correct
 Those writs I ne'er could retrospect ;
 With power to him and his succession
 To print and sell a new impression :
 And here I fix on Ossian's head
 A domicile for Doric reed,
 With as much power *ad musæ bona*
 As I *in propria persona*.

To Hamilton ‡ I give the task
 Outstanding debts to crave and ask ;
 And that my Muse he may not dub ill,
 For loading him with so much trouble,
 My debts I leave him *singulatim*,
 As they are mostly *desperatim*.

* Solicitor at law, and the poet's intimate friend.

† Late bookseller in Edinburgh.

‡ Solicitor at law, and the poet's intimate friend.

To Woods * whose genius can provoke
 His passions to the bowl or sock ;
 For love to thee, and to the Nine,
 Be my immortal Shakspeare thine.
 Here may you through the alleys turn,
 Where Falstaff laughs, where heroes mourn,
 And boldly catch the glowing fire
 That dwells in raptures on his lyre.

Now, at my dirge (if dirge there be),
 Due to the Muse and poetry,
 Let Hutchison † attend ; for none is
 More fit to guide the ceremonies :
 As I, in health, with him would often
 This clay-built mansion wash and soften,
 So let my friends with him partake
 The gen'rous wine at dirge or wake.

And I consent to registration
 Of this my Will for preservation,
 That patent it may be, and seen,
 In Walter's ‡ *Weekly Magazine*.
 Witness whereof, these presents wrote are
 By William Blair, the public notar,
 And, for the tremor of my hand,
 Are sign'd by him at my command.

His
 R. + F,
 Mark.

CODICIL

TO ROB. FERGUSSON'S LAST WILL.

WHEREAS, by test'ment, dated blank,
 Enroll'd in the poetic rank,
 'Midst brighter themes that weekly come

* An esteemed actor in Edinburgh, and an intimate friend of the poet.

† A tavern-keeper.

‡ Walter Ruddiman, publisher of the *Weekly Magazine*, the serial work in which most of Fergusson's poems appeared.

To make parade at Walter's drum,
I there, for certain weighty causes,
Produc'd some kind bequeathing clauses,
And left to friends (as 'tis the custom
With nothing till our death to trust 'em)
Some tokens of a pure regard
From one who lived and died a Bard.

If poverty has any crime in
Teaching mankind the art of rhymin',
Then, by these presents, know all mortals,
Who come within the Muses' portals,
That I approve my will aforesaid,
But think that something might be more said ;
And only now would humbly seek
The liberty to add and eke
To test'ment which already made is,
And duly register'd, as said is.

To Tulloch,* who, in kind compassion,
Departed from the common fashion,
And gave to me, who never paid it,
Two flasks of port upon my credit,
I leave the flasks, as full of air
As his of ruddy moisture were ;
Nor let him to complain begin,
He'll get no more of cat than skin.

To Walter Ruddiman, whose pen
Still screen'd me from the dunce's den,
I leave of phiz a picture, saving
To him the freedom of engraving
Therefrom a copy, to embellish,
And give his work a smarter relish ;
For prints and frontispieces bind do
Our eyes to stationery window,
As superfluities in clothes
Set off and signalise the beaux.
Not that I think in reader's eyes
My visage will be deem'd a prize ;

* A wine merchant.

But works that others would outrival,
 At glaring copperplates connive all;
 And prints do well with him that led is
 To shun the substance, hunt the shadows;
 For, if a picture, 'tis enough—
 A Newton, or a Jamie Duff.*
 Nor would I recommend to Walter
 This scheme of copperplates to alter;
 Since others at the samen prices
 Propose to give a dish that nice is,
 Folks will desert his ordinary,
 Unless, like theirs, his dishes vary.

To Williamson,† and his resetters,
 Dispersing of the burial letters,
 That they may pass with little cost
 Fleet on the wings of penny-post;
 Always providing and declaring,
 That Peter shall be ever sparing
 To make, as use is, the demand
 For letters that may come to hand,
 To me addressed while *locum tenens*
 Of earth and of corporeal penance;
 Where, if he fail, it is my will,
 His legacy is void and null.

Let honest Greenlaw‡ be the staff
 On which I lean for epitaph,
 And that the Muses, at my end,
 May know I had a learned friend,
 Whate'er of character he's seen
 In me, through humour or chagrin,
 I crave his genius may narrate in
 The strength of Ciceronian Latin.

* A fool who attended at funerals. A drawing of his curious phiz is preserved in *Kay's Edinburgh Portraits*.

† The penny-post master. See note to "The Rising of the Session."

‡ An excellent classical scholar, yet evidently a bit of an eccentric. His funeral letters, at his own dying request, were written in Latin. He appears not to have discharged the friendly duty bequeathed to him by the poet.

Reserving to myself the power
 To alter this at latest hour,
Cum privilegio revocare,
 Without assigning *ratio quare* :
 And I (as in the Will before did)
 Consent this deed shall be recorded :
In testimonium cujus rei,
 These presents are deliver'd by
R. FERGUSON.

EPISTLE TO MR. ROBERT FERGUSON.

Is Allan * risen frae the dead,
 Wha aft has tuned the aiten reed,
 And by the Muses was decreed
 To grace the thistle ?
 Na—Fergusson's come in his stead,
 To blaw the whistle.

In troth, my callant, I'm sae fain
 To read your sonsy, canty strain ;
 You write sic easy style, and plain,
 And words sae bonnie ;
 Nae southron loun dare you disdain,
 Or cry, " Fye on ye ! "

Whae'er has at Auld Reekie been,
 And king's birth-days' exploits has seen
 Maun own that ye hae gien a keen
 And true description ;
 Nor say, ye've at Parnassus been
 To form a fiction.

Hale be your heart, ye canty chield !
 May ye ne'er want a gude warm bield,

* Allan Ramsay.

And sic gude cakes as Scotland yields,
 And ilka dainty
That grows or feeds upon her fields,
 And whisky plenty !

But ye, perhaps, thirst mair for fame
Than a' the gude things I can name ;
And then, ye will be fair to blame
 My gude intention ;
For that ye needna gae frae hame,
 You've sic pretension.

Sae saft and sweet your verses jingle,
And your auld words sae meetly mingle,
'Twill gar baith married fook and single
 To roose your lays ;
When we forgather round the ingle,
 We'll chant your praise.

When I again Auld Reekie see,
And can forgather, lad, wi' thee,
Then we, wi' meikle mirth and glee,
 Shall tak a gill,
And o' your caller oysters we
 Shall eat our fill.

If sic a thing should you betide,
To Berwick town to tak a ride,
I'se tak ye up Tweed's bonny side
 Before ye settle,
And shaw you there the fisher's pride,
 A Sa'mon-kettle.

There lads and lasses do convey,
To feast and dance upo' the green ;
And there sic brav'ry may be seen
 As will confound ye,
And gar you glowr out baith your een
 At a' around ye.

To see sae mony bosoms bare,
 And sic huge puddins i' their hair,
 And some o' them wi' naething mair,
 Upo' their tete ;
 Yea, some wi' mutches that might scare
 Craws frae their meat.

I ne'er appear'd before in print,
 But, for your sake, wad fain be in't,
 E'en that I might my wishes hint
 That you'd write mair ;
 For sure your head-piece is a mint
 Where wit's nae rare.

Sonse fa' me, gif I hadna 'lure
 I could command ilk muse as sure,
 Than hae a chariot at the door
 To wait upo' me ;
 Though, poet-like, I'm but a poor
 Mid-Louthian Johnny.

J. S.

*Berwick, August 31, 1772. **

ANSWER TO MR. J. S.'S EPISTLE.

I TROW, my mettled Louthian lathie !
 Auld-farran birkie, I maun ca' thee ;
 For when in gude black print I saw thee,
 Wi' souple gab
 I skirl'd fu' loud, " Oh, wae befa' thee !
 But thou'rt a daub."

Awa', ye wily fleetchin' fallow !
 The rose shall grow like gowan yellow,

* Until the appearance of Dr. Grosart's edition of Fergusson, in 1851, this date was erroneously printed as 1773.

Before I turn sae toom and shallow,
 And void o' fushion,
 As a' your butter'd words to swallow
 In vain delusion.

Ye mak my Muse a dautit pet ;
 But gin she could like Allan's met,
 Or couthy cracks and hamely get
 Upo' her carritch,
 Eithly wad I be in your debt
 A pint o' parritch.

At times, when she may lowse her pack,
 I'll grant that she can find a knack
 To gar auld-warld wordies clack
 In hamespun rhyme,
 While ilk ane at his billy's back
 Keeps gude Scots time.

But she maun e'en be glad to jook,
 And play teet-bo frae nook to nook,
 Or blush, as gin she had the yook
 Upo' her skin,
 When Ramsay or when Pennicuik
 Their liltis begin.

At mornin' ear', or late at e'en,
 Gin ye sud hap to come and see ane,
 Nor niggard wife, nor greetin' wee ane,
 Within my cloyster,
 Can challenge you and me frae prairie'
 A caller oyster.

Hegh, lad ! it would be news indeed
 Were I to ride to bonny Tweed,
 Wha ne'er laid gamon owre a steed
 Beyont Lusterrick ; *
 And auld shanks-naig would tire, I dread,
 To pace to Berwick.

* The village of Restalrig.

You crack weel o' your lasses there :
 Their glancin' een, and brisket bare ;
 But, though this town be smeekeit sair,
 I'll wad a farden,
 Than ours there's nane mair fat and fair,
 Cravin' your pardon.

Gin heaven should gie the earth a drink,
 And afterhend a sunny blink,
 Gin ye were here, I'm sure you'd think
 It worth your notice,
 To see them dubs and gutters jink
 Wi' kiltit coaties.

And frae ilk corner o' the nation
 We've lasses eke o' recreation,
 That at close-mou's tak up their station
 By ten o'clock :—
 The Lord deliver frae temptation
 A' honest fouk !

Thir queans are aye upo' the catch
 For pursie, pocket-book, or watch,
 And can sae glib their leesins hatch,
 That you'll agree,
 Ye canna eithly meet their match
 'Tween you and me.

For this gude sample o' your skill
 I'm restin' you a pint o' yill,
 By and attour a Highland gill
 O' *aqua vitæ* ;
 The which to come and sock at will
 I here invite ye.

Though jillet Fortune scowl and quarrel,
 And keep me frae a bien beef barrel,
 As lang's I've twopence i' the warl'
 I'll aye be vokie
 To part a fadge or girdle farl
 Wi' Louthian Jockie.

Fareweel, my cock ! lang may you thrive,
 Weel happit in a cozy hive ;
 And that your saul may never dive
 To Acheron,
 I'll wish, as lang's I can subscribe
 ROB. FERGUSSON.

ANDREW GRAY TO ROBERT FERGUSSON.*

DEAR R., I e'en maun dip my pen,
 But how to write I dinna ken ;
 For learning, I got fient a grain,
 To tell me how
 To write to ony gentleman
 Sic like as you.

How blyth am I when I do see
 A piece o' your fine poetrie,
 It gars me laugh fu' merrilie,
 Because there's nane
 That gies sic great insight to me,
 As yours itlane.

* This, with Fergusson's reply to it, and a second epistle from "Andrew Gray," which follows, appeared originally in the *Perth Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, published by the famous Morrisons of Perth, in 1773. R. Morrison, Junr., for R. Morrison and Son, printed an edition of Fergusson's Poems, in 1788, which embraces the first portrait of the poet that appeared anywhere. "Andrew Gray," as well as "Whistleha'" and "Coolsa," mentioned in the fifth stanza here, are assumed names. It is understood that "Andrew" was the wise and facetious William Toshack, Surgeon, Perth, with whom Fergusson was on terms of intimacy. The witty doctor's grave, it may be remarked, is still discernible in Greyfriars burying ground in Perth, by virtue of an inscription on the family stone which was caused to be engraved to his memory "by his only surviving grandson, William Briggs, in Alloa, the lawful son of Margaret Toshack, his eldest daughter," in 1826. Toshack died in 1772, a year, as will be seen, before the epistles appeared in print. Fergusson composed an epitaph for him, which may be seen towards the end, among the English pieces, in this volume.

Trouth, Fergusson, I'm very shier,
 (Therefore I think I need na spier)
 That ye dwalt ance abien the mier,
 For ye do crack
 The very same way we do here
 At Almond back.

Ye've English plain enough, nae doubt,
 And Latin, too, but ye do suit
 Your lines, to fock that's out about,
 'Mang hills and braes :
 This is the thing that gars me shout
 Sae loud your praise.

Gin ever ye come here awa'
 I hope ye'll be sae gude as ca'
 For Andrew Gray, at Whistleha',
 The riddle macker,
 About a rig-length frae Coolsa,
 Just o'er the water.

We's treat ye, lad, for doing sae weel,
 Wi' bannocks o' gude barley meal,
 And wi' as mony cabbage kail
 As ye can tak :
 And twa-three chappins o' gude ale,
 To gar ye crack.

Whan this ye see, tak up your pen
 And write word back to me again :
 And fou you are, mind lat me ken
 Without delay ;
 To hear ye're weel, I'll be right fain :
 Yours, ANDREW GRAY.

ANSWER TO ANDREW GRAY.

NAE langer byegane than the streen,
 Your couthy letter met my een ;
 I lang to wag a cutty speen
 On Almond water ;
 And claw the lips o' truncher tree'n
 And tak a clatter.

"Frae Whistleha'" your muse doth cry ;
 Whare'er ye win I carena bye :
 Ye're no the laird o' Whistledry,
 As lang's ye can
 Wi' routh o' reekin kail supply
 The inward man.

You'll trow me, billy, kail's fu' geed
 To synd an' peerify the bleid ;
 'Twill rin like ony scarlet reid,
 While patt ye put on
 Wi' wethers that round Almond feed,
 The primest mutton.

Ane wad maist think ye'd been at Scoon,
 Whan kings wore there the Scottish Crown ;
 A soupler or mair fletching loun
 Ne'er hap'd on hurdies,
 Whan courtiers' tongues war there in tune
 For oily wordies.

Can you nae ither theme divine
 To blaw upon, but my engyne ?
 At Nature keek, she's unco fine
 Redd up, and braw :
 An can gie scouth to muses nine
 At Whistleha'.

Her road awhile is rough an' round,
 An' few poetic gowans found ;
 The stey braes o' the Muses' ground
 We scarce can crawl up ;
 But on the tap we re light as wind
 To scour an' gallop.

Whan first ye sey'd to mak a riddle,
 You'd hae an unco fike an' piddle,
 An' aiblins brak aff i' the middle,
 Like Sanny Butler ; *
 'Tis e'en sae wi' Apollo's fiddle,
 Before we wit lear.

Then flegna at this weary practice,
 That's tane to get this wyly nack nice ;
 The eident Muse begins to crack wise,
 An' ne'er cry dule :
 It's idle-seat, that banefu' black vice,
 That gars her cool.

Andrew, at Whistleha', your een
 May lippen for me very sien,
 For barley scones my grinders grien,
 They're special eating ;
 Wi' bizzzen cogs that ream abien
 Our thrapple weeting.

Till than may you haud hale and fier,
 That we to Maltman's browst may steer,
 And ilka care and ilka fear
 To dog-drive ding ;
 While cheek for chow we laugh and jeer
 And crack and sing.

R. FERGUSSON.

EDINBURGH, *June 23rd*, 1773.

* An allusion, doubtless, to the uncompleted but brilliant poem of "Hudibras."

ANDREW GRAY TO ROBERT FERGUSSON.

SECOND EPISTLE.

AT twall a' clock, ae Saturday,
 Your letter came to Andrew Gray ;
 But, weel a wat, I canna say,
 Nor can I tell ye,
 How blyth I was a' that hale day,
 Tho' you sud fell me.

The riddles they got leave to stand,
 To them I wadna pit a hand,
 Nor wad I split a single wand,
 For twonty pund ;
 Nor to the cow, worth, make a band,
 I was sae fond.

Ye say ye lang to wag a speen
 Wi' Andrew Gray, your couthy frien' ;
 Whilk gar'd me dance upo' the green,
 Without a fiddle :
 Your canty letter was the tien
 That gar'd me diddle.

But fatfor did ye yon way blaw,
 An' me sae fine and souple ca' ?
 I'm very shier, there's nane ava
 O' yon that's true ;
 There's nae ane stays in Whistleha'
 Can equal you.

Ye bade me, too, at Nature keek ;
 I wonder that ye yon way speak,
 Gied fieth, it's nae into the breek
 O' Andrew Gray :
 A fouishenless and silly leek,
 Nae worth a strae.

Whan first I sey'd the riddle makin',
 The splits they aften took a brakin',
 And mony time pat me frae crackin';
 Yet soon I grew,
 That I, as clever's eel or maukin,
 About them flew.

But Nature, lad, is nae for me,
 For her my een right canna see,
 I canna touch her after thee,
 Nor sall I meddle;
 Just jog on at the sauchen tree,
 And mak a riddle.

O' Whistledry I'm nae the laird,
 For I o' a' thing am weel said;
 And tho' I say't, the fint a shaird,
 A' here awa',
 Has ought within't to be compar'd
 Wi' Whistleha'.

Whan ye come up to Whistleha',
 A good fat wether hame I'll ca',
 And a' the beastly bleed I'll draw,
 Afore he die,
 And gar Meg mak him ready a'
 For you and me.

Syne to the browster house we'll drive,
 And drink till we be like to rive,
 And gin ye like, lad, we sall strive
 Wha's best at singin';
 And keep our spirits a' alive
 Wi' music ringin'.

O! vow! how happy will we be,
 Whan ane anither's face we see,
 I'm vera shier that as for me,
 I winna ken'
 Fat end o' me will imost be,
 I'll be sae fain.

ANDREW GRAY.

THE LAUREL DISPUTED;
OR, THE MERITS OF ALLAN RAMSAY AND ROBERT
FERGUSSON CONTRASTED.

Delivered in the Pantheon, at Edinburgh, on Thursday, 14th April, 1791, on the question—"Whether have the exertions of Allan Ramsay or Robert Fergusson done more honour to Scotch poetry?"

BY ALEXANDER WILSON,
Author of "Watty and Meg."*

BEFORE ye a' hae done, I'd humbly crave,
To speak two words or three amang the lave;
No for mysel', but for an honest carl,
Wha's seen right mony changes i' the warl',
But is sae blate, down here he durstna come,
Lest, as he said, his fears might ding him dumb;
And then he's frail—sae begged me to repeat
His simple thoughts about this fell debate;
He gied me this lang scroll; 'tis e'en right, brown;
I'se let you hear't as he has set it down.

*Seven speakers, it appears, took part in this memorable debate, which was convened by a printed advertisement, set out on the walls of Edinburgh; "a daud o' goud" being the reward,

"To him wha'd show, in clinking verses drest,
Gin Ramsay's songs or Fergusson's war best."

All took the side of Ramsay but Wilson, who, although his poem received the approbation of the audience, and by those best able to judge was esteemed the highest in literary quality of all the seven delivered, had yet to yield the prize, by seventeen votes of the meeting, to a Mr. Cumming, who was accused of gaining a majority by bribery. Tickets of admission, which cost sixpence each, were bought and distributed in abundance. The award was to be made by a vote of the audience; and to secure the majority which he actually attained, Cumming, it was said, purchased alone forty tickets, which he presented to ladies of his acquaintance, merely that they might attend and vote for him. Although Wilson's poem was likely the best, however, it is significant in the relation that all the other contestants stood for Ramsay; and the piece is placed here with no view of influencing the reader, but merely as a bit of interesting verse relating to Fergusson, which reveals to some extent how he stood in the public estimation in 1791.

Last owk, our Elspa wi' some creels o' eggs,
And three fat eerocks fassent by the legs,
Gaed down to Emburgh; caft a new bane-kame,
An' brocht a warl' o' news and clashes hame :
For she's scarce out a day, an' gets a text,
But I'm dung deaf wi' clatter a the next ;
She'll tell a' what she heard frae en' to en',
Her cracks to wives, wives' cracks to her again ;
Till wi' quo' I's, quo' she's, an' so's, her skirle
Sets my twa lugs a ringing like a gir'le.

'Mang ither ferlies whilk my kimmer saw,
Was your prent paper batter't on the wa' ;
She said she kentna rightly what it meant,
But saw some words o' goud an' poets in't !
This gart me glour ; sae aff sets I my lane
To Daniel Reid's, an auld frien' o' my ain ;
He gets the News, and tauld me that ye'd hecht
A dawd o' goud, on this same Fursday night,
To him wha'd show, in clinking verses drest,
Gin Ramsay's sangs or Fergusson's war best.

Trouth, I was glad to hear ye war sae kind,
As keep our slee-tongu'd billies in your mind ;
An' tho' our Elspa ca'd me mony a gouk,
To think to speak amang sae mony fouk ;
I gat my staff, pat on my bonnet braid,
An' best blue breeks, that war but fern-year made ;
A saxpence too, to let me in bedeen,
An' thir auld spentacles to help my een ;
Sae I'm come here, in houps ye'll a' agree,
To hear a frank auld kintra man like me.

In days when Dryden sang ilk bonny morn,
An' Sandy Pope began to tune his horn ;
Whan chiels round Lon'on chanted a' fu' thrang,
But poor auld Scotlan' sat withoot a sang ;
Droll Will Dunbar, frae Flyting then was freed,
An' Douglas, too, an' Kennedy were dead ;

And nane were left, in hamely cracks to praise
Our ain sweet lasses, or our ain green braes ;
Far aff our gentles for their poets flew,
An' scorn'd to own that Lallan sangs they knew ;
Till Ramsay raise : O blythsome, hearty days !
Whan Allan tun'd his chaunter on the braes !
Auld Reekie than, frae blackest, darkest wa's
To richest rooms resounded his applause ;
An' whan the nights were dreary, lang, an' dark,
The beasts a' fothert, an' the lads frae wark ;
The lasses' wheels thrang birring round the ingle,
The ploughman, borin' wi' his brogs an' lingel,
The herd's wires clicking ow'r the half-wrought hose,
The auld gudeman's een ha'fins like to close ;
The " Gentle Shepherd " frae the bole was ta'en,—
Then sleep, I trow, was banished frae their een ;
The crankiest then was kittled up to daffin',
An' sides and chafts maist riven war wi' laughin'.

Sic war the joys his crack could eith afford
To peer an' ploughman, barrowman, or lord ;
In ilka clachan, wife, man, wean, an' callan,
Cracket an' sang frae morn to e'en o' Allan.

Learn'd fouk, that lang in colleges an' schools,
Hae sooket learning to the vera hools,
An' think that naething charms the heart sae weel's
Lang cracks o' gods, Greeks, Paradise, and deils ;
Their pows are cram't sae fu' o' lear an' art,
Plain simple nature canna reach their heart ;
But whare's the rustic that can, readin', see
Sweet Peggy skiffin' ow'r the dewy lee ;
Or wishfu' stealin' up the sunny howe
To gaze on Pate, laid sleeping on the knowe ;
Or hear how Bauldy ventur'd to the deil,
How thrawn auld carlines skelpit him afiel',
How Jude wi's hawk met Satan i' the moss,
How Skin-flint grain't his pocks o' goud to loss ;
How bloody snouts an' bloody beards war gi'en
To smiths and clowns at " Christ's Kirk on the
Green ; "

How twa daft herds, wi' little sense or havings,
Dined by the road, on honest Hawkie's leavings ;
How Hab maist brak the priest's back wi' a rung,
How deathless Addie died, an' how he sung ;
Whae'er can thae (o' mae I needna speak)
Read tenty ow'r, at his ain ingle-cheek ;
An' no fin' something glowan thro' his blood,
That gars his een glowr thro' a siller flood ;
May close the beuk, poor coof ! and lift his spoon ;
His heart's as hard's the tackets in his shoon.

Lang saxty years ha'e whiten't ow'r this powe,
An' mony a height I've seen, an' mony a howe ;
But aye whan Elspa flate, or things gaed wrang,
Next to my pipe was Allie's sleekit sang ;
I thought him blyther ilka time I read,
An' mony a time, wi' unco glee I've said,
That ne'er in Scotland wad a chiel appear
Sae droll, sae hearty, sae confoundet queer,
Sae glibly-gabbet, or sae bauld again,—
I said, I swor't—but deed I was mistaen :
Up frae Auld Reekie, Fergusson begoud,
In fell auld phrase that pleases aye the crowd,
To cheer their hearts whiles wi' an antrin sang,
Whilk far an' near round a' the kintry rang.

