

SCOTTISH SONGS.

THE BRUCE OF BANNOCKBURN.

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led ;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victorie.

Now's the day, and now's the hour ;
See the front of battle lour ;
See approach proud Edward's power—
Chains and slaverie !

Wha will be a traitor knave ?
Wha can fill a coward's grave ?
Wha sae base as be a slave ?
Let him turn and flee !
Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Free-man stand, or free-man fa',
Let him follow me !

By oppression's woes and pains,
By your sons in servile chains,
We will drain our dearest veins,
 But they shall be free !
Lay the proud usurpers low !
Tyrants fall in every foe !
Liberty's in every blow !
 Let us do, or die !

Of this martial song the poet says, "There is a tradition that 'Hey, tuttie, taitie!' was the march of Robert Bruce at the battle of Bannockburn. This thought, in my solitary wanderings, warmed me into a pitch of enthusiasm on the theme of liberty and independence, which I threw into a kind of Scottish ode fitted to the air, which one might suppose to be the gallant Royal Scot's address to his heroic followers on that eventful morning." By another account, Burns was overtaken by a tremendous storm of mingled lightning and rain among the Galloway mountains, and in the midst of the elemental commotion he conceived and composed the song. It would appear too that the poet was musing on the French Revolution and the war for the independence of Scotland at the same time. A halo, historical and poetical, has been shed over the field of Bannockburn—over the hero who led, and the thirty thousand heroes who conquered: I will attempt no idle illustration of a subject which Barbour, Burns, and Scott have sung. The concluding verse is chiefly borrowed from Blind Harry's Wallace :

A false usurper sinks in every foe,
And Liberty returns with every blow.

A change was afterwards made in the original structure of the verse, so that it might correspond with the air of Lewie Gordon ; this encumbered the simple beauty of the fourth line of each stanza.—I have adhered to the first version.

SAE FLAXEN WERE HER RINGLETS.

Sae flaxen were her ringlets,
Her eyebrows of a darker hue,
Bewitchingly o'er-arching
Twa laughing een o' bonnie blue.
Her smiling, sae wyling,
Wad make a wretch forget his woe ;
What pleasure, what treasure,
Unto these rosy lips to grow !
Such was my Chloris' bonnie face,
When first her bonnie face I saw,
And aye my Chloris' dearest charm,
She says she lo'es me best of a'.

Like harmony her motion ;
Her pretty ancle is a spy
Betraying fair proportion,
Wad make a saint forget the sky.

Sae warming, sae charming,
 Her faultless form and gracefu' air ;
 Ilk feature—auld Nature
 Declar'd that she could do nae mair :
 Hers are the willing chains o' love,
 By conquering beauty's sovereign law ;
 And aye my Chloris' dearest charm,
 She says she lo'es me best of a'.

Let others love the city,
 And gaudy show at sunny noon ;
 Gie me the lonely valley,
 The dewy eve, and rising moon
 Fair beaming, and streaming,
 Her silver light the boughs amang ;
 While falling, recalling,
 The amorous thrush concludes his sang :
 There, dearest Chloris, wilt thou rove
 By wimpling burn and leafy shaw,
 And hear my vows o' truth and love,
 And say thou lo'es me best of a' !

Of this exquisite song Burns says little ; of the woman in whose praise it was written he says too much. “ She is one of the finest women in Scotland, and in fact is in a manner to me what Sterne's Eliza was to him—a mistress, or a friend, or what you will, in the guileless simplicity of Platonic love. I assure you, that to my lovely friend you are indebted for many of your best songs of mine. Do you think that the sober gin-

horse routine of existence could inspire a man with life, and love, and joy,—could fire him with enthusiasm, or melt him with pathos, equal to the genius of your book? No, no ;—whenever I want to be more than ordinary in song—to be in some degree equal to your diviner airs, do you imagine I fast and pray for the celestial emanation? I put myself in a regimen of admiring a fine woman ; and in proportion to the adorability of her charms, in proportion you are delighted with my verses. The lightning of her eye is the godhead of Parnassus, and the witchery of her smile the divinity of Helicon.” Such is the glowing picture which the poet gives of youth and health, and voluptuous beauty ; but let no lady envy the poetical elevation of poor Chloris : her situation in poetry is splendid—her situation in life merits our pity, and perhaps our charity.

AULD ROBIN GRAY.

When the sheep are in the fauld, and the kye a' at
hame,
And a' the warld to sleep are gane ;
The waes of my heart fa' in showers frae my ee,
When my gudeman lies sound by me.

Young Jamie lo'ed me weel, and he sought me for his
bride,

But saving a crown he had naething beside ;
To make that crown a pound, my Jamie gaed to sea,
And the crown and the pound were baith for me.

