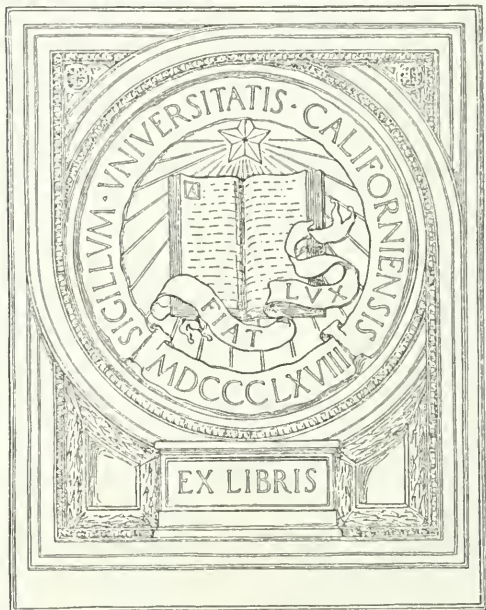




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AULD SCOTS BALLANTS.



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AULD SCOTS BALLANTS.

EDITED BY

ROBERT FORD,

AUTHOR OF "HAME-SPUN LAYS AND LYRICS," "HUMOROUS SCOTCH
READINGS IN PROSE AND VERSE," "GLINTS O'
GLENTODDY," ETC.



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P R E F A C E .

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NOTWITHSTANDING the many benefits resulting from the immense popularity of the Scottish daily and weekly newspapers, the universality of the latter has given an effectual check to the circulation of the rude Old Ballad Literature which, from fifty to a hundred years ago, formed so important an item in the pack of every itinerant chapman in the land; and to-day the tragic ballads of "Sir James the Rose," and "Mill o' Tifty's Annie," "The Hunting of Chevy-Chase," the pathetic tale of "Gil Morrice," and the humorous and once popular story of "Thrummy Cap," and others such like, are known chiefly to the literary antiquary. Some of our rare old chap-ballads, indeed, such as "Thrummy Cap," "The Wife o' Beith," "The Herd's Ghaist," "Young Gregor's Ghost," and "The Blaeberry Courtship"—none of which, strange to say, has been incorporated in the Standard Collections—are fast threatening to become extinct, copies of some of them being already almost unobtainable. This being the case, and considering that the custom hitherto has been to publish the collections of what has been aptly termed "the literature of the common people" at a price almost beyond the limits of the common purse, it occurred to me some time ago that a volume comprising the more popular and entertaining of the old Chap-Ballads, together with the best of those preserved in the Collections, would, if published at a moderate price, meet with approval. In the course of last year I accordingly issued a little collection in paper covers, under the title of "RARE OLD SCOTCH BALLADS." That pub-

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lication received the hearty approval of the Scottish press, and met with such gratifying success otherwise, that it is already out of print ; and the success of that earlier volume is regarded as a not unreasonable excuse for this substantial and largely augmented collection.

The present, like the earlier, makes no claim, of course, to being a COLLECTION in the popular acceptance of that elastic term, but is merely a "reel-rall" budget, comprising a number of rare and curious "blads" of verse, together with the "pick and wale" of the more popular of the ancient ballads of Scotland. Of these latter, the versions presented will be found to have been chosen for some good reason. The prefatory notes—studiously made as concise as possible—will be helpful to the uninitiated reader ; and the introduction of several ballads, copies of which are not to be found in any previous collection, together with the interesting particulars which it contains of the authors of "Thrummy Cap" and "The Piper of Peebles," and other pieces, may render the volume not unacceptable to even wrinkled students and connoisseurs in Scottish ballad poetry.

Of a number of the pieces which follow, it may, I am aware, be argued by the literary purist that they do not, strictly speaking, belong to the category of Ballads at all, but are simply narrative poems ; and the contention might be backed with much sound reasoning. At the same time, the distinction between a narrative poem and a ballad cannot always be easily made out, the difference being frequently as slight as that which distinguishes a ballad from a song. If it is right and proper to term a narrative song a ballad, then there should be no great mistake, one would think, in calling a narrative poem by the same name.

But enough here !

ROBERT FORD.

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Thrummy Cap.

(A LEGEND OF THE CASTLE OF FIDDES.)

“Thrummy Cap,” here subjoined, though comparatively few of those even who know the ballad well are aware of the fact, was written by a cousin-german of Robert Burns, the national poet, namely, John Burnes or Burness, son of William Burness, farmer, Bogjordan, Glenbervie, Kincardineshire. Robert Burns’s father, it is well known, belonged to this same part of the country, and was wont to spell his name Burness. John Burness, the author of “Thrummy Cap,” was born at Bogjordan on the 22d of May, 1771. Of his early life little is known, but partly on account of an injudicious marriage, and partly on account of a love of intoxicating liquor, his career was far from being a prosperous one. He was for some time a baker in Brechin, and in other towns in Forfarshire, and entered the Angus Fencibles in 1794. In 1796, whilst stationed with his regiment in Dumfries, he wrote his tale of “Thrummy Cap.” At this time he made the acquaintance of his illustrious relative, Robert Burns, to whom, shortly before his death, the poem was shown. It is alleged that the great poet read and approved of the production of his less-gifted relative, and, apochryphal as the allegation may be, we like to believe it. John, on the disbandment of his regiment in 1799, went to Stonehaven and commenced business for himself as a baker, but, being unsuccessful, he entered the Forfarshire Militia, in which he served until his discharge in 1815, when he once more returned to Stonehaven, once more attempted the baker business, and was once more unsuccessful. Subsequently he was engaged as a canvasser by a company of booksellers, which occupation he followed until his death, either in January or March (authorities differ), 1826, when he perished in a snowstorm near the church of Portlethen, Kincardineshire. His body was claimed by a relative in Aberdeen, and buried in Spittal Churchyard in that city. In addition to “Thrummy Cap,” Burness wrote and published “Charles Montgomery—A Tragical Dramatic Tale,” Stonehaven, 1800; “The Northern Laird,” Dublin, 1815; “The Ghaist o’ Garron

11a'," and "The Recruit," Montrose, no date. A sort of collated edition of his little works was published in Montrose in 1819, in a volume entitled, "Plays, Poems, Tales, &c." Most of these had appeared separately at various times, including the ones named above.

IN ancient times far i' the north,
 A hunder miles ayont the Forth,
 Upon a stormy winter day,
 Twa men forgather'd o' the way ;
 Ane was a sturdy bardoeh chiel,
 An' frae the weather happit weel,
 Wi' a mill'd plaiding Jockey coat,
 An' eke he on his heid had got
 A thrummy cap, baith large an' stout,
 Wi' flaps ahint, as weel's a snout,
 Whilk buttoned close aneath his chin,
 Tae keep the cauld frae gettin' in ;
 Upon his legs he had gammashes,
 Whilk sodgers term their spatterdashes,
 An' on his hands, instead o' gloues,
 Large doddy mittens, whilk he'd roose,
 For warmness, an' an aiken stick,
 Nae verra lang, but unco thick,
 Intil his nieve—he drave awa',
 An' cared for neither frost nor snaw.
 The ither was just the reverse,
 For duds upo' him they were scarce,
 An' unco frichtit glow'rin' body,
 Ye'd ta'en him for a rin-the-wuddy.
 This ill-met pair gaed on th'gither,
 An' took nae thocht upo' the weather ;
 But a mighty shoo'er o' snaw an' drift
 As ever dang doon frae the lift,
 Grew verra thick upo' the wind,
 Whilk to their wae they soon did find,
 An' John (that was the ill-happ'd buddy's name),

Wish't himsel safe frae harm at hame,
 Richt wild an' boisterous Boreas roar'd,
 " Preserve's," quo John, " we'll baith be smor'd,
 Oor trystic end we'll ne'er mak' oot."
 " Cheer up," says Thrummy, " never doot,
 I've some fears we've lost oor way,
 Hooever at the neist hoose we'll stay,
 Until we see gif it grow fair,
 Gin no, a' nicht we'll tarry there."
 " Weel, weel," says Johnny, " we will try."
 Syne they a mansion-hoose did spy
 Upo' the road a piece afore ;
 Sae up they gaed unto the door,
 Whaur Thrummy chappit wi' his stick ;
 Syne to the door cam' very quick
 A meikle dog, wha barkit sair ;
 But Thrummy for him didna care,
 He handled weel his aiken staff,
 In spite o's teeth he kept him aff,
 Until the landlord cam' to see,
 An' ken fat nicht the maitter be ;
 Then very soon the dog did cease,
 The landlord then did speir the case.
 Quo' Thrummy, " Sir, we ha'e gaen rill,
 We thocht we'd ne'er a hoose get till ;
 We near were smo're'd amo' the drift,
 An' sae gudeman ye'll mak' a shift,
 To gi'e us quarters a' this nicht,
 For noo we dinna ha'e the licht,
 Farer to gang, tho' it were fair,
 Sae gin ye ha'e a bed to spare,
 Whate'er you chairge, we sanna grudge,
 But satisfy ye ere we budge
 Tae gang awa'—an' fan 'tis day
 We'll pack oor a' an' tak' the way."
 The landlord said—" O' beds I've nane,

Oor ain fowks they can scarce contain ;
 But gin ye'll gang but twa miles forrit,
 Aside the kirk dwalls Robbie Dorrit,
 Wha keeps a change-hoose, sells gude drink ;
 His hoose ye may mak' oot, I think."
 Quo' Thrummy—"That's ower far awa',
 The roads are sae blawn up wi' snaw,
 Tae mak' it is nae in oor poo'er
 For, look ye, there's a gatherin' shoo'er
 Just comin' on. Ye'll lat us bide,
 Though we should sit by the fireside."
 The landlord said to him—"Na, na,
 I canna lat ye bide ava ;
 Chap aff, for 'tisna worth your while
 Tae bide, when ye ha'e jimp twa mile
 Tae gang. Sae quickly aff ye'll steer,
 For faith I doot ye'll no' be here."
 "Twa mile !" quo' Thrummy, "deil speed me,
 If frae this hoose this nicht I jee ;
 Are we to starve in a Christian land,
 As lang's my stick's intae my hand,
 An' siller plenty in ma pooch ?
 Tae nane aboot your hoose I'll crouch.
 Landlord, ye needna be sae rude,
 For, faith, we'll mak' oor quarters good.
 Come, John, lat's in, we'll tak' a seat,
 Fat sorrow gars ye look sae blate ?"
 Sae in he gangs, an' sets bim doon.
 Says he—"There's nane aboot your toon
 Sall put me oot till a new day
 As lang's I've siller here to pay."
 The landlord said—"Ye're rather rash,
 To turn ye oot I canna fash,
 Since ye're sae positive tae bide ;
 But troth ye'se sit by the fireside.
 I tauld ye else o' bed I'd nane

Unoccupied, except bare ane,
 In it I fear ye winna lie,
 For stootest hearts ha'e aft been shy
 Tae venture in within the room
 Aifter the nicht begins to gloom ;
 For in it they can ne'er get rest,
 'Tis haunted by a fearfu' ghaist ;
 Oorsel's are terrified a' nicht,
 Sae ye may chance tae get a sicht,
 Like that which some o' oor fowk saw ;
 Far better still ye gang awa'
 Or else ye'll maybe rue the day."
 "Guid faith," quo' John, "I'm thinkin' sae ;
 Better intae the neuk tae sit,
 Than fley'd, Gude keep's, oot o' oor wit ;
 Preserve us ever frae a' evil,
 I wadna like tae see the deevil."
 "Whisht, gowk," quo' Thrummy, "haud yer peace,
 That sanna gar me quit this place.
 Nane great or sma' I e'er did ill,
 Nae ghaist or de'il my rest shall spill.
 I will defy the meikle deil,
 An' a' his warks, I wat fu' weel ;
 What sorra then mak's ye sae eerie ?
 Fling by your fears, an' come, be cheery.
 Landlord, gin ye'll mak' up that bed,
 I promise I'll be verra gled
 Within the same a' nicht tae lie
 If that the room be warm and dry."
 The landlord says—"Ye'se get a fire,
 An' candle tae gin ye'll desire.
 Wi' beuks tae read, an' for yer bed
 I'll orders gi'e to get it made."
 John says—"As sure as I'm a Christian man
 Wha never likes to curse nor ban,
 I'll sit by the fireside a' nicht,