At first I thought the swankie didna ill,
Again, I glowrt to hear him better still ;
Bauld, slee and sweet, his lines mair glorious grew,
Glow'd round the heart, and glanc'd the soul out-thro' ;
But whan I saw the freaks o' Hallow Fair,
Brought a' to view as plain as I'd been there ;
An' heard, wi' teeth maist chatterin i' my head,
Twa kirk-yard ghaists rais'd goustly frae the dead ;
Dais'd Sandy greetan' for his thriftless wife ;
How camscheuch Samy sud been fed in Fife ;
Poor Will an' Geordy mourning for their frien' ;
The Farmer's Ingle, an' the cracks at e'en ;
My heart cry'd out, while tears were drappan fast,
O Ramsay, Ramsay, art thou beat at last ?

Ae nicht,—the lift was skinklin' a' wi' starns,—
 I cross'd the burn an' dauner't thro' the cairns,
 Down to auld Andrew Ralston's o' Craigneuk,
 To hear his thoughts, as he had seen the beuk :
 (Andrew's a gey droll haun—ye'll aiblins ken him?—
 It maksna, I had hecht some sangs to len' him).
 "Aweel," quo' I, as soon's I reek'd the hallan,
 "What think ye now o' our bit Em'burgh callan?"
 "Saf's, man," quo' Andrew, "yon's an unco chiel!
 He surely has some dealings wi' the diel!
 There's no' a turn that ony o' us can work at—
 At hame, or yet a-fiel', at kirk or market—
 But he describ'st as pawkily an' fell
 As gin he'd been a kintra man himsel'.
 Yestreen, I'm sure, beside our auld gudewife,
 I never leugh as meikle a' my life,
 To read the 'King's Birth-day's' fell hurry-burry,
 How draigl't pussey flies about like fury;
 Faith, I ken that's a fact. The last birth-day,
 As I stood glowring up an' down the way,
 A dead cat's guts, before I cou'd suspect,
 Harl't thro the dirt, cam clash about my neck;
 An' while, wi' baith my hauns, frae 'bout I tok it,
 Wi' perfect stink, I thought I wad a bocket.

"His stories, too, are tell't sae sleek an' baul',
 Ilk oily word rins jinking through the saul;
 What he describes, afore your een ye see't
 As plain an' lively as ye see that peat.
 It's my opinion, John, that this young fallow
 Excels them a', an' beats auld Allan hallow,
 An' shows at twenty-twa as great a giftie
 For painting just, as Allan did at fifty."

You, Mr. President, ken weel yersel',
 Better by far than kintra-fouks can tell,
 That they wha reach the gleg, auld-farrant art,
 In verse to melt, an' sooth, an' mend the heart;
 To raise up joy, or rage, or courage keen,
 And gar ilk passion sparkle in our een;

Sic chiels (whare'er they hae their ha' or hame)
 Are true-blue bards, and wordy o' the name.
 Sud ane o' thae, by lang experience, man
 To spin out tales frae mony a pawky plan,
 An' set's a' laughing at his blauds o' rhyme,
 Wi' sangs aft polish'd by the haun o' Time;
 And should some stripling, still mair light o' heart,
 A livelier humour to his cracks impart;
 Wi' careless pencil draw, yet gar us stare
 To see our ain fire-sides and meadows there;
 To see our thoughts, our hearts, our follies drawn,
 And Nature's sel' fresh starting frae his haun;
 Wad mony words, or speeches lang be needed,
 To tell whase rhymes war best, wha clearest-headed?

Sits there within the four wa's o' this house,
 Ae chield o' taste, droll, reprobate, or douse;
 Whase blessed lugs hae heard young Rob himsel'
 (Light as the lamb that dances on the dell)
 Lay aff his auld Scots crack wi' pawky glee,
 And seen the fire that darted frae his e'e?
 O let him speak! O let him try t' impart
 The joys that than gushed headlang on his heart,
 Whan ilka line, and ilka lang-syne glowr,
 Set faes an' friends and Pantheons in a roar!
 Did e'er auld Scotland fin' a nobler pride
 Through a' her veins, and glowan bosom glide,
 Than whan her Muses' dear young fav'rite bard,
 Wi' her hale strength o' wit and fancy fir'd,
 Raise frae the thrang, and, kin'ling at the sound,
 Spread mirth, conviction, truth, and rapture round?

To set Rob's youth and inexperience by,—
 His lines are sweeter, and his flights mair high;
 Allan, I own, may show far mair o' art,
 Rob pours at once his raptures on the heart;
 The first, by labour mans our breast to move,
 The last exalts to ecstasy and love;
 In Allan's verse, sage sleeness we admire,
 In Rob's, the glow of fancy and of fire,

And genius bauld, that nought but deep distress,
And base neglect, and want, could e'er suppress.

O hard, hard fate !—but cease, thou friendly tear,
I darna mourn my dear lo'ed Bardie here,
Else I might tell how his great soul had soar'd,
And nameless ages wonder'd and ador'd ;
Had friends been kind, and had not his young breath
And rising glory, been eclipsed by Death.

But lest ow'r lang I lengthen out my crack,
An' Epps be wearying for my coming back ;
Let ane an' a' here vote as they incline,
Frae heart and saul Rob Fergusson has mine.

POEMS IN ENGLISH.

Pastorals.*

PASTORAL I.—MORNING.

DAMON, ALEXIS.

DAMON.

AURORA now her welcome visit pays :
Stern darkness flies before her cheerful rays ;
Cool circling breezes whirl along the air,
And early shepherds to the fields repair :
Lead we our flocks, then, to the mountain's brow,
Where junipers and thorny brambles grow ;
Where founts of water 'midst the daisies spring,
And soaring larks and tuneful linnets sing ;
Your pleasing song shall teach our flocks to stray,
While sounding echoes smooth the sylvan lay.

ALEXIS.

'Tis thine to sing the graces of the morn,
The zephyr trembling o'er the ripening corn ;
'Tis thine with ease to chaunt the rural lay,
While bubbling fountains to your numbers play.

* These appeared anonymously in Ruddiman's *Weekly Magazine*, with the following note prefixed :—" We have been favoured with three Pastorals, under the titles Morning, Noon, and Night, written by a young Gentleman of this place, the style of which appears as natural and picturesque as that of any of the modern ones hitherto published."

No piping swain that treads the verdant field,
But to your music and your verse must yield :
Sing then—for here we may with safety keep
Our sportive lambkins on this mossy steep.

DAMON.

With ruddy glow the sun adorns the land ;
The pearly dew-drops on the bushes stand ;
The lowing oxen from the folds we hear ;
And snowy flocks upon the hills appear.

ALEXIS.

How sweet the murmurs of the neighbouring rill !
Sweet are the slumbers which its floods distil,
Through pebbly channels winding as they run,
And brilliant sparkling to the rising sun.

DAMON.

Behold Edina's lofty turrets rise !
Her structures fair adorn the eastern skies ;
As Pentland's cliffs o'ertop yon distant plain,
So she the cities on our north domain.

ALEXIS.

Boast not of cities, or of lofty towers,
Where discord all her baneful influence pours ;
The homely cottage and the wither'd tree,
With sweet content, shall be preferr'd by me.

DAMON.

The hemlock dire shall please the heifer's taste,
Our lands like wild Arabia be waste,
The bee forget to range for winter's food,
Ere I forsake the forest and the flood.

ALEXIS.

Ye balmy breezes ! wave the verdant field ;
Clouds ! all your bounties, all your moisture yield ;

That fruits and herbage may our farms adorn,
And furrow'd ridges teem with loaded corn.

DAMON.

The year already hath propitious smil'd ;
Gentle in spring-time, and in summer mild ;
No cutting blasts have hurt my tender dams ;
No hoary frosts destroy'd my infant lambs.

ALEXIS.

If Ceres crown with joy the bounteous year,
A sacred altar to her shrine I'll rear ;
A vigorous ram shall bleed, whose curling horns
His wooly neck and hardy front adorns.

DAMON.

Teach me, oh Pan ! to tune the slender reed,
No favourite ram shall at thine altars bleed ;
Each breathing morn thy woodland verse I'll sing,
And hollow dens shall with the numbers ring.

ALEXIS.

Apollo ! lend me thy celestial lyre,
The woods in concert join at thy desire ;
At morn, at noon, at night, I'll tune the lay,
And bid fleet Echo bear the sound away.

DAMON.

Sweet are the breezes when cool eve returns,
To lowing herds, when raging Sirius burns :
Not half so sweetly winds the breeze along
As does the murmur of your pleasing song.

ALEXIS.

To hear your strains the cattle spurn their food,
The feather'd songsters leave their tender brood ;
Around your seat the silent lambs advance,
And scrambling he-goats on the mountain dance.

DAMON.

But haste, Alexis, reach yon leafy shade,
Which mantling ivy round the oaks hath made ;
There we'll retire, and list the warbling note
That flows melodious from the blackbird's throat ;
Your easy numbers shall his songs inspire,
And every warbler join the general choir.

PASTORAL II.—NOON.

CORYDON, TIMANTHES.

CORYDON.

THE sun the summit of his orb hath gain'd ;
No flecker'd clouds his azure path hath stain'd ;
Our pregnant ewes around us cease to graze,
Stung with the keenness of his sultry rays ;
The weary bullock from the yoke is led,
And youthful shepherds from the plains are fled
To dusky shades, where scarce a glimmering ray
Can dart its lustre through the leafy spray.
Yon cooling rivulet where the waters gleam,
Where springing flowers adorn the limpid stream,
Invites us where the drooping willow grows,
To guide our flocks and take a cool repose.

TIMANTHES.

To thy advice a grateful ear I'll lend,
The shades I'll court where slender ozers bend ;
Our weanlings young shall crop the rising flower,
While we retire to yonder twining bower ;
The woods shall echo back thy cheerful strains,
Admired by all our Caledonian swains.

CORYDON.

There have I oft with gentle Delia stray'd
Amidst the embowering solitary shade,
Before the gods to thwart my wishes strove,
By blasting every pleasing glimpse of love :
For Delia wanders o'er the Anglian plains,
Where civil discord and sedition reigns.
There Scotia's sons in odious lights appear,
Though we for them have waved the hostile spear ;
For them my sire, enwrapp'd in curdled gore,
Breathed his last moments on a foreign shore.

TIMANTHES.

Six lunar months, my friend, will soon expire,
And she return to crown your fond desire.
For her, oh rack not your desponding mind !
In Delia's breast a generous flame's confined,
That burns for Corydon, whose piping lay
Hath caused the tedious moments steal away ;
Whose strains melodious moved the falling floods
To whisper Delia to the rising woods.

CORYDON.

Oft have I sung the blushes of the morn
When fair Aurora did the east adorn ;
But oft'ner sung my constant Delia's praise,
Her blush more comely than Aurora's rays.

TIMANTHES.

But could your sighs increase the floating gales
That favourably swell their lofty sails,
Ne'er should your sobs their rapid flights give o'er
Till Delia's presence graced our northern shore.

CORYDON.

Though Delia greet my love, I sigh in vain,
Such joy unbounded can I ne'er obtain.

Her sire a thousand fleeces numbers o'er,
And grassy hills increase his milky store,
While the weak fences of a scanty fold
Will all my sheep and fattening lambkins hold.

TIMANTHES.

Ah, hapless youth ! although the early Muse
Painted her semblance on thy youthful brows ;
Though she with laurels twined thy temples round,
And in thy ear distill'd the magic sound ;
A cheerless poverty attends your woes,
Your song melodious unrewarded flows.

CORYDON.

Think not, Timanthes, that for wealth I pine,
Though all the Fates to make me poor combine :
Tay, bounding o'er his banks with awful sway,
Bore all my corn and all my flocks away.
Of Jove's dread precepts did I e'er complain ?
E'er curse the rapid flood or dashing rain ?
Even now I sigh not for my former store,
But wish the gods had destined Delia poor.

TIMANTHES.

'Tis joy, my friend, to think I can repay
The loss you bore by autumn's rigid sway.
Yon fertile meadow where the daisies spring,
Shall yearly pasture to your heifers bring :
Your flock with mine shall on yon mountain feed,
Cheer'd by the warbling of your tuneful reed :
No more shall Delia's ever-fretful sire
Against your hopes and ardent love conspire.
Roused by her smiles, you'll tune the happy lay,
While hills responsive waft your songs away.

CORYDON.

May plenteous crops your irksome labour crown,
May hoodwink'd Fortune cease her envious frown ;

May riches still increase with growing years,
Your flocks be numerous as your silver hairs.

TIMANTHES.

But, lo! the heat invites us at our ease
To court the twining shades and cooling breeze ;
Our languid joints we'll peaceably recline,
And 'midst the flowers and opening blossoms dine.

PASTORAL III.—NIGHT.

AMYNTAS, FLORELLUS.

AMYNTAS.*

WHILE yet grey twilight does his empire hold,
Drive all our heifers to the peaceful fold ;
With sullied wing grim darkness soars along,
And larks to nightingales resign the song.

FLORELLUS.

The weary ploughman flies the waving fields,
To taste what fare his humble cottage yields ;
As bees, that daily through the meadows roam,
Feed on the sweets they have prepared at home.

AMYNTAS.

What awful silence reigns throughout the shade !
The peaceful olive bends his drooping head ;
No sound is heard o'er all the gloomy maze ;
Wide o'er the deep the fiery meteors blaze.

* Students of Fergusson will observe that the dialogue of this pastoral is set here in a manner different from that in which it appears in the general editions of the poet. According to Dr. Grosart, however—so far Fergusson's most careful editor—the style shown above is the original. It was mis-arranged, Dr. Grosart tells, in Ruddiman's volume of 1773, and in every subsequent edition, until the arrival of his own, in 1851.

FLORELLUS.

The grassy meads that smiled serenely gay,
Cheer'd by the ever-burning lamp of day,
In dusky hue attired, are cramp'd with colds,
And springing flowerets shut their crimson folds.

AMYNTAS.

The west, yet tinged with Sol's effulgent ray,
With feeble light illumines our homeward way;
The glowing stars with keener lustre burn,
While round the earth their glowing axles turn.

FLORELLUS.

What mighty power conducts the stars on high?
Who bids these comets through our system fly?
Who wafts the lightning to the icy pole,
And through our regions bids the thunders roll?

AMYNTAS.

But say, what mightier power from nought could
raise
The earth, the sun, and all that fiery maze
Of distant stars, that gild the azure sky,
And through the void in settled orbits fly?

FLORELLUS.

That righteous power, before whose heavenly eye
The stars are nothing, and the planets die;
Whose breath divine supports our mortal frame,
Who made the lion wild and lambkin tame.

AMYNTAS.

At his command the bounteous spring returns;
Hot summer, raging o'er the Atlantic, burns;
The yellow autumn crowns our sultry toil,
And winter's snows prepare the cumbrous soil.

FLORELLUS.

By him the morning darts his purple ray ;
To him the birds their early homage pay ;
With vocal harmony the meadows ring,
While swains in concert heavenly praises sing.

AMYNTAS.

Sway'd by his word, the nutrient dews descend,
And growing pastures to the moisture bend ;
The vernal blossoms sip his falling showers,
The meads are garnish'd with his opening flowers.

FLORELLUS.

For man, the object of his chiefest care,
Fowls he hath form'd to wing the ambient air ;
For him the steer his lusty neck doth bend,
Fishes for him their scaly fins extend.

AMYNTAS.

Wide o'er the orient sky the moon appears,
A foe to darkness and his idle fears ;
Around her orb the stars in clusters shine,
And distant planets 'tend her silver shrine.

FLORELLUS.

Hush'd are the busy members of the day,
On downy couch they sleep their hours away.
Hail, balmy sleep, that soothes the troubled mind !
Lock'd in thy arms our cares a refuge find.
Oft do you tempt us with delusive dreams,
When wildering fancy darts her dazzling beams ;
Asleep, the lover with his mistress strays
Through lonely thickets and untrodden ways ;
But when pale Cynthia's sable empire's fled,
And hovering slumbers shun the morning bed,
Roused by the dawn, he wakes with frequent sigh,
And all his flattering visions quickly fly.

AMYNTAS.

Now owls and bats infest the midnight scene,
Dire snakes, envenom'd, twine along the green :
Forsook by man the rivers mourning glide,
And groaning echoes swell the noisy tide.
Straight to our cottage let us bend our way,
My drowsy powers confess sleep's magic sway.
Easy and calm upon our couch we'll lie,
While sweet reviving slumbers round our pillows fly.

THE COMPLAINT.

A PASTORAL.

NEAR the heart of a fair spreading grove,
Whose foliage shaded the green,
A shepherd, repining at love,
In anguish was heard to complain :—

“ Oh Cupid ! thou wanton young boy !
Since, with thy invisible dart,
Thou hast robb'd a fond youth of his joy,
In return grant the wish of his heart.

“ Send a shaft so severe from thy bow
(His pining, his sighs to remove),
That Stella, once wounded, may know
How keen are the arrows of love.

“ No swain once so happy as I,
Nor tuned with more pleasure the reed ;
My breast never vented a sigh,
Till Stella approach'd the gay mead.

“ With mirth, with contentment endow'd,
My hours they flew wantonly by ;
I sought no repose in the wood,
Nor from my few sheep would I fly.

“ Now my reed I have carelessly broke,
Its melody pleases no more :
I pay no regard to a flock
That seldom hath wander'd before.

“ Oh Stella ! whose beauty so fair
Excels the bright splendour of day,
Ah ! have you no pity to share
With Damon thus fall'n to decay ?

“ For you have I quitted the plain,
Forsaken my sheep and my fold :
For you in dull languor and pain
My tedious moments are told.

“ For you have my roses grown pale ;
They have faded untimely away :
And will not such beauty bewail
A shepherd thus fall'n to decay ?

“ Since your eyes still requite me with scorn,
And kill with their merciless ray ;
Like a star at the dawning of morn,
I fall to their lustre a prey.

“ Some swain who shall mournfully go
To whisper love's sigh to the shade,
Will haply some charity show,
And under the turf see me laid :

“ Would my love but in pity appear
On the spot where he moulds my cold grave,
And bedew the green sod with a tear,
’Tis all the remembrance I crave.”

To the sward then his visage he turn'd ;
’Twas wan as the lilies in May ;
Fair Stella may see him inurn'd—
He hath sigh'd all his sorrows away.

THE DECAY OF FRIENDSHIP.

A PASTORAL ELEGY.

WHEN Gold, man's sacred deity, did smile,
My friends were plenty, and my sorrows few ;
Mirth, love, and bumpers, did my hours beguile,
And arrow'd Cupids round my slumbers flew.

What shepherd then could boast more happy days ?
My lot was envied by each humbler swain ;
Each bard in smooth eulogium sang my praise,
And Damon listen'd to the guileful strain.

Flattery ! alluring as the Syren's lay,
And as deceitful thy enchanting tongue,
How have you taught my wavering mind to stray,
Charm'd and attracted by the baneful song !

My pleasant cottage, shelter'd from the gale,
Arose, with moss and rural ivy bound ;
And scarce a floweret in my lowly vale
But was with bees of various colours crown'd.

Free o'er my lands the neighbouring flocks could roam ;
How welcome were the swains and flocks to me !
The shepherds kindly were invited home,
To chase the hours in merriment and glee.

To wake emotions in the youthful mind,
Strephon, with voice melodious, tuned the song ;
Each sylvan youth the sounding chorus join'd,
Fraught with contentment 'midst the festive throng.

My clustering grape compensated their magic skill ;
The bowl capacious swell'd in purple tide,
To shepherds, liberal as the crystal rill
Spontaneous gurgling from the mountain's side.

The shady arbour, and refreshing breeze,
In circling eddies, crown'd their noon-day toil ;
The sweets of rural elegance and ease,
Survey'd their pleasures with applauding smile.*

But, ah ! these youthful sportive hours are fled ;
These scenes of jocund mirth are now no more :
No healing slumbers 'tend my humble bed,
No friends condole the sorrows of the poor.

And what avail the thoughts of former joy ?
What comfort bring they in the adverse hour ?
Can they the canker-worm of care destroy,
Or brighten fortune's discontented lour ?

He who hath long traversed the fertile plain,
Where nature in its fairest vesture smiled,
Will he not cheerless view the fairy scene,
When lonely wandering o'er the barren wild ?

When, from the summit of a towering hill,
My seats of former happiness I spy,
The tears of sorrow o'er my cheeks distil,
While mournful thoughts the gushing streams supply.

For now pale poverty, with haggard eye
And rueful aspect, darts her gloomy ray ;
My wonted guests their proffer'd aid deny,
And from the paths of Damon steal away.

Thus, when fair summer's lustre gilds the lawn,
When ripening blossoms deck the spreading tree,
The birds with melody salute the dawn,
And o'er the daisy hangs the humming bee.

But when the beauties of the circling year
In chilling frosts and furious storms decay,
No more the bees upon the plains appear,
No more the warblers hail the infant day.

* This stanza has been generally omitted.

To the lone corner of some distant shore,
In dreary devious pilgrimage I'll fly,
And wander pensive, where deceit no more
Shall trace my footsteps with a mortal eye.

There solitary saunter o'er the beach,
And to the murmuring surge my griefs disclose ;
There shall my voice in plaintive wailings teach
The hollow caverns to resound my woes.

Sweet are the waters to the parched tongue ;
Sweet are the blossoms to the wanton bee ;
Sweet to the shepherd sounds the lark's shrill song ;
But sweeter far is solitude to me.

Adieu, ye fields, where I have fondly stray'd !
Ye swains, who once the favourite Damon knew ;
Farewell, ye sharers of my bounty's aid !
Ye sons of base ingratitude, adieu !

AGAINST REPINING AT FORTUNE.

THOUGH in my narrow bounds of rural toil
No obelisk or spendid column raise ;
Though partial fortune still averts her smile,
And views my labours with condemning eyes ;

Yet all the gorgeous vanity of state
I can contemplate with a cool disdain ;
Nor shall the honours of the gay and great
E'er wound my bosom with an envious pain.

Avails it aught the grandeur of their halls,
With all the glories of the pencil hung,
If truth, fair truth ! within the unhallow'd walls
Hath never whisper'd with her seraph tongue ?

Avails it aught, if music's gentle lay
 Hath oft been echoed by the sounding dome,
 If music cannot soothe their griefs away,
 Or change a wretched to a happy home ?

Though fortune should invest them with her spoils,
 And banish poverty with look severe—
 Enlarge their confines, and decrease their toils—
 Ah ! what avails, if she increase their care ?

Though fickle, she disclaim my moss-grown cot,
 Nature ! thou look'st with more impartial eyes :
 Smile thou, fair goddess ! on my sober lot ;
 I'll neither fear her fall nor court her rise.

When early larks shall cease the matin song ;
 When Philomel at night resigns her lays ;
 When melting numbers to the owl belong—
 Then shall the reed be silent in thy praise.

Can he who with the tide of fortune sails,
 More pleasure from the sweets of nature share ?
 Do zephyrs waft him more ambrosial gales,
 Or do his groves a gayer livery wear ?

To me the heavens unveil as pure a sky ;
 To me the flowers as rich a bloom disclose ;
 The morning beams as radiant to my eye ;
 And darkness guides me to a sweet repose.

If luxury their lavish dainties piles,
 And still attends upon their fated hours,
 Doth health reward them with her open smiles,
 Or exercise enlarge their feeble powers ?

'Tis not in richest mines of Indian gold,
 That man this jewel, happiness, can find,
 If his unfeeling breast, to virtue cold,
 Denies her entrance to his ruthless mind

Wealth, pomp, and honour, are but gaudy toys—
Alas, how poor the pleasures they impart !
Virtue's the sacred source of all the joys
That claim a lasting mansion in the heart.

CONSCIENCE.

AN ELEGY.

———Leave her to heaven,
And to the thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her.—SHAKSPEARE.

No chiring warblers flutter in the sky ;
Phœbus no longer holds his radiant sway ;
While nature, with a melancholy eye,
Bemoans the loss of his departed ray.

Oh happy he, whose conscience knows no guile !
He to the sable night can bid farewell ;
From cheerless objects close his eyes a while,
Within the silken folds of sleep to dwell.

Elysian dreams shall hover round his bed,
His soul shall wing, on pleasing fancies borne,
To shining vales where flowerets lift their head,
Waked by the breathing zephyrs of the morn.

But wretched he, whose foul reproachful deeds
Can through an angry conscience wound his rest ;
His eye too oft the balmy comfort needs,
Though slumber seldom knows him as her guest.

To calm the raging tumults of his soul,
If wearied nature should an hour demand,
Around his bed the sheeted spectres howl ;
Red with revenge the grinning furies stand.

