

## A TALE O' KIRRIE.

THE breath o' summer, the caller air,  
Are no to be boucht wi' gathered gear;

The winter snell and bitter cauld  
May be dear to breasts that are bare an' bauld.

Twa tinker bodies—a man and wife—  
Had led for years a stravaigin' life;

But auld age cam', an' the pair grew douce,  
To settle doon they hae boucht a hoose.

They blankets boucht, an' they boucht a bed,  
An' sat them doon wi' a roof owerhead;

An' 'oors on end by the chimley cheek  
Frae twa auld clay pipes they blew the reek;

An' there in state, like a king an' queen,  
They windered how tinkers they could hae been.

But the wastlin' winds cam' sighin' in;  
O' a pratlin' burn they heard the din.

An' the wind broucht in the scent o' woods;  
They saw through the panes the snaw-white cluds.

A hingin' branch that was blawn aboot  
Tapped on the glass to wile them oot.

The sparrows cam' to the window pane,  
Mavis an' blackbird mony an ane.

They keekit in at the crouchin' pair,  
An' speered, "What are they daein' there?"

An' they whistled "A fig for reprobates  
Wha turn their backs on their time-tried mates."

The pair at nicht couldna sleep a wink;  
O' the stars they missed the freenly blink.

The rustlin' leaves an' the patterin' shower  
Hushed na them ower as they did before.

O, uneasy lie on cauf the heads  
That ken the fragrance o' heather beds.

The four stane wa's seemed creepin' in,  
They scarce could breathe as they lay within.

In the morn they ta'en ilk ither's han's,  
Hung ower their shouthers their pots an' pans,

An' leavin' behin' their but an' ben,  
They've ta'en to their life in the woods again.

JAMES Y. GEDDES.

*caller*, bracing.  
*stravaigin*, wandering.  
*reek*, smoke.

*speered*, asked.  
*cauf*, chaff.