An' gang awa' whan it is licht."
 Says Thrummy till him, wi' a glower—
 "Ye coordly gowk, I'll mak' ye cower ;
 Come up the stair this nicht wi' me,
 An' I will caution for ye be."
 Then Johnny faintly gi'ed consent,
 An' up stairs to the room they went,
 Whaur soon they got baith fire an' licht,
 Tae haud them hearty a' the nicht.
 The landlord likewise gi'ed them meat,
 As meikle as they baith could eat,
 Showed them their bed, and bade them gang
 Tae it whene'er they did think lang,
 Sae wishin' them a guid repose,
 Straight syne tae his ain bed he goes.
 Oor travellers now being left alane,
 'Cause that the frost was nippin' keen,
 Cuist aff their shoon, an' warm'd their feet
 An' syne gaed tae their bed tae sleep.
 But coardly John wi' fear was quakin',
 He couldna sleep but still lay waukin',
 Sae troubled wi' a panic fricht,
 Whan near the twalt oor o' the nicht,
 That Thrummy waukened an' thus spoke—
 "Preserve's," quo' he, "I'm like tae choke
 Wi' thirst, an' I maun ha'e a drink ;
 I will gang doon the stair I think
 An' grapple for the water pail ;
 O for a waucht o' caller ale !"
 Johnny grips till'm, an' says—"Na,
 I winna lat ye gang awa' ;
 Hoo wid ye gang an' leave me here
 Alane, to dee wi' perfect fear."
 "Rise an' gae wi' me then," quo Thrummy,
 "Ye senseless, gude-for-naething bummy ;
 I'm only gaun to seek some water,

I will be back jist in a clatter.”
“Na, na,” says John, “I’ll rather lie ;
But, as I’m likewise something dry,
Gin ye can get a jug or cap,
Fesh me up a little drap.”
“Ay, ay,” quo’ Thrummy, “that I will,
Altho’ ye sudna get a gill.”
Sae doon he gaes tae seek a drink,
While on his way he sees a blink
O’ licht, that shone upo’ the floor
Oot through the keyhole o’ the door,
Which wasna fast but stood ajee.
Whatever’s there, he thinks, I’ll see.
So bauldly ower the threshold ventures,
An’ in within the door he enters.
But, reader, judge o’ his surprise
Whan there he saw, wi’ wond’rin’ eyes,
A spacious vault weel stored wi’ casks
O’ reamin’ ale, an’ some big flasks ;
An’ stridelegs ower a cask o’ ale
He saw the likeness o’ himsel’,
Just in the dress that he cuist aff,
A thrummy cap, an’ aiken staff,
Gammashes, an’ the jockey coat,
An’ in its hand the ghaist had got
A big four-leggit timmer bicker,
Filled tae the brim wi’ nappy liquor.
Oor hero at the spectre stared,
But neither daunted was nor cared,
But tae the ghaist strecht up did stap,
An’ says—“Dear brither, Thrummy Cap,
The warst ye surely dinna drink,
Sae I wi’ you will taste, I think.”
Syne took a jug, pu’d oot the pail,
An’ filled it up wi’ the same ale
Frae under whaur the spectre sat,

An' up the stair wi' it he gat,
 Took a gude drink, ga'e John anither,
 But never tauld him o' his brither
 That he into the cellar saw,
 Mair than he'd naething seen ava.
 Light, brown, an' nappy was the beer,
 "Whaur did ye get it?" John did speir.
 Says Thrummy—"Sure ye needna care;
 I'll gang an' try tae get some mair."
 Sae doon the stair again he goes
 Tae get o' drink anither dose,
 Bein' positive tae ha'e some mair,
 But still he fand the ghaist was there,
 Noo on a butt ahint the door.
 Says he—"Ye did nae ill before,
 Dear brither Thrummy, sae I'll try
 You aince again, because I'm dry."
 He fills his jug stracht oot below,
 An' up the stair again does go.
 John marvelled sair, but didna speir
 Again whaur he had got the beer,
 For it was stronger than the first,
 Sae they baith drank till like to burst,
 Syne did compose themsel's tae rest;
 Tae sleep awhile they thought it best.
 An' oor in bed they hadna been,
 An' scarcely weel had closed their een,
 When just intae the neighbourin' chaum'er
 They heard a dreadfu' din and claum'er;
 Aneath the bedclaes John did cower,
 But Thrummy jumped upon the floor,
 Him by the sark-tail John did haud.
 "Lie still," quo' he; "fat, are ye mad?"
 Thrummy then gaed a hasty jump,
 An' took John on the ribs a thump,
 Till on the bed he tumbled down

In little better than a swoon ;
 While Thrummy, fast as he could rin,
 Set aff to see fat made the din.
 The chaum'er seemed tae him as licht
 As if the sun was shinin' bricht ;
 The ghaist was stannin' at the door,
 In the same dress he had afore ;
 An' o'er anent it at the wa'
 Were ither apparitions twa.
 Thrummy beheld them for awee,
 But deil a wurd as yet spake he ;
 The speerits seemed tae kick a ba'
 The ghaist against the ither twa,
 Whilk close they drave baith back an' fore
 Atween the chimney an' the door.
 He stops awhile an' sees the play,
 Syne rinnin' up, he this did say—
 " Ane for ane may weel compare,
 But twa for ane is raither sair.
 The play's nae equal, sae I vow,
 Dear brither Thrummy, I'll help you."
 Then wi' his fit he kicked the ba',
 Gart it play stot again the wa'.
 Quick then, as lichtnin' frae the sky,
 The spectres wi' a horrid cry
 A' vanished in a clap o' thunder,
 While Thrummy at the same did wonder.
 The room was quiet noo and dark,
 An' Thrummy strippet tae his sark,
 Glauming his way back to his bed,
 He thinks he hears a person tread :
 An' e'er he gat withoot the door,
 The ghaist agen stood him before,
 An' in his face did starin' stand,
 Wi' a big candle in his hand.
 Quo' Thrummy, " Friend, I want to know

What brings ye frae the shades below.
I in my Maker's name command
You tell your story just aff hand.
Fat wad ye ha'e? I'll do my best
For you, tae lat you be at rest."
Then says the ghaist—" 'Tis thirty year
Since I was doomed to wander here ;
In a' that time there has been none
Behaved sae bold as you ha'e done ;
Sae if you'll dae a job for me,
Disturbance mair I'll never gi'e."
" Say on your tale," quo' gentle Thrummy ;
" To dae you justice I will try."
" Then mark me weel," the ghaist replied,
" And ye shall soon be satisfied.
Frae this aback near forty year,
I of this place was overseer ;
When this laird's father had the land,
A' thing was then at my command,
Wi' pooer tae dae as I thocht fit.
In ilka cause I chief did sit ;
The laird paid great respect tae me,
But I an ill return did gi'e ;
The title deeds o' his estate,
Oot o' the same I did him cheat,
An' stole them frae whaur they did lie,
Some days before the laird did die.
His son at that time was in France,
An' sae I thocht I had a chance
Gif he should never come again,
That the estate would be my ain ;
But scarcely three bare weeks had passed,
When death did come and grip me fast,
Sae sudden that I hadna pooer,
The charter back for to restore,
Soon after that hame came the heir,

An' syne got up the reefu' rair,
What sorrow has come ower the richts ?
They sought them several days an' nichts,
But never yet ha'e they been seen
As I beneath a muckle stane
Did hide them in this chaum'er wa',
Weel sewed up in a leather ba',
But I was ne'er allowed tae rest,
Until that I the same confest ;
But this to do I hadna power,
Frae yon time to this verra hour,
That I've reveal'd it a' to you ;
An' noo I'll tell you what to do.
Till nae langsyne nae mony kent,
That this same laird the richts did want ;
But noo they ha'e him at the law,
And the neist ook the laird maun shaw
Afore the court the richts o's land ;
This puts him to an unco stand,
For if he disna show them there,
O' a' his lands he'll be stript bare ;
Nae hopes has he to save his 'state,
This makes him soor and unco blate :
He canna think whar's richts can be,
And ne'er expects them mair to see ;
But noo, my freend, mark what I tell,
And ye'll get something tae yoursel',
Tak' oot the stane there in the wa',
And there ye'll get a leather ba',
'Tis just the same that ye did see,
When you said that you would help me.
The richts are sewed up in its heart,
But see you dinna wi' them pairt,
Until the laird shall pay you doon,
Just fifty guineas and a croon,
Whilk at my death was due to me,

This for thy trouble I'll gi'e tae thee ;
 And I'll disturb this hoose nae mair,
 'Cause I'll be free frae a' my care."
 This Thrummy promised weel tae do,
 And syne the ghaist bade him adieu,
 And vanished wi' a pleasant sound,
 Doon through the laft, and through the ground.
 Thrummy gaed back syne till's bed,
 And coardly John was verra gled,
 That he his neighbour saw aince mair,
 For of his life he did despair.
 Quo' John—"Wow, man, whaur ha'e ye been ?
 Come tell me a' that ye ha'e seen."
 "Na, bide," says Thrummy, "till day-light,
 "And syne I'll tell ye hale and richt."
 Sae baith lay still and took a nap,
 Until the ninth oor it did chap.
 Thrummy syne rase, put on his claes,
 And tae the chau'mer quick he gaes,
 Taks oot the stane intae the wa',
 And soon he fand the leather ba',
 Took oot the richts, replaced the stane,
 Ere John did ken whaur he had been.
 Then baith cam' stappin' doon the stair,
 The mornin' noo was calm and fair.
 "Weel," quo' the laird, "ye may noo gang,
 Ye ken the day's nae verra lang ;
 In the meantime it's calm and clear,
 Ye lose yer time in bidin' here."
 Quo' Thrummy—"Sir, mind what I tell,
 I've mair richt here than you yersel',
 Sae till I like I here shall bide."
 The laird at this began to chide :
 Says he, "My friend, ye're turnin' rude,"
 Quo' Thrummy, "I'll my claim mak' guid,
 For here, I just before ye a',

The richts o' this estate can shaw,
 And that is mair than ye can do."
 "What!" quo' the laird, "can that be true?"
 "'Tis true," quo' Thrummy, "look an' see,
 Dae ye think that I wad tell a lee?"
 Parchments frae his pouch then he drew,
 And doon upon the table threw.
 The laird at this up tae him ran,
 And cried, "Whaur did you get them, man?"
 Syne Thrummy tauld him a' the tale,
 As I've tauld you, baith clear and hale.
 The laird at this was fdgin' fain,
 That he had got his richts again;
 And fifty guineas doon did tell,
 Besides a present frae himsel'.
 Thrummy thanked him, and syne his gowd
 Intae a muckle purse he stowed,
 And crammed it in his oxter pooch,
 And syne socht oot his aiken crutch:
 Said, "Fare ye weel, I maun awa',
 And see gin I get through the snaw."
 "Weel, fare ye weel," replied the laird;
 "But hoo comes it ye hae'na shared,
 Or gien your neighbour o' the money?"
 "Na' by my sowl, I, sir," quo' Thrummy,
 "When I the siller sair did win,
 Tae share wi' him wad be a sin,
 For ere that I the ghaist had laid
 The cooardly brute had fyle't the bed."
 And sae my tale I here do end,
 I hope that nane it will offend:
 My muse will nae assist me langer,
 The dorty jaud sometimes does anger,
 I thocht her aince a gey smart lass,
 But noo she's come to sicna pass
 That a' my cudgellin' and wheepin'

Will hardly wauk her oot o' sleepin',
 Tae plague her mair I winna try,
 But dicht my pen and lay it bye.

Gil Morrice.

None of the ancient ballads preserved by the Scottish peasantry has excited more interest than the beautiful and pathetic narrative of "Gil Morrice," and this, as Motherwell observes, "no less on account of its own intrinsic merits as a piece of exquisite poetry than of its having furnished the plot of the justly celebrated tragedy of 'Douglas.'" Gray described it as divine, and it has been a fount of inspiration to various poets. It is believed to be founded on a real incident which happened in a remote period of our Scottish history. The "green wood" of the ballad was the ancient forest of Dundaff, in Stirlingshire, and Lord Barnard's castle is said to have occupied a precipitous cliff, overhanging the Water of Carron, on the lands of Halbertshire.

There are various readings of the ballad, under the titles, "Chield Morice," "Childe Maurice," and "Child Noryce." The following is the commoner copy of the chapman's wallet, and, in my opinion, the best.

GIL MORRICE was an Earl's son,
 His name it waxèd wide ;
 It was nae for his great riches,
 Nor yet his meikle pride.

His face was fair, lang was his hair,
 In the wild woods he stay'd,
 But his fame was by a fair lady,
 That lived on Carron side.

"Whare sall I get a bonny boy
 That will win hose and shoon,
 That will go to Lord Barnard's ha',
 And bid his lady come.

“ It’s ye maun rin this errand, Willie,
And ye may rin wi’ pride,
When other boys gae on their feet,
On horseback ye sall ride.”

“ O no ! O no ! my master dear,
I dare not for my life,
I’ll no gae to the bauld Baron’s
For to tryste forth his wife.”

“ My bird Willie, my boy Willie,
My dear Willie,” he said,
“ How can you strive against the stream ?
For I sall be obeyed.”

