

# NOTES,

## CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL,

### TO POSTHUMOUS WORKS.

ABBREVIATIONS:—*p.* PAGE; *c.* COLUMN; *s.* STANZA; *l.* LINE.

[Where Letters are referred to in these Notes, the pages indicated will be found in Prose Works.]

THE Posthumous Works of Robert Burns, as our readers will observe, are very numerous and miscellaneous. They have been recovered at various dates, from various sources, and by various indefatigable collectors; and we have endeavoured to apportion them as accurately as possible, having due regard to competing claims, that each discoverer in this interesting field might have his credit and authority unimpaired. A considerable number of the songs which appear in Johnson's Museum and in Thomson's Collection might also in a certain sense be called Posthumous, inasmuch as these works were not completed until long after the Author's death. But the compositions contributed by him to their pages were already in their respective publishers' hands as the author intended them to appear, so that the delay in their appearance until after his death was only an accident. Thomson's Collection was originally designed to be in four volumes only, and our selections from that work have been limited accordingly to those volumes. Two volumes more were subsequently added, in which a few of Burns's songs still in the editor's hands were printed; but as these songs, by Mr. Thomson's generous permission, had already appeared in Dr. Currie's edition, they have been placed by us foremost under his name as posthumous publications. Dr. Currie in this, and in many other respects, enjoyed an immense advantage over all other editors; yet the Posthumous Works of our Author as collected by him, although numerous and important, are far from being the most important discovered since the Author's death. The "Jolly Beggars" alone, and "Holy Willie's Prayer," which were first given to the world surreptitiously by Stewart, contemporaneously with Currie's third edition, would be enough to ensure high immortality for their Author; and with the "Cotter's Saturday Night," "Tam o' Shanter," "Death and Doctor Hornbook," the "Address to the Deil," and some others, constitute the immutable foundation of his fame in that department.

CURRIE'S EDITION.

The songs in Currie are properly fifteen in number (the sixteenth in our edition being the duplicate version, *p.* 328, not given by, although known to, him), and include several

of the very finest lyrical compositions of our Author. The first in order, which is also the most beautiful—

*p.* 325. MARY MORISON: Is surely one of the tenderest; most truthful, and exquisite serenades ever imagined or indited by a youth to propitiate an unconscious or indifferent maiden. How Burns should have estimated this so slightly is one of the many inexplicable problems of his psychological existence. Its date is very early—as its simplicity bespeaks; and the heroine, unless related to Mr. Morison, cabinetmaker, Mauchline, is unknown. The supremacy of this type of innocence and beauty in the dance, adding splendour to, or surpassing in splendour, the brightest and loveliest, in her very absence; and the rapt and silent wonder of the lover as he sees her in his imagination float or whirl along, or brings her into comparison with the others, has a beautiful and nearly perfect counterpart in Dante's vision of the Dance in Paradise, the characters alone, male and female, being transposed.

E come surge e va ed entra in ballo  
Vergine lieta sol per fare onore  
Alla novizia, non per alcun fallo;  
Così vid' io lo schiarato splendore  
Venire a' due che sì volgeano a ruota,  
Qual conveniasi al loro ardente amore.  
Misesi lì nel canto e nella nota:  
E la mia donna in lor tenne l' aspetto  
Pur come sposa tacita ed immota.—*Par. Cant. xxv.*

As rises up and enters on the dance  
The joyful virgin innocent of guile;  
To greet the Bride alone she doth advance:  
So saw I on the pair that wheeled the while  
New splendour added like a meteor glance,  
Such as became their flaming love. Even so,  
In song and string alike it seemed to glow.  
But fixed on them alone my lady held her eye,  
As some rapt spouse unmoved and silently.

Yestreen, when to the trembling string,  
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha';  
To thee my fancy took its wing,  
I sat but neither heard or saw.  
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,  
And yon the toast of a' the town,  
I sighed, and said among them a',  
"Ye are na Mary Morison!"

This song, and the other to "My Nanie, O"—but this in some respects pre-eminently, as having more passionate fer-

vour in it, combined with the utmost grace—we may pronounce to be the first most characteristic and perfect utterances of the great unsuspected flood of lyric melody that was hidden in the Author's soul: he sang them thus, and he knew it not.

p. 325. WILL YE GO TO THE INDIES, MY MARY? speaks for itself, and for its Author, and for Mary, at the date of their betrothal, in its own passionate unmistakable way.

p. 326. STREAMS THAT GLIDE IN ORIENT PLAINS: a farewell compliment to the Duke and Duchess of Gordon, on leaving their residence abruptly during his northern tour in 1787, carries us in an opposite direction. The passionate love of liberty, however, is predominant; but the irritation under which the lines were written is not manifest. The Author was in fact dragged away, by his friend Nicol's ill-humour, from the most captivating society, where he had intended to bestow himself for a week; but atoned to his noble entertainers for his hasty leave-taking by this beautiful ode in their honour. [Compare Highland Tour, Appendix, p. x.]

p. 326. MY LOVELY NANCY: we need hardly remind our readers, is a compliment to Clarinda, although, in letter (37) to her, he wishes to disguise the fact.

p. 327. MY WIFE'S A WINSOME WEE THING: declared by himself—letter (3) to Thomson—to have been extemporaneous, might be in compliment to Mrs. Burns, as we rather suppose, or by poetical license to some imaginary spouse.

p. 327. MEG O' THE MILL: the only presentable version of a very rude ballad—transformed for Thomson's Collection by our Author, in whose hands its rudeness totally disappears. The old original, a little dressed up by him also, may be found in the Museum; but has not been extracted by us. The edition here given was very highly valued by its author.

p. 327. PHILLIS THE FAIR: may be a tribute to Miss M'Murdo; and DELUDED SWAIN, which follows, may have had some original; but they were both written to accommodate the exigencies of the musician, and to supply a page in his popular publication.

pp. 328-29. THE LAST TIME I CAME O'ER THE MOOR, and FAREWELL THOU STREAM THAT WINDING FLOWS:—which are but two versions of the same song, the one adopted by Currie, and the other rejected—are of a very different order; and that they both refer to Mrs. Riddel is undeniable. They are far too profoundly passionate to be merely imaginary; and the visible conflict between right and wrong, in which the horrors of moral perdition are involved, is too real to leave any doubt of the actual state of the Author's mind at the moment. No more Petrarchan lyric than these has been written since the days of Petrarch. The situation, the relationship, the sentiments are the same as with Petrarch; and the language itself, "Love's veriest wretch," seems to be actually coined for, or taken from, the lips of Petrarch.

The first edition with Maria's name was written before, and the other, with 'Eliza' inserted, after, the quarrel with Mrs. Riddel; but the fact is transparent through all: and what the occasional agonies of the man's soul must have been in extricating himself from such maelstroms of passion as he here describes, and for which no other word than maelstrom is appropriate, can hardly be imagined, and certainly could not be expressed by any one but himself. Ten years exactly have

elapsed, and how different is it all now from the innocent, unsullied days of Mary Morison and Nanie O!

p. 329. CA' THE YOWES TO THE KNOWES: an exquisite pastoral, given by us as it appears in Currie, and which seems there to be perfect. In Chambers's and Cunningham's editions, however, four additional lines are found, which belong to a much older version, revised and improved by Burns for the "Museum" [p. 191, s. vi.] The present song is entirely his own, and it could not be improved by the addition of a single word or sentence.

p. 330. SAW YE MY PIEELY? another pastoral, written apparently for the music: and MY CHLORIS, an avowed compliment to Miss Lorimer, which the Author esteems for "simplicity and tenderness" as being "pretty well"—letter (41) to Thomson.

p. 330. 'T WAS NA HER BONIE BLUE E'E, may deserve the same encomium; and

p. 331. HOW CRUEL ARE THE PARENTS: altered from an old English song, is but the musical reiteration of many an ineffectual sermon on a painful and revolting theme. But the concluding song in this list,

p. 331. O WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST? has a sort of dramatic interest that requires to be reverentially specified. The song itself, which is said to have been absolutely *extempore*, was composed for Jessy Lewars, as she sat at the piano-forte entertaining the Poet with some old Scotch melodies a few weeks before his death. Her own account of the matter is, that whilst beginning seriously to ail (end of May, 1796), he called on her one morning, and desired her to select and play for him any tune she most preferred, that he might adapt words to it for her sake. The air she chose was "The Robin came to the Wren's Nest," which she continued to play until his ear caught the rhythm completely; and in a few minutes afterwards the above beautiful song was composed. It was long afterwards set to deeply pathetic music by the gifted Felix Mendelssohn.

p. 331. ELEGY ON THE LATE MISS BURNET; unfinished: see Heroines of Burns.

p. 332. SONNET ON HEARING A THRUSH SING, in a morning walk, on the Author's birthday, 1793: beautiful in any circumstances as a prayer, in which Faith, Humility, Gratitude, and Charity, are all equally combined; but inexpressibly touching, and beyond estimation valuable, when one remembers how that birthday of his has ever since been sanctified in the memories and hearts of his fellow-men.

p. 332. SONNET ON DEATH OF ROBERT RIDDEL, Esq.: has a peculiar interest, inasmuch as it was a parting tribute to the memory of a very dear friend with whom, through the officiousness of third parties, he had unfortunately quarrelled, and who was untimely carried to his grave before a reconciliation could be effected. The cause of this quarrel, we have the best reason to know, was Mrs. Walter Riddel's indiscretion in repeating to her brother-in-law some jocular remarks the Poet had made on his (Mr. Riddel's) peculiarities; and this indiscretion, as it lost him a true friend, added doubtless more bitterness to his own quarrel with her. On this subject the reader may compare the lines "Extempore, pinned on a Lady's Coach," p. 418. That this tribute to Mr. Riddel's



memory, however, was by no means fictitious or overstrained, but genuine, the reader may satisfy himself by comparing also "Inscription on a Grotto at Friars-Carse," p. 420.