Nor state nor grandeur can his pain allay ;
Where shall he find a requiem to his woes ?
Power cannot chase the frightful gloom away,
Nor music lull him to a kind repose.

Where is the king that conscience fears to chide ?
Conscience, that candid judge of right and wrong,
Will o'er the secrets of each heart preside,
Nor awed by pomp, nor tamed by soothing song.

DAMON TO HIS FRIENDS.

THE billows of life are supprest ;
Its tumults, its toils, disappear ;
To relinquish the storms that are past,
I think on the sunshine that's near.

Dame Fortune and I are agreed ;
Her frowns I no longer endure ;
For the goddess has kindly decreed
That Damon no more shall be poor.

Now riches will ope the dim eyes,
To view the increase of my store ;
And many my friendship will prize,
Who never knew Damon before.

But those I renounce and abjure
Who carried contempt in their eye ;
May poverty still be their dower,
That could look on misfortune awry !

Ye powers that weak mortals govern,
Keep pride at his bay from my mind ;
Oh let me not haughtily learn
To despise the few friends that were kind !

For theirs was a feeling sincere,
'Twas free from delusion and art :
Oh may I that friendship revere,
And hold it yet dear to my heart !

By which was I ever forgot ?
It was both my physician and cure,
That still found the way to my cot,
Although I was wretched and poor.

'Twas balm to my canker-tooth'd care ;
The wound of affliction it heal'd ;
In distress it was pity's soft tear,
And naked, cold poverty's shield.

Attend, ye kind youth of the plain !
Who oft with my sorrows condoled ;
You cannot be deaf to the strain,
Since Damon is master of gold.

I have chose a sweet sylvan retreat,
Bedeck'd with the beauties of spring ;
Around, my flocks nibble and bleat,
While the musical choristers sing.

I force not the waters to stand
In an artful canal at my door ;
But a river, at nature's command,
Meanders both limpid and pure.

She's the goddess that darkens my bowers
With tendrils of ivy and vine ;
She tutors my shrubs and my flowers ;
Her taste is the standard of mine.

What a pleasing diversified group
Of trees has she spread o'er my ground !
She has taught the grave larix to droop,
And the birch to shed odours around.

For whom has she perfumed my groves ?
 For whom has she cluster'd my vine ?
 If friendship despise my alcoves,
 They'll ne'er be recesses of mine.

He who tastes his grape juices by stealth,
 Without chosen companions to share,
 Is the basest of slaves to his wealth,
 And the pitiful minion of care.

Oh come, and with Damon retire
 Amidst the green umbrage embower'd !
 Your mirth and your songs to inspire,
 Shall the juice of the vintage be pour'd.

Oh come, ye dear friends of his youth !
 Of all his good fortune partake ;
 Nor think 'tis departing from truth,
 To say 'twas preserved for your sake.

RETIREMENT.

Odi profanum vulgus et arceo.—HOR.

COME, Inspiration ! from thy vernal bower,
 To thy celestial voice attune the lyre ;
 Smooth gliding strains in sweet profusious pour,
 And aid my numbers with seraphic fire

Under a lonely spreading oak I lay,
 My head upon the daisied green reclined ;
 The evening sun beam'd forth his parting ray,
 The foliage bended to the hollow wind.

There gentle sleep my acting powers suppress ;
 The city's distant hum was heard no more ;
 Yet Fancy suffer'd not the mind to rest,
 Ever obedient to her wakeful power.

She led me near a crystal fountain's noise,
Where undulating waters sportive play,
Where a young comely swain, with pleasing voice,
In tender accents sang his sylvan lay.

"Adieu, ye baneful pleasures of the town !
Farewell, ye giddy and unthinking throng !
Without regret your foibles I disown ;
Themes more exalted claim the Muse's song.

"Your stony hearts no social feelings share ;
Your souls of distant sorrows ne'er partake ;
Ne'er do you listen to the needy prayer,
Nor drop a tear for tender pity's sake.

"Welcome, ye fields, ye fountains, and ye groves !
Ye flowery meadows, and extensive plains !
Where soaring warblers pour their plaintive loves,
Each landscape cheering with their vocal strains.

"Here rural beauty rears her pleasing shrine ;
She on the margin of each streamlet glows ;
Where, with the blooming hawthorn, roses twine,
And the fair lily of the valley grows.

"Here Chastity may wander unassail'd
Through fields where gay seducers cease to rove ;
Where open Vice o'er Virtue ne'er prevail'd,
Where all is innocence, and all love.

"Peace, with her olive wand, triumphant reigns,
Guarding secure the peasant's humble bed ;
Envy is banish'd from the happy plains,
And Defamation's busy tongue is laid.

"Health and contentment usher in the morn ;
With jocund smiles they cheer the rural swain ;
For which the peer, to pompous titles born,
Forsaken sighs, but all his sighs are vain.

“ For the calm comforts of an easy mind
In yonder lonely cot delight to dwell,
And leave the statesman for the labouring hind,
The regal palace for the lowly cell.

“ Ye who to wisdom would devote your hours,
And far from riot, far from discord stray,
Look back disdainful on the city's towers,
Where Pride, where Folly, point the slippery way.

“ Pure flows the limpid stream in crystal tides
Thro' rocks, thro' dens, and ever verdant vales,
Till to the town's unhallow'd wall it glides,
Where all its purity and lustre fails.”

ODE TO HOPE.

HOPE ! lively cheerer of the mind,
In lieu of real bliss design'd,
Come from thy ever verdant bower
To chase the dull and lingering hour :
Oh ! bring, attending on thy reign,
All thy ideal fairy train,
To animate the lifeless clay,
And bear my sorrows hence away.

Hence, gloomy-featured black Despair,
With all thy frantic furies fly,
Nor rend my breast with gnawing care,
For Hope in lively garb is nigh.

Let pining Discontentment mourn ;
Let dull-eyed Melancholy grieve ;
Since pleasing Hope must reign by turn,
And every bitter thought relieve.

Oh smiling Hope ! in adverse hour
I feel thy influencing power :
Though frowning fortune fix my lot,
In some defenceless lonely cot,
Where poverty, with empty hands,
In pallid meagre aspect stands,
Thou canst enrobe me 'midst the great,
With all the crimson pomp of state,
Where luxury invites his guests
To pall them with his lavish feasts.
What cave so dark, what gloom so drear,
So black with horror, dead with fear,
But thou canst dart thy streaming ray,
And change close night to open day ?

Health is attendant in thy radiant train ;
Round her the whispering zephyrs gently play ;
Behold her gladly tripping o'er the plain,
Bedeck'd with rural sweets and garlands gay !

When vital spirits are deprest,
And heavy languor clogs the breast,
With more than Esculapian power
Endued, blest Hope ! 'tis thine to cure :
For oft thy friendly aid avails,
When all the strength of physic fails.

Nay, even though death should aim his dart,
I know he lifts his arm in vain,
Since thou this lesson canst impart—
Mankind but die to live again.

Deprived of thee must banners fall :
But where a living Hope is found,
The legions shout at danger's call,
And victors are triumphant crown'd.

Come, then, bright Hope ! in smiles array'd,
Revive us by the quickening breath ;
Then shall we never be afraid
To walk through danger and through death.

THE RIVERS OF SCOTLAND.

AN ODE.

Set to Music by Mr. Collet.

O'ER Scotia's parched land the Naiads flew,
From towering hills explored her shelter'd vales,
Caused Forth in wild meanders please the view,
And lift her waters to the zephyr's gales.

Where the glad swain surveys his fertile fields,
And reaps the plenty which his harvest yields.

Here did these lovely nymphs unseen,
Oft wander by the river's side,
And oft unbind their tresses green,
To bathe them in the fluid tide.

Then to the shady grottoes would retire,
And sweetly echo to the warbling choir ;

Or to the rushing waters tune their shells,
To call up Echo from the woods,
Or from the rocks or crystal floods,
Or from surrounding banks, or hills, or dells.

CHORUS.

Or to the rushing waters, etc.

When the cool fountains first their springs forsook,
Murmuring smoothly to the azure main,
Exulting Neptune then his trident shook,
And waved his waters gently to the plain.

The friendly Tritons, on his chariot borne,
With cheeks dilated blew the hollow-sounding horn.

Now Lothian and Fifan shores,
Resounding to the mermaid's song,
Gladly emit their limpid stores,
And bid them smoothly sail along

To Neptune's empire, and with him to roll
Round the revolving sphere from pole to pole ;

To guard Britannia from envious foes ;
To view her angry vengeance hurl'd
In awful thunder round the world,
And trembling nations bending to her blows.

CHORUS.

To guard Britannia, etc.

High towering on the zephyr's breezy wing,
Swift fly the Naiads from Forth's shores,
And to the southern airy mountains bring
Their sweet enchantment and their magic powers.

Each nymph her favourite willow takes ;
The earth with feverous tremor shakes ;
The stagnant lakes obey their call ;
Streams o'er the grassy pastures fall.

Tweed spreads her waters to the lucid ray ;
Upon the dimpled surf the sunbeams play.

On her green banks the tuneful shepherd lies :
Charm'd with the music of his reed,
Amidst the wavings of the Tweed,
From sky-reflecting streams the river-nymphs arise.

CHORUS.

On her green banks, etc.

The listening Muses heard the shepherd play ;
Fame with her brazen trump proclaim'd his name,
And to attend the easy graceful lay,
Pan from Arcadia to Tweeda came.

Fond of the change, along the banks he stray'd,
And sang, unmindful of the Arcadian shade.

AIR—*Tweed-side.*

Attend, every fanciful swain,
Whose notes softly flow from the reed ;
With harmony guide the sweet strain,
To sing of the beauties of Tweed :

Where the music of woods and of streams
In soothing sweet melody join,
To enliven your pastoral themes,
And make human numbers divine.

Ye warblers from the vocal grove,
The tender woodland strain approve,
While Tweed in smoother cadence glides
O'er flowery vales in gentle tides ;
And as she rolls her silver waves along,
Murmurs and sighs to quit the rural song.
Scotia's great Genius, in russet clad,
From the cool sedgy bank exalts her head ;
In joyful rapture she the change espies,
Sees living streams descend and groves arise.

AIR—*Gilderoy.*

As sable clouds at early day
Oft dim the shining skies,
So gloomy thoughts create dismay,
And lustre leaves her eyes.

“Ye powers ! are Scotia's ample fields
With so much beauty graced,
To have those sweets your bounty yields
By foreign foes defaced ?

“ Oh Jove ! at whose supreme command
The limpid fountains play,
O'er Caledonia's northern land
Let restless waters stray.

“ Since from the void creation rose,
Thou'st made a sacred vow,
That Caledon to foreign foes
Should ne'er be known to bow.”

The mighty Thunderer on his sapphire throne,
In mercy's robes attired, heard the sweet voice
Of female woe — soft as the moving song
Of Philomela 'midst the evening shades ;
And thus return'd an answer to her prayers :

“ Where birks at Nature's call arise ;
Where fragrance hails the vaulted skies ;
Where my own oak its umbrage spreads,
Delightful 'midst the woody shades ;
Where ivy mouldering rocks entwines ;
Where breezes bend the lofty pines ;
There shall the laughing Naiads stray,
'Midst the sweet banks of winding Tay.”

From the dark womb of earth Tay's waters spring,
Ordain'd by Jove's unalterable voice ;
The sounding lyre celestial muses string ;
The choiring songsters in the grove rejoice.

Each fount its crystal fluid pours,
Which from surrounding mountains flow ;
The river bathes its verdant shores ;
Cool o'er the surf the breezes blow.

Let England's sons extol their garden fair ;
Scotland may freely boast her generous streams :
Their soil more fertile, and their milder air ;
Her fishes sporting in the solar beams.

Thames, Humber, Severn, all must yield the bay
To the pure streams of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

CHORUS.

Thames, Humber, etc.

Oh Scotia ! when such beauty claims
A mansion near thy flowing streams,
Ne'er shall stern Mars, in iron car,
Drive his proud coursers to the war ;
But fairy forms shall strew around
Their olives on the peaceful ground ;
And turtles join the warbling throng,
To usher in the morning song ;
Or shout in chorus all the livelong day,
From the green banks of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

When gentle Phœbe's friendly light
In silver radiance clothes the night,
Still music's ever-varying strains
Shall tell the lovers Cynthia reigns ;
And woo them to her midnight bowers,
Among the fragrant dew-clad flowers,
Where every rock, and hill, and dale,
With echoes greet the nightingale,
Whose pleasing, soft, pathetic tongue,
To kind condolence tunes the song ;
And often wins the love-sick swain to stray,
To hear the tender variegated lay,
Through the dark woods of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

Hail, native streams, and native groves !
Oozy caverns, green alcoves !
Retreats for Cytherea's reign,
With all the graces in her train.
Hail, Fancy ! thou whose ray so bright
Dispels the glimmering taper's light !
Come in ærial vesture blue,
Ever pleasing, ever new ;

In these recesses deign to dwell
With me in yonder moss-clad cell :

Then shall my reed successful tune the lay,
In numbers wildly warbling as they stray
Through the glad banks of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY CONTRASTED.

IN AN EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.

FROM noisy bustle, from contention free,
Far from the busy town I careless loll ;
Not like swain Tityrus, or the bards of old,
Under a beechen, venerable shade,
But on a furzy heath, where blooming broom
And thorny whins the spacious plains adorn.
Here health sits smiling on my youthful brow ;
For ere the sun beams forth his earliest ray,
And all the east with yellow radiance crowns ;
Ere dame Aurora, from her purple bed,
'Gins with her kindling blush to paint the sky ;
The soaring lark, morn's cheerful harbinger,
And linnet joyful, fluttering from the bush,
Stretch their small throats in vocal melody,
To hail the dawn, and drowsy sleep exhale
From man, frail man ! on downy softness stretch'd.

Such pleasing scenes Edina cannot boast ;
For there the slothful slumber seal'd mine eyes,
Till nine successive strokes the clock had knell'd.
There, not the lark, but fish-wives' noisy screams,
And inundations plunged from ten house height,
With smell more fragrant than the spicy groves
Of Indus fraught with all her orient stores,
Roused me from sleep—not sweet refreshing sleep,
But sleep infested with the burning sting
Of bug infernal, who the live-long night
With direst suction sipp'd my liquid gore.

There, gloomy vapours in our zenith reign'd,
 And fill'd with irksome pestilence the air.
 There, lingering sickness held his feeble court,
 Rejoicing in the havoc he had made ;
 And death, grim death ! with all his ghastly train,
 Watch'd the broke slumbers of Edina's sons.

Hail, rosy health ! thou pleasing antidote
 'Gainst troubling cares !—all hail, these rural fields,
 Those winding rivulets and verdant shades,
 Where thou, the heaven-born goddess, deign'st to
 dwell !

With thee the hind, upon his simple fare,
 Lives cheerful, and from Heaven no more demands.
 But ah ! how vast, how terrible the change
 With him who night by night in sickness pines !
 Him, nor his splendid equipage can please,
 Nor all the pageantry the world can boast ;
 Nay, not the consolation of his friends
 Can aught avail ; his hours are anguish all ;
 Nor cease till envious death hath closed the scene.

But, Carlos, if we court this maid celestial ;
 Whether we through meandering rivers stray,
 Or midst the city's jarring noise remain,
 Let temperance, health's blythe concomitant,
 To our desires and appetites set bounds,
 Else, cloy'd at last, we surfeit every joy ;
 Our slacken'd nerves reject their wonted spring ;
 We reap the fruits of our unkindly lusts,
 And feebly totter to the silent grave.

ODE TO PITY.

To what sequester'd gloomy shade
 Hath ever gentle Pity stray'd ?
 What brook is water'd from her eyes ?
 What gales convey her tender sighs ?
 Unworthy of her grateful lay,
 She hath despised the great, the gay ;

Nay, all the feelings she imparts
Are far estranged from human hearts.

Ah, Pity ! whither would'st thou fly
From human heart, from human eye ?
Are desert woods and twilight groves,
The scenes the sobbing pilgrim loves ?
If there thou dwell'st, oh Pity ! say,
In what lone path you pensive stray.
I'll know thee by the lily's hue,
Besprinkled with the morning's dew ;
For thou wilt never blush to wear
The pallid look and falling tear.

In broken cadence from thy tongue,
Oft have we heard the mournful song ;
Oft have we view'd the loaded bier
Bedew'd with Pity's softest tear.
Her sighs and tears were ne'er denied,
When innocence and virtue died.
But in this black and iron age,
Where vice and all his demons rage,
Though bells in solemn peals are rung,
Though dirge in mournful verse is sung,
Soon will the vain parade be o'er,
Their name, their memory, no more,
Who love and innocence despised,
And every virtue sacrificed.
Here Pity, as a statue dumb,
Will pay no tribute to the tomb ;
Or wake the memory of those
Who never felt for others' woes.

Thou mistress of the feeling heart !
Thy powers of sympathy impart.
If mortals would but fondly prize
Thy falling tears, thy passing sighs,
Then should wan poverty no more
Walk feebly from the rich man's door ;
Humility should vanquish pride,
And vice be drove from virtue's side :
Then happiness at length should reign ;
And golden age begin again.

ON THE COLD MONTH OF APRIL, 1771.

Oh ! who can hold a fire in his hand
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus ;
Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite
By bare imagination of a feast ;
Or wallow naked in December's snow,
By thinking on fantastic summer's heat ?

SHAKSPEARE'S *Richard II.*

Poets in vain have hail'd the opening spring,
In tender accents woo'd the blooming maid ;
In vain have taught the April birds to wing
Their flight through fields in verdant hue array'd.

The Muse, in every season taught to sing,
Amidst the desert snows, by fancy's powers,
Can elevated soar, on placid wing,
To climes where spring her kindest influence showers.

April, once famous for the zephyr mild,
For sweets that early in the garden grow,
Say, how converted to this cheerless wild,
Rushing with torrents of dissolving snow ?

Nursed by the moisture of a gentle shower,
Thy foliage oft hath sounded to the breeze ;
Oft did thy choristers melodious pour
Their melting numbers through the shady trees.

Fair have I seen thy morn in smiles array'd,
With crimson blush bepaint the eastern sky ;
But now the dawn creeps mournful o'er the glade,
Shrouded in colours of a sable dye.

So have I seen the fair, with laughing eye,
And visage cheerful as the smiling morn,
Alternate changing for the heaving sigh,
Or frowning aspect of contemptuous scorn.

Life ! what art thou ?—a variegated scene
Of mingled light and shade, of joy and woe ;
A sea where calms and storms promiscuous reign ;
A stream where sweet and bitter jointly flow.

Mute are the plains ; the shepherd pipes no more ;
The reed's forsaken, and the tender flock ;
While echo, listening to the tempest's roar,
In silence wanders o'er the beetling rock.

Winter, too potent for the solar ray,
Bestrides the blast, ascends his icy throne,
And views Britannia, subject to his sway,
Floating emergent on the frigid zone.

Thou savage tyrant of the fretful sky !
Wilt thou for ever in our zenith reign ?
To Greenland's seas, congeal'd in chillness fly,
Where howling monsters tread the bleak domain.

Relent, oh Boreas ! leave thy frozen cell ;
Resign to spring her portion of the year ;
Let west winds temperate wave the flowing gale,
And hills, and vales, and woods, a vernal aspect wear.

THE SIMILE.

At noontide, as Colin and Sylvia lay
Within a cool jessamine bower,
A butterfly, waked by the heat of the day,
Was sipping the juice of each flower.

Near the shade of this covert, a young shepherd boy
The gaudy brisk flutterer spies,
Who held it as pastime to seek and destroy
Each beautiful insect that flies.

From the lily he hunted this fly to the rose,
From the rose to the lily again ;
Till, weary with tracing its motions, he chose
To leave the pursuit with disdain.

Then Colin to Sylvia smilingly said,
" Amyntor has followed you long ;
From him, like the butterfly, still have you fled,
Though woo'd by his musical tongue.

" Beware in persisting to start from his arms,
But with his fond wishes comply ;
Come, take my advice ; or he's pall'd with your charms,
Like the youth and the beautiful fly."

Says Sylvia—" Colin, thy simile's just,
But still to Amyntor I'm coy ;
For I vow she's a simpleton blind that would trust
A swain, when he courts to destroy."

THE BUGS.*

THOU source of song sublime ! thou chiefest Muse !
Whose sacred fountain of immortal fame
Bedew'd the flowerets cull'd for Homer's brow,

* Wodrow, in his *Analecta*, under date October 3, 1727, presents the following quaint notice of the introduction into Scotland of this "pestilence that walketh in darkness," as a schoolboy once described the lively bug :—"The vermin called buggs are at present extremely troublesome at Glasgow. They say that they are come over with timber from Holland. They are in many houses there, and they are so prolifick there, there is no getting rid of them. Its not twenty years since they were knowen, and such as had them kepted them secret. These six or seven years they are more openly complained off, and now the half of the town are plagued with them. This is chiefly attributed to the frequent alterations of servants, who bring them from house to house." Fifty years later, according to the poet here, there were within Edina's walls "a thriving colony of old and young," which "hid their numbers from the prying day."

When he on Grecian plains the battles sung
Of frogs and mice—do thou through Fancy's maze
Of sportive pastime, lead a lowly Muse
Her rites to join, while, with a faltering voice,
She sings of reptiles yet in song unknown.

Nor you, ye bards ! who oft have struck the lyre,
And tuned it to the movement of the spheres,
In harmony divine, reproach the lays,
Which, though they wind not through the starry host
Of bright creation, or on earth delight
To haunt the murmuring cadence of the floods
Through scenes where Nature, with a hand profuse,
Hath lavish strew'd her gems of precious dye ;
Yet, in the small existence of a gnat,
Or tiny bug, doth she, with equal skill,
If not transcending, stamp her wonders there,
Only disclosed to microscopic eye.

Of old the Dryads near Edina's walls
Their mansions rear'd, and groves unnumber'd rose
Of branching oak, spread beech, and lofty pine,
Under whose shade, to shun the noontide blaze,
Did Pan resort, with all his rural train
Of shepherds and of nymphs. The Dryads, pleased,
Would hail their sports, and summon echo's voice
To send her greetings through the waving woods ;
But the rude axe, long brandish'd by the hand
Of daring innovation, shaved the lawns ; *
Then not a thicket or a copse remain'd
To sigh in concert with the breeze of eve.

Edina's mansions with lignarian art
Were piled and fronted. Like an ark she seem'd
To lie on mountain's top, with shapes replete,

* There is a tradition in Edinburgh that one of the King Jameses, in order to clear the forest, which in his time encumbered the ground to the south of Edinburgh, and which proved a retreat for banditti, gave the citizens permission to extend their houses seven feet forward into the street by means of wooden balconies, using the timber of that forest as the material. Of this tradition or fact, Fergusson here very neatly takes advantage.—*Robert Chambers.*

Clean and unclean, that daily wander o'er
Her streets, that once were spacious, once were gay.
To Jove the Dryads pray'd, nor pray'd in vain,
For vengeance on her sons. At midnight drear
Black showers descend, and teeming myriads rise
Of bugs abhorrent, who by instinct steal
Through the putrescent and corrosive pores
Of sapless trees, that late in forest stood
With all the majesty of summer crown'd.

By Jove's command dispersed, they wander wide
O'er all the city. Some their cells prepare
'Mid the rich trappings and the gay attire
Of state luxuriant, and are fond to press
The waving canopy's depending folds ;
While others, destined to an humbler fate,
Seek shelter in the dwellings of the poor,
Plying their nightly suction in the bed
Of toil'd mechanic, who, with folded arms,
Enjoys the comforts of a sleep so sound,
That not the alarming sting of glutting bug
To murderous deed can rouse his brawny arm
Upon the blood-swoln fiend, who basely steals
Life's genial current from his throbbing veins.

Happy were grandeur could she triumph here,
And banish from her halls each misery,
Which she must brook in common with the poor
Who beg subsistence from her sparing hands.
Then might the rich, to fell disease unknown,
Indulge in fond excess, nor ever feel
The slowly creeping hours of restless night,
When shook with guilty horrors. But the wind,
Whose fretful gusts of anger shake the world,
Bears more destructive on the aspiring roofs
Of dome and palace, than on cottage low,
That meets Æolus with his gentler breath,
When safely shelter'd in the peaceful vale.

Is there a being breathes, howe'er so vile,
Too pitiful for envy ?—she, with venom'd tooth
And grinning madness, frowns upon the bliss
Of every species ; from the human form

That spurns the earth, and bends his mental eye
Through the profundity of space unknown,
Down to the crawling bug's detested race.