“ But Oh ! my master dear,” he cried,
“ In green wood ye’re your lane,
Gie o’er sic thochts I would ye redd,
For fear ye should be ta’en.”

“ Haste, haste, I say, gae to the ha’,
And bid her come wi’ speed ;
If ye refuse my high command,
I’ll gar your body bleed.

“ Gae bid her take this gay mantle,
’Tis a’ gowd but the hem ;
Bid her come to the good green wood,
And bring nane but her lane.

“ And there it is, a silken sark,
Her ain hand sewed the sleeve,
And bid her come to Gil Morrice,
Speir nae bauld Baron’s leave.”

“ Yes, I will gae your black errand,
Though it be to your cost,
Sin’ ye by me will not be warned,
In it ye shall find frost.

“ The Baron he’s a man of might,
He ne’er could bide a taunt,
And ye sall see before it’s night,
How sma’ ye ha’e to vaunt.

“ And sin’ I maun your errand rin,
Sair, sair against my will,
I’se make a vow, and keep it true,
It sall be done for ill.”

And when he came to broken brig,
He bent his bow and swam,
And when he came to grass growing,
Set down his feet and ran.

And when he came to Barnard’s ha’
Would neither chap nor ca’,
But set his bent bow to his breast,
And lichtly lap the wa’.

He would nae man his errand tell,
Though twa stood at the gate,
But straight into the ha’ he came,
Where great folks sat at meat.

“ Hail ! hail ! my gentle sire and dame,
My message winna wait,
Dame, ye maun to the green wood gang,
Before that it be late.

“ Ye’re bidden take this gay mantle,
It’s a’ gowd but the hem,
Ye maun go to the good green wood,
E’en by yourself alane.

“ There it is, a silken sark,
Your ain hand sewed the sleeve,
You maun come speak to Gil Morrice,
Speir nae bauld Baron’s leave.”

The lady stampèd wi' her foot,
 And winkèd wi' her e'e,
 But all that she could do or say,
 Forbidden he wouldna be.

“ It's surely to my bower-woman,
 It ne'er could be to me ;”
 “ I brought it to Lord Barnard's Lady,
 I trow that ye be she.”

Then up and spake the wily nurse,
 (The bairn upon her knee),
 “ If it be come frae Gil Morrice,
 'Tis dear welcome to me.”

“ Ye lee, ye lee, ye filthy nurse,
 Sae loud's I hear ye lee ;
 I brought it to Lord Barnard's Lady,
 I trow ye be nae she.”

Then up and spake the bauld Baron,
 An angry man was he ;
 He's ta'en the table wi' his foot,
 In flinders gart it flee.

“ Gae bring a robe of yon cleiding,
 That hangs upon the pin,
 And I'll gae to the good green wood,
 And speak with your leman.”

“ O bide at hame now, Lord Barnard,
 I warn you, bide at hame ;
 Ne'er wyte a man wi' violence
 That ne'er wyte ye wi' nane.”

Gil Morrice sat in yon green wood,
 He whistled and he sang ;
 “ Oh, what means a' thae folk coming ?
 My mother tarries lang.”

The Baron cam' to the greenwood,
 Wi' muckle dule and care,
 And there he spied brave Gil Morrice
 Kaiming his yellow hair.

His hair was like the threads o' gold
 Drawn frae Minerva's loom ;
 His lips like roses drapping dew,
 His breath a sweet perfume.

His brow was like the mountain snaw
 Gilt by the morning beam ;
 His cheeks like living roses glowed,
 His een like azure stream.

The boy was clad in robes o' green,
 Sweet as the infant spring ;
 And like the mavis on the bush,
 He gar't the valleys ring.

“ Nae wonder, nae wonder, Gil Morrice,
 My lady lo'ed thee weel,
 The fairest part of my body
 Is blacker than thy heel.

“ Yet ne'ertheless, now, Gil Morrice.
 For a' thy great beautie,
 Ye'se rue the day that ye was born,
 Thy head sall gae with me.”

Now he has drawn his trusty brand,
 And slait it on the strae,
 And through Gil Morrice' fair body
 He's gar'd cauld iron gae.

And he has ta'en Gil Morrice' head,
 And set it on a spear ;
 The meanest man in a' his train
 Has got the head to bear.

And he has ta'en Gil Morrice up,
Laid him across his steed,
And brought him to his painted bower,
And laid him on a bed.

The lady sat on the castle wa',
Beheld baith dale and down,
And there she saw Gil Morrice' head
Come trailing to the town.

“Far mair I lo'e that bloody head,
But and that yellow hair,
Than Lord Barnard and a' his lands,
As they lie here and there.”

And she has ta'en Gil Morrice' head,
And kissed baith mouth and chin ;
“I ance was fu' of Gil Morrice,
As hip is o' the stane.

“I got thee in my father's house
Wi' muckle grief and shame,
And brought thee up in good green wood,
Under the heavy rain.

“Oft have I by thy cradle sat,
And seen thee soundly sleep,
But now I'll go about thy grave,
The saut, saut tears to weep.”

And syne she kissed his bloody cheek,
And syne his bloody chin ;
“Better I lo'e my Gil Morrice,
Than a' my kith and kin.”

“Away, away ye ill woman,
An ill death may you dee,
Gin I had kenn'd he'd been your son,
He'd ne'er been slain by me.”

“ Upraid me not, Lord Barnard,
Upraid me not for shame,
Wi’ that same spear, oh pierce my heart,
And put me out of pain.

“ Since nothing but Gil Morrice’ head
Thy jealous rage could quell,
Let that same hand now take her life,
That ne’er to thee did ill.

“ To me nae after days nor nights
Will e’er be saft or kind ;
I’ll fill the air with heavy sighs,
And greet till I am blind.”

“ Enough of blood by me’s been spilt,
Seek not your death from me ;
I rather it had been mysel’,
Than either him or thee.

“ With heart so wae I hear your plaint,
Sair, sair I rue the deed,
That e’er this cursèd hand o’ mine
Did gar his body bleed.

“ Dry up your tears, my winsome dame,
Ye ne’er can heal the wound,
You see his head upon my spear,
His heart’s blood on the ground.

“ I curse the hand that did the deed,
The heart that thought the ill,
The feet that bore me with such speed
The comely youth to kill.

“ I’ll aye lament for Gil Morrice
As gin he were my ain ;
I’ll ne’er forget the dreary day
On which the youth was slain.”

The Bonnie Banks o' Fordie.

This old ballad was long a popular favourite in the southern parishes of Perthshire; and, I believe, is still occasionally heard by the cottage and bothy inglesides of that ilk. Its historical bearing (if any) and exact locality have never been clearly defined. Sometimes it is found under the title of "Baby-Lon," sometimes "The Duke of Perth's Three Daughters." But there is no tradition in the Perth ducal family corresponding with the story. There is, of course, the burn of Ordie in Perthshire—about equi-distant between Perth and Dunkeld—and no stream in Scotland of the name of *Fordie*, so far as I know; and since editors generally name Perthshire as the native locality of the ballad, may the original phraseology of the oft repeated title not have been "The bonnie banks of Ordie"? From that to "The bonnie banks o' Fordie" would be a simple and likely transition—probably is a clerical error.

The name of the hero, "Baby-Lon," is evidently a corruption by the reciters of "Burd-alane," signifying "The Solitary."

THERE were three ladies lived in a bower,
 Ech, wow, bonnie!
 An' they went forth to pu' a flower
 On the bonnie banks o' Fordie.

They hadna pu'd a flower but ane,
 Ech, wow, bonnie!
 When up there started a banish'd man
 On the bonnie banks o' Fordie.

He's taen the first sister by the hand,
 Ech, wow, bonnie!
 An' he's turned her round and made her stand
 On the bonnie banks o' Fordie.

“ Now, whether will ye be a rank robber’s wife,”

Ech, wow, bonnie !

“ Or will ye dee by my wee penknife
On the bonnie banks o’ Fordie ? ”

“ It’s I’ll no’ be a rank robber’s wife,”

Ech, wow, bonnie !

“ But I’ll rather dee by your wee penknife
On the bonnie banks o’ Fordie.”

He’s killed this May, an’ he’s laid her by,

Ech, wow, bonnie !

For to bear the red rose companie
On the bonnie banks o’ Fordie.

He has ta’en the second ane by the hand,

Ech, wow, bonnie !

An’ he’s turned her round and made her stand
On the bonnie banks o’ Fordie.

“ It’s whether will ye be a rank robber’s wife,”

Ech, wow, bonnie !

“ Or will ye dee by my wee penknife
On the bonnie banks o’ Fordie ? ”

“ It’s I’ll no’ be a rank robber’s wife,”

Ech, wow, bonnie !

“ But I’ll rather dee by your wee penknife
On the bonnie banks o’ Fordie.”

He’s killed this May, an’ he’s laid her by,

Ech, wow, bonnie !

For to bear the red rose companie
On the bonnie banks o’ Fordie.

Then he’s ta’en the youngest by the hand,

Ech, wow, bonnie !

An’ he’s turned her round and made her stand
On the bonnie banks o’ Fordie.

Says "Will ye be a rank robber's wife,"

Ech, wow, bonnie!

"Or will ye dee by my wee penknife

On the bonnie banks o' Fordie?"

"It's I'll no' be a rank robber's wife,"

Ech, wow, bonnie!

"Nor will I dee by your wee penknife

On the bonnie banks o' Fordie.

"For I hae a brither in this wood,"

Ech, wow, bonnie!

"An' gin ye kill me, it's he'll kill thee

On the bonnie banks o' Fordie."

"Now, tell me what is thy brother's name?"

Ech, wow, bonnie!

"My brother's name is Baby-Lon,

On the bonnie banks o' Fordie."

"O, sister, sister, wae be to me,"

Ech, wow, bonnie!

"O, have I done this ill to thee

On the bonnie banks o' Fordie?"

"The lift shall lie on yonder green,"

Ech, wow, bonnie!

"Or ever I shall again be seen

On the bonnie banks o' Fordie."

So he's ta'en out his wee penknife,

Ech, wow, bonnie!

An' he's twyned himsel' o' his ain sweet life

On the bonnie banks o' Fordie."

Sir James the Rose.

This old north country ballad, which appears to be founded on fact, is well known all over Scotland. There are one ancient and two modern versions of it. The following—one of the latter—is perhaps the most popular of the three. It is said to have been written by Michael Bruce, the author of the immortal “Ode to the Cuckoo.” Bruce was a native of Kinneswood, in Kinross-shire, was born on the 27th of March, 1746, and died at the early age of twenty-one. The original copy which begins:—

Oh, heard ye o’ Sir James the Rose,
The young heir o’ Baleichan:
For he has killed a gallant squire,
Whase friends are out to take him,

makes it appear that the hero of the ballad may have been the scion of a Perthshire house—namely Ballechan, near Ballinluig:—

OF all the Scottish northern chiefs,
Of high and warlike name,
The bravest was Sir James the Rose—
A knight of meikle fame.

His growth was like the youthful oak
That crowns the mountain’s brow,
And waving o’er his shoulders broad,
His locks of yellow flew.

Wide were his fields, his herds were large,
And large his flocks of sheep,
And numerous were his goats and deer,
Upon the mountains steep.

The chieftain of the good clan Rose,
A firm and warlike band,
Five hundred warriors drew the sword
Beneath his high command.

In bloody fight thrice had he stood,
Against the English keen,
Ere two and twenty opening Springs
The blooming youth had seen.

The fair Matilda dear he loved—
A maid of beauty rare ;
Ev'n Margaret on the Scottish throne
Was never half so fair,

Long had he wooed, long she refused
With seeming scorn and pride ;
Yet oft her eyes confessed the love
Her fearful words denied.

At length she blessed his well-tried love,
Allowed his tender claim ;
She vowed to him her tender heart,
And owned an equal flame.

Her father, Buchan's cruel lord,
Their passion disapproved ;
He bade her wed Sir John the Græme,
And leave the youth she loved.

One night they met, as they were wont,
Deep in a shady wood.
Where on the bank, beside the burn,
A blooming saugh tree stood.

Concealed among the underwood
The crafty Donald lay,
The brother of Sir John the Græme,
To hark what they might say.

When thus the maid began—" My Sire,
Our passion disapproves,
He bids me wed Sir John the Græme,
So here must end our loves.

“ My father’s will must be obeyed,
 Nought boots me to withstand,
 Some fairer maid, in beauty’s bloom,
 Must bless thee with her hand.

“ Soon will Matilda be forgot,
 And from thy mind effaced ;
 But may that happiness be thine
 Which I can never taste.”

“ What do I hear ? Is this thy vow ? ”
 Sir James the Rose replied ;

“ And will Matilda wed the Græme,
 Though sworn to be my bride ?

“ His sword shall sooner pierce my heart
 Than reave me of thy charms ; ”
 And clasped her to his throbbing breast,
 Fast locked within his arms.