He had nae been gone a week but only twa,
When my mither she fell sick, and the cow was stoun
awa' ;

My father brake his arm, and my Jamie at the sea,
And auld Robin Gray came a courting to me.

My father couldna' work, and my mither couldna' spin,
I toil'd day and night, but their bread I couldna' win ;
Auld Rob maintain'd them baith, and wi' tears in
his ee

Said, Jenny, for their sakes, will ye marry me ?

My heart it said nay, I look'd for Jamie back ;
But the wind it blew high, and the ship it was a wreck,
The ship it was a wreck, why didna Jenny die ?
And why do I live to say Wae is me ?

My father urged me sair ; though my mither didna
speak,

She look'd in my face till my heart was like to break ;
So I gied him my hand, though my heart was in
the sea,

And auld Robin Gray is gudeman to me.

I hadna been a wife a week but only four,
When sitting sae mournfully at my ain door,
I saw my Jamie's wraith, for I coudna think it he,
Till he said, I'm come back, love, to marry thee.

O sair did we greet, and muckle did we say ;
We took but ae kiss, and we tore ourselves away ;
I wish I were dead, but I'm no like to die ;
And why do I live to say Wae is me ?

I gang like a ghaist, and carena to spin ;
I darena think on Jamie, for that wou'd be a sin ;
But I'll do my best a gude wife to be,
For auld Robin Gray is kind unto me.

This exquisite song was written by Lady Ann Lindsay, and appeared before her ladyship was twenty years old. It has been fortunate in the admiration of the world and in the abuse of Mr. Pinkerton. In truth, I imagine the critic condemned it more from an intense spirit of contradiction, than from coldness of heart or infirmity of judgment, for he has sometimes expressed opinions in good taste and right feeling ; but all who are charmed with simple grace and happy delicacy will love the song of "Auld Robin Gray." Of the three characters, I love Auld Robin the most : he is a gray-haired and chivalrous old man, and ought to have lived and established a dynasty of Grays. Jamie is indeed a worthy fellow, and is to be commended for his many words and his "ae kiss ;" but the unstable element on

which a sailor lives makes him look out for disappointments and changes—quicksands, sunken rocks, sudden tempests, fierce enemies, and faithless loves are part and parcel of his fortunes ; they are expected with calmness, and braved or endured when met. Of Jenny I would gladly believe the best, yet she seems something of a schemer ; the destruction of her lover's vessel, and the belief that he had perished, I am afraid had some share in overcoming her reluctance : yet who can forget the picture of domestic sorrow which she draws, or fail to lay up in his heart the conclusion of the courtship :

My father urged me sair ; though my mother didna
 speak,
She look'd in my face till my heart was like to break.

Of the noble authoress I am sorry I can say no more than that she is the daughter of James Lindsay, fifth Earl of Balcarras, the widow of Andrew Bernard, Esq. Colonial Secretary at the Cape of Good Hope, and that her residence is in Berkeley-square. Some years ago the song of "Auld Robin Gray" was claimed as the production of an Irish clergyman. Lady Ann married the son of the bishop of Limerick—I can help Ireland no farther in its claim of authorship.

FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT.

Is there, for honest poverty
That hangs his head, and a' that?
The coward-slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure, and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden-gray, and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their winc,
A man's a man for a' that;
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that:
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see you birkie, ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;
Though hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that:
For a' that, and a' that,
His riband, star, and a' that,
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
 A marquis, duke, and a' that ;
 But an honest man's aboon his might,
 Guid faith he mauna fa' that !
 For a' that, and a' that,
 Their dignities, and a' that,
 The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
 Are higher ranks than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
 As come it will for a' that,
 That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
 May bear the gree, and a' that.
 For a' that, and a' that,
 It's coming yet, for a' that,
 That man to man, the warld o'er,
 Shall brothers be for a' that.

“ A great critic (Aikin) on song says, that love and wine are the exclusive themes for song writing. The following is on neither subject, and consequently is no song ; but will be allowed to be, I think, two or three pretty good prose thoughts inverted into rhyme.”—In this manner Burns speaks of this pithy, sarcastic, and manly song. That it re-echoes the sentiments of his own heart there can be little doubt : he believed in the supremacy of genius, and was something of a leveller ; and who can blame him ? During one year he enjoyed the friendship of the northern nobility, and for seven years he felt their neglect. During his visit to Edin-

burgh, he was caressed as no poet was ever caressed : he expected this sunshine to last, and looked for fortune to follow ; but he was not prepared for disappointment, and his fortitude was not equal to his other powers. To go at once from the rich man's wine and a table covered with plate, to water from the well and the homely fare and rustic work of a farmer—to leave my lady's hand for the rough stilts of the plough—were descents beyond his expectation, and far too strong for his spirit:—he sank, and died of a broken heart. This song was preceded by many a “ For a' that and a' that,” both jacobitical and domestic ; but none are worthy of remembrance.