Thus the lover pines, that reptile rude
Should 'mid the lilies of fair Chloe's breast
Implant the deep carnation, and enjoy
Those sweets which angel modesty hath veil'd
From eyes profane. Yet murmur not, ye few
Who gladly would be bugs for Chloe's sake !
For soon, alas ! the fluctuating gales
Of earthly joy invert the happy scene.
The breath of spring may, with her balmy power,
And warmth diffusing, give to Nature's face
Her brightest colours ; but how short the space,
Till angry Eurus, from his petrid cave,
Deform the year, and all these sweets annoy !

Even so befalls it to this creeping race,
This envied commonwealth. For they a while
On Chloe's bosom, alabaster fair,
May steal ambrosial bliss ; or may regale
On the rich viands of luxurious blood,
Delighted and sufficed. But mark the end :
Lo ! Whitsuntide appears with gloomy train
Of growing desolation. First upholsterer rude
Removes the waving drapery, where for years
A thriving colony of old and young
Had hid their numbers from the prying day.
Anon they fall, and gladly would retire
To safer ambush ; but his ruthless foot,
Ah, cruel pressure, cracks their vital springs,
And with their deep-dyed scarlet smears the floor.

Sweet powers ! has pity in the female breast
No tender residence, no loved abode,
To urge from murderous deed the avenging hand
Of angry housemaid ? She'll have blood for blood !
For, lo ! the boiling streams from copper tube,
Hot as her rage, sweep myriads to death.
Their carcasses are destined to the urn
Of some chaste Naiad, that gives birth to floods,
Whose fragrant virtues hail Edina, famed

For yellow limpid—whose chaste name the Muse
Deems too exalted to retail in song.

Ah me ! No longer they at midnight shade,
With baneful sting, shall seek the downy couch
Of slumbering mortals. Nor shall love-sick swain,
When, by the bubbling brook, in fairy dream,
His nymph, but half reluctant to his wish,
Is gently folded in his eager arms,
E'er curse the shaft envenom'd that disturbs
His long-loved fancies, Nor shall hungry bard,
Whose strong imagination, whetted keen,
Conveys him to the feast, be tantalised
With poisonous tortures, when the cup, brimful
Of purple vintage, gives him greater joy
Than all the Heliconian streams that play
And murmur round Parnassus. Now the wretch
Oft doom'd to restless days and sleepless nights,
By bugbear conscience thrall'd, enjoys an hour
Of undisturb'd repose. The miser, too,
May brook his golden dreams, nor wake with fear
That thieves or kindred (for no soul he'll trust)
Have broke upon his chest, and strive to steal
The shining idols of his useless hours.

Happy the bug, whose unambitious views
To gilded pomp ne'er tempt him to aspire !
Safely may he, enwrapt in russet fold
Of cobweb'd curtain, set at bay the fears
That still attendant are on bugs of state.
He never knows at morn the busy brush
Of scrubbing chambermaid. His coursing blood
Is ne'er obstructed with obnoxious dose
By Oliphant prepared ; too poisonous drug !
As fatal to this hated crawling tribe
As ball and powder to the sons of war.

A SATURDAY'S EXPEDITION.

IN MOCK HEROICS.

Non mira, sed vera, canam.

At that sweet period of revolving time
When Phœbus lingers not in Thetis' lap,
When twinkling stars their feeble influence shed,
And scarcely glimmer through the ethereal vault,
Till Sol again his near approach proclaims,
With ray purpureal, and the blushing form
Of fair Aurora, goddess of the dawn,
Leading the winged coursers to the pole
Of Phœbus' car. 'Twas in that season fair,
When jocund summer did the meads array
In Flora's ripening bloom, that we prepared
To break the bond of business, and to roam
Far from Edina's jarring noise a while.

Fair smiled the wakening morn on our design,
And we, with joy elate, our march began
For Leith's fair port, where oft Edina's sons
The week conclude, and in carousal quaff
Port, punch, rum, brandy, and Geneva strong,
Liquors too nervous for the feeble purse.
With all convenient speed we there arrived :
Nor had we time to touch at house or hall,
Till from the boat a hollow thundering voice
Bellow'd vociferous, and our ears assail'd
With "Ho ! Kinghorn, oh ! come straight aboard."
We fail'd not to obey the stern command,
Utter'd with voice as dreadful as the roar
Of Polyphemus, 'mid rebounding rocks,
When overcome by sage Ulysses' wiles.
"Hoist up your sails !" the angry skipper cries,
While fore and aft the busy sailors run,
And loose th' entangled cordage. O'er the deep
Zephyrus blows, and hugs our lofty sails,
Which, in obedience to the powerful breeze,
Swell o'er the foaming main, and kiss the wave.

Now o'er the convex surface of the flood
Precipitate we fly. Our foaming prow
Divides the saline stream. On either side
Ridges of yesty surge dilate apace ;
But from the poop the waters gently flow,
And undulation for the time decays,
In eddies smoothly floating o'er the main.

Here let the Muse in doleful numbers sing
The woeful fate of those whose cruel stars
Have doom'd them subject to the languid powers
Of watery sickness. Though with stomach full
Of juicy beef, of mutton in its prime,
Or all the dainties luxury can boast,
They brave the elements—yet the rocking bark,
Truly regardless of their precious food,
Converts their visage to the ghastly pale,
And makes the sea partaker of the sweets
On which they sumptuous fared. And this the cause
Why those of Scotia's sons whose wealthy store
Hath blest them with a splendid coach and six,
Rather incline to linger on the way,
And cross the river Forth by Stirling bridge,
Than be subjected to the ocean's swell,
To dangerous ferries, and to sickness dire.

And now at equal distance shows the land :—
Gladly the tars the joyful task pursue
Of gathering in the freight. Debates arise
From counterfeited halfpence. In the hold
The seamen scrutinise, and eager peep
Through every corner where their watchful eye
Suspects a lurking-place or dark retreat,
To hide the timid corpse of some poor soul
Whose scanty purse can scarce one groat afford.

At length we, cheerful, land on Fifer shore,
Where sickness vanishes, and all the ills
Attendant on the passage of Kinghorn.
Our pallid cheeks resume their rosy hue,
And empty stomachs keenly crave supply.
With eager step we reach'd the friendly inn ;

Nor did we think of beating our retreat
Till every gnawing appetite was quell'd.

Eastward along the Fifer coast we stray :
And here th' unwearied eye may fondly gaze
O'er all the tufted groves and pointed spires
With which the pleasant banks of Forth are crown'd.
Sweet navigable stream ! where commerce reigns,
Where peace and jocund plenty smile serene.
On thy green banks sits Liberty enthroned :
But not that shadow which the English youth
So eagerly pursue ; but freedom bought,
When Caledonia's triumphant sword
Taught the proud sons of Anglia to bemoan
Their fate at Bannockburn, where thousands came—
Never to tread their native soil again.

Far in a hollow den, where Nature's hand
Had careless strew'd the rocks, a dreadful cave,
Whose concave ceiling echoed to the floods
Their hollow murmurs on the trembling shore,
Demanded our approach. The yawning porch
Its massy sides disclosed, and o'er the top
The ivy tendrils twined the uncultured fern.
Fearful, we pry into the dreary vault,
Hoary with age, and breathing noxious damps.
Here busy owls may unmolested dwell
In solitary gloom ;—for few there are
Whose inclination leads them to review
A cell where putrid smells infectious reign.*

Then, turning westward, we our course pursue
Along the course of Forth's briny flood,
Till we o'ertake the gradual rising dale
Where fair Burntisland rears her reverend dome ;
And here the vulgar sign-post, painted o'er
With imitations vile of man and horse,
Of small-beer frothing o'er the unshapely jug,
With courteous invitation, spoke us fair

* A large cave at a small distance from Kinghorn, supposed, about a century ago, to have been the receptacle of thieves.—*Author's note.*

To enter in, and taste what precious drops
Were there reserved to moisten strangers' throats,
Too often parch'd upon the tedious way.

After regaling here with sober can,
Our limbs we plied, and nimbly measured o'er
The hills, the vales, and the extensive plains,
Which form the distance from Burntisland's port
To Inverkeithing. Westward still we went,
Till in the ferry-boat we loll'd at ease :
Nor did we long on Neptune's empire float ;
For scarce ten posting minutes were elaps'd
Till we again on *terra firma* stood,
And to M'Laren's march'd, where roasted lamb,
With cooling lettuce, crown'd our social board.
Here, too, the cheering glass, chief foe to care,
Went briskly round ; and many a virgin fair
Received our homage in a bumper full.

Thus having sacrificed a jocund hour
To smiling mirth, we quit the happy scene,
And move progressive to Edina's walls.

Now still returning eve creep'd gradual on,
And the bright sun, as weary of the sky,
Beam'd forth a languid occidental ray,
Whose ruby-tinctur'd radiance faintly gleam'd
Upon the airy cliffs and distant spires
That float on the horizon's utmost verge.
So we, with fessive joints and lingering pace,
Moved slowly on, and did not reach the town
Till Phœbus had unyoked his prancing steeds.

Ye sons of Caledonia ! who delight,
With all the pomp and pageantry of state,
To roll along in gilded affluence,
For one poor moment wean your thoughts from these,
And list this humble strain. If you, like us,
Could brave the angry waters, be uproused
By the first salutation to the morn
Paid by the watchful cock ; or be compell'd
On foot to wander o'er the lonely plain
For twenty tedious miles—then should the gout,
With all his racking pangs, forsake your frame ;

For he delights not to traverse the field,
 Or rugged steep, but prides him to recline
 On the luxuriance of a velvet fold,
 Where indolence on purple sofa lolls.

THE CANONGATE PLAYHOUSE IN RUINS.*

A BURLESQUE POEM.

YE few, whose feeling hearts are ne'er estranged
 From soft emotions ! ye who often wear
 The eye of pity, and oft vent her sighs,
 When sad Melpomene, in woe-fraught strains,
 Gains entrance to the breast ; or often smile
 When brisk Thalia gaily trips along
 Scenes of enlivening mirth—attend my song !
 And Fancy ! thou whose ever-flaming light
 Can penetrate into the dark abyss
 Of chaos and of hell—O ! with thy blazing torch
 The wasteful scene illumine, that the Muse
 With daring pinions may her flight pursue,
 Nor with timidity be known to soar
 O'er the theatric world, to chaos changed.

Can I contemplate on those dreary scenes
 Of mouldering desolation, and forbid
 The voice elegiac and the falling tear !
 No more, from box to box, the basket piled
 With oranges as radiant as the spheres,

*The Canongate Theatre stood behind the south line of the street, opposite to the head of New Street. It was founded in August, 1746, by Mr. Lacy Ryan of Covent-Garden, and, when finished, could hold, at 2s. 6d., 1s. 6d., and 1s., about £70. It was first used under the royal licence on the 9th of December, 1767 ; but a new theatre being built next year in the New Town, this humble place of entertainment was almost immediately after left to ruin. The site has long been occupied by a brewery.—*Robert Chambers.*

Shall with their luscious virtues charm the sense
Of taste and smell. No more the gaudy beau,
With handkerchief in lavender well drench'd,
Or bergamot, or rose-water pure,
With flavoriferous sweets shall chase away
The pestilential fumes of vulgar cits,
Who, in impatience for the curtain's rise,
Amused the lingering moments, and applied
Thirst-quenching porter to their parched lips.

Alas ! how sadly alter'd is the scene !
For lo ! those sacred walls, that late were brush'd
By rustling silks and waving capuchins,
Are now become the sport of wrinkled Time !
Those walls, that late have echoed to the voice
Of stern King Richard, to the seat transform'd
Of crawling spiders and detested moths,
Who in the lonely crevices reside,
Or gender in the beams that have upheld
Gods, demi-gods, and all the joyous crew
Of thunderers in the galleries above.

O, Shakespeare ! where are all thy tinsell'd kings,
Thy fawning courtiers, and thy waggish clowns ?
Where all thy fairies, spirits, witches, fiends,
That here have gamboll'd in nocturnal sport
Round the lone oak, or sunk in fear away
From the shrill summons of the cock at morn ?
Where now the temples, palaces, and towers ?
Where now the groves that ever verdant smiled ?
Where now the streams that never ceased to flow ?
Where now the clouds, the rains, the hails, the winds,
The thunders, lightnings, and the tempests strong ?

Here shepherds, lolling in their woven bowers,
In dull recitativo often sung
Their loves, accompanied with clangour strong
From horns, from trumpets, clarionets, bassoons ;
From violinos sharp, or droning bass,
Or the brisk tinkling of a harpsichord.

Such is thy power, O music ! such thy fame,
That it has fabled been, how foreign song,

Soft issuing from Tenducci's * slender throat,
Has drawn a plaudit from the gods enthroned
Round the empyreum of Jove himself,
High seated on Olympus' airy top.
Nay, that his feverous voice was known to soothe
The shrill-toned prating of the females' tongues,
Who, in obedience to the lifeless song,
All prostrate fell, all fainting died away
In silent ecstasies of passing joy.

Ye who oft wander by the silver light
Of sister Luna, or to churchyard's gloom,
Or cypress shades ; if chance should guide your steps
To this sad mansion, think not that you tread
Unconsecrated paths ; for on this ground
Have holy streams been pour'd and flowerets strew'd ;
While many a kingly diadem, I ween,
Lies useless here entomb'd, with heaps of coin
Stamp'd in theatric mint—offenceless gold !
That carried not persuasion in its hue,
To tutor mankind in their evil ways.
After a lengthen'd series of years,
When the unhallow'd spade shall discompose
This mass of earth, then relics shall be found,
Which, or for gems of worth, or Roman coins,
Well may obtrude on antiquary's eye.
Ye spouting blades ! regard this ruin'd fane,
And nightly come within those naked walls
To shed the tragic tear. Full many a drop
Of precious inspiration have you suck'd
From its dramatic sources. O ! look here
Upon this roofless and forsaken pile,
And stalk in pensive sorrow o'er the ground
Where you've beheld so many noble scenes.

Thus, when the mariner to foreign clime
His bark conveys, where odoriferous gales,
And orange groves, and love-inspiring wine,

* An operatic singer of repute. He often visited Edinburgh, where his mellifluous way of singing the Scottish melodies made him a great favourite.

Have oft repaid his toil—if earthquake dire,
 With hollow groanings and convulsive pangs,
 The ground hath rent, and all those beauties soil'd,
 Will he refrain to shed the grateful drop
 A tribute justly due (though seldom paid)
 To the blest memory of happier times ?

 FASHION.

Bred up where discipline most rare is,
 In Military Garden Paris. — *Hudibras*.

O NATURE, parent goddess ! at thy shrine,
 Prone to the earth, the Muse, in humble song,
 Thy aid implores ; nor will she wing her flight
 Till thou, bright form ! in thy effulgence pure,
 Deign'st to look down upon her lowly state,
 And shed thy powerful influence benign.

Come, then, regardless of vain fashion's fools ;
 Of all those vile enormities of shape
 That crowd the world ; and with thee bring
 Wisdom, in sober contemplation clad,
 To lash those bold usurpers from the stage.

On that bless'd spot where the Parisian dome
 To fools the stealing hand of time displays,
 Fashion her empire holds—a goddess great !
 View her, amidst the *millinerian* train,
 On a resplendent throne exalted high,
 Strangely diversified with gew-gaw forms ;
 Her busy hand glides pleasurable o'er
 The darling novelties, the trinkets rare,
 That greet the sight of the admiring dames,
 Whose dear-bought treasures o'er their native isle
 Contagious spread, infect the wholesome air
 That cherish'd vigour in Britannia's sons.

Near this proud seat of fashion's antic form
 A sphere revolves, on whose bright orb behold

The circulating mode of changeful dress,
Which, like the image of the sun himself,
Glories in coursing through the diverse signs
Which blazon in the zodiac of heaven.
Around her throne coquettes and petits beaux
Unnumber'd shine, and with each other vie
In nameless ornaments and gaudy plumes.
O worthy emulation ! to excel
In trifles such as these, how truly great !
Unworthy of the peevish, blubbering boy,
Crush'd in his childhood by the fondling nurse,
Who for some favourite bauble frets and pines.
Amongst the proud attendants of this shrine,
The wealthy, young, and gay Clarinda draws
From poorer objects the astonish'd eye.
Her looks, her dress, and her affected mien,
Doom her enthusiast keen in fashion's train.
White as the cover'd Alps, or wintry face
Of snowy Lapland, her toupée uprear'd,
Exhibits to the view a cumbrous mass
Of curls high nodding o'er her polish'd brow ;
From which redundant flows the Brussels lace,
With pendant ribbons, too, of various dye,
Where all the colours in the ethereal bow
Unite, and blend, and tantalise the sight,
Nature, to thee, alone, not fashion's pomp,
Does beauty owe her all-commanding eye.
From the green bosom of the watery main,
Array'd by thee, majestic Venus rose,
With waving ringlets carelessly diffused,
Floating luxurious o'er the restless surge.
What Reubens, then, with his enlivening hand,
Could paint the bright vermilion of her cheek,
Pure as the roseate portal of the east,
That opens to receive the cheering ray
Of Phœbus beaming from the orient sky ?
For sterling beauty needs no faint essays
Or colouring of art to gild her more :
She is all-perfect. And if beauty fail,
Where are those ornaments, those rich attires,

Which can reflect a lustre on that face,
Where she with light innate disdains to shine ?

Britons ! beware of fashion's luring wiles.
On either hand, chief guardians of her power,
And sole dictators of her fickle voice,
Folly and dull effeminacy reign ;
Whose blackest magic and unhallow'd spells
The Roman ardour check'd ; their strength decay'd ;
And all their glory scattered to the winds.

Tremble, O Albion ! for the voice of fate
Seems ready to decree thy after-fall.
By pride, by luxury, what fatal ills,
Unheeded, have approach'd thy mortal frame !
How many foreign weeds their heads have rear'd
In thy fair garden ! Hasten, ere their strength
And baneful vegetation taint the soil,
To root out rank disease, which soon must spread,
If no blest antidote will purge away
Fashion's proud minions from our sea-girt isle.

A BURLESQUE ELEGY.

ON THE AMPUTATION OF A STUDENT'S HAIR, BEFORE
HIS ORDERS.

O SAD catastrophe ! event most dire ! *
How shall the loss, the heavy loss, be borne ?
Or how the muse attune the plaintive lyre,
To sing of Strephon with his ringlets shorn ?

Say, ye who can divine the mighty cause
From whence this modern circumcision springs,
Why such oppressive and such rigid laws
Are still attendant on religious things ?

* Originally—O event dire !

Alas, poor Strephon ! to the stern decree
Which prunes your tresses, are you doom'd to yield?
Soon shall your *caput*, like the blasted tree,
Diffuse its faded honours o'er the field.

Now let the solemn sounds of mourning swell,
And wake sad echoes to prolong the lay ;
For, hark ! methinks I hear the tragic knell ;
This hour bespeaks the barber on his way.

O razor ! yet thy poignant edge suspend ;
O yet indulge me with a short delay ;
Till I once more pourtray my youthful friend,
Ere his proud locks are scatter'd on the clay.

Ere the huge wig, in formal curls array'd
With pulvile pregnant, shall o'ershade his face ;
Or, like the wide umbrella, lend its aid
To banish lustre from the sacred place.

Mourn, O ye zephyrs ! for, alas ! no more
His waving ringlets shall your call obey !
For, ah ! the stubborn wig must now be wore,
Since Strephon's locks are scatter'd on the clay.

Amanda, too, in bitter anguish sighs,
And grieves the metamorphosis to see.
Mourn not, Amanda, for the hair that lies
Dead on the ground shall be revived for thee.

Some skilful artist of a French friseur,
With graceful rinklets shall thy temples bind,
And cull the precious relics from the floor,
Which yet may flutter in the wanton wind.

VERSES

WRITTEN AT THE HERMITAGE OF BRAID, NEAR
EDINBURGH.

Would you relish a rural retreat,
Or the pleasure the groves can inspire,
The city's allurements forget,
To this spot of enchantment retire.

Where a valley and crystalline brook,
Whose current glides sweetly along,
Give nature a fanciful look,
The beautiful woodlands among.

Behold the umbrageous trees
A covert of verdure have spread,
Where shepherds may loll at their ease,
And pipe to the musical shade.

For, lo ! through each opening is heard,
In concert with waters below,
The voice of a musical bird,
Whose numbers melodiously flow.

The bushes and arbours so green,
The tendrils of spray interwove,
With foliage shelter the scene,
And form a retirement for love.

Here Venus transported may rove
From pleasure to pleasure unseen,
Nor wish for the Cyprian grove
Her youthful Adonis to screen.

Oft let me contemplative dwell
On a scene where such beauties appear ;
I could live in a cot or a cell,
And never think solitude near.

A TALE.

THOSE rigid pedagogues and fools,
Who walk by self-invented rules,
Do often try, with empty head,
The emptier mortals to mislead,
And fain would urge that none but they
Could rightly teach the A, B, C ;
On which they've got an endless comment,
To trifling minds of mighty moment,
Throwing such barriers in the way
Of those who genius display,
As often, ah ! too often, tease
Them out of patience and of fees,
Before they're able to explode
Obstructions thrown on learning's road.
May mankind all employ their tools
To banish pedantry from schools !
And may each pedagogue avail,
By listening to this simple tale !

Wise Mr. Birch had long intended
The alphabet should be amended,
And taught that H a breathing was ;
Ergo, he saw no proper cause
Why such a letter should exist :
Thus in a breath was he dismiss'd,
With, " O, beware, beware, O youth !
Take not the villain in your mouth."

One day this alphabetic sinner
Was eager to devour his dinner,
When to appease the craving glutton
His boy Tom produced the mutton.
Was such disaster ever told ?
Alas, the meat was deadly cold !
" Here, take and h—eat it," says the master ;
Quoth Tom, " That shall be done, and fast, sir."

And few there are who will dispute it,
But he went instantly about it ;
For Birch had scorn'd the H to say,
And blew him with a puff away.

The bell was rung with dread alarm—
“ Bring me the mutton—Is it warm ? ”
“ Sir, you desired, and I have eat it.”
“ You lie ; my orders were to heat it.”
Quoth Tom, “ I'll readily allow
That H is but a breathing now.”

THE PEASANT, THE HEN, AND YOUNG DUCKS.

A FABLE.

A HEN, of all the dunghill crew
The fairest, stateliest to view,
Of laying tired, she fondly begs
Her keeper's leave to hatch her eggs.
He, dunn'd with the incessant cry,
Was forced for peace' sake to comply ;
And in a month the downy brood
Came chirping round the hen for food,
Who view'd them with parental eyes
Of pleasing fondness and surprise,
And was not at a loss to trace
Her likeness growing in their face ;
Though the broad bills could well declare
That they another's offspring were :
So strong will prejudices blind,
And lead astray the easy mind.

To the green margin of the brook
The hen her fancied children took :
Each young one shakes his unfledged wings,
And to the flood by instinct springs ;

With willing strokes they gladly swim,
Or dive into the glassy stream,
While the fond mother vents her grief,
And prays the peasant's kind relief.
The peasant heard the bitter cries,
And thus in terms of rage replies :
" You fool ! give o'er your useless moan,
Nor mourn misfortunes not your own ;
But learn in wisdom to forsake
The offspring of the duck and drake."
To whom the hen, with angry crest
And scornful look, herself address'd :
" If reason were my constant guide
(Of man the ornament and pride),
Then should I boast a cruel heart,
And foreign feeling all depart ;
But since poor I, by instinct blind,
Can boast no feelings so refined,
'Tis hoped your reason will excuse,
Though I your counsel sage refuse,
And from the perils of the flood
Attempt to save another's brood."

MORAL.

When Pity, generous nymph ! possess'd,
And moved at will the human breast,
No tongue its distant sufferings told,
But she assisted, she condoled,
And willing bore her tender part
In all the feelings of the heart :
But now from her our hearts decoy'd,
To sense of others' woes destroy'd,
Act only from a selfish view,
Nor give the aid to pity due.

TO THE MEMORY OF
JOHN CUNNINGHAM THE POET.*

Sing his praises that doth keep
Our flocks from harm,
Pan, the father of our sheep ;
And, arm in arm,
Tread we softly in a round,
While the hollow neighbouring ground
Fills the music with her sound.

—BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

YE mournful meanders and groves,
Delight of the Muse and her song ;
Ye grottoes and dripping alcoves,
No strangers to Corydon's tongue !