“ I spoke to try thy love,” she said,
 “ I’ll ne’er wed man but thee ;
 The grave shall be my bridal bed
 Ere Græme my husband be.

“ Then take, dear youth, this faithful kiss,
 In witness of my troth ;
 And every plague become my lot,
 That day I break my oath.”

They parted thus—the sun was set—
 Up hasty Donald flies,
 And, “ Turn thee, turn thee, beardless youth ! ”
 He loud insulting cries.

Soon turned about the fearless chief,
 And soon his sword he drew ;
 For Donald’s blade, before his breast,
 Had pierced his tartans through.

“ This for my brother’s slighted love.

His wrongs sit on my arm ;”

Three paces back the youth retired,
And saved himself from harm.

Returning swift, his sword he reared,

Fierce Donald’s head above ;

And through the brain and crashing bone,
His furious weapon drove.

Life issued at the wound—he fell

A lump of lifeless clay ;

“ So fall my foes !” quoth valiant Rose,
And stately strode away.

Thro’ the green wood in haste he hied,

Unto Lord Buchan’s hall,

Beneath Matilda’s window stood,
And thus on her did call—

“ Art thou asleep, Matilda dear ?

Awake, my love. awake !

Behold thy lover waits without,
A long farewell to take.

“ For I have slain fierce Donald Græme,

His blood is on my sword ;

And far, far distant are my men,
Nor can defend their lord.

“ To Skye I will direct my flight,

Where my brave brothers bide,

To raise the valiant of the Isles,
To combat on my side.”

“ O do not so,” the maid replied,

“ With me till morning stay ;

For dark and dreary is the night,
And dangerous is the way.

“ All night I’ll watch thee in the park,
My faithful page I’ll send
In haste to raise the brave clan Rose,
Their master to defend.”

He laid him down beneath a bush,
And wrapped him in his plaid ;
While, trembling for her lover’s fate,
At distance stood the maid.

Swift ran the page o’er hill and dale,
Till, in a lonely glen,
He met the furious Sir John Græme
With twenty of his men.

“ Where goest thou, little page ? ” he said,
“ So late, who did thee send ? ”
“ I go to raise the brave clan Rose,
Their master to defend.

“ For he has slain fierce Donald Græme,
His blood is on his sword ;
And far, far distant are his men,
Nor can assist their lord.”

“ And has he slain my brother dear ? ”
The furious Græme replies ;
“ Dishonour blast my name, but he
By me, ere morning, dies !

“ Say, page, where is Sir James the Rose,
I will thee well reward.”
“ He sleeps into Lord Buchan’s park,
Matilda is his guard.”

They spurred their steeds, and furious flew,
Like lightning o’er the lea ;
They reached Lord Buchan’s lofty towers
By dawning of the day.

Matilda stood without the gate,
Upon a rising ground,
And watched each object in the dawn,
All ear to every sound.

“Where sleeps the Rose?” began the Græme,
“Or has the felon fled?
This hand shall lay the wretch on earth,
By whom my brother bled.”

“Last day, at noon,” Matilda said,
“Sir James the Rose passed by,
Well mounted on his noble steed,
And onward fast did hie.

“By this time he’s at Edinburgh town,
If horse and man hold good.”

“Your page then lied, who said, he was
Now sleeping in the wood.”

She wrung her hands and tore her hair,
“Brave Rose, thou art betrayed,
And ruined by those very means
From whence I hoped thine aid.”

And now the valiant knight awoke,
The virgin shrieking heard;
Straight up he rose and drew his sword,
When the fierce band appeared.

“Thy sword last night my brother slew,
His blood yet dims its shine;
And ere the sun shall gild the morn,
Thy blood shall reek on mine.”

“You word it well,” the chief returned,
“But deeds approve the man,
Set by your band, and hand to hand
We’ll try what valour can.

“ Oft boasting hides a coward’s heart ;
My weighty sword you fear,
Which shone in front of Flodden field,
When you kept in the rear.”

With dauntless step he forward strode,
And dared him to the fight ;
The Græme gave back, he feared his arm,
For well he knew its might.

Four of his men, the bravest four,
Sunk down beneath his sword ;
But still he scorned the poor revenge,
And sought their haughty lord.

Behind him basely came the Græme,
And pierced him in the side ;
Out spouting came the purple stream,
And all his tartans dyed.

But yet his hand dropped not the sword,
Nor sank he to the ground,
Till through his enemy’s heart the steel
Had forced a mortal wound.

Græme, like a tree by wind o’erthrown,
Fell breathless on the clay ;
And down beside him sank the Rose,
And faint and dying lay.

Matilda saw and fast she ran,
“ O spare his life ! ” she cried,
“ Lord Buchan’s daughter begs his life ;
Let her not be denied ! ”

Her well-known voice the hero heard,
And raised his death-closed eyes,
He fixed them on the weeping maid,
And weakly thus replies :

“ In vain Matilda begs a life,
 By death's arrest denied ;
 My race is run—adieu my love ! ”
 Then closed his eyes and died.

The sword, yet warm, from his left side,
 With frantic hand she drew ;
 “ I come, Sir James the Rose,” she cried,
 “ I come to follow you ! ”

The hilt she leaned against the ground,
 And bared her snowy breast,
 Then fell upon her lover's face,
 And sunk to endless rest.

The Ghaist o' Garron Ha'.

This probably was the last production of the author of
 “ Thrummy Cap.”

MAIR than a hundred years sinsyne,
 (I'm nae exact just to the time) ;
 But ae thing o' I'm verra sure :
 Some short time after Shirramuir,
 Wast in Argyleshire, then there stood
 An ancient Castle in a wood :
 The name o' it the fook did ca'
 The Manor House o' Garron Ha'.
 'Twas very strong, but nae that big.
 The laird o't was a true-blue Whig,
 An' Ranald Campbell was his name,
 An' at Fifteen he was frae hame,
 Out wi' the Duke at Shirramuir,
 An' there did fight, baith fierce and dour.
 For Solemn League he firmly stood,
 Yea, swore he'd freely shed his blood,

Gin that wad set his country free
 Frae abjur'd Stuarts an' Prelacy.
 There in his hip he gat a wound,
 Whilk never after that was sound,
 But pain'd him sadly mony a day ;
 Yet aft exulting, he would say,
 He got it in a glorious cause,
 Fighting for Covenanted laws ;
 An' thought that he might fairly claim
 The glorious crown o' martyrdom.
 He'd crack o' Peden an' Cargill,
 An' Richard Cameron, wi' good will,
 An' a' wha fell on Bothwell plain,
 Or at the Pentland Hills were slain—
 He rank'd them a' o' saints the chief ;
 But for that fause loon, traitor, thief,
 Archbishop Sharp, he said, 'twas true,
 He got nae mair but jnst his due ;
 An' the brave lads wha had sic zeal
 For truth, an' for the Church's weal,
 As rid the warld o' sic a knave,
 He rank'd them far aboon the lave.
 Sic themes as thae were just his hobby,
 An' aft he'd sit into the lobby,
 Wi' his twa sons, for sev'ral hours,
 An' there hold forth wi' a' his powers ;
 An' aft he'd twinge an' twist his lip,
 Aye whan the pains gae him a grip.
 His auldest son, whase name was Ranal',
 His thoughts just ran i' the same channel ;
 He swallow'd a' his father's lore,
 Was idoliz'd by him therefor ;
 An' as he was to be the heir,
 His brother Malcolm had sma' share
 Either o's father's love or gear ;
 Sae he to Embro' gaed to lear

The law, wi' a relation there,
Where he did stay three years an' mair ;
Sair'd out his time, an' gat a place,
An' fill'd it wi' a decent grace ;
Was sober, meek, and verra steady,
An' for his business aye was ready ;
But yet o' cash he was but bare,
Clerks hadna then gryte deal to spare ;
Fu' little did his father gi'e him ;
An' seldom ever gade to see him.
He'd now been sev'ral years awa.
An' been but ance at Garron Ha',
Sin' at the first that he gade south,
An' that was in his early youth.
But now his father took a blast,
Whilk soon did bring him to his last ;
A few days only he was spar'd,
An' now young Ranald was the laird.
Malcolm was now sent for wi' speed,
An' hame he came right wae indeed,
'Cause he'd nae seen his father livin',
Nor his last blessing to him given.
The funeral it now took place,
An' Malcolm, after some short space
Of stopping wi' his brother there,
Was now about streight to repair
Back to his place, when Ranald said,
" Malcolm, I would be verra glad,
Gin you wade bide a day or twa
Langer, afore ye gang awa ;
An' ae day's hunting let us tak',
Case it be lang ere ye win back.
I at the chase am now right clever,
I'll show ye feats that ye saw never
The like, in a' the Lothians three—
Come, mount your horse, and gang wi' me."

Malcolm directly ga'e consent,
 Sae aff the hunting party went,
 An' mony a hart did Ranald slay—
 The chase did last the live-long day ;
 An' mony a ditch an' dyke he lap,
 At five-barr'd gates he wadna stap,
 Till he was in a soom o' sweat,
 Wi' his exertions, an' the heat.
 When he came hame he sair complain'd,
 An' o' his inside sadly maned.
 They boot to put him till his bed,
 Whilst for a Doctor aff they rade :
 The Doctor made what haste he could,
 To see gin he could do him good ;
 But, feggs, he was a wee o'er late :
 Sae was the sov'reign will o' fate,
 Ranald had yielded up his breath,
 A prey to all-devouring death ;
 An hour ere ever he got there,
 The man was gone—sae what needs mair ?
 He only ae bare month was laird,
 An' was for death nae sair prepar'd.
 This made an alteration now
 Wi' a' at Garron Ha', I trow :
 Malcolm, of course, was now the heir,
 An' nane ava to get a share,
 But just ae lass, about the house.
 'Tis time that now we introduce
 This heroine into our tale,
 Because hereafter she'll na fail
 To act a chief part in our story,
 An' sae the reader won't be sorry
 To ken some little thing about her,
 Our tale would hardly tell without her :—
 Miss Baby Campbell then, 'twas clear,
 Had pass'd her seven-an'-twentieth year ;

An orphan brought up by the laird,
An' high in his affections shar'd.
Forby she was a near relation,
An' had a sort o' upper station,
Like housekeeper at Garron Ha',
Nae faut in her the auld man saw ;
She was a hypocrite profound,
By whilk means still she kept her ground ;
Auld Ranald thought her quite a saunt,
An' o' her talents aft wou'd vaunt—
He thought nane wi' her could compare,
Au' wish'd to match her wi' his heir ;
An' he himsel' had nae objection,
He followed ay his sire's direction.
Though she was aulder far than he,
He thought they brawlie wad agree ;
But Bab for him cared nae a spittle,
His understanding was sae brittle ;
But, as it fired up her ambition,
She wadna cared a single snishin'
Whae'er she married—sae that she
The lady o' the land might be ;
This was the point at whilk she ettl'd.
Sae that affair seemed to be settl'd.
But when young Malcolm now she saw
Come back again to Garron Ha',
Far mair accomplish'd than his brither,
That chang'd her notions a' thegither ;
Her mind was now right ill at ease,
Tho' Malcolm did her fancy please,
She ken'd fu' weel he had nae siller,
Tho' he paid gryte attention till her ;
Love an' ambition rack'd her heart,
She ken'dna how to act her part ;
Nor could she bear the thoughts ava,
O' nae bein' lady o' the Ha' ;

Yet whiles she thought wi' a' she'd part,
Cou'd she but touch young Malcolm's heart.
Sae in condition far frae easy,
She little better was than crazy.
But now when Ranald was awa',
An' Malcolm was possessed o' a',
She thought that now a' was her ain,
For o' her talents she was vain ;
Tho' she'd to beauty sma' pretension,
She had a verra keen invention.
Sae when the funeral was over,
She set her cap to catch her lover ;
But soon she fand that a' her art
Made nae impression on his heart ;
The reason o't was very plain,
He had a sweetheart o' his ain—
A merchant's daughter in Auld Reekie ;
An' soon he set aff for that city,
To settle his concerns there,
An' see again his favourite fair.
He meant there but short time to bide,
Then fetch to Garron Ha' his bride ;
Now cousin Bab wi' rage was fill'd,
For a' her hopes were fairly kill'd—
She saw she'd fairly lost the man,
An' whilk was warse—she'd lost the lan' ;
Wad be flung out upon the warl',
For weel she ken'd that the auld carl,
Expecting that she'd get it a',
Left her nae legacy at a'.
Her love did now to hatred turn,
With fiend-like fires her breast did burn—
Since she'd been slighted by the boy,
She him determined to destroy.
So now devised within her mind
A plot of a most hellish kind ;

Whilk, had it fairly ta'en effect,
'Twould hung young Malcolm by the neck ;
But Providence did interfere,
By whilk means Malcolm did get clear ;
An' threw the guilt on their ain heads,
Wha did contrive sic shamefu' deeds.
Bab ken'd if Malcolm was awa'
She'd heiress be hersel' at law.
Sae she a project did invent
Of diabolical intent :—
Gif she could but some way consider
To lay the murder o' his brither
On Malcolm's back, and him impeach.
She thought that syne her aim she'd reach ;
She'd fa' on means his guilt to prove,
An' sae revenge her slighted love.
Amang the servants was a fallow,
Wha (though his judgment was but shallow)
Had o' low cunning some sma' share.
His figure it was thin and spare,
Just much the same o' Ranald's mak' ;
His nose was shaped like his exact,
'Twas nearly what some fouk ca' Roman,
Or hawk-nib'd noses termed in common.
This man they ca'd him Duncan Graham.
To him Miss Bab now thought nae shame
To mak' her court, and tell her tale.
Her scheme was this : that, without fail,
Duncan young Ranald's ghaist should act,
Because she ken'd he had a knack
At sic odd jobs—and was right fit
Baith by his mimicry and wit,
To gar poor country fowk believe
Whate'er he liked, and sae deceive
The simple superstitious crew
Wha at the castle livèd now.

