

## WERE NA MY HEART LICHT I WAD DEE.

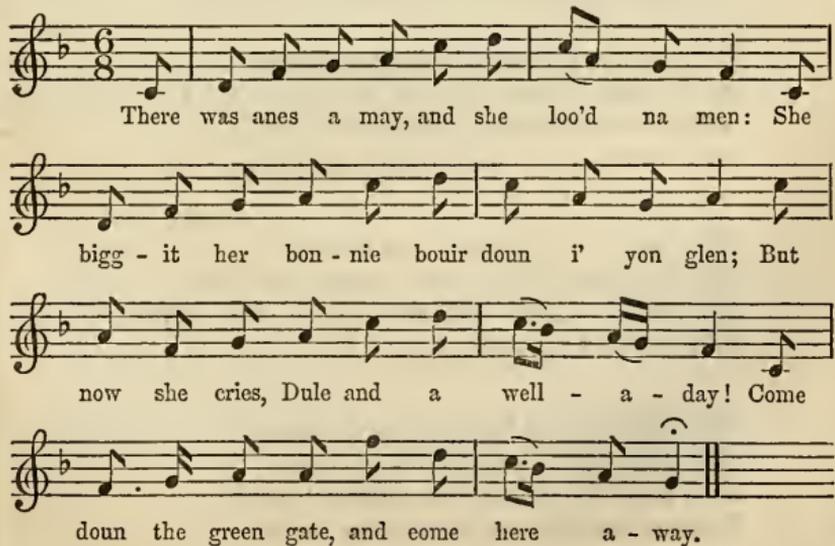
Towards the end of the seventeenth century, the upper and more educated classes seem to have become sensible of the beauty of the national melodies, and probably saw that in many instances the substitution of pure for licentious verses was desirable. Now, accordingly, we find the beginning of a series of song-writers of aristocratic grade, the first being Lady Grizel Baillie, a lady who may almost be said to have a place in our national history on other accounts. She was the daughter of the celebrated Patrick Hume, whose destiny it was to attain the

<sup>1</sup> See a *Ballad Book*, Edinburgh, 1824 (being a small collection by Mr Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe), where the song was first printed.

<sup>2</sup> This, with the music, will be found in Wood's *Songs of Scotland*, iii. 24.

rank of an earldom (Marchmont) and the highest state employments under the regime of King William, but who, in the preceding reign, had been a proscribed fugitive and an exile. At a dark crisis, when compelled to seek concealment for weeks in the charnel-house of his family under Polwarth Church, his heroic daughter Grizel braved all dangers and supplied him with food. The narration of the affair, given by her daughter Lady Murray of Stanhope, is one of the most interesting in the language.

Lady Grizel, who, in the happier days of her family, became the wife of Mr Baillie of Jerviswood (son of another sufferer under the House of Stuart), addicted herself to verse-making from an early age. Her daughter possessed a manuscript volume, which she had used in Holland, while residing there with her father, for jotting down snatches of song which she had composed. But of all her productions only two have as yet seen the light. The most important is a pathetic pastoral strain, which was published in her ladyship's lifetime in the *Orpheus Caledonius*. Lady Grizel died in 1746, aged eighty-one.



There was anes a may, and she loo'd na men: She  
 bigg - it her bon - nie bouir doun i' yon glen; But  
 now she cries, Dule and a well - a - day! Come  
 doun the green gate, and come here a - way.

There was anes a may, and she loo'd na men :  
 She biggit her bonnie bouir doun i' yon glen ;  
 But now she cries, Dule and a well-a-day !  
 Come doun the green gate, and come here away.

When bonnie young Johnie cam over the sea,  
 He said he saw naething sae bonnie as me ;  
 He hecht me baith rings and monie braw things ;  
 And were na my heart licht I wad dee.

He had a wee titty that loo'd na me,  
 Because I was twice as bonnie as she ;  
 She raised such a pother 'twixt him and his mother,  
 That were na my heart licht I wad dee.

The day it was set, and the bridal to be :  
 The wife took a dwam, and lay doun to dee.  
 She main'd, and she graned, out o' dolour and pain,  
 Till he vow'd that he ne'er wad see me again.

His kin was for ane of a higher degree,  
 Said, what had he to do wi' the like of me ?  
 Albeit I was bonnie, I was na for Johnie :  
 And were na my heart licht I wad dee.

They said I had neither cow nor caff,  
 Nor dribbles o' drink rins through the draff,  
 Nor pickles o' meal rins through the mill-e'e ;  
 And were na my heart licht I wad dee.

His titty she was baith wylie and slee,  
 She spied me as I cam ower the lea ;  
 And then she ran in, and made a loud din ;  
 Believe your ain een an ye trow na me.

His bonnet stood aye fou round on his brow ;  
His auld ane look'd aye as well as some's new ;  
But now he lets 't wear ony gate it will hing,  
And casts himself dowie upon the corn-bing.

And now he gaes drooping about the dykes,  
And a' he dow do is to hund the tykes :  
The live-lang nicht he ne'er steeks his e'e ;  
And were na my heart licht I wad dee.

Were I young for thee as I hae been,  
We should ha' been gallopin' down on yon green,  
And linkin' it on the lillie-white lea ;  
And wow gin I were but young for thee !<sup>1</sup>