Dr. Currie, who was among the first to recognise correspondence between Burns and foreign poets, remarks "that the two concluding lines [of this sonnet] express a sentiment exactly similar to one of the most beautiful passages in the *Pastor Fido*, from the 7th to the 10th line of the monologue at the opening of the 3d Act: yet Burns had no acquaintance with Guarini's works." We have looked at the passage here referred to; but the resemblance appears to us very general, and not sufficiently strong to justify its quotation.

p. 333. A VISION: has already been commented on, p. 273. and the FAREWELL TO AYRSHIRE appears in this place entirely on Dr. Currie's authority.

p. 334. SECOND EPISTLE TO DAVIE: of date 1785, although interesting in its own way, as a brotherly communication with an esteemed friend, and containing some valuable moral reflections, is not for a moment to be compared, in this or in any other respect, with the truly grand philosophical effusion which preceded it to the same correspondent. This epistle, indeed, seems never to have been intended for publication by its author, otherwise it would have appeared in one of his own editions. It was first printed by Sillars himself, as a sort of introduction to his poems, published at Kilmarnock—uniform with Burns's, and by the same printer, John Wilson, in 1789. That volume, which is now before us, is chiefly remarkable for its vulgarity, shallowness, and bad taste. Burns's success, as he became speedily aware, had "encouraged such a shoal of ill-spawned monsters to crawl into public notice, under the title of Scottish Poets, that the very term Scottish Poetry borders on the burlesque;" and the compliments he had himself too generously bestowed on Sillars made *him* conspicuous. This very distinction was now abused by him; his own poem on "Whisky" being but an insolent review of Burns's "Scotch Drink." So much for the gratitude of a small rival. Whether Burns was made actually aware of this, we are not informed. Most probably he was: for his letter (20) to Mrs. Dunlop, from which the above reference is quoted, was of March, 1789—and there are no more Epistles, it should seem, "to Davie."

p. 335. LINES ON MEETING WITH LORD DAER: first printed by Currie as a note, in his life of the Poet, and perhaps not quite what the Poet himself would have indited a few years, or even a few months, afterwards, were occasioned by a purely accidental interview with his lordship at Dugald Stewart's residence of Catrine, where Lord Daer arrived when Dr. M'Kenzie and our Author were at dinner with the professor. The verses read as if some formal introduction had been planned; but the interview was unpremeditated, as Dugald Stewart himself assured Dr. Currie.

p. 336. ADDRESS TO MR. W. TYTLER: is chiefly remarkable for the serious display it affords of the writer's Jacobitical predilections, insomuch that in its first published form whole words and lines had to be omitted. It is remarkable also for the satisfaction it evinces on the writer's part with Miers' profile of himself recently taken in Edinburgh, and of which he distributed not a few copies among his friends. Mr. Tytler was father of the distinguished lawyer who became afterwards

Lord Woodhouselee. He was a correspondent of our Author's in respect to the ancient poetry of Scotland, of which he knew much, having been intimately acquainted with Allan Ramsay; and was highly esteemed by our Author as an authority on that subject. Author's Annotations, p. 306.

p. 336. FIRST EPISTLE TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ.: is also the first formal attempt of our Author at what may be called English didactic poetry in the style of Johnson or Pope, in which he seems to have had an ambition to shine; but in which, although good, he would not have been pre-eminently successful. His own passions were far too strong to afford the composure requisite for such writing, and his previous acquaintance with books and systems of philosophy too limited. Whether he was conscious of this, or whether some accident prevented, is uncertain; but certain it is that this very epistle, which is the *first*, did not appear until after the Author's death, whereas his *third* epistle, in the same style and to the same kind patron, appears in one of his own editions—see p. 117. There is a pleasant interest, however, connected with this first epistolary effort in the English style—viz., that it was composed in the throng of harvest at Ellisland when he had newly entered on his farm, when he was "as tired as a dog" in the labours of the field, and when his muse was employed in the more congenial occupation of celebrating the praises of his Jean. Compare letter to Mrs. Burns, p. 217.

p. 337. SKETCH: INSCRIBED TO RIGHT HON. C. J. FOX: which follows in a similar style, requires no other commentary than that of his own letter (21) to Mrs. Dunlop, p. 18.

p. 338. ADDRESS TO THE TOOTHACHE—it is also superfluous to comment upon; but the Epistle

p. 338. TO DR. BLACKLOCK invites annotation, in so far as the pride of the Poet protests against, and apologizes for, the meanness of his occupation as an exciseman, throughout, and his desperate but impossible resolve to be master of his own destiny henceforth is most emphatically recorded. Compare *Phrenological Summary*—Appendix, p. lxxix.

p. 340. ON WHAT IS WRITTEN IN A WRAPPER TO CAPTAIN GROSE, we must be excused, in our clerical capacity, from making any observation; although it is impossible to run over such a catalogue of conjectures without an accompaniment of laughter—and a little laughter occasionally, on some of the topics enumerated, is beneficial medicine.

pp. 340-41-42-43-44, containing only SKETCHES, PROLOGUES, ADDRESSES, &c., may also be allowed to speak for themselves. The MONODY alone, and the EPITAPH on a Lady famed for her caprice—p. 344—require more than a moment's notice, inasmuch as they refer to the unhappy alienation which took place between Mrs. Riddel and our Author. In the same strain, but on a separate occasion, the reader will find the EPISTLE FROM ESOPUS TO MARIA, hereafter; and although these appear only in our Author's Posthumous Works, they were sufficiently well known at the time to give offence to the lady and her friends. No justification of such libels can now be advanced, but the extreme sensibility of the writer to the practical dismissal from the circle of Mrs. Riddel's acquaintance he had experienced, and the obstinate and rather ungenerous refusal of the lady herself to be reconciled. Her husband, a foolish man, might be to blame for



this; but Burns was the sufferer. His own bad health also, as Mr. Chambers pleads, would be an aggravation; which is true. But no mere accidental distemper would ever have provoked him to the use of such language towards a woman. There was a deeper cause than all that. His own self-respect had been mortally wounded, and Mrs. Riddel not only did not help him to heal that wound, but by her indiscreet rehearsal of his words in other quarters (see note, Sonnet on Death of Robert Riddel, Esq., *supra*), she increased the pain of it. He had humbled himself almost to the dust to obtain reconciliation or even a look of forgiveness, in vain, and he was not to be trifled with longer; but his reprisals were undignified, and he happily lived to lament them. Mrs. Riddel also lived to forgive them, as her subsequent correspondence shows. Let us leave the quarrel, therefore, in the light of such reconciliation and forgiveness.—See letters (6) to (12) to Mrs. Riddel.

On what remains in Currie's edition—much of it, especially the POEMS to Mitchell and De Peyster, *p.* 345, in one way, and the VERSES addressed to Young Ladies, *pp.* 346-47, in another, eminently characteristic of the writer—it seems unnecessary to comment at large. The authorship of the POEM ON PASTORAL POETRY, *p.* 349, has been questioned by Mr. Chambers, on Gilbert Burns's expressed doubts; whereas both Currie, as our readers see, and Cunningham maintain it. We are ourselves quite disposed to accept it as genuine.

The Epistle To MRS. SCOTT, *p.* 350, is an extremely fine summary of the Author's moral experience and ambition, elicited by a sort of masculine blue-stocking. The gallantry, the wisdom, the prophetic sense of it, and the happy ease with which every line is turned in it, could hardly be surpassed; although the writer's absolute reverence for the lady might not be so highly toned. Compare Border Tour—App., *p.* vi. As for the ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF SIR JAMES HUNTER BLAIR, *p.* 351, it must be read as many other such complimentary effusions to the memory of departed greatness are, with some allowance for poetical exaggerations both in figure and feeling; but that the Author cherished a genuine sorrow for the loss of a kind Ayrshire friend and generous patron is unquestionable—compare letter (4) to Aiken. Sir James died on the 1st of July, 1787, and Burns seems to have written the Elegy in Edinburgh, on his arrival there after his West Highland Tour, and just before he started with Nicol for the North. He enclosed a copy of it to Miss Ferrier, with verses complimentary to herself—*p.* 402.

By whom these two pieces were first published, is not now clearly ascertained.

#### THOMAS STEWART'S EDITION,

Which contains "Poems ascribed to Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Bard, not contained in any edition of his works hitherto published," was a thin octavo volume which appeared at Glasgow and at Greenock, 1801, and is commonly spoken of as surreptitious, having been published without the knowledge or consent of the Poet's family, and presumably for the publisher's own immediate benefit. But its publication was defended by himself on the ground substantially, that it was rescuing from public loss poems which had been "omitted in the Liverpool edition," and which might there-

fore "be supposed unworthy of the public eye." He made no "positive affirmation of their authenticity," but as the original manuscripts were in his own possession, the identification of their authorship was soon and easily determined. That most of them were Burns's own—one of them, indeed, his best—there could be no doubt. The volume, however, contained at least two pieces which had already appeared in the "Museum" unknown to Stewart, and of which duplicates had been found elsewhere by him. It contained also an epigram or two, picked up at random; and the celebrated "Epistle to a Tailor," which of course was not Burns's. Its most important addition, however, to the Poet's works, and for which the publisher is entitled to universal thanks, was the "Jolly Beggars"—the history of which has been long involved in obscurity, and is not yet very clear. We subjoin all the known facts, as briefly epitomised as possible.