The parish priest, she ken'd fu' weel,
Was just a simple doited chiel,
As superstitious as the lave,
Gif Duncan wad but right behave ;
They'd gar him come an' speak the ghaist,
Or try to lay him at the least ;
Syne he wad tell a dismal tale,
Whilk if right manag'd cou'dna fail
Of doing what they twa intended,
To get young Malcolm apprehended
For giein' Ranald poison strang,
Whilk cut him aff ere it was lang.
An' gin the plot should right succeed,
An' Malcolm number'd wi' the dead,
Bab did a solemn promise mak'
She'd Duncan for a husband tak',
An' mak' him Laird o' Garron Ha' ;
This setl'd was atween them twa ;
For Duncan took the job in hand,
An' Bab gae' him to understand,
That night the job he boot begin,
When it was night, to mak' a din,
In different parts thro' a' the house,
She ken'd the servants werna crouse,
To come o'er near to find him out,
An' thus there wark they set about ;—
A suit o' Ranald's claise they got
To help them forward i' their plot ;
But, as that Duncan's hair was black,
To mak' the likeness mair exact,
That afternoon, 'twas Baby's care
To mak' a wig o' lang red hair,
As Ranald's locks were o' that hue,
An' that wad make the figure true.
Sae when the fowk were to their bed,
Duncan that night began his trade.

They soon fand that their plot did tak',
For, i' the morning a' the crack
Was the strange noises on the night,
Whilk did the inmates sadly fright ;
An' ilka night this din did last,
Till a' the family aghast,
Declar'd to Baby ane an' a',
They'd frae the Castle gang awa',
'Cause they were sure it was the devil
(Or something that was full o' evil)
Had got possession o' the Ha' ;
For ae chiel sware he plainly saw
A gruesome spectre, wan as death,
An' he was free to gi'e his aith
That it had fect just like a cow,
An' round its head were flames o' blue ;
It graned and shook its bloody pow,
An' a' the house seemed in a lowe ;
It stalked slowly thro' the Ha' ;
The lave heard din but naething saw.
Baby heard this wi' seeming wonder ;
An' Duncan silently did ponder.
At length he says, " I muckle fear
Some murder's been committed here ;
We maun get fowk mair skill'd than we
Ere we o' this grim ghaist get free."
Just then the gard'ner came inby,
For i' the house he didna lie,
But in a bothie i' the yard,
An' tauld how he yestreen was scar'd
Wi' din, an' forc'd to leave his bed ;
An' whan he looked forth, he said,
He saw Young Ranald on the green
As plain as ere in life he'd seen ;
Just in his usual hunting dress,
His lang red hair, an' thin pale face ;

He walked slowly o'er the loan,
Wi' mony a dismal heavy groan ;
Sign'd to the gard'ner to come near,
But that he cudna do for fear ;
The spectre vanish'd syne awa ;
A' this the gard'ner sware he saw.
Baby at this did sain hersel'.
Said, " What to do I scarce can tell :
This apparition does portend
That Ranald's got a violent end,
Or else he never wad come back,
An' sic a strange disturbance mak' ;
I had some doubts of this ere now,
But what could a weak woman do.
'Tis my advice—we tell Mess John,
And fetch him to this house anon ;
What do we ken, but Ranald may
Hae something that he'd wish to say.
The Minister's the fittest man
To put us on the wisest plan,
To ken what is the spectre's will,
For he's a man o' real skill ;
Forby, his office as a priest
Qualifies him to speak a ghaist."
To this advice they a' agreed,
The gard'ner syne set aff wi' speed
To fetch Mess John—wha didna fail
To come—and hear the unco tale ;
He fairlied sair at what he heard,
An' ay he mus'd, an' ay he speir'd
About the strange and fearfu' sight
That fleg'd them sae the bypast night.
Whan he had chew'd his cud awee :
" This is an awfu' job," quoth he,
" I'm nae that fond o' it ava ;
But yet, I winna gang awa,

This night at ony rate I'll stay,
You'll a' attend, whilst I do pray
That we may be endow'd wi' grace
An' strength, this visitant to face.
The priest syne gae a solemn prayer,
Whilk being o'er, they did prepare
Ranald's ain room for him that night,
An' put in it baith fire and light ;
Back frae that room there was anither,
A thin wa' sep'rate them frae ither,
Thro' whilk there was a private door ;
They plac'd a claiths screen it before ;
Dunnan at that door could come in,
An' nae mak' verra muckle din ;
An' out again, as he thought fit,
Whene'er he judged it time to flit.
When a' their suppers now were o'er.
An' chapters read—ay, three or four,
The priest bade them a' gae to sleep,
For he alane the watch wad keep ;
Though he was quakin' ilka lith,
And scarcely had sae mickle pith
As stagger canny up the stair,
Unto the room he did repair.
The Bible up wi' him he took,
An' down he sat intil the neuk,
An' trembled like a quakin' ash,
Thinking that now he'd been o'er rash
To meddle wi' sic pranks him lane ;
An' twenty guineas wad he gi'en
That he'd been thirty miles awa,
Although as yet he naething saw.
When Duncan thought the lave asleep
Up to his room he syne did creep,
An' dressed himsel' to act his part.
A dram he took to cheer his heart,

Which spite o's neck now fell a beating,
 But now for him was nae retreating—
 He boot gae through some way or ither
 To personate young Malcolm's brither.
 He saw the priest was vera eery,
 An' that made him a deal mair cheery.
 Sae, as soon's twal o'clock did chap,
 Duncan gae a gentle tap.
 The parson, wha was near asleep,
 Hearing the rap, he did up pcep,
 Wi' a' his limbs sae sadly shakin',
 Duncan could hardly keep frae laughin'.
 He gae a groan baith loud and lang,
 The parson up till's feet did bang,
 An' stood twa-fauld up i' the neuk,
 An' firm he grasped the haly beuk.
 Duncan made his appearance now,
 An' stood close i' the parson's view,
 Wi' his pale face an' lang red hair,
 Ne'er moved an eye, but firm did stare
 The frightened parson i' the face,
 Wha never jeed out o' his place.
 At last, he says—"I you conjure
 To speak : In name o' that great Power
 Wha made us baith, come tell to me
 Baith what you want, and what you be."
 Duncan gae a heavy groan,
 An' said—"Alas ! ohon ! ohon !
 That ever I should come to this ;
 But I'm shut out frae heavenly bliss
 Till I mak' known this murder fell,
 An' yet I'm verra laith to tell ;
 But I maun do't an' mak a' plain
 Afore that I my rest can gain :—
 You see fu' weel I'm Ranald's spirit,
 An' Malcolm, wha does now inherit

The land I lately did possess,
Put arsenic in my breakfast mess ;
Impeach him, an' revenge my death,
Or else I'll hunt you while you've breath."
The parson now fell o'er wi' fright ;
An' Duncan syne slipt out o' sight,
Stripp'd aff his claise, an' fause red hair,
An' to his chamber did repair—
Right glad he'd play'd his part sae weel,
An' nae a bit remorse did feel.
The priest a while lay like one dead ;
At length he lifted up his head,
An' wildly round him he did stare,
To see gin still the ghaist was there ;
But whan he look'd an naething saw,
He was right blyth it was awa' ;
Whan he'd a wee come till himsel',
He pou'd the tow, an' rang the bell ;
Baby hersel' was soon asteer,
An' Duncan too, ye needna speer ;
An' ilka ane within the biggin',
To rise they needit little priggin',
They a' thrang'd to the servant's ha',
To hear what 'twas the parson saw ;
An' a' appeared extremely sorry,
To hear this mighty dismal story.
They said 'twou'd ne'er come i' their head
That Malcolm wad done sic a deed.
Baby held up her hands wi' wonder,
Turn'd up her een like duck's in thunder ;
As nat'rel's ever play was acted,
Until the strings o' them maist cracked ;—
An' a' the lave themsel's did bless,
Crying, "O ! wha wad ever thought o' this ?
Poison his brither ! gude keep's a' !
The like o' this we never saw—

Nor scarcely heard o' sic a crime,
 Na, nae sin' ever Cain's time."
 Bab says, "I kenna' what to say,
 I wiss I'd never seen this day ;
 Is there nae way to hush this matter ;
 Speak, reverend sir, for you ken better
 What sud be done than sic as me ;
 Cou'd we na' get poor Malcolm free
 O' comin' till a shamefu' end ?
 Ye ken, he's now my nearest friend ;
 But I'll be ruled, sir, by you—
 Sae ye maun tell me what to do."
 Then says the priest : "As soon's 'tis^o day
 I to a justice straught maun gae,
 An' there mak aith o' what I saw,
 Syne let it tak the course o' law—
 This I must do, or Ranald's ghaist
 Will never let me be at rest ;
 Likewise, the servants at the Ha',
 Maun gang an' tell a' that they saw !
 I'll do his bidden ilka hair.
 I never wiss to see him mair,
 Yon was a fearfu' sight indeed !
 Sae I maun till mysel' tak' heed."
 Weel ! whan 'twas day the parson now,
 An' a' the simple cozen'd crew,
 Unto his worship aff did set,
 An' him at hame by chance did get ;
 The justice, it maun be confess'd,
 Was just as senseless as the rest ;
 For whan the parson tauld this tale,
 He took his aith—syne, without fail,
 Examin'd a' came frae the Ha',
 An' straught to Embro' sent awa.
 An' Malcolm now was laid in prison
 Afore that he did ken the reason ;

But his surprise ye weel may guess,
When he acquainted was wi' this ;
It struck the poor youth perfect dumb,
An' did his senses sae benumb
He cudna speak, but hung his head,
An' look'd like's gin he had been dead,
An' they wha saw him in that case,
Said, guilt was printed on his face.
The day o' trial now was set,
An' a' concern'd did summons get ;
An' mony ane, baith far an' near,
Set aff this unco case to hear.
Bab and the priest, frae Garron Ha',
Did in a post chaise ride awa' ;
The lave on horseback aff did ride ;
But mark ye now, what did betide
These guilty wretches at the last,
When they thought Malcolm grippit fast :—
Whan Duncan near Linlithgow got,
His horse took fleg at a raised stot,
Wha frae some butchers gat awa',
An' ran an' puttit a' he saw.
The fowk out o' his road did rin,
An' screich'd an' made sae muckle din,
That Duncan's horse awa' did gallop,
An' on the road gar'd him play wallop,
An' smashed him a', by this same token,
His legs an' three o's ribs were broken,
Forby a clink upo' the head,
An' there he lay 's gin he'd been dead,
To the neist house they trail'd him in,
An' for a doctor aff did rin.
When he'd a wee come to himsel'
His state nae mortal man could tell,
Nor half describe his awfu' case,
When death did stare him i' th' face.

A priest he quickly did require,
An' ane they brought at his desire.
There he confess'd upo' the spot
His share in a' the hellish plot.
The priest did for the provost send,
As Duncan seem'd near to his end,
Wha came, an' his confession took,
An' Duncan sware till't on the book.
Near three hours langer did he live,
Prayin' his Maker to forgive
His foul misdeeds, wi' his last breath,
Syne sunk into the arms o' death.
The provost now for Embro' set,
For by this time the Court was met ;
An' when the judges took their station,
He shaw'd them Duncan's declaration,
This fill'd the Court wi' gryte surprize,
That any human could devise,
A scheme sae horrid an' sae evil.
Then quick laid hand on that she-devil,
Baby, an' sent her to the prison,
To try her at convenient season.
This turn'd the chance wi' her, I trow,
For Malcolm was acquitted now,
An' she hersel' put in his place,
To her confusion and disgrace.
Now deep despair did fill her mind,
An' ere she was an hour confin'd
She wi' a razor nick't her throat,
An' down she fell upo' the spot ;
An' to the last did curse and swear,
An' a' within the jail did fear.
This story made nae little noise,
But a' gude people did rejoice
That Malcolm's innocence was clear,
An' wi' loud shouts they did him cheer.

