

THE TABLE O' FEES.

O, HOW oft hae I heard
That our whole stock-in-trade
Is a desk for a yaird
And a pen for a spade—
While it maun be agreed,
There's a world's guid in these,
Yet oor best pock o' seed
Is the table o' fees.

For the desk and the stule,
Wi' a sigh let me say,
May be props for a fule
At the end o' the day;
But like manna and snaw,
Or a peck o' white peas,
For the doves o' the law
Is the table o' fees.

Let the merchantman boast
O' his fine speculations,
And the clergyman hoast
O'er his teinds' allocations,
For a steady on-cost,
Bankin' up the bawbees,
Like a warm dreepin' roast
Is the table o' fees.

Man ! it gangs wi' a clack !
 Like a mill makin' flour ;
 Three-and-fourpence a crack !
 Six-and-eightpence an hour ;
 Half-a-crown for a wink,
 And a shillin' a sneeze,
 Come like stour o' sma' ink
 Frae the table o' fees.

I could hand ye my stule,
 Ruler, ink-horn, and dask ;
 I could hand ye my quill,
 Or whate'er ye micht ask ;
 And could yet wi' my tongue—
 Whilk nae man can appease—
 Fill a cask tae the bung
 Frae the table o' fees.

ROBERT BIRD.

peck, number.*boast*, cough.*bawbees*, halfpennies.*bung*, full.

THE SPARROW.

BROWN-BACKIT, dusty-breasted chappie!
Wi' streakit throat, and pow sae nappy,
Wi' sturdy legs and neb sae rappy
 For fechtin' splore.
Thy cheery chirp mak's a' things happy
 About my door.

In some tree fork, nane thick wi' leaves,
Or darksome hole aneath the eaves,
A harum-scarum nest thou weaves
 O' strings and straws,
That trailin' fast, thou rugs and rieves
 Frae kings or craws.

In simmer's prime, the world's thy ain,
To range the fields and scour the plain—
O' farmer's guns, fear thou hast nane!
 Or thowless rattles;
But helter-skelter at the grain
 Thou yirps and battles.

When winter comes, thou begs nae pity,
But townward hies, wi' chirpin' ditty,
Hailin' wi' yellochs in the city
 Ilk frien' thou meets,
To win thy bread, and coup the kitty
 In verra streets.

Gi'e finches fine their music mellow,
 Gi'e blackbirds trig their nebs o' yellow,
 The redbreast, tae—the sodger fellow—

His sang sae sma' ;

In clatterin' noisome chorus bellow

Thou dings them a'.

But haud ! I dinna like thy fechtin',
 Whan, breast tae breast, hot war thou'rt wechtin' ;
 Strivin' wi' hangin' wings tae stretchin' ;

On yird thy foe ;

Crumbs fa' for a', and nebs fast dichtin',

Work endless woe !

Kings mak' the wars, and fules tak' swurds,
 And cloor ilk ither intae curds ;

But men o' sense, and bonnie birds,

Wi' brains tae harrow,

Should fecht their battles oot wi' words,

My wee cock sparrow !

Ance in a riddle-trap I caught thee,
 And to a strugglin' captive brought thee,
 But 'twas na dabs or kicks that got thee,

Thy wings sae fleet ;

'Twas thy wee burstin' he'rt that bought thee

Thy freedom sweet.

Black shame to the unworthy son
 Wad lift on thee a murderous gun,
 And through thy ranks, as thou dost run,

Pour spreading lead,

To see thee fall, wi' wings undone,

And bleedin' head.

Nae gun hae I, or dog, or warden;
 Thou'rt welcome to my house or garden;
 I dinna heed thy thefts ae farden
 Frae simmer tae simmer:
 Thou hast my love, my peace, my pardon—
 Thou blythesome comer.

ROBERT BIRD.

nappy, strong.
thowless, useless.
rappy, snatchy.
yirps, harps.

coup the kitty, get the better of.
yird, earth.
cloor, strike.
farden, farthing.

TO A YOUNG LAWYER.

INTO the ink-pot o' the Law
 You've ta'en the jump, and doo or daw,
 There ye man sprachle, kick and claw
 Amang queer cattle;
 And sae, my rhyming horn I'll blaw,
 And spring my rattle.

Wigs cockin' on a bench, you'll find,
 Just like the lave o' human kind—
 This way disposed, that way inclined,
 Wi' nip or nudge—
 A modest story, bear in mind,
 Cleeks aye the judge.

However changed be mood or tense,
 Plain common law is common sense;
 The Court may ring wi' pounds and pence,
 But ne'er forget,
 The core o' a' the foil and fence
 Is, Justice yet!

Lend not your tongue to the abuse
 O' sober truth; let no dog-noose
 Your conscience thraw or he'rt seduce
 Wi' glints o' gold—
 Success is but a poor excuse
 For honour sold.

Lang syne the wee bit writer body
Was pented black's a tinker's cuddy—
A fause-tongued loon, sly, inky, duddy,
 Snuffy and drucken;
But now, frae these he stands stark scuddy,
 And clean oot shucken.

Behold him on his glozened knees,
Waffin' a scrimpit table o' fees
Ower twa three sticks frae twa three trees,
 Aft green and wat,
Greetin 'through reek to mak' a bleeze
 And boil his pat!

Some men grow rich wi' tricks and plots,
And some wi' scrapings-oot and blots,
But there are guineas poor as groats
 To him that won them;
May your half-crowns hae nae black spots
 O' brunstane on them!

Shun mighty hills and dirty ditches,
For little threeds mak' siccar stitches,
And neither poverty nor riches
 Will be your lot—
Among the Law's queer kinks and hitches
 An honest Scot!

And whiles you'll gie a helping hand
To poor folk in a weary land;
What though your fee be sma' as sand
 Upon the dredger,
Sic kindly acts will rank and stand
 Right side the ledger!

And now, farewell! This Lawyer's screed
 Some day may stand you in guid steed—
 To keep your he'rt up were indeed
 Weel worth a letter:
 Where I hae failed, may you succeed,
 And e'en do better!

ROBERT BIRD.

lave, remainder.
nip or nudge, sharpness
 or annoyance.
dog-noose, gossip.

thraw, twist.
loon, fellow.
duddy, ragged.
scuddy, naked.