Let each Sylvan and Dryad declare
His themes and his music how dear ;
Their plaints and their dirges prepare,
Attendant on Corydon's bier.

* A descendant of the Cunninghams of Enterkine in Ayrshire, John Cunningham, so well known in his day to the lovers of polite learning by his pastoral poems, though yet more admired as a man of refined taste and simple manners, was born in Dublin (not Durham, as Burns has it) in 1729. His father was an extensive wine merchant in the Irish capital, but, early in life, he abandoned the parental roof, and took to the stage. For many years he performed in the Edinburgh Theatre, in the Stock Company of Mr. Digges. Latterly he was engaged at the theatre in Newcastle, where he died in the year 1773. Cunningham was the author of a drama called "Love in a Mist ;" and his song, "Kate of Aberdeen," for several seasons popular at Vauxhall Gardens, and enshrined in all the comprehensive Scottish Collections, is still well known. Burns tells the following anecdote of him which deserves recital :—"A fat dignitary of the Church coming past Cunningham on *Sunday*, as the poor poet was busy plying a fishing-rod in some stream near Durham, reprimanded Cunningham very severely for such an occupation on such a day. The poor poet, with that inoffensiveness of manners which was his peculiar characteristic, replied that he hoped God and his reverence would forgive his seeming profanity of that sacred day, *as he had no dinner to eat but what lay at the bottom of that pool*. This Mr. Woods, the player who knew Cunningham well and esteemed him much, assured me was true."

The echo that join'd in the lay,
So amorous, sprightly, and free,
Shall send forth the sounds of dismay,
And sigh with sad pity for thee.

Wild wander his flocks with the breeze,
His reed can no longer control ;
His numbers no longer can please,
Or send kind relief to the soul.

But long may they wander and bleat,
To hills tell the tale of their woe ;
The woodlands the tale shall repeat,
And the waters shall mournfully flow.

For these were the haunts of his love,
The sacred retreats of his ease,
Where favourite fancy would rove,
As wanton, as light as the breeze.

Her zone will discolour'd appear,
With fanciful ringlets unbound ;
A face pale and languid she'll wear,
A heart fraught with sorrow profound.

The reed of each shepherd will mourn ;
The shades of Parnassus decay ;
The Muses will dry their sad urn,
Since reft of young Corydon's lay.

To him every passion was known
That throb'd in the breast with desire ;
Each gentle affection was shown
In the soft sighing songs of his lyre.

Like the carolling thrush on the spray
In music soft warbling and wild,
To love was devoted each lay,
In accents pathetic and mild.

Let beauty and virtue revere,
And the songs of the shepherd approve,
Who felt, who lamented the snare,
When repining at pitiless love.

The summer but languidly gleams,
Pomona no comfort can bring ;
Nor valleys, nor grottoes, nor streams,
Nor the May-born flowerets of spring.

They've fled all with Corydon's muse,
For his brows to form chaplets of woe,
Whose reed oft awaken'd their boughs,
As the whispering breezes that blow.

To many a fanciful spring
His lyre was melodiously strung ;
While fairies and fawns, in a ring,
Have applauded the swain as he sung.

To the cheerful he usher'd his smiles,
To the woeful his sigh and his tear ;
A condoler with want and her toils,
When the voice of oppression is near.

Though titles and wealth were his due,
Though fortune denied his reward ;
Yet truth and sincerity knew
What the goddess would never regard.

Avails aught the generous heart,
Which nature to goodness design'd,
If fortune denies to impart
Her kindly relief to the mind ?

'Twas but faint the relief to dismay,
The cells of the wretched among ;
Though sympathy sung in the lay,
Though melody fell from his tongue.

Let the favour'd of fortune attend
To the ails of the wretched and poor :
Though Corydon's lays could befriend,
'Tis riches alone that can cure.

But they to compassion are dumb,
To pity their voices unknown ;
Near sorrow they never can come,
Till misfortune has mark'd them her own.

Now the shades of the evening depend ;
Each warbler is lull'd on the spray ;
The cypress doth ruefully bend
Where the corpse of cold Corydon stay.

Adieu, then, the songs of the swain !
Let peace still attend on his shade ;
And his pipe, that is dumb to his strain,
In the grave be with Corydon laid.

THE DELIGHTS OF VIRTUE.

RETURNING morn, in orient blush array'd,
With gentle radiance hail'd the sky serene ;
No rustling breezes waved the verdant shade,
No swelling surge disturb'd the azure main.

These moments, Meditation, sure are thine ;
These are the halcyon joys you wish to find,
When nature's peaceful elements combine
To suit the calm composure of the mind.

The Muse, exalted by thy sacred power,
To the green mountain's air-born summit flew,
Charm'd with the thoughtful stillness of an hour,
That usher'd beaming fancy to her view.

Fresh from old Neptune's fluid mansion sprung
The sun, reviver of each drooping flower ;
At his approach, the lark, with matin song,
In notes of gratitude confess'd his power.

So shines fair Virtue, shedding light divine
On those who wish to profit by her ways ;
Who ne'er at parting with their vice repine,
To taste the comforts of her blissful rays.

She with fresh hopes each sorrow can beguile,
Can dissipate Adversity's stern gloom ;
Make meagre Poverty contented smile,
And the sad wretch forget his hapless doom.

Sweeter than shady groves in summer's pride,
Than flowery dales or grassy meads, is she ;
Delightful as the honied streams that glide
From the rich labours of the busy bee.

Her paths and alleys are for ever green :—
There Innocence, in snowy robes array'd,
With smiles of pure content, is hail'd the queen
And happy mistress of the sacred shade.

O let no transient gleam of earthly joy
From Virtue lure your labouring steps aside ;
Nor instant grandeur future hopes annoy
With thoughts that spring from insolence and pride.

Soon will the winged moments speed away,
When you'll no more the plumes of honour wear :
Grandeur must shudder at the sad decay,
And Pride look humble when he ponders there.

Deprived of Virtue, where is Beauty's power ?
Her dimpled smiles, her roses, charm no more ;
So much can guilt the loveliest form deflower :
We loathe that beauty which we loved before.

How fair are Virtue's buds, where'er they blow,
Or in the desert wild or garden gay !
Her flowers how sacred, wheresoe'er they show,
Unknown to killing canker and decay !

A TAVERN ELEGY.

FLED are the moments of delusive mirth,
The fancied pleasure, paradise divine !
Hush'd are the clamours that derive their birth
From generous floods of soul-reviving wine.

Still night and silence now succeed their noise ;
The erring tides of passion rage no more ;
But all is peaceful as the ocean's voice
When breezeless waters kiss the silent shore.

Here stood the juice, whose care-controlling powers
Could every human misery subdue,
And wake to sportive joy the lazy hours,
That to the languid senses hateful grew.

Attracted by the magic of the bowl,
Around the swelling brim in full array
The glasses circled, as the planets roll,
And hail with borrow'd light the god of day.

Here music, the delight of moments gay,
Bade the unguarded tongues their motions cease,
And with a mirthful, a melodious lay,
Awed the fell voice of discord into peace.

These are the joys that virtue must approve,
While reason shines with majesty divine,
Ere our ideas in disorder move,
And sad excess against the soul combine.

What evils have not frenzied mortals done
By wine, that *ignis fatuus* of the mind !
How many by its force to vice are won,
Since first ordain'd to tantalise mankind !

By Bacchus' power, ye sons of riot ! say,
How many watchful sentinels have bled !
How many travellers have lost their way,
By lamps unguided through the evening shade !

O spare those friendly twinklers of the night !
Let no rude cane their hallow'd orbs assail !
For cowardice alone condemns the light
That shows her countenance aghast and pale.

Now the short taper warns me to depart,
Ere darkness shall assume his dreary sway ;
Ere solitude fall heavy on my heart,
That lingers for the far approach of day.

Who would not vindicate the happy doom,
To be for ever number'd with the dead,
Rather than bear the miserable gloom,
When all his comforts, all his friends, are fled ?

Bear me, ye gods ! where I may calmly rest
From all the follies of the night secure,
The balmy blessings of repose to taste,
Nor hear the tongue of outrage at my door.

GOOD EATING.

HEAR, O ye host of Epicurus ! hear !
Each portly form, whose overhanging paunch
Can well denote the all-transcendant joy
That springs unbounded from fruition full
Of rich repast ; to you I consecrate

The song advent'rous ; happy if the Muse
Can cook the numbers to your palates keen,
Or send but half the relish with her song,
That smoking sirloins to your souls convey.

Hence now, ye starv'lings wan ! whose empty sides
Oft echo to the hollow-murmuring tones
Of hunger fell. Avaunt, ye base-born hinds !
Whose fates unkind ne'er destined you to gorge
The banquet rare, or wage a pleasing war
With the delicious morsels of the earth.
To you I sing not ; for, alas ! what pain,
What tantalising tortures would ensue,
To aid the force of famine's sharpest tooth,
Were I to breathe my accents in your ear !

Hail, roast beef ! monarch of the festive throng,
To hunger's bane the strongest antidote ;
Come, and with all thy rage-appeasing sweets
Our appetites allay ! For, or attended
By root Hibernian, or plum-pudding rare,
Still thou art welcome to the social board.
Say, can the spicy gales from orient blown,
Or zephyr's wing, that from the orange groves
Brushes the breeze with rich perfumes replete,
More aromatic or reviving smell
To nostrils bring ! Or can the glassy streams
Of Pactolus, that o'er his golden sands
Delightful glide, the luscious drops outvie
That from thy sides embrown'd unnumber'd fall !
Behold, at thy approach, what smiles serene
Beam from the ravish'd guests ! Still are their tongues,
While they, with whetted instruments, prepare
For deep incision. Now the abscess bleeds,
And the devouring band, with stomachs keen,
And glutting rage, thy beauteous form destroy ;
Leave you a marrowless skeleton and bare,
A prey to dunghills, or vexatious sport
Of torrent rushing from defilement's urns,
That o'er the city's flinty pavement hurls.

So fares it with the man whose powerful pelf
Once could command respect. Caress'd by all,

His bounties were as lavish as the hand
Of yellow Ceres till his stores decay'd ;
And then (O dismal tale !) those precious drops
Of flattery that bedew'd his spring of fortune,
Leave the sad winter of his state so fallen,
Nor nurse the thorn from which they ne'er can hope
Again to pluck the odour-dropping rose !

For thee, roast beef ! in variegated shapes,
Have mortals toil'd. The sailor sternly braves
The strength of Boreas, and exulting stands
Upon the sea-wash'd deck. With hopes inspired
Of yet indulging in thy wish'd-for sweets,
He smiles amidst the dangers that surround him ;
Cheerful he steers to cold, forbidden climes,
Or to the torrid zone explores his way.

Be kind, ye powers ! and still propitious send
This paragon of feeding to our halls.
With this regaled, who would, vain-glorious, wish
For towering pyramids superbly crown'd
With jellies, syllabubs, or ice-cream rare ?
These can amuse the eye, and may bestow
A short-lived pleasure to a palate strange ;
But for a moment's pleasure, who would vend
A lifetime that would else be spent in joy,
For hateful loathings, and for gouty rheums,
Ever preceded by indulged excess ?

Blest be those walls where hospitality
And welcome reign at large ! There may you oft
Of social cheer partake, and love, and joy ;
Pleasures that to human mind convey
Ideal pictures of the bliss supreme ;
But near the gate where parsimony dwells,
Where ceremony cool, with brow austere,
Confronts the guests, ne'er let thy foot approach !
Deprived of thee, heaven-born benevolence,
What is life's garden but a devious wild,
Through which the traveller must pass forlorn,
Unguided by the aid of friendship's ray ?
Rather, if poverty hold converse with thee,
To the lonely garret's lofty bield ascend,

Or dive to some sad cell ; there have recourse
 To meagre offals, where, though small thy fare,
 Freedom shall wing thee to a purer joy
 Than banquets with superfluous dainties crown'd,
 Mix'd with reserve and coolness, can afford.

But if your better fortunes have prepared
 Your purse with ducats, and with health your frame,
 Assemble, friends ! and to the tavern straight,
 Where the officious drawer, bending low,
 Is passive to a fault. Then, nor the Signior grand,
 Or Russia's empress, signalised for war,
 Can govern with more arbitrary sway.

Ye who, for health, for exercise, for air,
 Oft saunter from Edina's smoke-capt spires,
 And by the grassy hill or dimpled brook,
 An appetite revive, should oft-times stray
 O'er Arthur's-seat's green pastures, to the town
 For sheep-heads and bone-bridges famed of yore,
 That in our country's annals stands yclept
 Fair Duddingstonia, where you may be blest
 With simple fare and vegetable sweets,
 Freed from the clamours of the busy world.*

Or, if for recreation you should stray
 To Leithian shore, and breathe the keener air
 Wafted from Neptune's empire of the main ;
 If appetite invite, and cash prevail,
 Ply not your joints upon the homeward track,
 Till Lawson, chiefest of the Scottish hosts ! †

* The village of Duddingstone, near Edinburgh, was famed for taverns in which sheep-head dinners could be got. The crania of the sheep being afterwards placed as stepping-stones across pools in the street, the place was quizzically spoken of as a great city possessing a hundred bone bridges.—*Robert Chambers*.

† Lawson's tavern was in a large old house (dated 1678), on the *Shore* at Leith, very near the flag-house at the end of the pier. It has long been a private dwelling. Chancing to be in this house a good many years ago, the writer of this note observed on a window, scribbled by a diamond, the complaint of some dissatisfied customer, who had perhaps dined in it the most part of a century ago—"Lawson's is a good house, but bad waiters."—*Robert Chambers*.

To nimble-footed waiters give command
The cloth to lay. Instinctively they come ;
And, lo ! the table, wrapt in cloudy steams,
Groans with the weight of the transporting fare,
That breathes frankincense on the guests around.

Now, while stern winter holds his frigid sway,
And to a period spins the closing year ;
While festivals abound, and sportive hours
Kill the remembrance of our weaning time,
Let not Intemperance, destructive fiend !
Gain entrance to your halls. Despoil'd by him,
Shall cloyed appetite, forerunner sad
Of rank disease, inveterate clasp your frame ;
Contentment shall no more be known to spread
Her cherub wings round thy once happy dwelling,
But misery of thought, and racking pain,
Shall plunge you headlong to the dark abyss.

TEA.

YE maidens modest ! on whose sullen brows
Hath weaning chastity her wrinkles cull'd,
Who constant labour o'er consumptive oil,
At midnight knell, to wash sleep's nightly balm
From closing eyelids, with the grateful drops
Of tea's blest juices ; list the obsequious lays,
That come not, with Parnassian honours crown'd,
To dwell in murmurs o'er your sleepy sense,
But, fresh from orient blown, to chase far off
Your lethargy, that dormant needles roused
May pierce the waving mantua's silken folds.
For many a dame, in chamber sadly pent,
Hath this reviving limpid call'd to life :
And well it did, to mitigate the frowns
Of anger, reddening on Lucinda's brow
With flash malignant, that had harbour'd there,
If she at masquerade, or play, or ball,

Appeared not in her newest, best attire.
But Venus, goddess of the eternal smile,
Knowing that stormy brows but ill become
Fair patterns of her beauty, hath ordain'd
Celestial tea—a fountain that can cure
The ills of passion, and can free the fair
From frowns and sighs, by disappointment earn'd.

To her, ye fair, in adoration bow !
Whether at blushing morn or dewy eve ;
Her smoking cordials greet your fragrant board,
With Sushong, Congo, or coarse Bohea crown'd.
At midnight skies, ye mantua-makers, hail
The sacred offering : for the haughty belles
No longer can upraid your lingering hands,
With trains upborne aloft by dusty gales
That sweep the ball-room. Swift they glide along,
And, with their sailing streamers, catch the eye
Of some Adonis, mark'd to love a prey,
Whose bosom ne'er had panted with a sigh,
But for the silken draperies that enclose
Graces which nature has by art conceal'd.

Mark well the fair ! observe their modest eye,
With all the innocence of beauty blest ;
Could slander o'er that tongue its power retain,
Whose breath is music ? Ah, fallacious thought !
The surface is ambrosia's mingled sweets,
But all below is death. At tea-board met,
Attend their prattling tongues ; they scoff, they rail
Unbounded ; but their darts are chiefly aim'd
At some gay fair, whose beauties far eclipse
Her dim beholders, who, with haggard eyes,
Would blight those charms where raptures long have
dwelt

In ecstasy, delighted and sufficed.

In vain hath Beauty, with her varied robe,
Bestow'd her glowing blushes o'er her cheeks,
And called attendant graces to her aid,
To blend the scarlet and the lily fair ;
In vain did Venus in her favourite mould

Adapt the slender form to Cupid's choice ;
When slander comes, her blasts too fatal prove ;
Pale are those cheeks where youth and beauty glow'd—
Where smiles, where freshness, and where roses grew ;
Ghastly and wan their Gorgon picture comes,
With every fury grinning from the looks
Of frightful monster. Envy's hissing tongue
With deepest vengeance wounds, and every wound
With deeper canker, deeper poison teems.

O gold ! thy luring lustre first prevail'd
On man to tempt the fretful winds and waves,
And hunt new fancies. Still, thy glaring form
Bids commerce thrive, and o'er the Indian waves,
O'er-stemming danger, draw the labouring keel
From China's coast to Britain's colder clime,
Fraught with the fruits and herbage of her vales.
In them, whatever vegetable springs,
How loathsome and corrupted, triumphs here,
The bane of life, of health the sure decay :
Yet, yet we swallow, and extol the draught,
Though nervous ails should spring, and vapourish
qualms

Our senses and our appetites destroy.

Look round, ye sippers of the poison'd cup
From foreign plant distill'd ! No more repine
That Nature, sparing of her sacred sweets,
Hath doom'd you in a wilderness to dwell ;
While round Britannia's streams she kindly rears
Green sage and wild thyme. These were sure decreed,
As plants of Britain, to regale her sons
With native moisture, more refreshing, sweet,
And more profuse of health and vigour's balm
Than all the stems that India can boast.

THE SOW OF FEELING.

Well ! I protest there's no such thing as dealing
With these starch'd poets—with these men of feeling !

Epilogue to "The Prince of Tunis."

MALIGNANT planets ! do ye still combine
Against this wayward, dreary life of mine ?
Has pitiless oppression—cruel case !—
Gain'd sole possession of the human race !
By cruel hands has every virtue bled,
And innocence from men to vultures fled ?
Thrice happy had I lived in Jewish time,
When swallowing pork or pig was doom'd a crime ;
My husband long had blest my longing arms,
Long, long had known love's sympathetic charms !
My children, too—a little suckling race,
With all their father growing in their face—
From their prolific dam had ne'er been torn,
Nor to the bloody stalls of butchers borne.

Ah, luxury ! to you my being owes
Its load of misery, its load of woes !
With heavy heart I saunter all the day ;
Gruntle and murmur all my hours away !
In vain I try to summon old desire
For favourite sports—for wallowing in the mire ;
Thoughts of my husband, of my children, slain,
Turn all my wonted pleasure into pain !
How oft did we, in Phœbus' warming ray,
Bask on the humid softness of the clay !
Oft did his lusty head defend my tail
From the rude whispers of the angry gale ;
While nose-refreshing puddles stream'd around,
And floating odours hail'd the dung-clad ground.

Near by a rustic mill's enchanting clack,
Where plenteous bushels load the peasant's back,
In straw-crown'd hovel, there to life we came,
One boar our father, and one sow our dam.
While tender infants on our mother's breast

A flame divine in either shone confest :
In riper hours, love's more than ardent blaze
Inkindled all his passion, all his praise !
No deadly, sinful passion fired his soul,
Virtue o'er all his actions gain'd control !
That cherub which attracts the female heart,
And makes them soonest with their beauty part,
Attracted mine ; I gave him all my love,
In the recesses of a verdant grove :
'Twas there I listen'd to his warmest vows,
Amidst the pendant melancholy boughs ;
'Twas there my trusty lover shook for me
A shower of acorns from the oaken tree ;
And from the teeming earth, with joy, plough'd out
The roots salubrious with his hardy snout.

But, happiness ! a floating meteor thou,
That still inconstant art to man and sow,
Left'st us in gloomiest horrors to reside,
Near by the deep-dyed sanguinary tide,
Where whetting steel prepares the butchering knives,
With greater ease to take the harmless lives
Of cows, and calves, and sheep, and hogs, who fear
The bite of bull-dogs, that incessant tear
Their flesh, and keenly suck the blood-distilling ear !

At length the day, the eventful day, drew near,
Detested cause of many a briny tear !
I'll weep, till sorrow shall my eyelids drain,
A tender husband and a brother slain !
Alas ! the lovely languor of his eye,
When the base murderers bore him captive by ;
His mournful voice, the music of his groans,
Had melted any hearts, but hearts of stones !
O ! had some angel at that instant come,
Given me four nimble fingers and a thumb,
The blood-stain'd blade I'd turn'd upon his foe,
And sudden sent him to the shades below—
Where, or Pythagoras' opinion jests,
Beasts are made butchers—butchers changed to beasts.
Wisely in early times the law decreed,
For human food few quadrupeds should bleed ;

But monstrous man, still erring from the laws,
 The curse of Heaven upon his banquet draws !
 Already has he drain'd the marshes dry
 For frogs, new victims of his luxury ;
 And soon the toad and lizard may come home,
 In his voracious paunch to find a tomb ;
 Cats, rats, and mice, their destiny may mourn,
 In time their carcasses on spits may turn ;
 They may rejoice to-day—while I resign
 Life, to be number'd 'mongst the feeling swine.

AN EXPEDITION TO FIFE AND THE ISLAND OF MAY,

ON BOARD “THE BLESSED ENDEAVOUR” OF DUNBAR,
 CAPTAIN ROXBURGH, COMMANDER.

List, O ye slumberers on the peaceful shore,
 Whose lives are one unvariegated calm
 Of stillness and of sloth ! And hear, O nymph !
 In heaven yclept pleasure ; from your throne
 Effulgent send a heavenly radiant beam,
 That, cheer'd by thee, the Muse may bend her way :
 For from no earthly flight she builds her song,
 But from the bosom of green Neptune's main
 Would fain emerge, and, under Phœbe's reign,
 Transmit her numbers to inclining ears.

Now, when the warbling songsters quit the groves,
 And solemn sounding whisperings lull the spray,
 To meditation sacred, let me roam
 O'er the blest floods that wash our native shore,
 And view the wonders of the deep profound,
 While now the western breezes reign around,
 And Boreas, sleeping in his iron cave,
 Regains his strength and animated rage,
 To wake new tempests and inswell new seas.

And now Favonius wings the sprightly gale ;
The willing canvas, swelling with the breeze,
Gives life and motion to our bounding prow,
While the hoarse boatswain's pipe shrill-sounding far,
Calls all the tars to action. Hardy sons !
Who shudder not at life-devouring gales,
But smile amidst the tempest's sounding jars,
Or 'midst the hollow thunders of the war.
Fresh sprung from Greenland's cold, they hail with joy
The happier clime, the fresh autumnal breeze,
By Sirius guided, to allay the heat
That else would parch the vigour of their veins.
Hard change, alas ! from petrifying cold
Instant to plunge to the severest ray
That burning dog-star or bright Phœbus sheds.
Like comet whirling through the ethereal void,
Now they are redden'd with solar blaze,
Now froze and tortur'd by the frigid zone.

Thrice happy Britons ! whose well-temper'd clay
Can face all climes, all tempests, and all seas.
These are the sons that check the growing war ;
These are the sons that hem Britannia round
From sudden innovation—awe the shores,
And make their drooping pendants hail her queen
And mistress of the globe. They guard our beds,
While fearless we enjoy secure repose,
And all the blessings of a bounteous sky.
To them in feverous adoration bend,
Ye fashion'd macaronies ! whose bright blades
Were never dimm'd or stain'd with hostile blood,
But still hang dangling on your feeble thigh,
While through the Mall or Park you show away,
Or through the drawing-room on tiptoe steal.

On poop aloft, to messmates laid along,
Some son of Neptune, whose old wrinkled brow
Has braved the rattling thunder, tells his tale
Of dangers, sieges, and of battles dire ;
While they, as fortune favours, greet with smiles,
Or heave the bitter sympathetic sigh,
As the capricious fickle goddess frowns.

Ah, how unstable are the joys of life !
The pleasures, ah, how few ! Now smile the skies
With aspect mild ; and now the thunders shake,
And all the radiance of the heavens deflower.
Through the small opening of the mainsail broad,
Lo, Boreas steals, and tears him from the yard,
Where long and lasting he has play'd his part !
So suffers virtue. When in her fair form
The smallest flaw is found, the whole decays.
In vain she may implore with piteous eyes,
And spread her naked pinions to the blast :
A reputation maim'd finds no repair,
Till death, the ghastly monarch, shuts the scene.