MARY MORISON.

O Mary, at thy window be,
It is the wish'd, the trysted hour !
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor :
How blithely wad I bide the stoure,
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure
Of lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
 The dance gaed through the lighted ha',
 To thee my fancy took its wing,
 I sat, but neither heard nor saw :
 Though this was fair, and that was braw,
 And yon the toast of a' the town,
 I sigh'd, and said among them a',
 Ye are na Mary Morison.

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
 Wha for thy sake wad gladly die ?
 Or canst thou break that heart of his,
 Whase only fault is loving thee ?
 If love for love thou wiltna gie,
 At least be pity to me shown !
 A thought ungentle canna be
 The thought o' Mary Morison.

"Mary Morison" is one of the best and the earliest of Burns's songs. It is written much in the antique style, and the name of the heroine has a national look and sound which excite an interest worth ten thousand Chlorises and Phyllises, and all the fabulous tribe of Arcadian damsels. That the poet did not think well of it himself, we have his own authority: "I do not think it very remarkable either for its merits or demerits;—it is impossible to be always original, entertaining, and witty."

O MAY, THY MORN.

O May, thy morn was ne'er sae sweet
As the mirk night o' December ;
For sparkling was the rosy wine,
And private was the chamber :
And dear was she I darena name,
But I will aye remember ;
And dear was she I darena name,
But I will aye remember.

And here's to them, that, like oursel,
Can push about the jorum ;
And here's to them that wish us weel,
May a' that's gude watch o'er them ;
And here's to them we darena tell,
The dearest o' the quorum ;
And here's to them we darena tell,
The dearest o' the quorum.

This happy and original little lyric was one of many which flowed from the pen of Burns into the Musical Museum. The contrast of the first and last verses is very great, yet very natural. The poet imagines himself warmed with wine, and seated among his companions, to whom he announces, as the glass goes round,

the attractions of his mistress, and his good fortune in her affection. His confidence goes no farther ;—the name of his love is not to be told ; and for this poetical tyranny there is no remedy.

THE BRAES O' BALQUHITHER.

Let us go, lassie, go,
To the braes of Balquhither,
Where the blae-berries grow
'Mang the bonnie Highland heather ;
Where the deer and the rae,
Lightly bounding together,
Sport the lang simmer day,
On the braes o' Balquhither.

I will twine thee a bow'r,
By the clear siller fountain,
And I'll cover it o'er
Wi' the flow'rs of the mountain ;
I will range through the wilds,
And the deep glens sae drearie,
And return wi' the spoils
To the bow'r o' my dearie.

When the rude wintry win'
 Idly raves round our dwelling,
And the roar of the linn
 On the night breeze is swelling,
So merrily we'll sing,
 As the storm rattles o'er us,
Till the dear shieling ring
 Wi' the light lilting chorus.

Now the summer is in prime,
 Wi' the flow'rs richly blooming,
And the wild mountain thyme
 A' the moorlands perfuming ;
To our dear native scenes
 Let us journey together,
Where glad Innocence reigns
 'Mang the braes o' Balquhither.

This song was written by Robert Tannahill, and its liquid verse and lively images have made it a favourite. It is simple and natural without pastoral affectation, but without much pastoral knowledge. The shepherd's shieling is a bower made of materials far too frail to endure the rattle of a winter storm—it is only a summer residence. It was in a little shieling of turf and heather that I found my friend James Hogg, half way up the hill of Queensberry, with the Lay of the Last Minstrel in his hand, and all his flocks feeding before him ; but I should never have looked for him there on a winter night when snows were drifting thick and deep.

JENNY'S BAWBEE.

I met four chaps yon birks amang,
 Wi' hanging lugs and faces lang :
 I spier'd at neighbour Bauldy Strang,
 What are they, these we see ?
 Quoth he, ilk cream-fac'd pawky chiel'
 Thinks himsel' cunnin' as the deil,
 And here they come awa' to steal
 Jenny's bawbee.

The first, a captain to his trade,
 Wi' ill-lin'd scull, and back weel clad,
 March'd round the barn, and by the shed,
 And papped on his knee :
 Quoth he, my goddess, nymph, and queen,
 Your beauty's dazzled baith my een !
 Though ne'er a beauty he had seen
 But Jenny's bawbee.

A Norland laird neist trotted up,
 Wi' bawsent naig and siller whip ;
 Cried, Here's my horse, lad, haud the grup,
 Or tie him to a tree.
 What's gowd to me ? I've wealth o' lan'
 Bestow on ane o' worth your han'—
 He thought to pay what he was awn
 Wi' Jenny's bawbee.