*p.* 352. THE JOLLY BEGGARS, A CANTATA: How this remarkable and most perfect of all our Author's larger lyrical works could have been rejected by Dr. Currie, as insinuated by Stewart, we are much at a loss to understand; because only one manuscript copy ever existed, which Currie presumably never saw. In this respect, unless Stewart knew all the facts of the case much better than appears on the surface, his implied reflection on the fidelity of Currie's editorship cannot be correct. But he might reasonably take for granted, as other more distinguished authorities have done, that so important a work as this was sure to be found among the Author's own remains, and had been examined and rejected by his recognised editor. In an article in the Quarterly Review, with reference to Stewart's edition, and attributed by Cromeek to Sir Walter Scott, the following passage to the same effect occurs: "Yet applauding, as we do most highly applaud, the leading principles of Dr. Currie's selection, we are aware that they sometimes led him into fastidious and over delicate rejection of the Bard's most spirited and happy effusions;" among which "A Cantata in particular, called the 'Jolly Beggars,' for humorous discrimination of character inferior to no poem of the same length in the whole range of English poetry," is included by the writer. All which assertion looks indeed like authority, as against Dr. Currie for rejecting it, but may be only a repetition, after all, of Stewart's own intimation. Even at a much later date, we find Professor Wilson in his celebrated Essay saying, "Mr. Thomson in his five-pound letter asks, 'Pray, my good sir, is it impossible for you to muster a volume of poetry?' Why, with the assistance of Messrs. Johnson and Thomson, it would have been possible; and then Burns could have called in his 'Jolly Beggars,'" &c.—Now the fact in reality was, that Burns, long before that time, had not only laid the "Jolly Beggars" aside, but gifted it unconditionally away, having preserved no copy, and did not even remember its existence. This he distinctly avows in his letter (30) to Thomson. The Professor, however, in this instance, is to be excused also, inasmuch as the passage in question had not been published at the date, as we believe, of his writing—having first appeared in Chambers's edition—and it might be as difficult for him as for Stewart, or the writer in the Quarterly, to imagine how Burns could forget such a composition. But it is more



surprising to hear Mr. Carlyle state that this poem "which does not appear in Currie's edition, has been often printed before and since, under the humble title of *The Jolly Beggars*." That it has been often printed since it first appeared in Stewart's edition, although not quite so correctly in general, is true; but when or where was it printed before? Nowhere. Mr. Stewart was, in fact, the first publisher who discovered that work; and he printed it with astonishing fidelity from the original, and sole existing, manuscript in his own possession. That manuscript was afterwards fac-similed by Lumsden of Glasgow, 1823—the fac-simile being certified as true by Stewart; and the poem has since become an integral and indispensable part of our Author's collected works. That the existence of the work itself, however, although forgotten by the Author, had been somehow reported to Thomson is manifest, or it could never have occurred to him to make inquiries on the subject; but that he never saw the work is equally manifest, for such inquiries, in that case, would have been superfluous. In 1818, that is seventeen years after its first appearance, he had it set to music by Bishop, and published it on his own account in a very mutilated condition. On referring to Lumsden's fac-simile, of which two copies of different dates (one with an engraving of Allan's celebrated picture of the "Beggars" prefixed to it) are now before us, we find the following statement in the preface:—

"The manuscript was given by the Poet himself to Mr. David Woodburn, at that time factor to M'Adam of Craigenhillan, and by Mr. Woodburn to Mr. Robert M'Limont, merchant in Glasgow, from whom it passed into the possession of Mr. Smith of Greenock, who gave it to the present possessor," [Mr. Stewart.]

No reference, the reader will observe, is here made to any knowledge on Dr. Currie's part of this document. Had it been submitted to him by any of its possessors for approval, and rejected, it was at least highly probable such a circumstance would have been alluded to; and as this was the only copy in existence, we may safely conclude that the accomplished Doctor never saw the work, and therefore could not reject it. The omission by him of that passage in Burns's own letter (30) to Thomson, referring to it, might indeed be construed against him; but that omission can be much more easily explained on the contrary supposition that he was entirely ignorant of what the Poet alluded to, and did not choose to perplex his readers by inserting what he could not explain. The passage itself refers to a great deal more than the cantata, which Currie considered irrelevant, and expressly informs us that only what "was of any importance was presented to the reader." What related to the cantata, therefore, was like the rest, of no importance in his opinion, obviously because he had never seen the cantata. On the same principle, he omits also that other passage in letter (50) to Thomson, relating to the miniature of 1795, because he could not comprehend it, never having seen the portrait itself to which allusion so pointed is made. [Compare 'Kerry Miniatures'—Appendix, p. lxxvii.] Thus far distinctly, but no farther as yet, are we able to trace the history of the celebrated cantata.

The composition of this remarkable work, however, is an entirely different question. According to tradition, it seems

to have been written from actual observation of such a scene in Mrs. Gibson's Hostelry (otherwise Poesie Nansie's Howf) at Mauchline. The Poet was accompanied on that occasion by his friends Richmond and Smith. "In the course of a few days," says Mr. Chambers, "he recited a part of the poem to Richmond, who used to say, that, to the best of his recollection, it contained, in its original form, songs by a sweep and a sailor, which did not afterwards appear." It is highly probable that it was from Richmond, then in Edinburgh, Mr. Thomson first heard of the cantata. That Richmond's statement as to its having been originally in another and perhaps a larger form is correct, the fac-simile itself bears witness, there being two entire pages, beginning with "Recitativo, Poor Merry Andrew," and ending with the last words of his song, which must have been written at another time and substituted for other pages—two or four, as the case might be—when the work was revised and finished. It appears to ourselves, reviewing the whole, that Burns must either have had several songs lying by him, which he introduced in character for this cantata; or that he wrote several duplicates on experiment, and selected the most appropriate. When this selection was made, the rejected copies would be preserved and otherwise made use of. One of these, with a slight variation of the chorus, and with another verse to begin, with one verse also omitted, but in all other respects the same, appeared in the "Museum," vol. III.—See Poetical Works, p. 140, "For a' that and a' that." This, our readers may be well assured, was the original form of the "Bard's" first song in the "Jolly Beggars"—written and thrown aside, as not quite appropriate for the occasion. In like manner, we have no doubt, there was also a choice of songs for the "Tinker." By comparing Poetical Works, p. 174, "Merry hae I been teethin a heckle" with "My bonnie lass, I work in brass," our readers will have no great difficulty in perceiving that it was only a choice between these, as to which was most appropriate of the two for the drama; and that the most appropriate of the two was chosen, there can be no doubt. With the exception, therefore, of the songs attributed to the sweep and the sailor, which may have been lost, all the original materials out of which the "Jolly Beggars" was composed are now before us, and the very manner of its composition indicated. On the perfection and beauty of the work itself, all commentary is superfluous. How the Poet himself should have undervalued it, nobody can tell. His mother and brother are said not to have approved of it, for which they might have reasons of their own; and their disapproval might induce him to throw it aside, or present it to some more appreciating friend. It is, in fact, one of his very finest works, both morally and artistically, as a poet. It is a natural supplement to the "Cotter's Saturday Night," and presents human nature in a different, but equally truthful, point of view. It is a perfect moral counterpart to the "Holy Fair," it contains the rudimental idea of "A Man's a Man for a that," and is a rival in many ways to "Tam o' Shanter" himself. It is the only sort of drama ever Burns wrote, and is the most finished specimen of its kind, we are now bold enough to affirm, to be met with in any language. Being a very early composition, contemporaneous with the



"Cotter's Saturday Night," it indicates both the variety and perfection of the Author's gifts, and remains also one of the clearest proofs of his own unconsciousness of the greatness of his own genius. Every word in the descriptive portions is pictorial, and every syllable in the songs dramatic. The very first sentence—

When lyart leaves bestrow the yird,  
Or, wavering like the banckie-bird,  
Bedim canld Boreas' blast,

surpasses in richness and effect the finest landscape ever drawn; whilst those few words of comfort alone, in relation to the poor sorrowful drab to whom they are addressed,

Let me ryke up to dight that tear,  
An' go wi' me, and be my dear;  
An' then your every care an' fear  
May whistle owre the lave o't,

contain more than whole volumes of ordinary ethics, or sermons either, on such topics as love and charity. In a word, through all its wild license and profligacy, the strength, the freedom, the reliability of Nature herself predominates, and in the midst of all its uproar and blasphemy, notes of the utmost tenderness and truth are to be heard.

In the manuscript copy, and in Stewart's edition also, the following notes by the Author are to be found, which look as if he had originally intended it for publication, although, for reasons which can only be conjectured, he ultimately abandoned the design.

p. 352, c. 1. Banckie-bird—The old Scotch name for the Bat.

p. 355, c. 2. Kilbaigie—A peculiar sort of whisky so called: a great favorite with Poosie Nansie's clubs.

p. 355, c. 2. A wight of Homer's craft—Homer is allowed to be the eldest ballad singer on record.

p. 357. THE KIRK'S ALARM, we need hardly inform our readers, refers to the violent ecclesiastical controversy which at that date was raging in the west of Scotland on the reputed heresy of Dr. M'Gill, one of the ministers of Ayr. In this controversy our Author was as keenly involved as any clerical enthusiast of them all, but on the side of mercy and liberality; a position which, unfortunately, did himself little good—as it scarcely ever does any man good, when the Church herself inclines to the other. Of the "Kirk's Alarm" there were two copies:—the original draft will be found at p. 390, which the reader may compare. The *dramatis personæ*, in the present instance, are as follows—

Dr. Mac.—Rev. Dr. M'Gill, junior collegiate minister of Ayr. Dr. M'Gill's celebrated essay, published 1786, was entitled "A Practical Essay on the Death of Jesus Christ, in Two Parts; containing, 1, the History; 2, the Doctrine of His Death." It was denounced as Socinian by Dr. Peebles, of Newton-upon-Ayr, in his Revolution centenary discourse, 1788; and defended by its author in another publication, April, 1789. This brought the question into the ecclesiastical courts for discussion, and agitated the whole religious world in the west of Scotland. Dr. M'Gill apologised and recanted. It was in this discussion the Poet took part. Dr. M'Gill died March 30, 1807, in the 76th year of his age, and 46th of his ministry. *Vide* Murray's Literary History of Galloway; also Paton's Contemporaries of Burns.

Town of Ayr—The Magistrates of Ayr took part on Dr. M'Gill's behalf.

Provost John—John Ballantine, Esq., provost of Ayr.

Orator Bob—Robert Aiken, Esq., writer, Ayr.