And now we gain the May, whose midnight light,
Like vestal virgins' offerings undecay'd,
To mariners bewilder'd acts the part
Of social friendship, guiding those that err
With kindly radiance to their destined port.

Thanks, kindest Nature ! for those floating gems,
Those green-grown isles, with which you lavish strew
Great Neptune's empire. But for thee, the main
Were an uncomfortable mazy flood.
No guidance then would bless the steerman's skill,
No resting-place would crown the mariner's wish,
When he to distant gales his canvas spreads
To search new wonders. Here the verdant shores
Teem with new freshness, and regale our sight
With caves, that ancient Time, in days of yore,
Sequester'd for the haunt of Druid lone,
There to remain in solitary cell,
Beyond the power of mortals to disjoin
From holy meditation. Happy now
To cast our eyes around from shore to shore,
While by the oozy caverns on the beach
We wander wild, and listen to the roar
Of billows murmuring with incessant noise.

And now, by fancy led, we wander wild
Where o'er the rugged steep the buried dead
Remote lie anchor'd in their parent mould ;
Where a few fading willows point the state

Of man's decay. Ah, death ! where'er we fly,
 Whether we seek the busy and the gay,
 The mourner or the joyful, there art thou !
 No distant isle, no surly swelling surge,
 E'er awed thy progress or controll'd thy sway,
 To bless us with that comfort, length of days,
 By all aspired at, but by few attain'd.

To Fife we steer—of all beneath the sun
 The most unhallow'd 'midst the Scotian plains !
 And here (sad emblem of deceitful times :)
 Hath sad Hypocrisy her standard borne.
 Mirth knows no residence, but ghastly Fear
 Stands trembling and appall'd at airy sights.
 Once only—only once—reward it, gracious powers !
 Did Hospitality, with open face,
 And winning smile, cheer the deserted sight,
 That else had languish'd for the blest return
 Of beauteous day, to dissipate the clouds
 Of endless night, and superstition wild,
 That constant hover o'er the dark abode.
 O happy Lothian ! happy thrice her sons !
 Who ne'er yet ventured from the southern shore
 To tempt misfortune on the Fife coast :
 Again with thee we dwell, and taste thy joys,
 Where sorrow reigns not, and where every gale
 Is fraught with fulness, blest with living hope,
 That fears no canker from the year's decay.

TO SIR JOHN FIELDING.

ON HIS ATTEMPT TO SUPPRESS "THE BEGGARS' OPERA."

When you censure the age,
 Be cautious and sage,
 Lest the courtiers offended should be ;
 When you mention vice or bribe,
 'Tis so pat to all the tribe,
 Each cries, " It was levell'd at me !"—GAY.
 'Tis woman that seduces all mankind.—FILCH.

BENEATH what cheerful region of the sky
Shall Wit, shall Humour, and the Muses fly ?
For ours, a cold, inhospitable clime,
Refuses quarter to the muse and rhyme.
If on her brows an envied laurel springs,
They shake its foliage, crop her growing wings,
That with the plumes of virtue wisely soar,
And all the follies of the age explore.
But should old Grub her rankest venom pour,
And every virtue with a vice deflower,
Her verse is sacred, justices agree ;
Even Justice Fielding* signs the wise decree.

Let fortune-dealers, wise predictors ! tell
From what bright planet Justice Fielding fell.
Augusta trembles at the awful name ;
The darling tongue of Liberty is tame,
Basely confined by him in Newgate chains,
Nor dare exclaim how harshly Fielding reigns.

In days when every mercer has his scale,
To tell what pieces lack, how few prevail,
I wonder not the low-born menial trade
By partial justice has aside been laid ;
For she no discount gives for virtue worn ;
Her aged joints are without mercy torn.

In vain, O Gay ! thy muse explored the way
Of yore to banish the Italian lay ;
Gave homely numbers sweet, though warmly strong ;
The British chorus blest the happy song ;
Thy manly voice, and Albion's, then were heard,
Felt by her sons, and by her sons revered :
Eunuchs, not men, now bear aloft the palm,
And o'er our senses pour lethargic balm.

* Sir John Fielding was a half-brother of the great novelist, and succeeded him as Justice at Bow Street. Although blind from infancy, he was yet, it has been told, a most active and energetic magistrate. His attempt to suppress the performance of the piquant Opera of the good-natured Gay, however, called forth widespread and intense indignation, expressed in pamphlets, squibs, etc., etc. He died in 1780.

The stage the truest mirror is of life ;
Our passions there revolve in active strife ;
Each character is there display'd to view ;
Each hates his own, though well assured 'tis true.
No marvel, then, that all the world should own
In Peachum's treachery Justice Fielding known ;
Since thieves so common are, and, Justice, you
Thieves to the gallows for reward pursue.
Had Gay, by writing, roused the stealing trade,
You'd been less active to suppress your bread ;
For, trust me ! when a robber loses ground,
You lose your living with your forty pound.

'Twas woman first that snatch'd the luring bait,
The tempter taught her to transgress and eat ;
Though wrong the deed, her quick compunction told ;
She banish'd Adam from an age of gold.

When women now transgress fair virtue's rules,
Men are their pupils, and the stews their schools.
From simple whoredom greater sins began
To shoot, to bloom, to centre all in man ;
Footpads on Hounslow flourish here to-day,
The next, old Tyburn sweeps them all away ;
For woman's faults, the cause of every wrong,
Men robb'd and murder'd, thieves at Tyburn strung.
In panting breasts to raise the fond alarm,
Make females in the cause of virtue warm,
Gay has compared them to the summer flower,
The boast and glory of an idle hour ;
When cropp'd, it falls, shrinks, withers, and decays,
And to oblivion dark consigns its days.

Hath this a power to win the female heart
Back from its vice, from virtue ne'er to part ?
If so the wayward virgin will restore,
And murders, rapes, and plunders be no more.

These were the lays of him who virtue knew,
Her dictates who revered, and practised too ;
No idle theorist in her stainless ways,
He gave the parent goddess all his days.

O Queensberry ! * his best and earliest friend,
 All that his wit or learning could commend ;
 Best of patrons ! the Muse's only pride !
 Still in her pageant shalt thou first preside ;—
 No idle pomp that riches can procure,
 Sprung at a start, and faded in an hour,
 But pageant, lasting as the uncropp'd bay,
 That verdant triumphs with the Muse of Gay.

TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

FOOD FOR A NEW EDITION OF HIS DICTIONARY.

Let Wilkes and Churchill rage no more,
 Though scarce provision, learning's good :
 What can these hungries next implore ?
 E'en Samuel Johnson loves our food.

GREAT pedagogue ! whose literarian lore,
 With syllable and syllable conjoin'd,
 To transmutate and varify, has learn'd
 The whole revolving scientific names
 That in the alphabetic columns lie,
 Far from the knowledge of mortalic shapes ;
 As we, who never can peroculate
 The miracles by thee miraculised,
 The Muse, silential long, with mouth apert,
 Would give vibration to stagnatic tongue,
 And loud encomiate thy puissant name,
 Eulogiated from the green decline
 Of Thames's banks to Scoticanian shores,
 Where Lochlomondian liquids undulise.

To meminate thy name in after times,
 The mighty mayor of each regalian town
 Shall consignate thy work to parchment fair

* Charles, the good Duke of Queensberry, the patron of Gay, was then still alive.

In roll burgharian, and their tables all
Shall fumigate with fumigation strong :
Scotland, from perpendicularian hills,
Shall emigrate her fair muttonian store,
Which late had there in pedestration walk'd,
And o'er her airy heights perambulised.

O, blackest execrations on thy head,
Edina shameless ! Though he came within
The bounds of your notation, though you knew
His honorific name, you noted not,
But basely suffer'd him to chariotise
Far from your towers, with smoke that nubilate,
Nor drank one amicitial swelling cup
To welcome him convivial. Bailies all !
With rage inflated, catenations tear,*
Nor ever after be you vinculis'd,
Since you that sociability denied
To him whose potent lexiaphanian style
Words can prolongate, and inswell his page
With what in others to a line's confined.

Welcome, thou verbal potentate and prince !
To hills and valleys, where emerging oats
From earth assuage our pauperty to bay,
And bless thy name, thy dictionarian skill,
Which there definitive will still remain,
And oft be speculised by taper blue,
While youth studentious turn thy folio page.

Have you, as yet, in per'patetic mood
Regarded with the texture of the eye
The cave cavernic, where fraternal bard,
Churchill, depicted pauperated swains
With thraldom and bleak want reduced sore ;
Where nature, colourised, so coarsely fades,
And puts her russet par'phernalia on ?
Have you, as yet, the way explorified
To let lignarian chalice, swell'd with oats,
Thy orifice approach ? Have you, as yet,

* Catenations, *vide Chains*.—JOHNSON.

With skin fresh rubified by scarlet spheres,
 Applied brimstonic unction to your hide,
 To terrify the salamandrian fire
 That from involuntary digits asks
 The strong allaceration? Or can you swill
 The usquebalian flames of whisky blue
 In fermentation strong? Have you applied
 The kilt aërian to your Anglian thighs,
 And with renunciation assignised
 Your breeches in Londona to be worn?
 Can you, in frigour of Highlandian sky,
 On heathy summits take nocturnal rest?
 It cannot be.—You may as well desire
 An alderman leave plum-puddenian store,
 And scratch the tegument from pottage dish,
 As bid thy countrymen, and thee, conjoin'd,
 Forsake stommachic joys. Then hie you home,
 And be a malcontent, that naked hinds,
 On lentiles fed, can make your kingdom quake,
 And tremulate Old England libertised!

EPILOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MR. WILSON, AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, IN
 THE CHARACTER OF AN EDINBURGH BUCK.

YE who oft finish care in Lethe's cup,
 Who love to swear, and roar, and keep it up,
 List to a brother's voice, whose sole delight
 Is—sleep all day, and riot all the night.

Last night, when potent draughts of mellow wine
 Did sober reason into wit refine;
 When lusty Bacchus had contrived to drain
 The sullen vapours from our shallow brain;
 We sallied forth (for valour's dazzling sun
 Up to his bright meridian had run),
 And, like renown'd Quixotte and his squire,
 Spoils and adventures were our sole desire.

First we approach'd a seeming sober dame,
Preceded by a lanthorn's pallid flame,
Borne by a liveried puppy's servile hand,
The slave obsequious of her stern command.
"Curse on those cits," said I, "who dare disgrace
Our streets at midnight with a sober face ;
Let never tallow-chandler give them light,
To guide them through the dangers of the night !"
The valet's cane we snatch'd, and dam'me ! I
Made the frail lanthorn on the pavement lie.
The guard, still watchful of the lieges' harm,
With slow-paced motion stalk'd at the alarm.
"Guard, seize the rogues !" the angry madam cried ;
And all the guard, with "Seize ta rogue," replied.

As in a war, there's nothing judged so right
As a concerted and prudential flight,
So we, from guard and scandal to be freed,
Left them the field and burial of their dead.

Next we approach'd the bounds of George's Square :
Blest place !—no watch, no constables, come there.
Now had they borrow'd Argus' eyes who saw us,
All was made dark and desolate as chaos :
Lamps tumbled after lamps, and lost their lustres,
Like doomsday, when the stars shall fall in clusters.
Let fancy paint what dazzling glory grew
From crystal gems, when Phœbus came in view :
Each shatter'd orb ten thousand fragments strews,
And a new sun in every fragment shows.

Hear, then, my bucks, how drunken fate decreed us
For a nocturnal visit to the Meadows ;
And how we, valorous champions ! durst engage—
O deed unequall'd !—both the Bridge and Cage ;*
The rage of perilous winters which had stood—
This 'gainst the wind, and that against the flood ;

* The Cage was a small circular building at the end of the central walk in the Meadows, for the shelter of loungers during a shower. The Bridge bestrode a small stream which crossed the same walk.—
Robert Chambers.

But what nor wind, nor flood, nor Heaven could bend
e'er,

We tumbled down, my bucks ! and made surrender.

What are your far-famed warriors to us,
'Bout whom historians make such mighty fuss ?

Posterity may think it was uncommon

That Troy should be pillag'd for a woman ;

But ours your ten years' sieges will excel,

And justly be esteem'd the nonpareil :

Our cause is slighter than a dame's betrothing ;

For all these mighty feats have sprung from nothing.

THE ANTIQUARY.*

Just now in fair Edina lives,

That famous antient town,

At a known place hight Black-fryr's wynd

A knight of old renown.

A Druid's sacred form he bears

With saucer eyes of fire,

An antique hat on's head he wears

Like Ramsay the town cryer.

Down in the wynd his mansion stands,

All gloomy dark within,

Here mangled books like blood and bones

Strew'd in a giant's den.

Crude—indigested—half-devoured—

On groaning shelves they're thrown,

Such manuscripts no eye can read—

No hand write, but his own.

* This poem is supposed to describe James Cummys of the Herald Office, who was, along with the poet, a member of the Cape Club.

No prophet he like Sydrophel
Can future times explore—
But what has happened he can tell
Five hundred years and more.

A walking alm'nack he appears
Stept from some mouldy wall,
Worn out of use, through dust and years,
Like scutcheons in his hall.

By rusty coins old kings he'll trace,
And know their air and mien—
King Fergus he knows well by face,
Though George he ne'er has seen.

This wight th' outsides of Churches lov'd
Almost unto a sin,
Spires Gothic of more use he prov'd
Than pulpits are within.

Ye jack-daws, that are us'd to talk
Like us of human race—
When nigh you see J— C— walk
Loud chatter forth his praise.

When e'er the fatal day shall come—
For come, alas ! it must—
When this good Knight must stay at home
And turn to antique dust ;

The solemn dirge ye owls prepare,
Ye bats more hoarsely skreek—
Croak, all ye ravens, round the bier,
And all ye church-mice squeak !

A SUMMONS.*

To Jemmy Neeham, our Recorder,
Herald and purs'vants of that order,
Whereas 'tis meant and shewn to me
This month of August seventy-three
That some unlicensed prying blades
Of late have occupied the Shades,
The like in future to prevent
It is our sov-er-eign intent
That from this month of August so forth,
You shall debar all Knights of no worth,
By lock-fast doors at noon-tide hours,
To keep it from the rascals' powers.
Therefore, I charge you that ye summon
Precentor,† base born son of woman,
To answer in the hour of cause
For open insult to our laws,
Likeas ordain him to depone
If he has lybell's, any one
Containing treasonable rhymes
Or other treasonable crimes
Which he has issued 'gainst the Shades
And all our bumper-drinking blades,
All things before said which to do
We hereby do commit to you
As all of you and every one
Shall answer to us thereupon.

* This was first printed by Dr. Grosart, in 1851, as an additional note to the poem of "Auld Reekie," from the holograph of Fergusson, furnished to him for the purpose by David Laing of the Writers to the Signet's Library. His allusion to the Cape Club in the poem named appears to have been the subject of humorous accusation against the poet. Hence, perhaps, the "Summons."

† Precentor was the club-title of Fergusson.

JOB, CHAP. III., PARAPHRASED.

PERISH the fatal day when I was born,
The night with dreary darkness be forlorn ;
The loathed, hateful, and lamented night
When Job, 'twas told, had first perceived the light ;
Let it be dark, nor let the God on high
Regard it with the favour of his eye ;
Let blackest darkness and death's awful shade
Stain it, and make the trembling earth afraid ;
Be it not join'd unto the varying year,
Nor to the fleeting months in swift career.
Lo ! let the night, in solitude's dismay,
Be dumb to joy, and waste in gloom away ;
On it may twilight stars be never known ;
Light let it wish for, Lord ! but give it none.
Curse it let them who curse the passing day,
And to the voice of mourning raise the lay ;
Nor ever be the face of dawning seen
To ope its lustre on the enamell'd green ;
Because it seal'd not up my mother's womb,
Nor hid from me the sorrows doom'd to come.
Why, Lord ! the wretched object of thine ire,
Did I not rather from the womb expire ?
Why did supporting knees prevent my death,
Or suckling breasts sustain my infant breath ?
For now my soul with quiet had been blest,
With kings and counsellors of earth at rest,
Who bade the house of desolation rise,
And awful ruin strike tyrannic eyes ;
Or with the princes unto whom were told
Rich store of silver and corrupting gold ;
Or, as untimely birth, I had not been
Like infant who the light hath never seen ;
For there the wicked from their troubles cease,
And there the weary find their lasting peace ;
There the poor prisoners together rest,
Nor by the hand of injury oppress ;

The small and great together mingled are,
And free the servant from his master there.
Say, wherefore has an over-bounteous Heaven
Light to the comfortless and wretched given?
Why should the troubled and oppress'd in soul
Fret over restless life's unsettled bowl,
Who long for death, who lists not to their prayer,
And dig as for the treasures hid afar;
Who with excess of joy are blest and glad,
Rejoiced when in the tomb of silence laid?
Why then is grateful light bestow'd on man,
Whose life is darkness, all his days a span?
For ere the morn return'd my sighing came,
My mourning pour'd out as the mountain stream,
Wild-visaged fear, with sorrow-mingled eye,
And wan destruction, hideous, stared me nigh;
For though nor rest nor safety blest my soul,
New trouble came, new darkness, new controul.

ODE TO HORROR.

O THOU, who with incessant gloom
Courts the recess of midnight tomb!
Admit me of thy mournful throng,
The scatter'd woods and wilds among.
If e'er thy discontented ear
The voice of sympathy can cheer,
My melancholy bosom's sigh
Shall to your mournful plaint reply;
There to the fear-foreboding owl
The angry furies hiss and howl;
Or near the mountain's pendant brow,
Where rush-clad streams in cadent murmurs flow.

EPODE.

Who's he that with imploring eye
Salutes the rosy dawning sky?
The cock proclaims the morn in vain,
His sp'rit to drive to its domain:
For morning light can but return
To bid the wretched wail and mourn.
Not the bright dawning's purple eye
Can cause the frightful vapours fly;
Nor sultry Sol's meridian throne
Can bid surrounding fears begone.
The gloom of night will still preside,
While angry conscience stares on either side.

STROPHE.

To ease his sore distemper'd head,
Sometimes upon the rocky bed
Reclined he lies, to list the sound
Of whispering reed in vale profound.
Happy if Morpheus visits there,
A while to lull his woe and care;
Send sweeter fancies to his aid,
And teach him to be undismay'd.
Yet wretched still; for when no more
The gods their opiate balsam pour,
Behold! he starts, and views again
The Libyan monster prance along the plain.
Now from the oozing caves he flies,
And to the city's tumult hies,
Thinking to frolic life away;
Be ever cheerful, ever gay;
But though enwrapp'd in noise and smoke,
They ne'er can heal his peace when broke.
His fears arise, he sighs again
For solitude on rural plain;
Even there his wishes all convene
To bear him to his noise again.
Thus tortured, rack'd, and sore oppress,
He constant hunts, but never finds his rest.

ANTISTROPHE.

O exercise ! thou healing power,
 The toiling rustic's chiefest dower ;
 Be thou with heaven-born virtue join'd,
 To quell the tumults of the mind ;
 Then man as much of joy can share
 From ruffian winter, bleakly bare,
 As from the pure ethereal blaze
 That wantons in the summer rays.
 The humble cottage then can bring
 Content, the comfort of a king ;
 And gloomy mortals wish no more
 For wealth and idleness, to make them poor.

ODE TO DISAPPOINTMENT.

THOU joyless fiend, life's constant foe,
 Sad source of care, and spring of woe,
 Soft pleasure's hard controul ;
 Her gayest haunts for ever nigh,
 Stern mistress of the secret sigh
 That swells the murmuring soul.

Why haunt'st thou me through deserts drear ?
 With grief-swoln sounds why wound my ear,
 Denied to pity's aid ?
 Thy visage wan did e'er I woo,
 Or at thy feet in homage bow,
 Or court thy sullen shade ?

Even now enchanted scenes abound,
 Elysian glories strew the ground,
 To lure the astonish'd eyes ;
 Now horrors, hell, and furies reign,
 And desolate the fairy scene
 Of all its gay disguise.

The passions, at thy urgent call,
 Our reason and our sense enthrall
 In frenzy's fetters strong.
 And now despair, with lurid eye,
 Doth meagre poverty descry,
 Subdued by famine long.

The lover flies the haunts of day,
 In gloomy woods and wilds to stray,
 There shuns his Jessy's scorn ;
 Sad sisters of the sighing grove
 Attune their lyres to hapless love,
 Dejected and forlorn.

Yet hope undaunted wears thy chain,
 And smiles amidst the growing pain,
 Nor fears thy sad dismay ;
 Unawed by power, her fancy flies
 From earth's dim orb to purer skies,
 In realms of endless day.

 D I R G E .

THE waving yew or cypress wreath
 In vain bequeath the mighty tear ;
 In vain the awful pomp of death
 Attends the sable-shrouded bier.

Since Strephon's virtue's sunk to rest,
 Nor pity's sigh, nor sorrow's strain,
 Nor magic tongue, have e'er confest
 Our wounded bosom's secret pain.

The just, the good, more honours share
 In what the conscious heart bestows,
 Than vice adorn'd with sculptor's care,
 In all the venal pomp of woes.

A sad-eyed mourner at his tomb,
 Thou, Friendship ! pay thy rights divine,
 And echo through the midnight gloom
 That Strephon's early fall was thine.

SONGS FROM "ARTAXERXES."*

FROM ACT II., SCENE 2.

Tune—"Braes of Balandine."

ARBACES (*sings*).

By Heav'n's displeasure the wretch thus is thrown,
 With tempests harsh-sounding, on seas yet unknown ;
 In vain, thus surrounded, he struggles with death,
 When toss'd by huge billows, and panting for breath ;
 Even hope, too, forsakes him, no pity he craves ;
 He's left, without mercy, the sport of the waves.

FROM ACT II., SCENE 6.

Tune—"Roslin Castle."

MANDANE (*sings*).

WHAT doubts oppress my wounded heart !
 My soul at every breath doth start !

* These verses are of little or no literary value, and have been seldom printed ; yet, seeing they were sung in the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, on the production of the English opera of "Artaxerxes," for which they were written, in 1769, when our poet was only nineteen years old, they should not be omitted from any representative edition of his poems. Further, seeing they were in all likelihood made to order, and that the Opera was advertised as "Music composed by Tho. Aug. Arne, Mus. Doc., with the addition of Three Favourite Scotch Airs. The words by Mr. R. Fergusson," they call for notice, as Stenhouse observes, in proof of their author's early celebrity.

The performers in "Artaxerxes," on the occasion above noted, were :—*Artaxerxes*, Mr. Ross ; *Artabanes*, Mr. Phillips ; *Arbaces*, Mr. Tenducci ; *Rimenes*, Mrs. Woodman ; *Mandane*, Madame Tenducci ; *Semira*, Miss Brown.

Fain would my gloomy thoughts retire,
 Nor fill my stormy breast with ire;
 Yet cares torment my tortur'd mind,
 Leaving their rugged tracts behind;
 And still my soul they hold in pain,
 Their cruel empire to maintain.

FROM ACT III., SCENE 7.

Tune—"Lochaber no more."

ARBACES (*sings*).

O WHERE shall I wander my lover to find,
 And with sweet discourses indulge my fond mind?
 Once more I must view her before I depart,
 And with mild embraces enliven my heart
 Perchance she's approaching that smooth-gliding stream,
 Where I first espy'd and discovered my flame:
 Farewell then my sorrows, I'll leave you a while,
 And steal from my true love one ravishing smile.

WHERE WINDING FORTH.*

SONG.

WHERE winding Forth adorns the vale.
 Fond Strephon, once a shepherd gay,
 Did to the rocks his lot bewail,
 And thus addressed his plaintive lay:
 "O, Julia, more than lily fair,
 More blooming than the op'ning rose,
 How can thy breast, relentless, wear
 A heart more cold than winter's snows?"

* This song appears in Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*, set to the old air of "Cumbernauld House."

“ Yet nipping winter’s keenest reign
But for a short-lived space prevails ;
Springtime returns, and cheers each swain,
Scented with Flora’s fragrant gales.
Come, Julia ! come, thy love obey,
Thou mistress of angelic charms !
Come, smiling like the morn of May,
And centre in thy Strephon’s arms.