A few month after, Malcolm now
 Unto Auld Reekie bade adieu,
 Took hame his bride to Garron Ha',
 An' never after gade awa' ;
 But settled there wi' his dear wife,
 They liv'd a lang an' happy life,
 An' were respected mony a year,
 For a' the neipers lov'd them dear.

Our tale we've now brought to an end ;
 We see that Heaven does aye defend
 The upright, who, in God do trust ;
 But lays the guilty in the dust.
 An' sic as vilely spurn his law,
 Witness " The Ghaist o' Garron Ha'."

Watty and Meg.

One of the most gifted of Paisley's many gifted sons, Alexander Wilson, the author of "Watty and Meg," was born on the 6th of July, 1766. He was originally designed for the ministry, but was instead brought up to the trade of a handloom weaver. Ultimately he developed into a pedlar—an occupation which, he said, was more appropriate to a "mortal with legs" than tramping the treddles of a handloom. In his twenty-eighth year he went to America, where in a short time he developed into a valued ornithologist, and prepared a work on the American ornithology, which will ever be regarded as his *magnum opus*. He died in America on the 23rd of August, 1813, the cause of his death being a cold caught in swimming a river while in pursuit of a rare species of bird of which he had long been in search.

Wilson's greatest poem, "Watty and Meg," was first issued anonymously in 1792, and sprang into immediate favour, no less than one hundred thousand copies of it being disposed of within a few weeks. The author was

much gratified with its great success, but still more by hearing it attributed to Robert Burns, for whom he entertained the highest regard. Burns also thought highly of the poem. It is on record, indeed, in this connection, that one day as the national poet was sitting at his desk by the side of his window, a well-known hawker, Andrew Bishop by name, went past crying—" 'Watty and Meg,' a new ballad by Robert Burns." The poet looked out and cried—"That's a lee, Andrew! but I wad mak' your plack a bawbee if it were true."

KEEN the frosty winds were blawin',
 Deep the snaw had wreathed the ploughs,
 Watty, wearied a' day sawin',
 Daunert down to Mungo Blue's.

Dryster Jock was sitting cracky,
 Wi' Pate Tamson o' the Hill;
 "Come awa," quo' Johnny, "Watty—
 Haith, we'se hae anither gill!"

Watty, glad to see Jock Jabos,
 And sae mony neibours roun';
 Kicket frae his shoon the snawba's,
 Syne ayont the fire sat down.

Owre a board, wi' bannocks heapit,
 Cheese, and stoups, and glasses stood;
 Some were roaring, ithers sleepit,
 Ithers quietly chew their cud.

Jock was selling Pate some tallow,
 A' the rest a racket hel'—
 A' but Watty, wha, poor fallow,
 Sat and smoket by himsel'.

Mungo filled him up a toothfu'
 Drank his health and Meg's in ane;
 Watty, puffing out a mouthfu',
 Pledged him wi' a dreary grane.

“ What’s the matter, Watty, wi’ you ?
 Trowth your chafts are fa’in’ in !
 Something’s wrang—I’m vexed to see you—
 Gudesake ! but ye’re desperate thin ! ”

“ Ay, ” quo’ Watty, “ things are altered,
 But its past redemption now ;
 L—d ! I wish I had been haltered
 When I married Maggy Howe !

“ I’ve been poor, and vex’d, and raggy :
 Try’d wi’ troubles no that sma’ ;
 Them I bore— but marrying Maggy
 Laid the cap-stane o’ them a’.

“ Nicht and day she’s ever yelpin’,
 Wi’ the weans she ne’er can gree :
 When she’s tired wi’ perfect skelpin’,
 Then she flees like fire on me.

“ See you, Mungo ! when she’ll clash on
 Wi’ her everlasting clack,
 Whyles I’ve had my nieve, in passion,
 Lifted up to break her back. ”

“ O, for gudesake, keep frae cuffets ! ”
 Mungo shook his head and said,
 “ Weel I ken what sort o’ life it’s ;
 Ken ye, Watty, how I did ?—

“ After Bess and I were kippled,
 Soon she grew like ony bear,
 Brak’ my shins, and, when I tipped,
 Harl’t out my very hair !

“ For a wee I quietly knuckled,
 But, when naething wad prevail,
 Up my claes and cash I buckled—
 ‘ Bess, for ever fare-ye-weel ! ’

“ Then her din grew less and less aye,
 Haith, I gart her change her tune ;
 Now a better wife than Bessy
 Never stept in leather shoon.

“ Try this, Watty—When you see her
 Raging like a roaring flood,
 Swear that moment that ye’ll lea’ her—
 That’s the way to keep her good.”

Laughing, sangs, and lasses’ skirls,
 Echoed now out through the roof,
 “ Done ! ” quo’ Pate, and syne his arls
 Nailed the Dryster’s wauket loof.

In the thrang o’ stories tellin’,
 Shaking haun’s, and ither cheer,
 Swith ! a chap comes on the hallan,
 “ Mungo, is oor Watty here ? ”

Maggy’s weel kent tongue and hurry,
 Darted through him like a knife,
 Up the door flew—like a fury
 In came Watty’s scaulding wife.

“ Nasty, gude-for-naething being !
 O, ye snuffy, drucken sow !
 Bringing wife and weans to ruin,
 Drinking here wi’ sic a crew !

“ Devil nor your legs were broken.
 Sic a life nae flesh endures.
 Toiling like a slave to slocken
 You, ye dyvor and your whores !

“ Rise ! ye drucken beast o’ Bethel !
 Drink’s your night and day’s desire ;
 Rise this precious hour ! or faith I’ll
 Fling your whisky i’ the fire,”

Watty heard her tongue unhallow'd,
 Pay'd his groat wi' little din,
 Left the horse while Maggy follow'd,
 Flyting a' the road behin'.

Fowk frae every door cam' lamping.
 Maggy curst them ane and a',
 Clappit wi' her haun's, and stamping,
 Lost her bauchles i' the snaw.

Hame, at length, she turn'd the gavel,
 Wi' a face as white's a clout,
 Raging like a very devil,
 Kicking stools and chairs about.

“Ye'll sit wi' your limmers round you !
 Hang you, sir, I'll be your death !
 Little hauds my haun's, confound you,
 But I'll cleave you to the teeth.”

Watty, wha, 'midst this oration,
 Eyed her whyles but durstna speak,
 Sat like patient Resignation,
 Trem'ling by the ingle-cheek.

Sad his wee drap brose he suppet,
 Maggy's tongue gaed like a bell.
 Quietly to his bed he slippet
 Sighing aften to himsel' :

“Nane are free frae some vexation,
 Ilk ane has his ills to dree ;
 But through a' the hale creation
 Is a mortal vex'd like me ?”

A' night lang he row'd and gaunted.
 Sleep or rest he couldna' tak' ;
 Maggy, aft wi' horror haunted,
 Mum'lin', started at his back.

Soon as ere the morning peepit,
 Up rase Watty, waefu' chiel',
 Kiss'd his weanies while they sleepit,
 Wauken'd Meg, and socht fareweel.

“Fareweel Meg !—And O ! may Heaven
 Keep you aye within his care ;
 Watty's heart you've lang been grievin',
 Now he'll never fash you mair.

“Happy could I been beside you,
 Happy baith at morn and e'en ;
 A' the ills that e'er betide you,
 Watty aye turned out your frien'.

“But ye ever like to see me
 Vex'd and sighin' late and ear',
 Fareweel, Meg, I've sworn to lea' thee,
 So thou'll never see me mair.”

Meg, a' sabbing, sae to lose him,
 Sic a change had never wist,
 Held his haun' close to her bosom,
 While her heart was like to burst.

“O my Watty ! will ye lea' me,
 Frien'less, helpless, to despair ?
 O ! for this ae time forgi'e me,
 Never will I vex you mair.”

“Ay ! ye've aft said that, and broken
 A' your vows ten times a-week,
 No, no, Meg !—see, there's a token
 Glittering on my bonnet cheek.

“Owre the seas I march this morning,
 Listed, tested, sworn and a',
 Forced by your confounded girning—
 Fareweel, Meg ! for I'm awa'.”

Then Poor Maggy's tears and clamour
 Gushed afresh, and louder grew,
 While the weans, wi' mournfu' yamour,
 Round their sabbing mither flew.

“Through the yirth I'll waunder wi' you—
 Stay, O Watty! stay at hame;
 Here, upon my knees, I'll gie you
 Ony vow you like to name.

“See your poor young lammies pleadin',
 Will ye gang and break our heart?
 No a house to put our head in,
 No a friend to tak' our part!”

Ilka word came like a bullet,
 Watty's heart begoud to shake,
 On a kist he laid his wallet,
 Dichted baith his een and spake.

“If ance mair I could by writing,
 Lea' the sodgers and stay still,
 Wad you swear to drap your flytin'?”
 “Yes, O Watty! yes, I will.”

“Then,” quo' Watty, “mind, be honest;
 Aye to keep your temper strive;
 Gin ye break this dreadfu' promise,
 Never mair expect to thrive.

“Marg'et Howe! this hour ye solemn
 Swear by everything that's good,
 Ne'er again yoor spouse to scauld him,
 While life warms your heart and blood.

“That ye'll ne'er in Mungo's seek me,
 Ne'er put drucken to my name,
 Never out at e'ning steek me,
 Never gloom when I come hame.

“That ye’ll ne’er, like Bessy Miller,
 Kick my shins or rug my hair,
 Lastly, I’m to keep the siller;
 This upon your saul you swear?”

“O – h !” quo’ Meg ; “Aweel,” quo’ Watty,
 “Fareweel ! faith I’ll try the seas ;”
 “O stand still,” quo’ Meg, and grat aye ;
 “Ony, ony way ye please.”

Maggy syne, because he prest her,
 Swore to a’ thing owre again ;
 Watty lap, and danced, and kiss’d her ;
 Wow ! but he was wondrous fain.

Down he threw his staff victorious ;
 Aff gaed bonnet, claes, and shoon ;
 Syne below the blankets, glorious,
 Held anither Hinneymoon !

Bessie Bell and Mary Gray.

The story on which this popular ballad is founded has been often told, and is so charged with tender pathos that it never fails to command attentive hearing. It belongs to the time of the great plague, or pestilence, which, down to the year 1665, was the terror of Scotland, and which at one time reduced the city of Perth of about one-sixth of its population. The common tradition is that Bessie Bell and Mary Gray were the daughters of two country gentlemen in the neighbourhood of Perth, and an intimate friendship subsisted between them. Bessie Bell, daughter of the laird of Kinvaid, was on a visit to Mary Gray, at her father’s house of Lednock, now called Lynedoch, when the plague of 1666 broke out in the country. To avoid the infection, the two young ladies built themselves a bower in a very retired and romantic spot known as the Burn-braes, on the side of the Brachie Burn, situated about three-quar-

ters of a mile west from Lynedoch House. Here they lived for some time ; but the plague raging with great fury, they caught the infection from a young gentleman of Perth who, it is said, was in love with the one or the other, or with them both ; and who, having discovered their rural habitation and the scanty fare it afforded, had made it his daily duty to supply them with provisions from the " Borough town." According to a traditionary story which I have received at various times from the lips of old persons in Perthshire, the provisions were not the vehicle by which the pestilence was conveyed. But the young gentleman on one of his visits having brought with him, among other presents for their gratification, a rare necklace which he had purchased of a Jew, and which had unhappily been originally the property of one who had died of the plague, the infection was in this way communicated to the young ladies, and proved fatal to them both. According to custom in cases of the plague, they were not buried in the ordinary place of sepulture, but in a secluded spot called the Dronach-haugh, at the foot of the brae of the same name, and near to the bank of the river Almond. The young man having also died of the plague, was laid at their feet. Dronoch, or Dronoch, in the Gaelic means sorrowful, therefore the likelihood is that this piece of ground takes its name from the fact of these hapless young persons being buried in it.

The earliest authentic information concerning the grave of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray is found contained in a letter dated 21st June, 1781, written by Major Barry of Lednock; and published in the Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Vol. II., 1822. This gentleman explains that when he came first to Lednock he was shown in a part of the grounds called the Dronach-haugh, a heap of stones almost covered with briars, thorn, and fern, and which he was assured was the burial place of the hapless ladies whose names are immortalised in the fragment of ballad poetry bearing their names as its title. Major Barry caused all the rubbish to be removed from the little spot of classic ground, and inclosed it with a wall, planted it round with flowering shrubs, made up the grave double, and fixed a stone in the wall, on which were engraved the names of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray.