D'rymple Mild—Rev. Dr. William Dalrymple, senior minister of the collegiate charge in Ayr—a man conspicuous for benevolence and worth.

Rumble John—Rev. John Russell—celebrated in the "Holy Fair."

Simper James—Rev. James M'Kinlay, Kilmarnock, hero of the "Ordination."

Singet Sawnie—Rev. Alexander Moodie, of Ricarton, one of the "Twa Herds."

Daddy Auld—Rev. Mr. Auld, of Mauchline.

The Clerk—Gavin Hamilton, Esq., of Mauchline.

Davie Bluster—Rev. Mr. Grant, Ochiltree.

Jamy Goose—Rev. Mr. Young, Cumnock.

Poet Willie—Rev. Mr., afterwards Dr., Peebles, Ayr: his "Liberty's Chain," was an awkward poetical figure which occurred in some poem of his on the centenary of the Revolution. He would have been a poet and a wit, if he could.

Andro Gouk—Rev. Dr. Andrew Mitchell, Monkton: "Gouk," in every sense of the word, it should appear, except in his love of money; and he might be a gouk there, too. Yet he was not incapable of laughter, poor soul; and is said to have acknowledged that Burns, "after all, was a droll fellow." *Vide* Chambers, vol. III., p. 49.

Barr Steenie—Rev. Stephen Young, Barr.

Irvine Side—Rev. George Smith, Galston.—Compare "Holy Fair."

Muirland Jock—Rev. John Shepherd, Muirkirk.

Holy Will—Elder, William Fisher—"Holy Willie."

This poem, in consequence of its importance, precedes the others in Stewart's edition, but it was not written till 1789.

p. 358: THE TWA HERDS: which was a very early production, dates from 1786, and refers to a personal, which by degrees grew to be a public quarrel, between two of the most distinguished evangelical clergy of the district, Messrs. Moody and Russell, Kilmarnock. For particulars of this ridiculous and contemptible brawl, *vide* Chambers, vol. I., p. 124.

p. 360. JOHN GOUDIE, "Terror o' the Whigs," was in many respects an original and gifted man. He was a Kilmarnock tradesman, much addicted to scientific speculation, a little, or perhaps a good deal, inclined to scepticism, and published more than one treatise invalidating the authority of Scripture, which brought him into disrepute. An account of his life may be found in Paton's "Contemporaries of Burns," Edinburgh, 1840, with a portrait affixed, which indicates both benevolence, imagination, and a very decided individuality. The first edition of his essays appeared in Glasgow, in three volumes, about the year 1780; a second edition in 1785, to which this letter refers; and in consequence of this letter a strong friendship originated between Goudie and the Poet, in which our Author received most valuable assistance from the benevolent latitudinarian, being introduced by him to all the gentry of Kilmarnock, including the Town-Clerk, Mr. Paterson, Dr. Hamilton, Major Parker, Dr. William Moore, Mr. Robert Muir, and others—whose subsequent friendly relations to our Author are well known. Goudie died 1809, at the advanced age of ninety-two. At his death, a numerous collection of manuscripts, poems and letters by Burns, were found among his papers, but these most unfortunately have all been made away with, or destroyed.

p. 360. HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER: one of the boldest and most effective satires on hypocrisy and unconscious blasphemy ever written. It is a purely dramatic performance, and implies no irreverence whatever on the writer's part; but on the contrary, manifests his own profoundest detestation of, and contempt for, every variety of imposture in the name of religion. The language employed would indeed be blasphemous enough in any other view of it; but as it stands in the mouth of such a worshipper, it is the most characteristic embodiment ever imagined of the unspoken thoughts and "desires of the flesh and of the mind" in one who was "by nature a child of wrath, even as others." "Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers, therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation." The unhappy subject of this satire, it is said, was ultimately detected in some



malversation of the poor's funds; and, if we are correctly informed, was found dead in a ditch by the way-side—the result of intoxication.

There seem to have been several copies of this satire in the Author's own handwriting extant. One of these, in possession of Dr. J. Dickson, Dumfries, we have had the privilege of examining. It is prefaced with the quotation from Pope, which we have prefixed to Stewart's edition; and it presents also a few minor verbal variations, which could hardly be indicated without giving the entire poem over: thus "ruler" for "buckler" and for "elder;" "sax thousand" for "five thousand;" and in the last verse but two, instead of

While he, wi' hingin lips and snakin  
Held up his head.

the reading is—

While Auld wi' hingin lip gaed sneakin,  
And hid his head.

which seems to be an oversight, the application of the whole verse in the original being evidently to Aiken and not to Auld. Upon the whole, we are disposed to prefer Stewart's edition to any other we have seen.—Compare "In Name of the Nine," Appendix, p. iii.; also Epistle to M'Math.

p. 362. THE EPITAPH: which follows, is by no means equal in spirit or in humour, to the "Prayer."

p. 362. ADDRESS TO AN ILLEGITIMATE CHILD: had, in original manuscript, a much broader and plainer title. This address is a bold, in some respects a daring, but manly avowal of parental tenderness in a case where pain and shame must have largely mingled; and where atonement for offence had been made in the usual scandalous and degrading fashion of the time, more likely to provoke than to restrain it. On behalf of this child the Poet made a legal assignment of his works in prospect of leaving the country—Appendix, p. xii. She was both kindly cared for and educated at Mossgiel; she subsequently became the wife of Mr. John Bishop, overseer at Polkemmet, and died, December, 1816, aged thirty-two. This child, it is universally admitted, had a most astonishing resemblance to her father. The reader, on this subject, may compare Original Reminiscences, 2, Appendix—p. xxvii.: also Memoranda by Mrs. Burns, p. xxi.

p. 363. THE INVENTORY: a true enough, although doubtless a laughable, account of the "hail stock and plenishing" of a moorland farm in our Author's early days; and incidentally, of moorland life and habits—addressed, as our readers will observe, to his friend Mr. Aiken, who was surveyor for the district. The "Inventory," as a portion of our Author's Posthumous Works, is remarkable for having been published first by Dr. Currie in a mutilated form—such passages as he judged improper having been omitted. It was re-published from the original by Stewart, complete, and this mutilation, discovered by him, may have led him to suspect that Dr. Currie had deliberately excluded the "Jolly Beggars" altogether on the same principle. In Currie, and in editions copied from him, the ploughman's well-known designations for certain horses, *lan'-afore* and *lan'-ahin*, that is, the two horses which go one before the other on the left or *landward* side of the plough, are strangely misprinted *han'-afore* and *han'-ahin*—a misreading of the manuscript, doubtless.

p. 364-5. THE PROLOGUE, THE ELEGY, and THE TOAST—which conclude this subdivision, do not seem to require any special commentary.

CROMEK'S EDITION.

Robert Hartley Cromek, born at Hull, 1770, was originally intended for the law, but his sympathetic feelings, outraged in the practice of it, prevented his pursuit of that profession. Having a decided predilection for literature and art, he began the study of engraving at Manchester, which he afterwards completed at London, under the celebrated Bartolozzi—cultivating literature at the same time as an amateur. Early in 1808 he appeared as the publisher of "Blair's Grave," with magnificent engravings by Schiavonetti from the celebrated designs of Blake. Immediately after this, he was induced to pay a visit to Scotland for the benefit of his health; and being a most devoted admirer of our Author's, he made what may be called a literary pedestrian tour through the whole region rendered sacred by his life and genius, from the Cottage where he was born to the churchyard of Dumfries where his remains are deposited. On this excursion he was accompanied by James M'Clure as a guide, the humble but affectionate attendant of the Poet's death-bed, and faithful friend of the family, by whom he was enabled to visit many remote scenes that would otherwise have been inaccessible to him, and to collect many valuable fragments he would never else have seen. His additions thus made to the correspondence of Burns were most important, consisting of no fewer than sixty-two letters, besides commonplace books, journals, &c., and the fragments of poetry collected by him were also of great value, although several pieces included in that collection had been published before unknown to him from other copies, and a few ascribed by him to Burns were not Burns's at all. These will be found distinguished in their places—Poetical Works, pp. 425-26. This volume, called the "Reliques," was published by him in 1808, uniform with Currie's edition, and was intended as a supplementary tribute of honour to the Poet's genius—"another stone on the CAIRN of a great and lamented chief." From this edition the following pieces, first presented to the public by Cromek, are derived.

p. 365. To J. LAPRAIK; the Third and Last Epistle: remarkable for the extremely broad vernacular in which it is written; although in most respects poetically inferior to the other Epistles addressed to the same correspondent.

p. 366. To THE REV. JOHN M'MATH: an admirable, vigorous, and powerful production, containing many of the manliest sentiments and truest confessions possible for such an Author on the subject of religion—sentiments and confessions which have, in fact, passed into proverbs. It seems to have been intended as a sort of apology to a clergyman for such a satire as "Holy Willie's Prayer;" but is indeed the clearest vindication of it. It is dated only two days after the foregoing epistle to Lapraik, and contains a curious incidental meteorological record for the autumn of that year. A little sunshine, interrupted with frequent "bitter blaudin show'rs," and strong gusts of north wind driving the reapers into shelter, seems to have characterised the middle of September, 1785; during which intervals of storm, however, the Poet



was not idle, for both these epistles were written under cover at the moment. M'Math, as we learn from Mr. Chambers, was then assistant and successor to Rev. Peter Wodrow, of Tarbolton; was an excellent preacher, but not very successful; "fell into low spirits in consequence of his dependent situation," and died in obscurity at Rossul, in the Isle of Mull, December, 1825.—Compare "The Twa Herds," p. 359, c. 2, s. 5; also concluding verse of the poem.

p. 367. TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ., recommending a boy: is an epistle admirable in every way, socially, morally, and religiously—both as a business communication and as a satire. We have every reason to believe that "Master Tootie," celebrated for his knavery in cow-dealing, and not John Wilson, printer, Kilmarnock, was the real subject of Wee Johnny's epitaph. Compare note on Epitaphs—*infra*.

p. 368. TO MR. M'ADAM, of Craigongillan: affords some hint as to how the "Jolly Beggars" might come into Mr. Woodburn's hands, who was then factor to M'Adam.

p. 369. WILLIE'S AWA: written during the Border Tour, on occasion of Creech's visit to London at that time—see letter (1) to him, p. 120. Our readers have only to compare this *quasi* lament, in its amazing exuberance of friendship and of compliment, with the SKETCH which follows, p. 371, to understand with what complicated feelings of dissatisfaction and uncertainty our Author regarded this important personage. The relations which actually subsisted between him and his publisher, and whether justice was ever rendered to him in the way of a final settlement, all documents relating to the subject having been destroyed, it is impossible for us to determine. Compare note on letter (2) to Creech, p. 120.