A lawyer neist, wi' bleth'rin gab,
 And speeches wove like ony wab ;
 O' ilk ane's corn he took a dab,
 And a' for a fee ;
 Accounts he owed through a' the town,
 And tradesmen's tongues nae mair could drown
 But now he thought to clout his gown
 Wi' Jenny's bawbee.

Quite spruce, just frae the washin' tubs,
 A fool came neist ; but life has rubs,
 Foul were the roads, and fu' the dubs,
 And sair besmear'd was he :
 He danc'd up, squintin' through a glass,
 And grinn'd, I' faith, a bonnie lass !
 He thought to win, wi' front o' brass,
 Jenny's bawbee.

She bade the laird gae kaim his wig,
 The sodger not to strut sae big,
 The lawyer not to be a prig ;
 The fool he cried, Tee-hee !
 I kenn'd that I could never fail !
 But she prinn'd the dishclout to his tail,
 And cool'd him wi' a water-pail,
 And kept her bawbee.

Then Johnie came, a lad o' sense,
 Although he had na mony pence ;
 And took young Jenny to the spence,
 Wi' her to crack a wee.

Now Johnie was a clever chiel',
 And here his suit he press'd sae weel,
 That Jenny's heart grew saft as jeel,
 And she birl'd her bawbee.

The name of this song was suggested to Sir Alexander Boswell by an old fragment, which still lives among the peasantry. He borrowed no more, and has filled up the idea which this little symbol of the maiden's wealth presented, with a procession of lovers of many professions, all alike eager for the acquirement of wealth by matrimony. The characters of the competitors for the crown matrimonial are cleverly drawn: Jenny had more prudence than what commonly pertains to maidens who flourish in lyric verse. The old verses are scarcely worth preserving:

And a' that e'er my Jenny had,
 My Jenny had, my Jenny had ;
 A' that e'er my Jenny had,
 Was ae bawbee.
 There's your plack and my plack,
 And your plack and my plack,
 And my plack and your plack,
 And Jenny's bawbee :

We'll put it in the pint stoup,
 The pint stoup, the pint stoup ;
 We'll put it in the pint stoup,
 And birl't a' three.

GREEN GROW THE RASHES.

There's nought but care on ev'ry han',
In ev'ry hour that passes-o ;
What signifies the life o' man,
An' 'twere na for the lasses-o ?
Green grow the rashes-o !
Green grow the rashes-o !
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Are spent among the lasses-o !

The worldly race may riches chase,
An' riches still may fly them-o ;
An' though at last they catch them fast,
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them-o.

But gie me a cannie hour at e'en,
My arms about my dearie-o ;
An' worldly cares, and worldly men,
May a' gae tapsalteerie-o !

For you sae douse, ye sneer at this,
Ye're nought but senseless asses-o !
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,
He dearly lov'd the lasses-o.

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
 Her noblest work she classes-o:
 Her 'prentice han' she tried on man,
 An' then she made the lasses-o.
 Green grow the rashes-o!
 Green grow the rashes-o!
 The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
 Are spent among the lasses-o!

The "Green grow the Rashes" of our ancestors was a song of some spirit, and more freedom.—I remember the chorus:

Green grow the rashes-o!
 Green grow the rashes-o!
 Nae feather-bed was e'er sae soft,
 As a bed among the rashes-o!

It was probably akin to the song of "Pou thou me the Rushes green," mentioned in the "Complaynt of Scotland." This is one of the early songs of Burns, and the incense which it offers in the concluding verse at the shrine of female beauty is the richest any poet ever brought.

THE BLUE-EYED LASS.

I gaed a waefu' gate yestreen,
A gate, I fear, I'll dearly rue ;
I gat my death frae twa sweet een,
Twa lovely een o' bonnie blue.
'Twas not her golden ringlets bright,
Her lips like roses wat wi' dew,
Her heaving bosom lily white ;
It was her een sae bonnie blue.

She talk'd, she smil'd, my heart she wyl'd,
She charm'd my soul, I wistna how ;
And aye the stound, the deadly wound,
Came frae her een sae bonnie blue.
But spare to speak, and spare to speed,
She'll aiblins listen to my vow :
Should she refuse, I'll lay my dead
To her twa een sae bonnie blue.

The lady, in honour of whose blue eyes this fine song was written, was Miss Jeffrey of Lochmaben, now residing at New York in America—a wife and a mother. It is very popular among the ladies ; their sweet clear voices ascend with the music a height which few men can hope to reach. I have a copy of the song in the hand-writing of Burns.

MACPHERSON'S FAREWELL.