Else, haunted by the fiend despair,
He’ll court some solitary grove,
Where mortal foot did ne’er repair,
But swains oppress’d with hapless love.
From the once pleasing rural throng
Removed, he’ll bend his lonely way,
Where Philomela’s mournful song
Shall join his melancholy lay.”

AMIDST A ROSY BANK OF FLOWERS.*

SONG.

AMIDST a rosy bank of flowers,
Young Damon mourn’d his forlorn fate ;
In sighs he spent his languid hours,
And breathed his woes in lonely state.

Gay joy no more shall ease his mind ;
No wanton sports can soothe his care ;
Since sweet Amanda proved unkind,
And left him full of black despair.

* The tune to which this is adapted in the *Scots Musical Museum*, where it also has a place, is “The Highlandman’s Lamentation,” composed by James Oswald, and published in the third volume of his *Caledonian Pocket Companion*.

His looks, that were as fresh as morn,
Can now no longer smiles impart ;
His pensive soul, on sadness borne,
Is rack'd and torn by Cupid's dart.

Turn, fair Amanda ! cheer your swain ;
Unshroud him from his veil of woe :
Range every charm to soothe the pain
That in his tortured breast doth grow.

NO REPOSE CAN I DISCOVER.*

SONG.

No repose can I discover,
Nor find joy without my lover ;
Can I stay when she's not near me ?
Cruel fates ! once deign to hear me.

The charms of grandeur don't decoy me,
Fair Eliza must enjoy me ;
My crown and sceptre I resign,
The shepherd's life shall still be mine.

SINCE BRIGHTEST BEAUTY SOON MUST
FADE.

SONG.

SINCE brightest beauty soon must fade,
That in life's spring so long has roll'd,
And wither in the drooping shade,
Ere it return to native mould ;

* In the *Museum*, as additional words to the tune of "Braw, braw lads of Gala Water."

Ye virgins, seize the fleeting hour,
 In time catch Cytherea's joy,
 Ere age your wonted smiles deflower,
 And hopes of love and life annoy.

CAPE SONG.*

Tune—"How happy a state does the miller possess."

How happy a state does the Cape-knight possess,
 With sixpence he'll purchase a crown's worth of bliss,
 O'er a foaming green stoup he depends for some sport
 From a liquid that never can do a man hurt.

What though in Capehall he should goosified spew?
 From peuking with porter no thirst can ensue,
 Not so, my dear knights, fares the ignorant ass
 Who drinks all the evening at burning molass.

Now in the Cape closet a table's preparing,
 With Welsh Rabbits garnished and good Glasgow
 herring;
 Oh what Caller Tippeny then shall be quaff'd,
 And of thee, O Thames Water,† a terrible draught!

In freedom's gay frolic we shorten the night,
 With humorous pitching and songs of delight;
 Then who would not rather in Capehall get drunk
 For sixpence, than give half-a-crown to a punk?

* This appears for the first time in any edition of Fergusson's collected poems, not having seen the light of print until recently, when quoted by Dr. Hans Hecht in his introduction to *Songs from David Herd's Manuscripts*, published by William J. Hay, John Knox's House, Edinburgh. 1904.

† London porter.

ON NIGHT.

Now murky shades surround the pole ;
Darkness lords without control :
To the notes of buzzing owl,
Lions roar and tigers howl,
Fright'ning from their azure shrine
Stars that wont in orbs to shine :
Now the sailor's storm-toss'd bark
Knows no blest celestial mark,
While in the briny troubled deep
Dolphins change their sport for sleep ;
Ghosts, and frightful spectres gaunt,
Churchyard's dreary footpaths haunt,
And brush with wither'd arms the dews
That fall upon the drooping yews.

THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

My life is like the flowing stream
That glides where summer's beauties teem,
Meets all the riches of the gale
That on its watery bosom sail,
And wanders 'midst Elysian groves
Through all the haunts that fancy loves.

May I, when drooping days decline,
And 'gainst those genial streams combine,
The winter's sad decay forsake,
And centre in my parent lake.

EPIGRAM

ON A LAWYER'S DESIRING ONE OF THE TRIBE TO LOOK
WITH RESPECT TO A GIBBET.

THE lawyers may revere that tree
Where thieves so oft have strung,
Since, by the Law's most wise decree,
Her thieves are never hung.

CHARACTER OF A FRIEND

IN AN EPITAPH WHICH HE DESIRED THE AUTHOR TO
WRITE.

UNDER this turf, to mouldering earth consign'd,
Lies he, who once was fickle as the wind,
Alike the scenes of good and ill he knew,
From the chaste temple to the lewdest stew.
Virtue and vice in him alternate reign'd :—
That fill'd his mind, and this his pocket drain'd,
Till in the contest they so stubborn grew,
Death gave the parting blow, and both withdrew.

EPITAPH ON GENERAL WOLFE.*

IN worth exceeding, and in virtue great,
Words would want force his actions to relate.
Silence, ye bards ! eulogiums vain forbear ;
It is enough to say that Wolfe lies here.

* Quebec witnessed the fall of James Wolfe ; a young hero, whose name is worthy to be placed in the same rank with those of the Grecian annals ; a man of extraordinary acuteness and energy of mind, whose soul was equally superior to pride and suspicion, and who, in his virtues, perhaps in his magnanimity, but especially in the circumstances of his death, closely resembled Epaminondas—*John Von Muller*. General Wolfe was twice struck as he led on a bayonet charge which decided the day ; and when the French were already broken, he received a third bullet, which was fatal, in the heart. He lived just long enough to know that the victory was complete ; and the last words of the young conqueror were—"Now, God be praised, I die happy."

EPIGRAM

ON THE NUMEROUS EPITAPHS FOR GENERAL WOLFE ;
FOR THE BEST OF WHICH A PREMIUM OF £100
WAS PROMISED.

THE Muse, a shameless mercenary jade !
Has now assumed the arch-tongued lawyer's trade ;
In Wolfe's deserving praises silent she,
Till flatter'd with the prospect of a fee.

ON A PREMIUM OF £100

BEING OFFERED FOR THE BEST EPITAPH ON GENERAL
WOLFE.

ONE hundred pounds ! too small a boon
To set the Poet's muse in tune,
That nothing might escape her.
What ? Wolfe's achievements to relate,
With every action good and great ?
Pshaw ! 'twouldn't buy the paper.

ON THE DEATH OF DR. TOSHACK OF
PERTH.

A GREAT HUMOURIST.

Where be those gibes, those flashes of merriment, that were
wont to set the table in a roar ?—*Hamlet*, Act V.

THE Doctor dead ! let old St. Johnston mourn ;
Let laughter's sons to sorrow's vot'ries turn ;
Mirth, wit, and humour from the earth are gone,
And to the summit of Olympus flown.
Could Momus die, 'tis sure as Jove's in heaven,
The vacant chair to Toshack would be given.

EXTEMPORE,

ON BEING ASKED WHICH OF THREE SISTERS WAS THE
MOST BEAUTIFUL.

WHEN Paris gave his voice, in Ida's grove,
For the resistless Venus, queen of love,
'Twas no great task to pass a judgment there,
Where she alone was exquisitely fair;
But here what could his ablest judgment teach,
When wisdom, power, and beauty, reign in each?
The youth, nonplus'd, behoved to join with me,
And wish the apple had been cut in three.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. THOMAS
LANCASHIRE, COMEDIAN.*

ALAS, poor Tom! how oft with merry heart
Have we beheld thee play the sexton's part!
Each comic heart must now be grieved to see
The sexton's dreary part perform'd on thee.

TO MR. GUION, COMEDIAN,
FOR HIS PANEGYRIC ON DR. WEBSTER.

THOUGH moralists may wisely say,
It is but barely civil
For all our enemies to pray,
And render good for evil;

* Mr. Lancashire possessed a great fund of dry humour, and filled Shuter's line in low comedy. He was a great favourite with the public. He kept a tavern, first in the Canongate, and afterwards in the New Town. He drank and joked with his customers; laughed and grew fat; and at length died, respected by many, and with the good word of all.—Jackson's *History of the Scottish Stage*.

I think it strange that Guion sage,
Should grow that very culprit,
To worship those who hate the stage
And lash it from the pulpit.

ON SEEING A COLLECTION OF PICTURES PAINTED BY MR. RUNCIMAN.*

O COULD my Muse, like thee, with magic skill,
Subdue the various passions at her will,
Like thee make each idea stand confest,
That honours or depraves the human breast;
Like thee could make the awe-struck world admire,
An Ossian's fancy, and a Fingal's fire,
Boldly aspiring at exalted lays,
The Poet then should sing the Painter's praise.

EPIGRAM

ON JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ., AND DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON
BEING CONFINED TO THE ISLE OF SKYE.†

Two gems, the nation's greatest boast,
To Scotia's plains drew near,
Bright to illume her dismal coast,
And barren fields to cheer.

* Alexander Runciman, landscape painter and house-decorator, whose great work was the decoration of the Hall of Ossian (referred to by the poet) at Penicuik. He was a fellow-Knight with Fergusson of the Cape Club, and painted the poet's portrait. Born in 1736, he died suddenly in the streets of Edinburgh, in 1785.

† Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell have at last appeared. It seems they sailed from the isle of Skye on the 3rd instant, bound for Icolmkill, but were driven by the remarkable storm which came on that day, to the isle of Coll, where they were wind bound for a fortnight. On *getting loose* from Coll, as they term it, they reached the isle of Mull, and from thence went to Icolmkill, under the conduct of Sir Allan Maclean.—*Extract of a Letter from Inveraray, October 26, 1773.*

She, fearing that their gracious forms,
 To other climes might fly,
 Learning and Liberty by storms
 Confin'd to Isle of Skye.

ON THE MUSIC BELLS

PLAYING YESTERDAY FORENOON, PRIOR TO BROWN'S AND
 WILSON'S EXECUTION, ON THE DEACONS BEING PRE-
 SENTED TO COUNCIL.*

HAPPY the folks that rule the roast !
 Our Council men are cheerful ;
 To mirth they now devote each toast,
 And bells fill ev'ry ear full.

When man's condemned to suffer death
 For his unlicens'd crimes,
 Instead of psalms they quit their breath
 To merry-making chimes.

ON SEEING A LADY PAINT HERSELF.

WHEN, by some misadventure cross'd,
 The banker hath his fortune lost,
 Credit his instant need supplies
 And for a moment blinds our eyes ;

* John Brown and James Wilson were executed for the murder of Adam Thomson on Carnwathmuir. They were each only about twenty-six years old. They had made several efforts to escape from prison, in which they were as often detected ; but when they found every attempt vain, they appeared reconciled to their fate, and at last by the persuasive influence of the clergyman who attended them, they were brought to a sense of their guilt, and a confession of the crime for which they were condemned.

So, Delia, when her beauty's flown,
Trades on a bottom not her own,
And labours to escape detection
By putting on a false complexion.

EXTEMPORE,

ON SEEING STANZAS ADDRESSED TO MRS. HARTLEY,
THE ACTRESS, WHEREIN SHE IS DESCRIBED AS RE-
SEMBLING MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

HARTLEY resembles Scotland's Queen,
Some bard enraptured cries ;
A flattering bard he is, I ween,
Or else the painter lies.

EPIGRAM

ON SEEING SCALES USED IN A MASON LODGE.

Why should the Brethren, met in lodge,
Adopt such awkward measures,
To set their scales and weights to judge
The value of their treasures ?
The law laid down from age to age,
How can they well o'ercome it ?
For it forbids them to engage
With aught but line and plummet.

EPIGRAM

ON THE AUTHOR'S INTENTION OF GOING TO SEA.

FORTUNE and Bob, e'er since his birth,
Could never yet agree ;
She fairly kick'd him from the earth
To try his fate at sea.

EPIGRAM

WRITTEN EXTEMPORE, AT THE DESIRE OF A GENTLEMAN
WHO WAS RATHER ILL-FAVOURED, BUT WHO HAD
A FAMILY OF BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN.

SCOTT and his children emblems are,
Of real good and evil ;
His children are like cherubims,
But Scott is like the devil.



GLOSSARY.

A

A', all.
Abidin't, abiding in.
Aboon, above.
Adie, Adam.
Ae, one.
Aff, off.
Afield, in the field.
Aft, oft.
Aften, often.
Afterhend, afterwards.
Aft-times, often-times.
Ahint, behind.
Aiblins, perhaps.
Aik, an oak, pain.
Ails, or *Ailings*, ill.
Ain, own.
Airin, airing.
Airths, ways.
Aiten, oaten.
Aith, an oath.
Aits, oats.
Alake, alas.
Alane, alone.
Along, along.
Alshin, a shoemaker's awl.
Amang, among.
Amry, a cupboard.
An', and, if.
Ance, or *Aince*, once.
Ane, one.
Anes, ones.
Anither, another.
Antrin, different, rare, occasional.
Aquafont, water.
Aquavita, whisky.
Attour, out-over.
Auld, old.

Auldfarren, or *Auldfarrant*, sagacious, cunning, ingenious.
Auld Nick, one of the many names for the devil.
Auld world, old world.
Auntie, dimin. of aunt.
Awa, away.
Ayont, beyond.

B

Ba', a ball.
Back-gaun, going back.
Bagnet, a bayonet.
Bailie, a magistrate.
Bairn, a child.
Bairnies, children.
Bairnly, childish.
Baith, both.
Ban, to swear.
Bane, a bone.
Banefu', baneful.
Bang, an effort, a great number, to drive.
Bannet, a bonnet.
Bannin, swearing.
Bannocks, thick cakes.
Bant'rin, bantering.
Bardie, dimin. of bard.
Barkent, clotted and dry, like bark.
Barras, boroughs.
Bassie, an old horse.
Baudrons, a cat.
Baudy, brothel.
Bauk, a cross beam.
Bauld, bold.
Bauldly, boldly.
Bauthrin, bustling, fluttering.

- Bawbee*, a halfpenny.
Beardly, broad built, stout made.
Beastie, dimin. of beast.
Bedeckit, dressed.
Bedeem, immediately, in haste.
Bedown, down.
Beek, to warm.
Beekin, basking.
Beengin, cringing.
Befa', befall.
Begude, begun.
Ben-by, into the spence or parlour.
Bender, a hard drinker.
Benmost, inmost.
Beted, befell.
Beyont, beyond.
Bicker, a kind of wooden dish, a short race.
Bide, to abide, to suffer.
Bield, shelter.
Bien, wealthy, prosperous.
Bienly, wealthy, plentifully.
Big, to build.
Biggin, a house, building.
Bike, or *Byke*, a nest of bees.
Billie, a young fellow, a comrade.
Bink, a shelf.
Binna, be not.
Bir, force, flying swiftly with a noise.
Birdie, dimin. of bird.
Birken, birchen.
Birkie, or *Birky*, a plucky little fellow.
Birks, birch trees.
Birle, to drink. Common people joining their bodles for purchasing liquor, they call it *birling a bodle*.
Birn, a burnt mark, a burden.
Birsle, to scorch.
Birze, to bruise.
Bisket, a biscuit.
Bis'ness, business.
Bizz, a bustle, to buzz.
Bizz'd, buzzed.
- Bizzin*, buzzing.
Blade, a leaf.
Blate, bashful, sheepish.
Blaw, to blow, to boast.
Blawn, blown.
Blawort, the blue-bottle.
Bleer-e'ed, having the eyes dim with water or rheum.
Bleerin, blearing.
Blink, a smiling glance.
Bleezin, blazing.
Blinkin, the flame rising and falling, as of a lamp when the oil is exhausted.
Blobs, blotches.
Blude, blood.
Blue-gown, one of those beggars who got annually on the king's birth-day a blue gown or cloak, with a badge.
Bluidy, bloody.
Blythe, or *Blythesome*, cheerful, happy.
Bodden, or *Bowden*, or *Bodin*, provided, furnished.
Bodle, one-sixth of a penny English.
Bogles, spirits, hobgoblins.
Bonny, or *Bonie*, handsome, beautiful.
Borrows, borough.
Bougil, the crow of a cock.
Bourachs, enclosures, a crowd.
Bowie, a small cask open at one end, a dish.
Brae, a declivity, the slope of a hill.
Bra'd, broad.
Brak, broke.
Branks, a sort of bridle.
Braw, handsome, fine.
Bravest, finest in apparel.
Brawly, finely, handsomely.
Breeks, breeches.
Brisket, or *Bisket*, breast, bosom.
Brither, brother.
Broachie, dimin. of broach.
Brock, a badger.

Brodit, pricked.
Brog, to pierce.
Broggs, a kind of strong shoes.
Broodit, brooded.
Broom-thackit, grown over or thatched with broom.
Brose, a composition of boiled water and oatmeal.
Browst, what is brewed.
Browster, brewer.
Bruik, to suffer, to endure.
Brulzie, a broil, a combustion.
Brunt, did burn.
Buik, or *Buke*, a book, bulk.
Bumbaz'd, confused.
Bure, did bear.
Burn, a rivulet.
Burnie, dimin. of burn.
Busk, dress.
Buskit, dressed.
Buss, a bush.
Busses, bushes.
But and Ben, the country kitchen and parlour.
Byggane, bypast.
Byre, a cow-house.

C

Ca', to call, to name, to drive.
Cabbage-fauld, a place in which cabbage grows.
Ca'd, called, drove.
Cadgie, cheerful.
Cadgily, cheerfully.
Cadie, a young fellow, a person who runs errands.
Caird, or *Card*, a tinker, to heckle.
Cairn, a loose heap of stones.
Callant, a boy.
Caller, cool, fresh, sound.
Cam, came.
Can, a cup.
Canna, cannot.
Cannily, gently.
Canny, cautious, gentle, lucky.
Cantily, cheerfully, merrily.
Cantrip, a charm, a spell.
Canty, merry, cheerful.

Cap, a wooden drinking vessel.
Capernoity, ill-natured, whimsical.
Carefu', careful.
Carena, care not.
Carle, an old man.
Carlin, a stout old woman.
Carline, an old woman.
Carritch, catechism.
Ca's, drives.
Cassen, cast.
Catcht, caught.
Ca't, called, driven.
Cauld, cold.
Cauldness, coldness.
Cauldrife, wanting cheerfulness in address, spiritless.
Causeway, causeway.
Chancy, fortunate.
Change-house, a tavern.
Chap, a blow, a person, a fellow.
Chappin, a stoup, or ale measure, something less than an English quart.
Chaumer, or *Chaumir*, a chamber.
Chaunter, a part of a bagpipe.
Cheek for chow, side by side.
Cheep, a chirp, to chirp.
Chiel, or *chield*, a young fellow.
Childer, children.
Chimley, the chimney.
Chow, to chew.
Claes, or *Claise*, clothes.
Claiking, gossiping.
Claith, cloth.
Clamihewit, a severe blow.
Clamp, a sharp blow or stroke that makes a noise.
Clarty, dirty, unclean.
Clash, idle talk.
Claver, clover.
Claw, to scratch.
Cleed, or *Clead*, to clothe.
Cleedin, clothing.
Cleek, to catch as with a hook.
Cleugh, a den betwixt rocks, a gulley.

Clink, money, a sharp stroke.
Clinkin, jerking.
Clitter-clatter, idle talk.
Clour, a swelling after a blow, a blow.
Clout, to strike, to mend.
Clouted, mended.
Clung, empty.
Coatie, dimin. of coat.
Coble, a fishing boat.
Cod, a pillow.
Codroch, rustic.
Coft, bought.
Cog, a wooden dish.
Cogie, or *Coggie*, dimin. of cog.
Collie, a shepherd's dog.
Connach, to abuse.
Contentit, contented;
Conveen, to assemble.
Coof, a ninny, a blockhead.
Corby, or *Corbie*, a raven.
Cornin, corning.
Cosh, neat.
Coshly, neatly.
Cotter, the inhabitant of a cot-house or cottage.
Cou'd, could.
Cou'dna, could not.
Coup, to barter, to tumble over.
Cour, to crouch.
Cour'd, crouched.
Couthy, kind, loving.
Cow'd, kept under, terrified, cropped short.
Cow, to clip short.
Cox, to persuade.
Cozy, snug.
Crabbit, crabbed, fretful.
Crabbittly, peevishly, morosely.
Crack, conversation, to converse, a flaw.
Crackit, cracked.
Craig, a crag, the throat.
Crammin, filling.
Crap, a crop, to creep, to top.
Cravin, craving.
Craw, the crow of a cock, a rook.

Criesh, or *Creesh*, grease.
Crieshy, greasy.
Crouse, cheerful, courageous.
Crouslly, boldly.
Crowdy, a dish made of oat-meal.
Crummy, a cow.
Crune, to make a noise like the continued roar of a bull or cow.
Cuissers, coursers.
Culls, rakes.
Cunnin, cunning.
Cunzied, coined.
Cutty, short.

D

Dad, a violent stroke, a large piece.
Daffin, foolishness, merriment.
Daft, merry, giddy, foolish.
Daintith, dainty.
Dander, to wander to and fro.
Dang, pushed, driven.
Danton, to discourage.
Darena, dare not.
Daub, proficient.
Dautit, caressed, fondled.
Daut, to caress with tenderness.
Deas, long seat erected against a wall.
Deave, to deafen.
Deid, dead.
Devall, to cease, to give over.
Dew drap, a dew drop.
Dictionar, dictionary.
Dight, to clean.
Dightin, winnowing corn from chaff.
Divot, broad turf.
Ding, to worst, to push.
Dinlin, rattling.
Dinsome, noisy.
Dinna, do not.
Disturbit, disturbed.
Dockan, (an herb) the dock.
Doggie, dimin. of dog.
Doilt, tired, crazed.

Doitet, stupidified.
Dool, or *Dule*, pain, sorrow.
Dolefu', doleful.
Dools, sorrows.
Donnart, stupid.
Dorts, a proud pet.
Dorty, proud, not to be spoken to, conceited.
Dosin, dosing.
Doss, to pay.
Douff, mournful, dull.
Dought, could, availed.
Doughtier, abler, stronger.
Doughtna, durst not.
Doughty, able, valiant, strong.
Douk, to put under water.
Douna, or *Downa*, do not.
Doup, the rump.
Dour, sullen.
Dow, am or are able, to wither.
Dow'd, inclined.
Dowie, or *Dowy*, worn with grief, fatigue, etc.
Drap, a drop.
Drappit, dropped.
Draunt, to speak slow, to drivel.
Dreamt, dreamed.
Dree, to suffer, endure.
Dreech, slow, tedious.
Dree'd, endured, suffered.
Dreep, to drop.
Dreepin, dropping.
Drib, a drop.
Drible, to drizzle.
Drips, drops.
Drog, drug.
Droukit, drenched, wet.
Drouth, thirst, drought.
Drouthy, or *Drowthy*, thirsty.
Drucken, drunken.
Drumly, muddy.
Dubs, small puddles of water.
Duddies, rags.
Duddy, ragged.
Duds, rags, clothes.
Dules, to hail the dules, to reach the mark.
Dung, worsted, pushed, driven.

Dunt, a stroke or blow.
Dwaam, a sudden pain or sickness.
Dwall, dwell.
Dwynin, or *Dwinin*, decaying, losing bulk, shrinking.

E

Ear, early.
Ee, the eye.
Een, eyes.
E'ening, evening.
Eident, diligent.
Eery, frightened, dreading spirits.
Eik, *Eke*, to join.
Eikit, joined.
Eith, easy.
Eithly, easily.
Eild, old age.
Elden, fuel.
Elshin, a shoemaker's awl.
Emmack, an ant.
Eneugh, enough.

F

Fa', fall.
Fadge, a spongy sort of bread, in shape of a roll.
Fae, a foe.
Fa'en, fallen.
Fairin, a fairing, a present.
Fairns, ferns.
Faithfu', faithful.
Fallow, fellow.
Fand, found.
Farer, longer, further.
Fareweel, farewell.
Farl, a cake of bread.
Fash, or *Faush*, trouble, care, to trouble.
Faugh'd, ploughed, and not sowed.
Faught, fight.
Fauld, a fold, to fold.
Faut, a fault.
Fearfu', fearful.
Feat, neat, spruce.
Feck, a part, quantity.