Of the various miscellaneous pieces which follow, only a few require to be specially commented on. For some information concerning TERRAUGHTY, p. 370, the reader may turn to Appendix, p. xxxi.; the MR. SUTHERLAND, p. 372, for whom our Author wrote more than one prologue, is mentioned with commendation in letter (2) to Gilbert Burns; and the history of PEG NICHOLSON'S demise, in letter (4) to Nicol. This animal, as our readers may conjecture, was named for the mad woman who attempted George III.'s life; as the Poet's own favourite, "Jenny Geddes," was for our zealous old Presbyterian matron who protested against the Liturgy in St. Giles's.

p. 371. ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT RUISSEAU, our readers need hardly be informed, contains a play on his own name in French; and, as they perceive, affords a very strong and natural indication of his own pride in self-acquired scholastic accomplishments. Burns was a great reader, and prided himself on being a first-rate writer; and in the mere penmanship of his letters evinced the greatest scholarly care.

But tell him, he was learn'd and clark,  
Ye roos'd him than!

Compare Epistle to Lapraik, p. 365, c. 2—

• An' took my joctelg an' whatt it,  
Like ony clark.

p. 373. THE DEAN OF FACULTY: refers to a ridiculously bitter contest, originating in political animosities, to displace Henry Erskine from the Deanship of Faculty. Mr. Erskine, although a great favourite, had become a little too liberal in

his politics, it should appear; had presided at some dangerous mob-meeting in Edinburgh, &c., and was absolutely displaced by a Tory majority of 123 to 38, the successful antagonist being Mr. Robert Dundas, Lord-Advocate. This took place January 12th, 1796. It is stated by Mr. Chambers, on the authority of a Mr. Bertram, late of Edinburgh, that Mr. Erskine's mortification was so great at this loss of honour, that he went that very night to his own door, and "hewed off with a coal-axe the brass-plate which expressed his forfeited dignity!" Our Author, like most of the other liberals throughout the country, deeply sympathised with the honourable gentleman in this insult; and besides that, was animated with a private grudge against Mr. Dundas for the insolent neglect he had experienced at his hands in reference to an elegy on his relative the late President—see p. 386.

p. 374. ON CESSNOCK BANKS: p. 376. MONTGOMERIE'S PEGGY:—see Heroines of Burns.

p. 376. ROBIN: This remarkable poetico-prophetic effusion is commonly dated about the beginning or middle of the year 1784; and if so, that being prior to any outward indications of coming popularity, and even prior to his own most important Authorship, it must be accepted as a very singular and truthful anticipation of his own future greatness. According to Mr. Chambers, there was some rumour, but without foundation, that a wayfaring woman who chanced to be present at the birth, and in whose hands the new-born infant was placed, had actually announced such prophecies concerning him. Be this as it may, the prophecies, conjectural or real, were true. The accident alluded to, of the falling in of a portion of the cottage gable on the night of the birth, did not occur, according to Gilbert's statement, until nine or ten days afterwards, and was attributable partly to the storm and partly to the previous accidental settling down unequally of the gable itself—the jambs of the chimney being firm, but the walls adjacent comparatively loose. As for the song itself, it is in all respects characteristic and worthy of him; and in its original, simple, unamutilated and uninterpolated form, as hero quoted from Cromek, is a perfect prophetic and pictorial idyl. The concluding verse, omitted by some from motives of delicacy, and *improved* by others from motives the very reverse, when printed honestly as it stands in its own original, contains nothing whatever seriously reprehensible. On the contrary, it presents an absolutely perfect picture of an aged sibyl addressing an unconscious male child, not very regardful of the dignity of her own sex, as such personages rarely are, yet saying nothing to provoke any undue or painful licence at their expense.

Guid faith, quo' scho, I doubt you, Sir,

This little title of "Sir" from the withered crone to the puling infant, and the omission of all complimentary terms to persons of the other sex, make the essential dramatic difference. But the rhyme is not so good, it may be objected; and so much the better for that. The crone thought nothing of rhyme, but of womanly homage only. On the other hand, the picture is better, and the moral sense complete—which was the thing in Burns's eye, above all other things, to be attended to. All attempts to decorate or to *enrich* this verse, as we find in Cunningham's edition, with better rhymes and worse sense, not



only vitiate its moral integrity, but destroy its pictorial truthfulness; in a word, vulgarise and debase it. That Cromek's edition is the correct edition there cannot be the shadow of a doubt; and it should be restored and preserved accordingly.

p. 377. O RAGING FORTUNE'S WITHERING BLAST: compare letter to Robert Riddel, Esq., p. 71. NOW BANK AND BRAE: on Cromek's sole authority, ascribed to Burns; seems to be genuine; and contains the only reference by our Author to the Girvan Water, which flows through a beautiful, very beautiful valley, long and intimately well known to us.

p. 378. THE BANKS OF DOON: original draft, first published by Cromek. See letter (4) to John Ballantine, Esq.

p. 378. HERE'S A HEALTH TO THEM THAT'S AWA: The concluding verse of this song was left incomplete by Cromek, from motives of anxiety, doubtless, for the welfare of the Poet's family, whose prospects might still be dependent on political patronage; it was then made up by Cunningham on chance, as a mere chorus, and remained in this unfinished state until completed in Chambers's edition: *vide infra*. p. 409.

p. 379. ADDRESS TO DUMOURIER: more properly Dumouriez, Charles François—was one of the most distinguished early Generals of the French Revolution. He gained an important victory over the Austrians at Gemappe; which was followed by the subjugation of the whole Austrian Netherlands. The execution of Louis XVI. alienated this accomplished soldier, and he became suspect to the Revolutionary Government. His arrest was then decreed; to escape from which he fled for protection to the Austrians. His career afterwards was that of an exile, in which character he visited several countries in Europe. He came to England in 1804—where a liberal pension was allowed him by the British Government—and died near Henley-on-Thames, March, 1823. It was his defection to the Austrians which occasioned our Author's contemptuous "Address" to him, who, like many other friends of national progress at the moment, did not give Dumouriez credit for sincerity either as a soldier or as a politician.—Compare Epigram, p. 426.

p. 381. WILLIE CHALMERS: a piece of vicarious courtship, a sort of special pleading for which our Author was well qualified, and in which he was often employed, was written to oblige his friend Mr. Chalmers, one of the "writer chiefs" at Ayr, who also occasionally did him service; and is the only addition made by LOCKHART to Burns's Posthumous Works.

#### CUNNINGHAM'S EDITION.

Allan Cunningham, whose father was land-steward on the Dalswinton estate, and had frequent intercourse with Burns—who himself also was a younger contemporary of the Poet's, and often saw him—had many admirable opportunities of collecting the poetic remains overlooked by Currie and Cromek. His edition, therefore, as might be expected, contains a considerable number of pieces which had not hitherto appeared. Whether the copies discovered by him, however, were not the best, or whether his own attention to the text was less careful than it should have been, it is certain that a great many variations and corrections on some of the pieces collected by him have since been made—examples of which the reader will

find by comparing Chambers's edition of the Election Ballads with the same poems as they appear in Cunningham.

p. 382. TO JOHN KENNEDY: Compare letters to, p. 142.

p. 382. ADDRESS OF BEEZEBUB: although it appeared for the first time, we believe, among the collected works of Burns in Cunningham's edition, had been given to the world before that in the *Edinburgh Magazine*, of February, 1818; to whose editor it was conveyed by a gentleman who received it from Rankine of Adamhill. It was one of our Author's early compositions, dating in 1786, and was prefaced by the following note explanatory of the occasion.

"Address of Beelzebub to the Right Honourable the Earl of Breadalbane, President of the Right Honourable and Honourable the Highland Society, which met on the 23d of May last, at the Shakspeare, Covent Garden, to concert ways to frustrate the designs of five hundred Highlanders who, as the Society were informed by Mr. M'Kenzie of Applecross, were so audacious as to attempt an escape from their lawful lords and masters whose property they were, by emigrating from the lands of Mr. M'Donald of Glangarry to the wilds of Canada, in search of that fantastic thing—LIBERTY."

Our Author's own love of liberty inclined him, perhaps, to exaggerate a little for the worse the object the Highland Society had in view; for M'Kenzie of Applecross, by whom it was suggested, was a liberal-minded, patriotic man, who did much to improve the condition of his tenantry.