Farewell, ye dungeons, dark and strong,
The wretch's destinie !
Macpherson's time will not be long,
On yonder gallows-tree.
Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he ;
He play'd a spring, and danced it round,
Below the gallows-tree.

O what is death but parting breath !
On many a bloody plain
I have dar'd his face, and in this place
I scorn him yet again !

Untie these bands from off my hands,
And bring to me my sword ;
And there's no man in all Scotland,
But I'll brave him at a word.

I've liv'd a life of sturt and strife ;
I die by treacherie :
It burns my heart I must depart
And not avenged be.

Now farewell light, thou sunshine bright,
And all beneath the sky

May coward shame destain his name,
The wretch that dares not die !
Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he ;
He play'd a spring, and danced it round,
Below the gallows-tree.

Burns, if I may trust a mark in the Museum, communicated this wild and warlike song as an old lyric, with additions : it is, however, as much his own as a song may well be.—It owes little, except the name and subject, to the death-chant of Macpherson, printed in Herd's Collection. This daring freebooter composed the song and tune while under sentence of death at Inverness ; and when he came to the fatal tree he played the air on a favourite violin : holding up the instrument, he offered it to any of his name who would play the tune at his lyke-wake. No one answered—he dashed the fiddle to pieces on the hangman's head, and flung himself from the ladder. Tradition has some curious stories to tell of songs sung, and music composed, in circumstances very unfavourable for such compositions. The town piper of Falkirk, it is said, was sentenced to be hanged for horse-stealing : on the night before his execution he obtained as an indulgence the company of some of his brother pipers, and as the liquor was abundant, and their instruments in tune, the noise and fun grew fast and furious. The execution was to be at eight o'clock, and the poor piper was recalled to a sense of his situa-

tion by morning light dawning on the window. He suddenly silenced his pipe, and exclaimed, "O'but this wearyfu' hanging rings in my lug like a new tune!"

MEG O' THE MILL.

O ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten?
 An' ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten?
 She has gotten a coof wi' a claut o' siller,
 And broken the heart o' the barley miller.

The miller was strappin', the miller was ruddy;
 A heart like a lord, and a hue like a lady:
 The laird was a widdiefu', bleerit knurl:—
 She's left the guid fellow, and ta'en the churl.

The miller he hecht her a heart leal and loving:
 The laird did address her wi' matter mair moving;—
 A fine pacing horse, wi' a clear chained bridle,
 A whip by her side, and a bonnie side-saddle.

O wae on the siller, it is sae prevailing;
 And wae on the love that is fix'd on a mailen'!
 A tocher's nae word in a true lover's parle,
 But, gie me my love, and a fig for the warl!

"Meg o' the Mill" was a favourite theme with Burns:
 augmented the humour and the glee of the old song,

and sent it to the Museum ; while for Thomson's more classic collection he wrote the present version. The ancient song lives still in the tenacious memory of the peasantry, though little of it deserves to live.

Ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten ?
Ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten ?
A braw new gown, and the tail o't is rotten,
And that's what Meg o' the Mill has gotten.

DONALD AND FLORA.

When merry hearts were gay,
Careless of aught but play,
Poor Flora slipt away
Sadd'ning to Mora.
Loose flow'd her yellow hair,
Quick heav'd her bosom bare,
And thus to the troubled air
She vented her sorrow :

Loud howls the northern blast,
Bleak is the dreary waste ;
Haste then, O Donald, haste,
Haste to thy Flora !
Twice twelve long months are o'er.
Since on a foreign shore
You promis'd to fight no more.
But meet me in Mora

Come then, O come away !
Donald ! no longer stay !
Where can my rover stray
 From his lov'd Flora ?
Ah ! sure he ne'er could be
False to his vows and me !
Heavens ! is't not yonder he,
 Comes bounding o'er Mora ?

Never, O wretched fair !
Sigh'd the sad messenger,
Never shall Donald mair
 Meet his loved Flora !
Cold as yon mountain's snow,
Donald, thy love, lies low !
He sent me to soothe thy woe,
 While weeping in Mora.

Well fought our valiant men
On Saratoga's plain ;
Thrice fled the hostile train
 From British glory.
But, though our foes did flee,
Sad was each victory !
For youth, love, and loyalty,
 Fell far, far from Mora !

Here, take this love-wrought plaid,
Donald, expiring, said ;
Give it to yon dear maid,
 Drooping in Mora :

Tell her, O Allan, tell !
Donald thus bravely fell ;
And that in his last farewell
 He thought on his Flora !

Mute stood the trembling fair,
Speechless with wild despair !
Striking her bosom bare,
 She sigh'd, Poor Flora !
Ah, Donald ! ah, well-a-day !—
Flora no more could say ;
At length the sound died away
 For ever in Mora !