In 1787 Lynedoch estate passed into the possession of Mr. Thomas Graham of Balgowan, afterwards Lord Lynedoch, and the wall erected round the graves in the Dron-

ach-haugh by Major Barry half a century before, being discovered by this later proprietor, on his return from a lengthened pilgrimage abroad, to have fallen into a dilapidated state, he had the remains of the wall removed and a neat stone parapet and iron railings five feet high placed round the spot. He also covered the graves with a stone slab, on which were inscribed the words, "They lived, they loved, they died." This railing still stands; but the stone slab within the railing is not visible to the eye, being covered with stones heaped up cairn-wise, brought hither by the many visitors who have made pilgrimages to this famous Scottish shrine.

The original verses—two in number—were first printed by Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, under the title of "The Twa Lassies"; and, one or two necessary corrections excepted, are as follows:—

O, Bessie Bell and Mary Gray,
 They war twa bonnie lassies!
 They biggit a bower on yon burn-brae,
 And theekit it o'er wi' rashies.
 They theekit it o'er wi' rashies green,
 They theekit it o'er wi' heather,
 But the pest cam' frae the Borough's toun
 And slew them baith thegether.

They thocht to lie in Methven kirkyard
 Amang their noble kin;
 But they maun lie in Dronach-haugh
 And beik fornent the sun.
 And Bessie Bell and Mary Gray,
 They war twa bonnie lassies!
 They biggit a bower on yon burn-brae,
 And theekit it o'er wi' rashies.

Starting with the first four lines of the above, Allan Ramsay produced a song which is sometimes printed in the collections. It is a performance not without merit, but as the author has dared to transform the burden of the verses from tender pathos to lively humour, we give him credit for it with a grudge, for the good reason that in so far as his version gains popularity a sweetly-pathetic historic romance loses its hold on the public mind.

The subjoined beautiful rendering of the tradition in ballad verse will be welcome to many. The author, James Duff, known as "the Methven poet," was a gardener to trade, and flourished in the early part of the present century. He was the author of the popular song, "Lassie wi' the yellow coatie." His volume of poems, published at

Perth in 1816, and which contains the following ballad, is now very scarce. Duff, it will be seen, does not adhere to the traditionary story, but gives free rein to his poetic fancy. Unlike Allan Ramsay, however, he maintains the original spirit of the tender romance.

WHEN plague and death, a dreary space,
Pervaded Britain's isle ;
When sorrow sat on many a face,
And few were seen to smile.

On Almond side, as poets tell,
There dwelt two ladies gay ;
The one was named fair Bessie Bell,
The other Mary Gray.

Fast knit in close relation's bands,
Their friendship still increas'd ;
And each was heiress of the lands
Her sires had long possess'd.

Thus Bessie Bell and Mary Gray
To years of beauty grew ;
While death around them ev'ry day
Confirm'd his mission true.

By fear impress'd, it struck their mind
To live recluse from man ;
And long they sought to find a spot
Convenient for their plan—

To build a bower on Almond side,
Within a lonely wood,
Where herbs and nuts and fruit supplied
Those maidens for their food.

Here many months in humble guise
They fix'd their lone abode ;
Unknown or seen by human eyes,
They spent their time with God.

Religion in their early youth
Had oft their mind employ'd,
And trusting now in sacred truth,
Much comfort they enjoy'd.

No costly table here was spread
With dishes rich and fine ;
Nor humble page, in liv'ry clad,
Pour'd out the homely wine.

The bramble grape, the hazel nut,
The crystal spring that flow'd,
Were all, it seem'd, those maidens sought,
And all that heav'n bestow'd.

No gaudy weeds those ladies wore,
Nor di'monds had to boast ;
Nor silk, nor fur, from foreign shore,
Brought home with toil and cost.

The flax that wav'd on yonder field
Supplied them linen white :
The wool which Scotia's mountains yield
Here clad them day and night.

Here Nature spread her beauties wide,
In ev'ry flow'r that springs ;
And music swell'd on either side,
From ev'ry bird that sings.

The lark awak'd them in the morn,
With her delightful note ;
The linnet warbled from the thorn,
Around their humble cot.

Thus far remov'd from humankind,¹
They thought themselves secure ;
Nor foul infection could they find,
Nor death discry their door.

But ah ! the fire of ardent love
Conceal'd in Bessie's breast,
Which nought but fate could disapprove,
Bereav'd her mind of rest.

A neighb'ring youth, of manners mild,
And much respected birth,
Her near acquaintance from a child,
And conscious of her worth.

Who long had sighed for Bessie Bell,
And long conceal'd his pain ;
At length had told his tender tale,
Nor was his suit in vain ;

For she, it seems, had likewise lov'd,
Though close she kept the same ;
No wonder then her heart approv'd,
When he declar'd his flame.

Oft by sweet Almond's flow'ry side,
This youthful pair had rov'd ;
Where oft he styl'd fair Bess his bride,
And told how much he lov'd.

But now that he had lost his fair,
No peace on earth had he ;
His mind was fill'd with anxious care,
And sad perplexity.

Both town and country, far and near,
He sought for Bessie Bell ;
But ah ! no tidings he could hear,
For none her home could tell.

Thus did this youth, day after day,
His search for her renew ;
Nor pass'd the stranger on his way,
But ask'd if he her knew.

“ Oh ! have you seen fair Bessie Bell,
The flow'r of womankind ;
Oh ! gentle stranger, can you tell
Where I this nymph might find ?

“ Her hair is like the threads of gold,
Tied with a ribbon blue ;
Her frame was cast in beauty's mould,
With Nature's likeness true.”

Then would he to the winds complain
Of his hard destiny ;
Or breath'd his plaint in mournful strain,
Or sad soliloquy.

“ Oh ! love, my unrelenting foe,
And cause of all my pain,
Must I the sweets of life forego,
And waste my youth in vain.

“ Oh ! hear my plaint, ye pow'rs above,
And mitigate my woe ;
Oh ! had she known how much I love,
She had not left me so.

“ The dove may take a morning flight,
And leave her mate to mourn ;
But long before the fall of night
Will to her nest return.

“ Sure some unhallow'd rival's hand
Has borne my fair aside ;
Perhaps this night in wedlock's band,
My Bess becomes his bride.

“ Oh ! would some angel lead the way,
Or point what course to take ;
Tho' thousand dangers round her lay,
I'd brave them for her sake.

“ But why complain of Bessie Bell,
Or think of fortune ill !
Oh ! could I hope (for who can tell),
Perhaps she loves me still.

“ But see ! the sun has left the sky,
The shades of night draw near ;
The fleecy clouds of crimson dye
Begin to disappear.

“ No hamlet round me I can spy,
But bleak and dreary waste ;
Where shall a wan'drer safely lye
His wearied limbs to rest.

“ To Lynedock Hall I'll bend my way,
Where friendship I shall find ;
There lives her uncle, worthy Gray,
Of feeling heart and kind.

“ My mournful tale of slighted love
To him I will declare ;
A heart like his, no doubt, 't will move
To sympathetic care.

“ But see ! from yon embow'ring shade
What glimm'ring taper shines ;
Perhaps some Hermit there is fled,
And now in hunger pines.

“ I'll haste me hence perhaps in time,
Ere death has closed his eye,
To succour life was ne'er a crime,
Though even doomed to die.”

Then straight he hied him to the spot,
From whence this taper shone ;
At length he reach'd the humble cot,
Built of green sod alone.

The roof of pyramidal form,
Cut from the neighb'ring bushes ;
And as a shelter from the storm,
'Twas thatch'd o'er with rushes.

He round it gaz'd with wond'ring eyes,
To think upon the choice ;
But who can paint his sweet surprise,
To hear a female voice.

He paus'd to think what hapless fair
Might in this bower dwell ;
But oh ! think what his feelings were,
To hear his Bessie Bell !

An eager transport fired his breast,
Regardless of all harms,
The door he gently backwards press'd,
And lock'd her in his arms.

But who can paint in colours fair,
This sweet, this tender scene ;
Ye fervent lovers now declare,
Nor dare, for once, to feign.

Her faithful cousin, Mary Gray,
Upon a couch reclin'd ;
The sacred volume by her lay,
Her guide and counsel kind.

Alarm'd to find a youth so rude,
Had found their sweet retreat ;
And see a stranger thus intrude,
She sunk beside her seat.

Her balmy lips of rosy hue,
Appear'd like lifeless clay ;
Her eyes like pearly drops of dew,
Their lustre died away.

At length she heav'd a melting sigh,
O'ercome with fear and grief ;
The stranger heard and turn'd his eye,
Then sprung to her relief.

E'en love, with all its boasted charms,
He for a moment spurn'd,
And held her friendly in his arms,
Till life and sense return'd.

Her eyes resum'd their lustre bright,
Her lips their scarlet hue ;
Her raven-locks and bosom white,
His admiration drew.

A sudden stupor seiz'd his thought,
But how, he could not tell ;
He, for a moment, quite forgot
His peerless Bessie Bell.

'Twas but a moment, and no more,
This conflict he endur'd ;
The fair he long had lov'd before,
But spake and he was cured.

“ Oh ! Mary dear, my cousin kind,
And partner of my woe ;
Was ruthless fate itself design'd
To break my comfort so ?

“ This is my much-lamented friend,
Young William is his name ;
His love for me, which knows no end,
Has been in this to blame.

“ But now that fortune’s fickle wheel
Has brought my friend to me,
Come share with me the joy I feel,
And I’ll do so with thee.”

Thus said, she spread a towel white,
Upon her cousin’s knee ;
Then brought the best, that well she might,
And served them cheerfully.

No questions ask’d, no faults were found,
Nor studied forms were here ;
’Twas sweet content the supper crown’d,
And welcome for good cheer.

With hand and heart they jointly strove
His comfort to procure ;
Sure love alone can answer love,
And render bliss secure.

I need not here in words describe
The minutes wing their way
Unheeded, till the feather’d tribe
Proclaim’d approaching day.

The lark, the linnet, and the thrush,
With warbling notes and wild,
Began to chant on every bush,
While bright Aurora smiled.

When hand in hand, the loving pair,
They left the humble cell,
The heartfelt joys of love to share,
And all its griefs to tell.

’Twas by sweet Almond’s limpid stream,
Where sporting fishes play,
Young William and his lovely dame,
That morning took their way.

Here all that love could say was said,
Or virtuous truth invent ;
And here the day was fix'd to wed,
With blushing free consent.

This done, young William took his leave,
And homeward bent his way ;
While Bess was left no more to grieve,
But wait the wish'd-for day.

With joy he hied him home to tell,
So well's his journey sped,
And how he found his Bessie Bell,
Embow'r'd in yonder shade.

He told his friends they must provide
'Gainst the appointed hour,
To welcome home his lovely bride,
And grace the nuptial bow'r.

But now it pains my heart to speak,
And all must grieve to hear,
Our young bridegroom fell soon so sick
That death itself seem'd near.

The best of human skill was tried,
The first advice was given ;
But all in vain, young William died,
He died in hopes of heaven.

Thus to disease a victim fell,
A youth of spotless fame,
Whose latest words were, " Bessie Bell " ;
Life ended with her name.

Now let us turn to yonder bow'r,
Where these two maidens gay,
Prepar'd to meet the nuptial hour,
Th' appointed marriage day.

But ah ! the pestilential breath,
As many still suppose,
Of their late stranger, prov'd their death,
Though sweet as summer rose.

And there, unseen, their bodies lay,
Till by some wand'rer found ;
And here their graves are seen this day,
Denied the sacred ground.

This simple stone and ivy'd wall,
Directs the stranger's way,
To let the tear of pity fall,
A tribute due to pay.

This worthy Barry fenced around,
With many a shrub and tree ;
This spot he styled sequester'd ground,
And still deserves to be.

Here Almond o'er its pebled bed,
Meanders soft and sweet ;
There many a winding walk and shade,
Where lovers daily meet.

Here gallant Graham, of well-won fame,
Has fix'd his mansion seat,
And greatly beautified the same
With woods and gardens sweet.

His matchless skill, and boundless taste,
At Lynedock now to view,
Have brought him many a noble guest,
Which never Scotland knew.

But here my muse must quit her theme,
Nor more the numbers tell ;
May fortune wait on worthy Graham,
And peace to Bessie Bell.

The Bonnie House o' Airlie.