Faith, you and A——s \* were right. \* Applecross.

p. 385. EPISTLE TO MAJOR LOGAN: is the next in order which calls for special note; and is remarkable in many ways for its great poetic excellence, its force and beauty, its pictorial touches and its moral allusions, as an epistle. The date at Mossgiel, October 30th, 1786, implies that it was written after Mary Campbell's death; and the passionate reference to Jean, "wha was a dear ane," but by whom he had been injured, implies also that his indignation against her for such treatment was still rankling very painfully in his breast. Compare Heroines of Burns—Mary Campbell. Major Logan, as the Epistle informs us, was a great musician; he was also a great punster—died, in fact, with a jest in his mouth. At his residence of Park, near Ayr, he was occasionally visited by the Poet. His mother and unmarried sister kept house for him. The Major lived and died a bachelor.

p. 386. LINES intended to be written under a Noble Earl's Picture: our readers are probably aware, were submitted to his Lordship, the Earl of Glencairn, one of our Author's most generous patrons, with an earnest request that they might be published with his sanction; which his Lordship, however, without assigning any reason for his refusal, declined.

p. 386. ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT DUNDAS, Esq., of Arniston, &c.; was written at the suggestion of Charles Hay, Esq., advocate—compare letter to him. We find the following note by Cunningham on the subject:—

I found it inserted in the handwriting of the poet, in an interleaved copy of his poems, which he presented to Dr. Geddes, accompanied by the following surly note:—"The foregoing poem has some tolerable lines in it, but the incurable wound of my pride will not suffer me to correct, or even peruse it. I sent a copy of it with my best prose letter to the son of the great man, the theme of the piece, by the hands of one of the noblest men in God's world, Alexander Wood, surgeon: when, behold! his solicitorship took no more notice of my poem, or of me, than I had been a strolling fiddler who had made free with his lady's name for a silly new reel. Did the fellow imagine that I looked for any dirty gratuity?" This Robert Dundas was the elder brother of that Lord Melville to whose hands, soon after these lines were written, all the government patronage in Scotland was confided, and who, when the name of Burns was mentioned, pushed the wine to Pitt, and said nothing. The poem was first printed by me, in 1834.



We object to the use of the word "surlly" in the above remarks. Burns's note was nothing more than the honest expression of natural indignation at unprovoked and inexcusable insolence in return for complimentary services not of his own designing. On this subject, the reader may compare Phrenological Summary in Appendix; and to see that such treatment was not soon forgotten, may compare also "The Dean of Faculty," p. 373, with note on.

p. 387. EPISTLE TO HUGH PARKER: one of the Author's Kilmarnock friends, contains not only a most graphic picture of the Poet's situation at Ellisland—see Mrs. Burns's Memoranda in Appendix—but poetically some of the most extraordinary figures and ideas ever introduced on familiar topics. Homer's idea of Orion chasing the Bear round the pole is nothing to that of "Jenny Geddes" on the zodiac!

p. 388. LETTER TO JAMES TENNANT: of a later date, is in the same style, although not quite so exuberant. Of the family mentioned in it, several members came to be persons of some influence and distinction. "Preacher Willie" was subsequently well known for his History of Hindostan; and "Wabster Charlie" became the founder of the extensive world-celebrated Chemical Works of St. Rollox, Glasgow. These gentlemen were full brothers to one another, but only half brothers to the James Tennant to whom this letter of our Author's is addressed.

p. 389. TO JOHN TAYLOR: relates to a *bona fide* incident in the Poet's life, when his horse, being in danger on the slippery roads, had its shoes "frosted," or sharpened, by a very busy blacksmith, at the earnest request of Mr. Taylor, to whom the verses were addressed by Burns, and endorsed by his friend and fellow-traveller Mr. Sloan, stating the circumstances. The incident occurred at Wanlockhead, and may be found detailed in Cunningham. In addition to payment and poetry, the smith was very cordially regaled at *Ramage's*, of which he lived long afterwards to boast.

p. 390. DELIA, AN ODE: said by some to have been done in rivalry of the so-called Della Cruscan School of Poetry—a sort of exaggerated sentimental style, introduced by certain fantastic English copyists from Italy, and then very fashionable about London; but is in fact a very fine unconscious parallel to the best specimens of Hebrew poetry, in which the same or a similar idea is repeated in every stanza, in different words and with different figures, to illustrate or enforce it. The occasion of writing this ode is said to have been a challenge by some acquaintance at Brownhill, who had a newspaper in his hand with a specimen of the popular poetry on its pages. The verses by Burns in competition were written almost extemporaneously, and were afterwards sent by him for publication to *The Star* newspaper, accompanied by the following note—

Mr. Printer,—If the productions of a simple ploughman can merit a place in the same paper with Sylvester Otway, and the other favourites of the muses who illuminate the *Star* with the lustre of genius, your insertion of the enclosed trifle will be succeeded by future communications from yours, &c.,

R. BURNS.

*Ellisland, near Dumfries; 18th May, 1789*

p. 390. KIRK'S ALARM: compare note on, at p. 432; also letters to Logan.

p. 392. LADDIES BY THE BANKS O' NITH; THE FIVE CARLINS; and other "Election Ballads," have been made the subject of so much commentary by persons who may be presumed far better able to judge than the Author himself was of their propriety at the moment, that we must decline to do more than refer our readers to his own explanation of his motives as these have been recorded by himself in his letter to Mr. Heron of Heron, Prose Works, p. 197. We shall content ourselves, therefore, with merely indicating in the usual manner, the occasions and the personages referred to.

p. 392. LADDIES BY THE BANKS O' NITH, we may mention, although quoted by us here from Cunningham's edition, to preserve the connection entire, was first printed by Mr. Robert Chambers. It refers contemptuously to the Duke of Queensberry's change of political party, and his desertion of the King's cause during his alarming illness, and support of the Prince of Wales's unconstitutional claims, in 1788. The opposing candidates were Sir James Johnston of Westerhall, and Captain Miller, younger of Dalswinton.

Whistlebirk—Alexander Birtwhistle, Esq., provost of Kirkcudbright.

p. 392. FIVE CARLINS—refers to the same contest: compare letter (6) to Graham. The Burghs represented are—

Maggy by the Banks o' Nith—Dumfries;  
Marjory o' the Monie Lochs—Lochmaben;  
Blinkin Bess of Annandale—Annan;  
Whiskey Jean—Kirkcudbright;  
Black Joan frae Crichton Peel—Sanquhar.

Personages—

Auld guidman—the King;                      Young guidman—Prince of Wales.

p. 394. EPISTLE TO ROBERT GRAHAM, Esq.: continued reference to the same subject; compare letter to, as before.

Drumlanrig—Queensberry;                      M'Murdo—Factor to his Grace;  
Craighdarroch—Fergusson, of;                      Glenriddel—Riddel of Friars Carse;  
Stag—Provost, of Dumfries;                      Welsh—Mr. Sheriff;  
Lawson—a wine merchant in Dumfries;  
"Muffled Murderer of Charles"—Executioner of Charles I. wore a mask.  
Scrimgeour—Lord Dundee;                      Graham—Marquis of Montrose.  
"Stewart, bold as Hector"—Stewart of Hillside.

p. 395. HERON BALLADS; refer to the contested election for the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, in which the candidates were Mr. Heron, of Heron and Kerroughtree, on the Liberal, and Mr. Gordon of Balmaghie, on the Tory party. Balmaghie was a man of moderate property, but supported by the influence of his uncle, Murray of Broughton, and also of the Earl of Galloway. John Bushby of Tinwald Downs, an object of contempt to Burns, was a most officious party on Gordon's side.

p. 395. BALLAD FIRST—requires no note, except that the reference to the Earl of Selkirk is not directed against his Lordship personally, but against his coalition in this case with the Earl of Galloway, whose son, Lord Garlies, had done all in his power to keep the election back on pretence of a snowstorm—1795.

p. 396. BALLAD SECOND: to the tune, and in the style of the rude old Scottish ballad "Fy, let us a' to the Bridal."

Murray—of Broughton;                      Gordon—of Balmaghie;  
Blacklipped Johnnie—John Bushby, Esq., of Tinwald Downs;  
Kemperton's birkie—William, brother to John Bushby;  
New Sheriff—Bushy Maitland, son to John.



Cardones—Maxwell, of; Douglasses—of Orchardtown and Castle-Douglas; Kenmure—Gordon, of—afterwards by restoration, Viscount of; Redcastle—W. S. Lawrie, of; Muirhead—Rev. Mr., of Urr; Buittle—Rev. G. Maxwell, of; Folk from St. Mary's—Earl of Selkirk's family; Young Richard—Oswald, of Aucheneruive; Collieston—Copland, of; Stamp Office Johnnie—John Syme, Esq.; Quintin—M'Adam, of Craigenkillan; Cassencarric—Mr. —, of; Colonel Tam—Colonel Goldie, of Goldie Lea; Kerroughtree—Mr. Heron, of; Auld Major—Heron, his brother; Kilkerran—Sir Adam Fergusson, of; Birtwhistle—Mr. A., Kirkeudbright; Johnnie—John Maxwell, of Terraughty; Gordie—George Maxwell, of Carruehan; Wallie—Wellwood Maxwell, Esq.; Logan M'Dowall—Colonel M'Dowall of Logan—whose treatment of the lady gave occasion for the beautiful lyric of "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon." Gunpowder Blair—of Dunskey; Broughton—Murray, of;

We are indebted for certain of the above particulars to Cunningham and Chambers.

p. 397. BALLAD THIRD: was written on another contest which followed soon after the preceding, between Heron and the Hon. Montgomery Stewart, a son of the Earl of Galloway. Heron was successful, but was unseated on Petition; which so affected his health and spirits that he shortly afterwards died. For personages referred to, compare as above.

p. 398. THE FETE CHAMPETRE: refers to an expensive pic-nic given by Mr. Cunningham of Enterkine and Annbank, with political objects in view, when a general election was thought imminent. The ostensible object was to celebrate Mr. Cunningham's accession to his property, and great rejoicings were organised on the occasion; which may have been all that was really intended, for Mr. Cunningham did not appear as a candidate. But that party favour was contemplated seems to have been generally believed, or no such ballad as this would have been thought of. The entertainment took place in the summer of 1788. "Ursa Major," our readers need hardly be reminded, refers to Dr. Samuel Johnson, who was contemptuously so designated by old Boswell of Auchinleck, in reply to his son's boast that the Doctor was a great luminary, quite a "constellation."

p. 399. EPISTLE FROM ESOPUS TO MARIA: the most objectionable lampoon by our Author at Mrs. Riddel's expense, during their quarrel. The "Esopus" here represented was one James Williamson, manager of a small theatrical company which occasionally played at Dumfries; and the point of the satire seems to be that this actor, who had been a good deal patronised by Mrs. Riddel, and even invited to festivities at Woodley Park, had been shortly after with his whole company imprisoned by the Earl (commonly called the "bad Earl") of Lonsdale, he and they together, as a set of vagrants. This occurring during our Author's own alienation from Mrs. Riddel's favour, was ground enough for the indulgence of his satirical vengeance.