Hector Macneill had some tenderness, but no pathos ; and as pathos was wanted for this tale of woe, the song is a failure. What messenger ever came with so swift a foot and so tedious a tongue :—in three verses he tells what he might have said in three lines, and the silly sorrow of the lady is in keeping with the stupidity of the messenger :—

Ah, Donald ! ah, well-a-day !
Flora no more could say.

I have omitted one verse, and more might be spared.

MY ONLY JO AND DEARIE.

Thy cheek is o' the rose's hue,
 My only jo and dearie-o ;
 Thy neck is like the siller dew,
 Upon the banks sae brierie-o ;—
 Thy teeth are o' the ivorie,
 O sweet's the twinkle o' thine e'e !
 Nae joy, nae pleasure, blinks on me,
 My only jo and dearie-o.

The birdie sings upon the thorn
 It's sang o' joy, fu' cheerie-o,
 Rejoicing in the simmer morn,
 Nae care to make it eerie-o ;
 But little kens the sangster sweet
 Aught o' the cares I hae to meet,
 That gar my restless bosom beat,
 My only jo and dearie-o.

Whan we were hairnies on yon brae,
 And youth was blinkin' bonnie-o,
 Aft we wad daff the lee-lang day
 Our joys fu' sweet and monie-o :
 Aft I wad chase thee o'er the lea,
 And round about the thorny tree,
 Or pu' the wild flowers a' for thee,
 My only jo and dearie-o.

I hae a wish I canna tine,
'Mang a' the cares that grieve me-o ;
I wish thou wert for ever mine,
And never mair to leave me-o :
Then I wad daut thee night and day,
Nor ither warldly care wad hae,
Till life's warm stream forgot to play,
My only jo and dearie-o.

I remember when this song was exceedingly popular : its sweetness and ease rather than its originality and vigour might be the cause of its success. The third verse contains a very beautiful picture of early attachment—a sunny bank and some sweet soft school-girl, will appear to many a fancy when these lines are sung. It was written by Richard Gall.

AE FOND KISS.

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever ;
Ae farewell, alas, for ever !
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that fortune grieves him
While the star of hope she leaves him ?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me ;—
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy :
But to see her, was to love her ;
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never lov'd sae kindly,
Had we never lov'd sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted !

Fare thee well, thou first and fairest !
Fare thee well, thou best and dearest !
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure !
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever ;
Ae farewell, alas ! for ever !
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

Burns wrote this moving song about the year 1790—
Like Thomson he laments the cruelty of fortune : but
there is more passion in his complaint ; and he seems to
have drunk deeply of joy before he parted with the cup.
Of the heroine I cannot speak with certainty ; but the
poet I believe has named her right—the song is more
creditable to her charms than to her good name.

AGAIN REJOICING NATURE SEES.

Again rejoicing Nature sees
Her robe assume its vernal hues,
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,
All freshly steep'd in morning dews.

In vain to me the cowslips blaw,
In vain to me the vi'lets spring ;
In vain to me, in glen or shaw,
The mavis and the lintwhite sing.

The merry ploughboy cheers his team,
Wi' joy the tentie seedman stauks,
But life to me's a weary dream,
A dream of ane that never wauks.

The wanton coot the water skims,
Among the reeds the ducklings cry,
The stately swan majestic swims,
And every thing is blest but I.

The sheep-herd steeks his faulding slap,
And owre the moorland whistles shill,
Wi' wild, unequal, wand'ring step,
I meet him on the dewy hill.

And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Blithe waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts and sings on fluttering wings,
A woe-worn ghaist, I hameward glide.

Come, Winter, with thine angry howl,
 And raging bend the naked tree ;
 Thy gloom will soothe my cheerless soul,
 When nature all is sad like me !

I have removed from this fine song the idle encumbrance of an adopted chorus ; it interrupted the flow of the narrative, and was at open war with the sentiment of each verse. The chorus was joyous and the song mournful. It is one of the earliest printed lyrics of Burns.

O WERE I ON PARNASSUS' HILL.

O were I on Parnassus' hill !
 Or had of Helicon my fill ;
 That I might catch poetic skill,
 To sing how dear I love thee.
 But Nith maun be my muse's well,
 My muse maun be thy bonnie sel' ;
 On Corsincon I'll glow'r and spell,
 And write how dear I love thee.

Then come, sweet Muse, inspire my lay,
 For a' the lee-lang simmer's day
 I cou'dna sing, I cou'dna say
 How much, how dear I love thee.

I see thee dancing o'er the green,
 Thy waist sae jimp, thy limbs sae clean,
 Thy tempting lips, thy roguish een—
 By heaven and earth I love thee!