Feckless, puny, feeble, weak, silly.
Feckly, nearly.
Feg, a fig.
Fend, to defend.
Fend, to live comfortably.
Fenziyng, feigning.
Ferlies, wonders.
Ferly, a wonder, to wonder.
Fernyear, the preceding year.
Ferra, a cow missing calf.
Fetch, to pull by fits.
Fient, fiend, a petty oath.
Fier, sound, healthy, a brother, a friend.
*Fingernebb*s, finger-ends.
Fireflaught, a flash of lightning.
Fit, foot.
Fitstep, footstep.
Fizz'd, whizzed.
Flae, to strip, a flae.
Flae'd, flayed.
Flaff, to move up and down, as birds with their wings.
Flee, a fly.
Fleg, to fright.
Fleein, flying.
Fleetch, to supplicate in a flattering manner.
Fleetchin, supplicating.
Fleuk, a flounder.
Fleg, to frighten.
Fley, to scare, to affright.
Fley'd, affrighted.
Flingin, throwing.
Flyte, to scold, to chide.
Flytin, chiding, scolding.
Fore, forward.
Forfoughen, weary, faint and out of breath.
Forgather, to meet, to encounter.
Forseeth, forsooth.
Fou, or *Fu'*, full, drunk.
Fouk, or *Fock*, folk.
Fousome, fulsome.
Fouth, plenty, abundance.
Frae, from.
Friz, a frizzle.

Fuddlin, drinking.
Fund, found.
Fu'ness, fullness.
Furth, forth.

G

Ga', gall.
Gab, to speak pertly, the mouth.
Gabbie, dimin. of gab, mouth.
Gabbit, of a ready and easy expression.
Gabblin, prating pertly.
Gae, to go, give.
Gaed, went.
Gaes, goes.
Gae't, gave it.
Gane, gone.
Gang, to go, to walk.
Ganging, going.
Gangs, goes.
Gantris, stands for barrels.
Gar, to make, to force to.
Gardies, arms.
Gars, makes, forces.
Gart, or *Gar'd*, caused, forced, made.
Gash, sagacious, talkative, wise, to converse.
Gashly, wisely.
Gashin, conversing.
Gat, got.
Gate, way, manner, road.
Gaudsman, a plough boy.
Gaunt, to yawn.
Gaunting, yawning.
Gawn, or *Gawn*, going.
Gawsy, buxom, large.
Gear, riches, goods of any kind.
Geck, to toss the head in wantonness or scorn, to mock.
Gentles, gentry.
Gyzenin, thirsting, drying.
Ghaist, a ghost.
Gie, to give.
Gien, given.
Gies, gives.
Gif, if.
Gilpy, a roguish girl.

Gimmer, a ewe from one to two years old.
Gin, if.
Girn, to grin, to snarl, to twist the features in rage.
Girnal, a box or barrel in which meal is kept.
Girsle, gristle.
Gizy-maker, a maker of periwigs.
Gizz, a periwig.
Gizzen, dry.
Gizzen'd, or *Geys'd*, shrunk with dryness.
Glaikit, foolish, inattentive.
Glamour, when devils, wizards, or jugglers deceive the sight they are said to fling *glamour* over the eyes of the spectator, juggling.
Gleesome, merry.
Gleefu', full of joy.
Gled, a glede, the kite.
Gleg, sharp, ready, active.
Glen, a deep, narrow valley.
Glent, glint, peep.
Glent, to peep.
Gloamin, the twilight.
Glib, smooth, easy.
Glore, glory.
G'owr, to stare, to look.
Glowrin, staring.
Gormandizin', gormandizing.
Gowd, gold.
Gowan, the wild daisy.
Gowdspink, goldfinch.
Gowk, a cuckoo, a term of contempt, a brainless fellow.
Gowpin, a handful.
Graith, dress, accoutrements, gear.
Grane, or *Grain*, a groan, to groan.
Granny, grandmother.
Grapin, groping.
Gratefu', grateful.
Gravat, a neckcloth.
Gree, to agree; *to bear the gree*, to be decidedly victor.

Grein, to long for.
Greenin, longing for.
Greet, to shed tears, to weep.
Greetin, weeping.
Grip, to hold fast.
Gristly, gristly.
Grist, contents.
Grunds, sediment.
Grunt, to cry like a hog.
Gruntle, grunting noise.
Gudeman, the master of the house.
Gudewife, the mistress of the house.
Gudame, grandmother.
Gude, the Supreme Being, good.
Gudely, goodly.
Guidin't, guiding it.
Guilefu', guileful.
Gullie, a large knife.
Gust, to taste.
Gustit, tasted.
Gusts, tastes.
Gusty, tasteful.
Gutcher, grandfather.

H

Hadna, had not.
Hae, have, to have.
Haet, *fient haet*, a petty oath of negation, nothing.
Haff, half.
Haffit, the temple, the side of the head.
Hafflins, half, partly.
Haggis, a pudding made of the liver and lungs of a sheep.
Hailstones, hailstones.
Hain'd, saved.
Hair-kaimer, hair-comber.
Hairst, or *Harst*, harvest.
Hale, whole, tight.
Halesome, wholesome.
Halesomest, wholesomest.
Hallan, a partition wall in a cottage.
Hallow-e'en, the 31st of October.

Haly, holy.
Hame, home.
Hameil, domestic.
Hameily, homely, affable.
Hamespun, homespun.
Hameward, homeward.
Hap, an outer garment, to happen, to wrap, to cover.
Happit, covered.
Haps, perhaps.
Hap-warm, a covering.
Harl, to drag.
Harlin, dragging.
Ha's, halls.
Hatefu', hateful.
Haud, to hold.
Hauds, holds.
Haugh, a valley.
Haveril, a foolish, talkative fellow.
Hawkie, a cow, properly one with a white face.
Hawse, the throat.
Healthfu', healthful.
Hearse, hoarse.
Heart-scad, heartburn.
Heathery, heathy.
Heeze, or *Heese*, to elevate, to raise.
Heez'd, elevated.
Heh, oh ! strange.
Heid, head.
Herd, to tend flocks, one who tends flocks.
Herried, plundered.
Herrin, a herring.
Het, hot.
Hetskinn'd, hot-skinned.
Hidlin, private.
Himsel, himself.
Hinder, last.
Hiney, honey.
Hiney'd, covered with honey.
Hineysuckle, honeysuckle.
Hing, to hang.
Hip, to miss.
Hirelin, hireling.
Hirplin, creeping, limping.
Hirsle, to move slowly.

Hoden, coarse.
Holey, full of holes.
Hooley, slow.
Hopefu', hopeful.
Horse-couper, a horse-broker.
Houff, a resort.
Houp, hope.
Houkit, digged.
Housie, dimin. of house.
Howder, thrown together in confusion.
Howe, hollow, a hollow or dell.
Howtowdy, a young hen.
Howlet, an owl.
Hummil, wanting horns.
Hunder, a hundred.
Hungert, hungered.
Huntit, hunted.
Hurdies, the loins, the buttocks.

I

I, in.
Ilk, or *Ilka*, each, every.
Indentit, indentured.
Ingan, an onion.
Ingle, fire, fire-place.
I'se, I shall or will.
Ither, other.
Itsel, itself.

J

Jibe, to mock.
Jillet, a jilt, a giddy girl.
Jink, to dodge, to turn a corner.
Joe, a sweetheart.
Jook, or *Jouk*, to stoop, to bow the head.
Joot, sour or dead liquor.
Jow, the swinging motion and peeling sound of large bells.
Joyfu', joyful.

K

Kail, colewort, a kind of broth.
Kail-worm, a caterpillar.
Kail-yard, a kitchen garden.
Kain, fowls, etc., paid as rent.
Kam'd, combed.

Kebbuck, a cheese.
Keek, to peep, to look.
Keekin, looking.
Keekin-glass, a looking-glass.
Ken, to know.
Kens, knows.
Kent, or *Ken'd*, knew.
Keppit, met.
Kill, a kiln.
Kiltit, tucked up.
Kin, kindred, friends.
Kin-kind, every kind.
Kirk, a church.
Kirk-yard, church-yard.
Kirn, the harvest supper, a churn, to churn.
Kirnstaff, the staff of a churn.
Kist, chest, a shop counter.
Kist-nook, corner of a chest.
Kittle, to tickle, ticklish, lively, difficult.
Kniesfly, with vivacity.
Knout, cattle.
Knowe, a small round hillock.
Kye, cows.
Kyte, the belly.
Kyth, to discover.

L

Labster, a lobster.
Ladin, lading.
Laiglen, a milking-pail with one handle.
Laird, a landlord.
Lair'd, sunk in snow or mud.
Laith, loath.
Lammie, dimin. of lamb.
Lanely, lonely.
Lang, long.
Langer, longer, weariness.
Langsyne, long since.
Lapper'd, curdled.
Lassie, a young girl.
Lat, let.
Lathie, a lad.
Lave, the rest, the remainder, the others.
Laverock, the lark.
Lawen, a tavern reckoning.

Leal, loyal, true, faithful.
Leally, loyally, honestly, truly.
Lear, learning, to learn.
Lear'd, learned.
Lea-rig, a grassy ridge.
Leem, a loom.
Leese me, dear is to me.
Leesh, *Lesche*, a lash.
Lerroch, the site of a building, a place.
Lick, to whip or beat.
Licket, whipped.
Lieve, willingly.
Lightlyin, sneering.
Ligs, lies.
Lilt, a ballad, a tune; to sing.
Liltin, singing.
Lilts, the holes of a wind instrument of music.
Lim, limb.
Limp, to hobble.
Lingans, thread used by shoemakers.
Lintie, a linnet.
Lippans, expects, trusts.
Lith, a joint.
Livin, living.
Lo'e, love, to love.
Loo'd, loved.
Loof, the hollow of the hand.
Lounder, a sound blow.
Loup, to jump, to leap.
Loupin, leaping.
Loot, to bow down, to stoop.
Loutit, stooped.
Love, flame.
Lown, or *Loun*, a ragamuffin, a fellow, a woman of easy virtue.
Lows'd, loosed, let loose.
Lowse, to untie.
Luggie, a wooden dish with a handle.
Lugs, the ears.
Lum, the chimney.
Lure, rather.
Lyart, old, hoary.
Lyin, lying.
Lythe, calm, sheltered.

M

Mae, more.
Maen, or *Main*, or *Mane*, to moan, to complain.
Maiks, half-pence.
Mailin, a farm.
Mair, or *Mare*, more.
Maist, most.
Maister, master.
Mak, to make.
Maks, makes.
Mang, among.
Marsh, march.
Maught, might.
Maukin-mad, hare-mad.
Maun, must.
Maunna, must not, may not.
Mavis, a thrush.
Maw, to mow.
Meltith, a meal.
Menzie, company of men, assembly, one's followers.
Mirk, dark.
Mirkest, darkest.
Mishanter, misfortune.
Mislear'd, mischievous, unmannerly.
Mither, mother.
Mons Meg, a very large iron cannon in the castle of Edinburgh.
Mony, many.
Mou, the mouth.
Mournfu', mournful.
Muckle, or *Meikle*, big, great.
Muircock, a moorcock.
Mutch, a cap.
Mu'ter, the miller's toll.
Mysel, myself.

N

Na, no, not, nor.
Nae, no, not any.
Naeboddy, nobody.
Naething, nothing.
Naig, a horse.
Nainsel, myself.
Nane, none.
Neebour, neighbour.

Needna, need not.
Ne'er-do-weel, never-do-well.
Neist, next.
Nicker, to cry like a horse.
Nickit, cut, marked.
Nickstick, a notched stick for keeping a reckoning.
Noggan, a measure containing a quarter of a pint.
Nor', north.
Norlan, of or belonging to the north.
Notar, an attorney.
Nouther, neither.
Nowt, cows, kine.

O

O', of.
Ohon! alas!
Ony, any.
Orra, anything over what is needful.
O't, of it.
Ouk, week.
Oursels, ourselves.
Out-by, at a distance.
Out-owre, out over.
Owre, over, too.
Owsen, oxen.

P

Pakes, chastisement.
Pang'd, crammed.
Pap, pop.
Parritch, oatmeal pudding, a well-known Scottish dish.
Partans, crabs.
Pat, put, a pot.
Patientfu', waiting with patience.
Paughty, proud, haughty.
Pawky, or *Pauky*, witty, and sly, without any harm or bad design.
Peats, turf for firing.
Pechin, panting.
Pegh, to pant.
Perfite, perfect.

Pet, silent anger, also one too much caressed.
Philabegs, Highlanders' kilts.
Pibroch, a Highland tune.
Pig, an earthen pitcher.
Pingle, to strive, to contend.
Pirny, dimin. of *pirn*, the spool or quill within the shuttle, which receives the yarn.
Pith, strength, might, force.
Plack, an old Scotch coin.
Plaidie, dimin. of *plaid*.
Plainstones, flagstones laid in a footpath.
Plaister, a plaster.
Playfeir, a playfellow, a toy.
Plough, a plough.
Pley, a quarrel.
Plouk, a pimple.
Plouky, *Ploukie*, pimpled.
Pock, a purse.
Pomet, pomatum.
Poortith, poverty.
Pouch, pocket.
Pout, a poult.
Pow, the head, the skull.
Powny, a little horse, a pony.
Presentit, presented.
Pricket, pricked.
Prie, to taste.
Pried, tasted.
Priein, tasting.
Prieve, to prove or taste.
Prievin, proving, tasting.
Prigging, cheapening, entreating.
Pu'd, pulled.
Puddock, a frog.
Punk, a strumpet.
Pursie, dimin. of *purse*.
Pussie, a hare or cat.

Q

Quat, to quit.
Quean, a young woman.
Quegh, to quaff, a wooden drinking-dish.
Quo', quoth.

R

Raggit, ragged.
Raingit, ranged.
Rakin, raking.
Ragle, a range.
Raw, a row.
Rax, to stretch.
Rax'd, stretched.
Ream, cream, to cream.
Reamin, frothing, brimful.
Reck, heed.
Reek, smoke, reach.
Reekin, smoking.
Reesle, a blow.
Remead, or *Remeid*, remedy.
Respeckit, respected.
Restin, resting.
Rift, to belch.
Rig, a ridge.
Riggin, the top or ridge of a house.
Rin, to run, to melt.
Rokelay, a cloak.
Roose, to praise, to extol.
Roset, rosin.
Roup, hoarseness, a sale.
Routh, plenty.
Rovin, roving.
Rowt, to roar, to bellow.
Rowtin, lowing.
Royit, romping, riotous.
Ruck, a rick of hay or corn.
Rue, repent.
Runkle, a wrinkle.

S

Sae, so.
Saft, soft.
Safter, softer.
Safteft, softest.
Sain, to bless.
Sair, to serve, a sore.
Sair'd, served.
Sair-dow'd, sore worn with grief.
Sairer, sorer.
Sairest, sorest.
Sairly, sorely.
Sall, shall.

- Sa'mon*, salmon.
Sang, a song.
Sangster, a songster.
Sark, a shirt.
Saul, soul.
Saulie, a hired mourner.
Saunt, a saint.
Saut, salt.
Sautit, salted.
Sax, six.
Saxpence, sixpence.
Scabbit, scabbed.
Scad, to scald.
Scaldin, or *Scauldin*, scolding.
Scance, to shine.
Scantlins, hardly.
Scape, a bee-hive.
Scar-craw, a scare-crow.
Scart, a scratch.
Scauld, to scold.
Scaw'd, scabbed.
Slates, covering of a house.
Scoul, to scold.
Scoulin, scolding.
Scoup, scope.
Scowder, to burn.
Scowder't, burnt.
Scowry, scouring.
Screech, to scream.
Scrimp, straitened, little.
Scrimply, straitly, narrowly.
Scunner, to loath.
Seenil, seldom.
Seethe, to be nearly boiling.
Sell, self.
Sels, ourselves.
Seugh, or *Sough*, a sigh, the sound of wind amongst trees.
Sey, to try.
Shanksnaig, to walk: as, *he took shanksnaig*, he walked on his own legs.
Shanna, shall not.
Sharger, a lean person, a weakly child.
Shaw, a small wood in a hollow place, to show.
Sheen, bright, shining.
- Shellycoat*, a bum - bailiff, a spirit.
Shillin, a shilling.
Shoon, shoes.
Shoppies, dimin. of shops.
Shou'd, should.
Sib, akin.
Sic, such.
Sicken, such.
Sicker, sure, steady.
Siclike, like such a thing.
Siller, silver, money.
Simmer, summer.
Sin', since.
Singin, singing.
Singit, singed.
Sinsyne, since that time.
Skair, to share.
Skair'd, shared.
Skaith, to damage, to injure, injury.
Skaithless, uninjured.
Skar, to fright.
Skelf, a shelf.
Skelp, a ringing blow.
Skelpin, walking smartly.
Skirl, to shriek.
Skirl'd, shrieked.
Sklent, slanted.
Skreed, to tear, a rent.
Slae, a sloe.
Slaw-gaun, slow-going.
Slee, sly.
Sleely, slyly.
Slocken, to quench.
Sma', small.
Sma'est, smallest.
Smeeek, smoke.
Smeeekit, smoked.
Smirky, smiling.
Smoor, to smother.
Snaw, snow.
Snaw-ba', a snow-ball.
Snaw-tappit, covered with snow.
Snawry, snowy.
Snell, smarting, bitter, sharp, firm.

Snelly, sharply, bitterly, smartly.
Snodit, dressed.
Snugly, neatly, conveniently.
Sodden, boiled, soaked.
Sodger, a soldier.
Sonsy, sweet, engaging, lucky, jolly.
Sook, to suck.
Soom, to swim.
Soun, sound.
Soup, a spoonful, a small quantity of anything liquid.
Souple, flexible, swift.
Souter, a shoemaker.
Sowder, solder, to cement.
Sowf, to con over a tune.
Sowens, a kind of soured gruel, made of the seeds of oatmeal boiled up till they make agreeable pudding, flummery.
Spae, to prophesy, to divine.
Spae-wife, a fortune teller.
Spake, or *Spak*, spoke, did speak.
Spat, a spot.
Spaul, a limb.
Spear, or *Speir*, to ask, to inquire.
Speel, or *Speal*, to climb.
Spraingit, striped of different colours.
Spraings, stripes of different colours.
Spulzie, to plunder.
Spulzied, plundered.
Spunk, a match tipped with brimstone.
Squad, a crew, a party.
Sta', a stall.
Stack, a rick of hay or corn.
Stamack, the stomach.
Stane, a stone.
Stang, to sting.
Stannin, standing.
Stap, step, to stop.
Stappit, stopped.
Stark, stout.

Starnies, the stars.
Staw'd, surfeited.
Stealin', stealing.
Stech, to cram.
Steek, to shut, a stitch.
Steekit, shut.
Steepit, steeped.
Steeve, firm, compacted.
Steghin, cramming.
Stent, stint, a quantity assigned.
Stey, steep.
Stickit, pierced.
Stirrah, a man.
Stoiter, stagger.
Stoiterin, staggering.
Stoo, to crop.
Stoup, a jug or dish with a handle.
Stown, stolen.
Strae, straw.
Straik, a stroke, to stroke.
Straikit, stroked.
Straith, a valley.
Strang, strong.
Strappin, tall and handsome.
Straught, straight.
Stravaig, to stroll.
Streek, to stretch.
Streekit, stretched.
Sud, should.
Swank, or *Swack*, jolly, stately.
Swaird, sword, grass.
Swee', to swallow.
Sweer, lazy, slow.
Swith, get away.
Swither, to hesitate.
Syndet, rinsed.
Syne, since, ago, then, afterwards.

T

Ta'en, taken.
Taes, toes.
Tak, to take.
Taks, takes.
Tane, one.
Tap, the top, a top.
Taukin talking.

Taunt, to mock.
Tauntin, mocking.
Teat, a small quantity.
Teazin, teasing.
Tenfauld, tenfold.
Tent, to take heed, caution.
Tenty, cautious.
Teugh, tough.
Thae, these, those.
Thankfu', thankful.
Theekit, thatched.
Thegither, together.
Themsels, themselves.
Thereanent, thereupon.
Thir, these.
Thirl, to bind, to grind at a mill.
Thirlin, thrilling, vibrating.
Thof, though.
Thole, to suffer, to endure.
Thrang, a throng, to throng.
Thrapple, the throat.
Thrave, did thrive.
Thraw, to twist, to contradict, to throw.
Thrawin, thrown.
Thrawart, crabbed, forward, cross.
Threefauld, threefold.
Threep, to aver, to allege, to affirm boldly.
Thistle, a thistle.
Thud, a blow, to make a loud intermittent noise.
Tid, time or tide, proper time, humour.
Tinkler, a tinker.
Tint, lost.
Tir, to uncover a house.
Tither, the other, another.
Tocher, portion, dowry.
Todlin, gently moving, tottering.
Tongue-tackit, having an impediment of speech.
Tonguey, talkative, noisy.
Toom, empty.
Toom'd, emptied.

Toothfu', a small quantity, applied to liquor.
Touzle, to tease, to ruffle.
Towmonth, a year.
Trampin, tramping.
Treean, a wooden dish.
Tricket, tricked.
Trig, spruce, handsome, neat.
Trigly, sprucely, neatly.
Trig-made, neat made.
Trock, exchange.
Troke to barter.
Troth, truth, a petty oath.
Trow, to believe.
Truff, turf.
Truncher, a trencher.
Tryin, trying.
Tulzie, to quarrel.
Tummil, tumble.
Tunefu', tuneful.
Twa, two.
Twa-legg'd, having two legs.
Twalt, twelfth.
Tyne, or *Tine*, to lose.

U, V

Ulie, *Ully*, *Uilzie*, oil.
Uncanny, fearful, awkward.
Unco, strange, very.
Unfauld, unfold.
Unfleggit, unfrighted.
Unken'd, unknown.
Unyokit, unyoked.
Upo', upon.
Usefu', useful.
Vau't, a vault.
Vogie, *Vokie*, elevated, proud, boastful.

W

Wad, would, pledge, wager.
Wadna, would not.
Wae, woe.
Wae'fu', woeful.
Waes, woes, sorrows.
Waesucks, O the pity ! alas !
Wa'-flower, wall-flower.
Waken, *Wakin*, *Waukin*, to awake.

Wale, choice, to choose.
Wallie, large and beautiful,
bonnie wallies, fine things.
Walth, wealth.
Wambles, runs.
Wame, or *Wyme*, womb, belly.
Wanchancy, unlucky.
Wanruly, unruly.
Wanwordy, unworthy.
Wanworth, want of worth.
Warl', or *World*, world.
Worldly, worldly.
Warlock, a wizard.
Ware, to lay out.
Wark, work.
Wa's, walls, ways.
Wat, wet, to know.
Wats, knows.
Wauk, wake.
Waur, worse.
Wauken'd, or *Wakened*, awaked.
Wee, little.
Wee-anes, little ones.
Weel, well.
Weel-tostit, well toasted.
Ween, imagined, supposed,
 thought.
Weet, rain, wetness.
Weety, rainy.
Weigh-bauk, a balance.
Weir, war.
Weird, fate.
Weirlike, warlike.
Wer't, were it.
Weyr, war.
Wha, who.
Whae'er, whoever.
Whane'er, whenever.
Whang, a leathern thong, a
 slice of bread or cheese.
Whang'd, sliced.
Whare, where.
Whare'er, wherever.
Wharefore, wherefore.
Whareon, whereon.
Wharewi', wharewith.
Whase, whose.
Wherewitha', wherewithal.
Whilk, which.

Whinge, whine.
Whinstane, a whinstone.
Whisht, silence.
Whumble, to turn upside down.
Whytens, small fish.
Wi', with.
Wight, a man or person.
Willin', willing.
Willawins, well-a-day.
Win, to get, to winnow, to
 dwell.
Windlestree, a wheat or oaten
 straw.
Winna, will not.
Winnock, a window.
Wins, goes.
Winsome, gay, hearty, engag-
 ing.
Wirrikow, a bugbear.
Withouten, without.
Wizzen, or *Wizen*, throat.
Woo, wool.
Woo'd, courted.
Wordies, dimin. of words.
Wou'd, would.
Wow, an exclamation of plea-
 sure or wonder.
Wraith, a spirit, a ghost, an
 apparition exactly like a liv-
 ing person, whose appear-
 ance is said to forebode that
 person's approaching death.
Wrang, wrong.
Wud, mad.
Wumill, a wimble.
Wyle, to beguile.
Wyliest, slyest.
Wyt, weight.
Wylie, cunning.
Wyte, blame, to blame.

Y

Yap, hungry.
Yarkit, jerked, lashed.
Yelloch, to scream.
Yellochin, screaming.
Yestreen, yesternight.
Yill, ale.

Yird, earth.

Yird-laigh, as low as earth.

Yokit, yoked.

Yokin, yoking, a bout.

Yole, a fishing boat.

Yont, beyond.

Youk, the itch.

Youf'd, or *Youl'd*, to cry as a dog.

Yoursel, yourself.

Yowe, ewe.

Yule-day, Christmas-day.



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