I see her face the first of Ireland's sons—a certain Captain Gillespie.

The crafty Colonel—M'Dowal of Logan, already distinguished for his bad morality—compare "Banks o' Doon."

The satire, as a satire, is very powerfully and well written; but it is of course to be regretted it was ever written at all.

p. 400. THE SONS OF OLD KILLIE: one of several masonic effusions by our Author, who was a devout brother of the craft. The "Willie" here specified, was Mr. William Parker of Kilmarnock, at that date president of the lodge there, and an esteemed friend of the Poet's. Burns, as we have said, was a most enthusiastic Mason, and sometimes even held meetings in his own house, when he could not elsewhere

assemble a lodge, to promote the initiation of brethren. He was himself admitted to the craft by St. James's Lodge, Tarbolton, 1783, soon after he came to reside at Lochlea. That lodge then assembled in a small thatched public-house kept by one Manson, near the toll, where many extraordinary reunions doubtless took place under the Poet's auspices. The lodge has since been removed to a more commodious "Tent" opposite the church, where the books and insignia used by the Poet are still religiously preserved, and shown to strangers under the strict guardianship of two warders. On his first visit to Edinburgh, in the end of 1786, he was speedily recognised as a brother by all the leading representatives of the order there; was assumed a member of the Canongate Kilwinning, 1st February, 1787; and was elected Poet-Laureate to that lodge, March 1st—this distinguished honour being conferred upon him by Mr. Fergusson of Craigdarroch, then Master of the Lodge. For full particulars of these proceedings our readers are referred to "A Winter with Robert Burns," Edinburgh, 1846. During his Border Tour he was admitted, with much honour and free of all charge, a Royal Arch Mason of St. Abb's Eyemouth, May 19th, 1787.

On his removal to Dumfriesshire, he was assumed a member of the St. Andrew's Lodge there, December 27th, 1788. He was respectively elected Steward and Senior Warden of that Lodge, whose meetings he attended pretty regularly till within a few months of his death—his last attendance being April 14th, 1796. This Lodge, it appears, existed forty-one years—the minute-book, the masonic mallet, and the apron belonging to and worn by Robert Burns being now in possession of our esteemed and most obliging correspondent, Thomas Thorburn, Esq., Ryedale; in whose house we have had the pleasure of examining them, and from whom these particulars are obtained.

#### CHAMBERS'S EDITION.

Mr. Robert Chambers, whose indefatigable researches have resulted in many biographical discoveries, to which, directly or indirectly, not only ourselves but all succeeding editors have been deeply indebted, has the credit also of having brought to light several posthumous poetical productions of our Author. Among these are conspicuous—

pp. 401-2. THE TARBOLTON LASSES, RONALDS OF BENNALS, TO MISS FERRIER, THE BONNY LASS OF ALBANY: under several of which heads, we must refer our readers to Heroines of Burns, Appendix.

p. 404. THE TREE OF LIBERTY: known to, but rejected by, Allan Cunningham on internal evidence, as not by Burns. "It was first printed in People's edition of Burns, 1840, from a manuscript in possession of Mr. James Duncan, Mosesfield, Glasgow."—Chambers. The poem is admitted to be in our Author's handwriting, but this, we have already seen, is by no means decisive evidence. On the whole, although we do not doubt the genuineness of the authorship in this case, we frankly admit that it is by no means in Burns's own style.\*

\* In justice to Cunningham, we are glad now to state, that in his edition of 1842, he distinctly rejects "Shelah O'Neil"—compare p. 426—which he ascribes to Sir Alexander Boswell. This fact, which escaped our notice at the moment, confirms our own judgment concerning that song, although on other grounds. In Blackie's edition, the song appears on Cunningham's authority; it should now, therefore, be entirely dismissed.



p. 405. VERSES ON THE DESTRUCTION OF WOODS NEAR DRUMLANRIG: the wholesale sylvan devastation here commemorated with deserved scorn, is said to have been committed by his Grace of Queensberry to provide a dower for the Countess of Yarmouth, on the *supposition* that she was his daughter. His Grace's estates of Neidpath, Peeblesshire, were devastated by him at the same time and for the same object. The lady claimed other parentage, and is said even to have had another fortune left her by another supposed father. Such was the state of morals then in court and country; yet Burns ran the risk of social ruin for daring to denounce a man like this and his political associates—"Behold thy gods, O Israel!"

Mr. Chambers informs us that the verses were inscribed "on the back of a window shutter in an inn or toll-house, near the scene of the devastation"—which may probably be the case; but they were well known in the district by rehearsal long before they were published. From a gentleman—Mr. Cuthbert of Burnock Holms, Ochiltree—to whom they were thus familiar, we receive the following variations:

- |             |   |                   |
|-------------|---|-------------------|
| c. 1, s. 1. | As on the banks o' wandering Nith       | wimpling Nith     |
| c. 2, s. 2. | Amang his eaves, the sigh he gave       | his caves,        |
| c. 2, s. 4. | <i>read as follows—</i>                 |                   |
|             | An peacefu' raise its ingle reek        |                   |
|             | That slowly curling clamb the hill      |                   |
|             | But now the cot is bare and cauld,      |                   |
|             | Its leafy shelter tint and gane—&c.     |                   |
| c. 2, s. 5. | "Alas!" said I—                         | "Alas!" quoth I—  |
|             | Has stripp'd the cleeding o' your braes | aff your braes.   |
| c. 2, s. 6. | It blew na here sac fierce and fell     | It blows na here. |

All which we believe to be either the true readings, or at least great improvements on the text as now commonly accepted.

p. 406. EXTEMPORE on some Commemorations of the POET THOMSON (Earl Buchan's demonstrations): was accompanied with the following note to Mrs. Graham of Fintry—

To Mrs. Graham of Fintry, this little poem, written in haste on the spur of the occasion, and therefore inaccurate, but a sincere compliment to that sex the MOST AMIABLE OF THE WORKS OF GOD—is most respectfully presented by  
THE AUTHOR.

p. 406. JOHN BUSHBY'S LAMENTATION: John Bushby, Esq., of Tinwald Downs, originally a solicitor, afterwards a banker, had acquired much wealth and influence in both professions, and became a country squire in consequence. He is described by Mr. Chambers, on the authority of those who knew him, as a man of great intellectual parts; but he seems also to have been without much heart or sincerity. He must have been essentially a vulgar man. He affected to patronise Burns, and had him occasionally at his house to dine; but contrived to put insults or practical jokes upon him there, which resulted in the Poet's implacable resentment. This monied mammon-worshipper and ill-bred man is known to the world now only through the contemptuous notice with which an exciseman thus honoured him.

p. 407. VARIOUS READINGS—of Election Ballads; ADDITIONAL STANZAS TO VISION, &c.—which follow in Mr. Chambers's edition, must be allowed to explain themselves.

p. 411. NEW PSALMODY: communicated to us by our esteemed friend and correspondent, Mr. Manners of Croydon.

About its genuineness there can be no doubt. The only references which require explanation seem to be—

That Young Man great in Issachar— Pitt in the Commons.  
The burden bearing tribe.

The Judge that's mighty in thy law,  
The man that fears thy name.\*

\* Either Thurlow, whose habit of profane swearing may be glanced at, as the *Inverness Courier* supposes; or possibly,

Old Mansfield, who writes like the Bible,  
Says the more 'tis a truth, Sir, the more 'tis a libel.—p. 417.

#### FRAGMENTS, INSCRIPTIONS, EPIGRAMS, &c.

These minor pieces, some of which are of special interest, as they illustrate our Author's history, we have collected from various sources—in one or two cases original—and have grouped together, as far as possible, in such a manner as to indicate the time, and manner of their composition; but as a few words of explanation additional with respect to some of them may perhaps be required, we subjoin the following:—

p. 413. FOR PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD'S BIRTH-DAY: was written for a company of gentlemen who celebrated that occasion in Edinburgh; but as it contained some sentiments which politically might have been injurious to the interests of the Poet's family, Dr. Currie suppressed the bulk of it. The ode, so far as we can judge, does not seem to have been in the Author's best style by any means.

p. 414. INSCRIPTION ON BLANK LEAF OF A WORK BY HANNAH MORE: compare letter (1) to Aiken, p. 145.

p. 415. ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON: original draft. From an exact copy of the original now before us, we are disposed to believe that this was not so much a separate draft, written and laid aside, as only a rough draft corrected, and afterwards, according to correction, copied out. In proof of this we may state, that the so-called original draft has all the corrections in itself, and contains the fourth verse entire without correction. At this point the Poet seems to have paused and laid the corrected copy aside; for the concluding verse is awaiting.—Compare finished copy, p. 123.

p. 416. ON MISS JEAN SCOTT: according to Stewart, who first printed this epigram, refers to a Miss Jean Scott of Ayr; although it seems quite as likely to have had reference to some young lady of that name on the Borders, to whom our Author was introduced on his travels in that part of Scotland.

p. 416. LINES ON WINDOW PANE AT INVERARY: Dr. Grierson's version, *Prose Works*, p. 205. In our note on this version at page quoted, we intimated that the Dr. Grierson by whom it was preserved, and who accompanied Burns on the West Highland Tour, was unknown to us at the time. In Sir Walter Scott's letter quoted by Lockhart we find the following statement [*Life of Burns*, p. 113]—"Mr. Thomas Grierson was at that time a clerk of my father's. He knew Burns and promised to ask him to his lodgings to dinner, but had no opportunity to keep his word; otherwise, I might have seen more of this distinguished man." Dr. Grierson, we have now little doubt, must have been some relative, most probably a brother, of this Mr. Thomas Grierson's, clerk to Sir Walter's father. The reader may further compare Highland Tour—Appendix, top of p. ix., c. 2.

p. 418. IN DEFENCE OF A LADY: the "glow'rin spectre"



thus addressed, is said by Mr. Chambers to have been a certain Lord of Session then on Circuit, who in a state of partial inebriety, on entering the drawing-room at Dalswinton, inquired what "howlet-faced thing" one of the young ladies there was, whom he did not happen to recognise.

p. 418. TO A GENTLEMAN HE HAD OFFENDED: addressed to Mr. Walter Riddel, after the unpleasant scene at Woodley Park; and EXTEMPORE, PINNED ON A LADY'S COACH—with reference to Mrs. Riddel's indiscreet habit of talking. Compare note on Sonnet on the Death of Robert Riddel, Esq., p. 428.

p. 419. WRITTEN ON A TUMBLER, &c.: this tumbler, which was purchased for a shilling by a gentleman present, and carried off as a prize, came afterwards into the possession of Sir Walter Scott, and is now at Abbotsford, among the most precious relics there.

p. 422. AT THE INN AT BROWNHILL: the landlord, whose name was Bacon, seems to have been a great friend of our Author's; for at the sale of his effects after his death, a common snuff-mill—a horn mounted with silver and presented to him by the Poet—having the Poet's name inscribed, was found. It realized £5. The Poet seems to have had several of these—compare letter (2) to James Smith.