By night, by day, a-field, at hame,
 The thoughts o' thee my breast inflame;
 And aye I muse and sing thy name;
 I only live to love thee.
 Tho' I were doom'd to wander on
 Beyond the sea, beyond the sun,
 Till my last weary sand was run,
 Till then—and then I'll love thee.

Burns wrote this song when he first became a dweller on the banks of the Nith; and he wrote it in honour of Mrs. Burns. I have heard the introduction of the heathen hill and fount of poetic inspiration censured as pedantic; but they are mentioned only in a half-serious and half-comic way, that the poet may give preference to the stream of Nith and the hill of Corsincon. The second verse contains one of those happy strokes for which the poet is unrivalled—he gazes on the image of life and loveliness which his fancy presents till he can contain himself no longer, and exclaims, after making an inventory of various perfections, “By heaven and earth I love thee!”

WHISTLE O'ER THE LAVE O'T.

First when Maggie was my care,
 Heaven, I thought, was in her air ;
 Now we're married—spier nae mair—

Whistle o'er the lave o't.

Meg was meek, and Meg was mild,
 Bonnie Meg was nature's child—
 Wiser men than me's beguil'd ;

Whistle o'er the lave o't.

How we live, my Meg and me,
 How we love and how we 'gree,
 I carena by how few may see ;—

Whistle o'er the lave o't.

Wha I wish were maggots' meat,
 Dish'd up in her winding sheet,
 I could write—but Meg maun see't—

Whistle o'er the lave o't.

No lady would be thought ambitious who wished to be considered the heroine of this brief and pithy song. Burns wrote it as a speculation upon matrimonial happiness, and with the wish of supplanting the ancient song of "Whistle o'er the lave o't," which it has not

wholly succeeded in accomplishing. The old song is still living, though scarcely worthy of existence :—

She sent her daughter to the well,
 Better she had gane hersell ;
 She missed a foot, and down she fell—
 Whistle o'er the lave o't.

And so it goes on, meaning much more than it openly expresses.



THE PLAID AMANG THE HEATHER.

The wind blew hie owre muir and lea,
 And dark and stormy grew the weather ;
 The rain rain'd sair ; nae shelter near
 But my love's plaid amang the heather.

Close to his breast he held me fast ;—
 Sae cozie, warm, we lay thegither ;
 Nae simmer heat was half sae sweet
 As my luv'e's plaid amang the heather !

'Mid wind and rain he tauld his tale ;
 My lightsome heart grew like a feather :

It lap sae quick I cou'dna speak,
But silent sigh'd among the heather.

The storm blew past ;—we kiss'd in haste ;
I hameward ran and tauld my mither ;
She gloom'd at first, but soon confest
The bowls row'd right among the heather.

Now Hymen's beam gilds bank and stream,
Whare Will and I fresh flowers will gather—
Nae storms I fear, I've got my dear
Kind-hearted lad among the heather.

This I believe is not a popular song ; nor is it one of those compositions for which the author has shown any particular regard, or his admirers any marked affection. Neither has it much novelty of sentiment or originality of conception to recommend it. Nevertheless, for flowing ease and natural felicity of expression, it surpasses any of the other songs of Hector Macneill. A lover's plaid, and a bed of heath, are favourite topics with the northern Muse ; when the heather is in bloom it is worthy of becoming the couch of beauty. A sea of brown blossom, undulating as far as the eye can reach, and swarming with wild-bees, is a fine sight.

COME UNDER MY PLAIDIE.

Come under my plaidie, the night's gaun to fa' ;
 Come in frae the cauld blast, the drift, and the snaw ;
 Come under my plaidie, and sit down beside me—
 There's room in't, dear lassie, believe me, for twa !
 Come under my plaidie, and sit down beside me,
 I'll hap ye frae every cauld blast that can blaw :
 Come under my plaidie, and sit down beside me,
 There's room in't, dear lassie, believe me, for twa.

Gae 'wa wi' your plaidie ! auld Donald, gae 'wa,
 I fear na the cauld blast, the drift, nor the snaw ;
 Gae 'wa wi' your plaidie ! I'll no sit beside ye ;
 Ye might be my gutcher :—auld Donald, gae 'wa.
 I'm gaun to meet Johnie, he's young and he's bonnie ;
 He's been at Meg's bridal, fu' trig and fu' brow !
 Nane dances sae lightly, sae gracefu', sae tightly,
 His cheek's like the new rose, his brow's like the snaw.

Dear Marion, let that fle stick fast to the wa',
 Your Jock's but a gowk, and has naething ava :
 The hale o' his pack he has now on his back ;
 He's thretty, and I am but threescore and twa.
 Be frank now and kin'ly : I'll busk ye aye finely ;
 To kirk or to market they'll few gang sae brow ;
 A bien house to bide in, a chaise for to ride in,
 And flunkies to 'tend ye as fast as ye ca'.

My father ay tauld me, my mither an' a',
 Ye'd make a gude husband, and keep me ay braw ;
 It's true I lo'e Johnie, he's young and he's bonnie,
 But, waes me, I ken, he has naething ava !
 I hae little tocher, ye've made a gude offer ;
 I'm nae mair than twenty ; my time is but sma' !
 Sae gie me your plaidie, I'll creep in beside ye,
 I thought ye'd been aulder than threescore and twa !

She crap in ayont him, beside the stane wa',
 Whare Johnie was list'ning, and heard her tell a' :
 The day was appointed !—his proud heart it dunted,
 And strack 'gainst his side, as if bursting in twa.
 He wander'd hame wearie, the night it was drearie,
 And, thowless, he tint his gate 'mang the deep snaw :
 The howlet was screamin', while Johnie cried, Women
 Wad marry auld Nick if he'd keep them ay braw.

O the deil's in the lasses ! they gang now sae braw,
 They'll lie down wi' auld men o' fourscore and twa ;
 The hale o' their marriage is gowd and a carriage ;
 Plain love is the cauldest blast now that can blow.
 Auld dotards, be wary ! take tent wha ye marry,
 Young wives wi' their coaches they'll whup and they'll
 ca',
 Till they meet wi' some Johnie that's youthfu' and
 bonnie,
 And they'll gie ye horns on ilk haffet to claw.

“Come under my Plaidie” was printed in the Museum, and has since found ready admission into our lyric collections; yet it is deficient in the sprightly rustic grace and buoyant animation of many of our songs of courtship and matrimony. That an old man should desire a young wife, is nothing new; and that the vanity of woman should cast away true love for splendid dresses and a coach, is not uncommon. The charm, therefore, must lie in the poetry or in the vivid narrative. There is little that can be called poetry about it; and the narrative is never brightened up for a moment by any of those flashings-out of humour or of wit, which we remember, with pleasure and love, to repeat. It was written by Hector Macneill.

DUNCAN GRAY.

Duncan Gray came here to woo,
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't,
 On blithe Yule night, when we were fou,
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
 Maggie coost her head fu' heigh,
 Look'd asklent an' unco skeigh,
 Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh;
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan fleech'd, an' Duncan pray'd,
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Duncan sigh'd baith out an' in,
Grat his een baith blear'd an' blin',
Spake o' loupin' o'er a linn,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Time an' chance are but a tide,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Slighted love is sair to bide,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Shall I, like a fool, quoth he,
For a haughty hizzie die?
She may gae to—France—for me!
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

How it comes let doctors tell,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't;
Meg grew sick as he grew heal,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Something in her bosom wrings,
For relief a sigh she brings;
And O, her een, they spake sic things!
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan was a lad o' grace,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Maggie's was a piteous case,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan couldna be her death,
Swelling pity smoor'd his wrath :
Now they're crouse and canty baith ;
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

“ Duncan Gray is that kind of light-horse gallop of an air which precludes sentiment—the ludicrous is its ruling feature:” such are the words of Burns in his communication with Mr. Thomson concerning this lively song. Into the shortest measure, the poet had the unrivalled art of infusing ease and grace, and vivacity and humour. To airs for which our ancestors could only find a lucky line or two, which, from a penury of invention, they repeated through the verse, Burns found an overflow of happy verses, telling the lively or the tender story of the song without the clumsy assistance of those cuckoo repetitions. An ancient Duncan Gray once existed, but the hero had no right to be called “ a lad of grace.”

WANDERING WILLIE.

Here awa', there awa', wandering Willie,
Here awa', there awa', haud awa' hame ;
Come to my bosom, my ain only dearie,
Tell me thou bring'st me my Willie the same.

Winter winds blew loud and cauld at our parting,
It was na the blast brought the tear in my e'e:
Welcome now simmer, and welcome my Willie,
The simmer to nature—my Willie to me.

Rest, ye wild storms, in the cave of your slumbers,
How your dread howling a lover alarms!
Wauken, ye breezes, row gently, ye billows,
And waft my dear laddie ance mair to my arms.

But Oh! if he's faithless, and minds na his Nannie,
Flow still between us, thou wide-roaring main;
May I never see it, may I never trow it,
But, dying, believe that my Willie's my ain!

The old "Here awa' Willie," which inspired this song, has some merit, and is well known. The versions of Burns's song are numerous; and lyric poets may obtain instruction in the art of song-writing by reading the correspondence between the poet and the musician. To induce the song to echo the music with greater nicety, the poetry submitted to a kind of musical martyrdom—sense was prevailed against by sound. I have restored the reading of the first rough sketch of the song in the second verse: the expression is more natural and touching.