#### EPITAPHS.

The most of these, as our readers perceive, are humorous and highly characteristic—in which respect they need no commentary, except that they are pre-eminently and indubitably the work of Robert Burns. Nobody but himself could have written either such epigrams or such epitaphs, nor could they be imitated with success by any other writer. With respect to one epitaph, however, which has already appeared from the Kilmarnock edition in an earlier part of this work, the celebrated epitaph on "Wee Johnie," p. 79, we take this, the first opportunity, since we were ourselves aware, of informing our readers that it was never intended, as commonly supposed, for John Wilson, printer, Kilmarnock. On the late Mrs. Begg's authority, which is indisputable, the real object of this celebrated epitaph was a certain insignificant, ill-conditioned "world's-worm" of a cowfeeder at Mauchline, whose residence was on the road to Mossgiel. By this man's senseless impertinences our Author was occasionally annoyed on his way, coming or going; but attributing these to want of intellect or littleness of soul, as was doubtless the case, he commemorated them, and immortalised him, accordingly. This person's name we have not distinctly ascertained, but are much disposed to believe that he was the same contemptible personage described as "Master Tootie" in the Epistle to Gavin Hamilton, p. 367. This, however, is a matter of secondary importance. We are chiefly anxious to vindicate our Author's own consistency in such a case, and to relieve the name of JOHN WILSON, printer, Kilmarnock, from an unjust and unaccountable reproach, so long and so universally attached to it. Let the first printer of Robert Burns, therefore, with unsullied tombstone, now rest in peace. His Author never intended to insult him in an epitaph of his own printing, and was most probably a total stranger to him at the time when that epitaph was written.

#### CONCLUSION.

We have now reached the limit of our critical commentary on these wonderful poetical productions, and in concluding our remarks, we think it particularly worthy of observation—

1. That there is not, from beginning to end, in poem, verse, or line, a single trace of what is commonly called sensational writing in any form; nothing that appeals to the faculty of mere empty wonder, or to the nervous susceptibilities of our constitution; nothing horrible; nothing extravagant or fantastic; nothing false; all, on the contrary, supremely natural, within the bounds of possibility, of probability, of fact—so that their universal popularity must be founded on their invariable harmony with nature in her most universal attributes, in pathos, in humour, in beauty, in tenderness, and in truth.

2. It is worthy of particular notice also, that in poems or songs of a certain class, from which offence in most cases must inevitably arise, and in which want of taste, actual grossness, or indecency most commonly prevails, there is a singular absence of every offensive element in Burns. There are, it appears, no fewer than twenty-six instances in which such subjects—of masculine transgression and of feminine misfortune or disgrace—have been treated by him, or referred to, directly or indirectly, either in original compositions, or by revision and remodelling of ancient songs; and although some of these are by no means either suited or intended for indiscriminate reading, yet there is only one, or at the most two cases, in which passion or imagination borders on impropriety; and only one in which indignation for personal wrong—as in "Holy Willie's Prayer"—deepens into indecent scorn. When we farther state, that in the above list we include such pieces as "Ye Banks and Braes o' bonie Doon" on the one hand, and certain songs in the "Jolly Beggars" on the other, our readers may be able to judge for themselves whether we affirm too much, when we say that this painful topic, so frequently suggested both by the manners of the people and by the traditions of their literature, and by his own individual experience, was ever treated with so great variety of style, ranging from the deepest pathos to the highest scorn, or invested with so much popular dramatic interest in mere fragments, or handled with so much delicacy of taste and with so little moral impropriety of any kind, and always with some moral compensation of repentance and regret, or of actual atonement made for injury attendant, by any one writer in prose or poetry who ever lived.

3. And lastly, that although the Author himself has been much reproached for intemperance, and condemned as the writer of bacchanalian songs, it appears that there are only ten pieces in all (including "Scotch Drink," which is not bacchanalian but only descriptive) dedicated to conviviality; and not one of these directly associated with, or made conducive in itself to, any other kind of immorality. When the great extent and variety of Robert Burns's miscellaneous, and especially of his song, writing is taken into account, the multitude of his temptations, the acknowledged violence of his own passions, and the universal licence of society at the time—these simple statistical facts, which we have carefully verified, speak more for his personal self-control, for his good taste, and the delicacy of his moral intuitions, than probably



any one in a thousand of his readers would at first believe; and supply the best, indeed the only, answer required for those who seem to have special delight in ignorantly and persistently impeaching his morality as an author.

According to Mr. M'Kie's (of Kilmarnock) catalogue, which is not yet finished, it appears that of the Life and Works of Robert Burns, more or less complete, Reliques, Fragments, and separate pieces, there have been no fewer than two hundred and twenty-two editions in Great Britain; fourteen in America; and four in Germany: besides three German translations, and at least two French. Of separate lives, memoirs, commentaries, critiques, essays, lectures, sermons, letters, &c., on himself or on subjects immediately connected with him, there have been sixty-six; whilst of speeches and poems dedicated to his memory in all parts of the civilized world, the number may fairly be stated as beyond calculation.

The rapidly increasing value of Burns's MSS., even the smallest fragments, is attested by the fact that in one of the best London catalogues their prices are second only to those of the Great Napoleon's—the comparative scarcity of whose remains in this country gives them additional interest; whilst the commercial value of our Author's own original edition is regularly rising with every new sale from five to ten, and in some cases from three to thirteen guineas. Shakespear alone, in this respect, is a competitor with Burns; but Shakespear's antiquity—and consequent rarity—has more than two hundred years additional in its favour.

From a literal Translation of our Author's Works into French by M. Leon de Wailly, politely forwarded to us by Dr. Andrew Ranken, Lochside, New Cumnock, we extract the following specimen, which, from its very literality, is amusing.

### Duncan Gray.

DUNCAN GRAY vint ici faire sa cour,  
Ah! ah! quelle cour!  
Le joyeux soir de Noël que nous étions gris;  
Ah! ah! quelle cour!  
Maggie leva bien haut la tête,  
Regarda de travers et très-fièrement,  
Et força le pauvre Duncan de se tenir à distance.  
Ah! ah! quelle cour!

Duncan supplia, et Duncan pria,  
Ah! ah! etc.  
Meg fut aussi sourde qu' Ailsa Craig,  
Ah! ah! etc.  
Duncan soupira en dehors et en dedans,  
Pleura à se troubler et à se perdre la vue,  
Parla de sauter dans une chute d'eau;  
Ah! ah! etc.

Le temps et le chance ne sont qu' une marée,  
Ah! ah! etc.

L'amour dédaigné est dur à supporter,  
Ah! ah! etc.

Irai-je, comme un sot, dit il,  
Mourir pour une pécore hautaine?  
Elle peut aller—en France pour moi!  
Ah! ah! etc.

Comment cela se fait, que les docteurs le disent,  
Ah! ah! etc.

Meg devint malade—à mesure qu' il devint bien  
Ah! ah! etc. [portant,

Quelque chose la blesse au cœur,  
Pour se soulager elle pousse un soupir,  
Et, Dieu! ses yeux, ils disaient tant de choses!  
Ah! ah! etc.

Duncan était un garçon compatissant;  
Ah! ah! etc.

L' état de Maggie était piteux,  
Ah! ah! etc.

Duncan ne pouvait pas la tuer,  
La pitié grandissant étouffa sa rancune;  
Maintenant ils sont contents et joyeux tous les deux.  
Ah! ah! quelle cour!

The following translation into the Gaelic language, which we have been assured is almost literal, of the two first stanzas of our Author's sublime Ode to Mary in Heaven, has been communicated by an esteemed clerical friend in the West Highlands, and may prove interesting to our Celtic readers.

### Do Mharie air Aeuukh.

A' Reul shuiloach Mhaiseach, led ghath'n tladh,  
Le mian bhi coimhd na Maduinn mhoch,  
A ris tha toirt a steach ann la  
San dugadh mo Mhairi om chrìdh an sprochd.  
O Mhairi ghraìdh! a chaochail gnuis!  
Cait nios bheil t'ionad taimh an sith?  
Am faic thu iosal fear do ghraìdh?  
An cluinn thu na h'osnaigh tha renbadh a chrìdh?

Nuair Naomh sin ne gun di-chuimhn mis,  
Ne gun di-chuimhm mis 'choille Naomh,  
Far taobh n' Ayr lubach choinnich sin,  
Tigh'n beo fad la am builsgean a ghaoil!  
Cha dean tim qu Siorr' dubh' amach  
Cuimhneachain graìdh'n oibhneas chaidh seach;  
T'iomhaigh nuair bha sin comhladh san ach;  
Ah! sbeag shaoil sin gu' be nuair mach!