There are various readings of this popular ballad : but they differ only in detail, the main incidents being always the same. Its locality and historical basis are briefly as follows :—During the great civil war of the seventeenth century, the Earl of Airlie, in Forfarshire, adhered firmly to the Royal cause, and in consequence rendered himself particularly obnoxious to the Covenanting party, who, during the Earl's absence in England, attacked his houses of Forter and Airlie, and plundered and burned them to the ground. Spalding says :—“The Earl of Airly went from home to England, fearing the troubles of the land, and that he should be pressed to subscribe the Covenant, whether he would or not, whilk by fleeing the land he resolved to eschew as well as he could, and left his eldest son, the Lord Ogilvie, a brave young nobleman, behind him at home. The Estates or Tables learning of his departure, directed the Earls of Montrose and Kinghorne to go to the place of Airly, and to take in the same, and for that effect to carry cartows [cannon] with them ; who went and summoned the Lord Ogilvie to render the house (being an impregnable strength by nature, well manned by all sort of munition and provision necessary), who answered his father was absent, and he left no such commission with him as to render his house to any subjects, and that he would defend the samen to his power, till his father returned from England. There were some shots shot the house, and some from the house ; but the assailants finding the place invulnerable, by nature of great strength, without great skaith, left the place without meikle loss on either side ; these departed therefrae in June. Now the Committee of Estates finding no contentment in this expedition, and hearing how their friends of the name of Forbes, and others in the country, were daily injured and oppressed by Highland lymmers, broken out of Lochaber, Clan Gregor out of Brae of Athol, Brae of Mar, and divers other places ; therefore they gave order to the Earl of Argyle to raise men out of his own country, and first to go to Airly and Furtour, two of the Earl of Airly's principal houses, and to take in and destroy the same, and next to go upon their lymmers and punish them ; likeas, conform to his order, he raises an army of about five thousand men, and marches towards Airly ; but

the Lord Ogilvie, hearing of his coming with such irresistible force, resolves to flee, and leave the house manless : and so for their own safety they wisely fled ; but Argyle most cruelly and inhumanly enters the house of Airly, and beats the same to the ground, and right sua he does to Furtour, syne spoiled all within both houses, and such as could not be carried away, they masterfully brake down and destroyed." Argyle was at feud with the Ogilvies of Airlie, and is said to have heartily enjoyed the commission to sack their stronghold, and lost no time in putting his orders into execution. After plundering Airlie Castle, he set it on fire, and afterwards razed the walls. In an account written by James Gordon, parson of Rothiemay, it is said that Argyle "was seen taking a hammer in his hand and knocking down the hewed work of the doors and windows till he did sweat with heat at his work." From Airlie he proceeded to Forter—which, by the way, is the scene of the dialogue of the ballad, and not Airlie at all—where Lady Ogilvie was, being then near her confinement. Argyle is said to have behaved to her with much cruelty, turning her out of doors, and even refusing to grant permission to her grandmother, and his own kinswoman, the Lady Drummie, to receive her into her House of Kelly. The House of Forter was also razed to the ground, but not until the Campbells had kept possession of it for several months.

The following version of the ballad will be found in some unimportant particulars to differ from any other, and to compare favourably with any one yet published.

It fell upon a day, and a bonnie summer day,
 When the aits grew green and the barley,
 That there fell out a great dispute
 Between Argyle and Airlie.

The Duke o' Montrose has written to Argyle
 To come in the morning early,
 And he's up and awa' by the back o' Dunkeld,
 To plunder the bonnie House o' Airlie.

Lady Ogilvie look'd ower frae her high castle wa',
 And O, but she sigh'd sairly,
 When she saw Argyle wi' a hunder o' his men,
 Come to plunder the bonnie House o' Airlie.

“ Come down, come down, Lady Ogilvie,” he says,
 “ Come down, and kiss me fairly,
 Or I swear by the sword that hangs in my hand
 I winna leave a stannin’ stane in Airlie.”

“ I’ll no come down to thee, proud Argyle,
 Nor wad I kiss thee fairly ;
 I’ll no come down thou fause, fause lord,
 Tho’ thou shouldna leave a stannin’ stane in Airlie.

“ But if my gude lord had been at hame,
 As he’s awa’ wi’ Charlie,*
 There durstna a Campbell in a’ Argyle
 Set a fit upon the bonnie green o’ Airlie.

“ If my gude lord were here this nicht,
 As he is wi’ King Charlie,
 The dearest blude o’ a’ thy kin
 Wad slocken the burnin’ o’ Airlie.

“ O, I ha’e borne him seven bonnie sons,
 The youngest ne’er saw his daddie,
 And though I had as mony ower again,
 I wad gi’e them a’ to Prince Charlie.”

Argyle in a rage attacked the bonnie ha’,
 And he’s to the plundering fairly ;
 And tears tho’ he saw, like dewdrops fa’,
 In a lowe he set the bonnie House o’ Airlie.

“ What lowe is yon ?” quo’ the gude Lochiel,
 “ That lowps o’er the hill-taps clearly ?”
 “ By the God of my kin !” cried the young Ogilvie,
 “ It’s my ain dear bonnie House o’ Airlie !

* Charles I.

“ It’s no’ the bonnie house, nor the lands a’ reft,
 That grieves my heart sae sairly ;
 But O, the winsome dame, and the sweet babes I left.
 They’ll be smoor’d in the black reek o’ Airlie.”

“ Draw your dirks ! draw your dirks !” cried the brave
 Lochiel ;
 “ Unsheath your swords !” cried Charlie,
 “ And we’ll kindle sic a lowe round the fause Argyle,
 And licht it wi’ a spark out o’ Airlie.”

Young Tamlane.

The “ Tale of the Young Tamlane,” the scene of which is laid in Ettrick Forest, is mentioned in “ The Complaynt of Scotland,” printed in 1549 ; and the ballad is said to be a favourite still with the rural inhabitants of the Border counties.

“ Carterhaugh is a plain, at the conflux of the Ettrick and Yarrow, in Selkirkshire, about a mile above Selkirk, and two miles below Newark Castle, a romantic ruin which overhangs the Yarrow, and which is said to have been the habitation of our heroine’s father, though others place his residence in the Tower of Oakwood. The peasants point out, upon the plain, those curious rings, which vulgar credulity supposes to be traces of the Fairy revels. Here they say, were placed the stands of milk and of water, in which ‘ Tamlane ’ was dipped, in order to effect the disenchantment ; and upon these spots, according to their mode of expressing themselves, the grass will never grow. Miles Cross (perhaps a corruption of Mary’s Cross,) where fair Janet is said to have awaited the arrival of the Fairy train, is said to have stood near the Duke of Buccleuch’s seat of Bowhill, about half a mile from Carterhaugh. In no part of Scotland, indeed, has the belief in Fairies maintained its ground with more pertinacity than in Selkirkshire. The most sceptical among the lower ranks only venture to assert that their appearances and mischeivous

exploits have ceased, or at least become infrequent since the light of the Gospel was diffused in its purity."—*Whitelaw*.

The following version is derived mainly from the "Border Minstrelsy," a good many verses, for various reasons, being deleted.

" O I forbid ye, maidens a',
 That wear gowd in your hair,
 To come or gae by Carterhaugh,
 For young Tamlane is there."

But up and spak her, fair Janet,
 The fairest o' her kin,
 " I'll come and gae to Carterhaugh
 And ask nae leave o' him."

She has kilted her green kirtle
 A little abune her knee ;
 And she has braided her yellow hair
 A little abune her bree.

She has prink'd hersel', and preen'd hersel',
 By the ae light o' the moon,
 And she's awa' to Carterhaugh,
 To speak wi' young Tamlane.

And when she cam' to Carterhaugh,
 She gaed beside the well,
 And there she fand his steed standing,
 But he wasna there himsel'.

She hadna pu'd a red red rose,
 A rose but barely three,
 When up and starts a wee, wee man
 At Lady Janet's knee !

Says, " Why pu' ye the rose, Janet ?
 What gars ye break the tree ?
 Or why come ye to Carterhaugh,
 Withouten leave o' me ?"

Says, "Carterhaugh it is mine ain ;
 My daddie gave it me ;
 I'll come and gang to Carterhaugh,
 And ask nae leave o' thee."

He's ta'en her by the milk-white hand,
 Amang the leaves sae green ;
 And sair and meikle was the love
 That fell the twa between.

He's ta'en her by the milk-white hand,
 Amang the roses red ;
 And they hae vow'd a solemn vow
 Ilk ither for to wed.

"The truth ye'll tell to me, Tamlane,
 A word ye maunna lee ;
 Gin e'er ye was in haly chapel,
 Or sained * in Christentie !"

"The truth I'll tell to thee, Janet,
 A word I winna lee ;
 I was ta'en to the good church-door,
 And sained as well as thee.

"Randolph, Earl Murray, was my sire,
 Dunbar, Earl March, is thine ;
 We loved when we were children small,
 Which yet you well may mind.

"When I was a boy just turn'd of nine,
 My uncle sent for me,
 To hunt, and hawk, and ride wi' him,
 And keep him companie.

* Hallowed.

“ There came a wind out of the north,
A sharp wind and a snell,
And a dead sleep came over me,
And frae my horse I fell ;

“ The Queen o’ Fairies keppit me,
In yon green hill to dwell.
I am a fairy, lyth and limb ;
Fair lady, view me well.

“ But we that live in Fairy-land
No sickness know nor pain,
I quit my body when I will
And take to it again.

“ We sleep in rose-buds, soft and sweet,
We revel in the stream,
We wanton lightly on the wind,
Or glide on a sun-beam.

“ And I would never tire, Janet,
In fairy-land to dwell ;
But aye, at ilka seven years,
They pay the teind to hell ;
But I’m sae fat and fair o’ flesh,
I fear ’twill be mysel’ !

“ This night is Hallowe’en, Janet,
The morn is Hallowday,
And gin ye dare your true love win,
Ye hae nae time to stay.

“ The night it is good Hallowe’en,
When fairy folk will ride,
And she that wad her true love win,
At Miles Cross she maun bide.

“ And ye maun gae to the Miles Cross,
Between twal hours and one,
Tak’ haly water in your hand,
And cast a compass roun’.”

“ And how shall I thee ken, Tamlane?
And how shall I thee knaw,
Amang sae many unearthly knights,
The like I never saw?”

“ The first company that passes by,
Say na, and let them gae ;
The neist company that passes by,
Say na, and do right sae ;
The third company that passes by,
Then I’ll be ane o’ thae.

“ For I ride on the milk-white steed,
Wi’ a gold star in my crown ;
Because I was a christen’d knight,
They gie me that renown.

“ First let pass the black, Janet,
And syne let pass the brown,
But grip ye to the milk-white steed,
And pu’ the rider doun.

“ My right hand will be gloved, Janet,
My left hand will be bare ;
And these the tokens I gie thee,
Nae doubt I will be there.

“ They’ll turn me in your arms, Janet,
An adder and a snake ;
But haud me fast, let me not pass,
Gin ye would be my maik.

“ They’ll turn me in your arms, Janet,
An adder and an ask ;
They’ll turn me in your arms, Janet,
A bale that burns fast.

“ They’ll turn me in your arms, Janet,
A red-hot gad o’ airn ;
But haud me fast, let me not pass,
For I’ll do you nae harm.

“ First dip me in a stand o’ milk,
Then in a stand o’ water ;
But haud me fast, let me not pass ;
I’ll be your bairn’s father.

“ They’ll shape me in your arms, Janet,
A dove, but and a swan :
And last they’ll shape me in your arms
A mother-naked man :
Cast your green mantle over me—
I’ll be mysel’ again.”

Gloomy, gloomy was the night,
And eerie was the way,
As fair Janet, in her green mantle,
To Miles Cross she did gae.

About the dead hour o’ the night,
She heard the bridles ring,
And Janet was as glad o’ that,
As ony earthly thing.

There’s haly water in her hand,
She’s cast a compass round ;
And straight she sees a fairy band
Come riding o’er the mound.

Fair Janet stood with mind unmoved,
 The dreary heath upon,
 And louder, louder waxed the sound
 As they came riding on.

And first gaed by the black, black steed,
 And then gaed by the brown ;
 But fast she gript the milk-white steed,
 And pu'd the rider down.

She pu'd him frae the milk-white steed,
 And loot the bridle fa' ;
 And up there raise an elrish cry ;
 " He's won amang us a' ! "

They shaped him in fair Janet's arms
 An ask, but and an adder ;
 She held him fast in every shape,
 To be her ain true lover.

They shaped him in her arms at last
 A mother-naked man,
 She cuist her mantle over him,
 And sae her true love wan.

Up then spak' the Queen o' Fairies,
 Out o' a bush o' broom :
 " She that has borrow'd young Tamlane,
 Has gotten a stately groom ! "

Up then spak' the Queen o' Fairies,
 Out o' a bush o' rye :
 " She's ta'en away the bonniest knight
 In a' my companie !

" But had I kenn'd, Tamlane," she says,
 " A lady wad borrow thee,
 I wad hae ta'en out thy twa grey een,
 Put in twa een o' tree !

“ Had I but kenn'd, Tamlane,” she says,
 “ Before ye came frae hame,
 I wad tane out yer heart o' flesh,
 Put in a heart o' stane.

“ Had I but had the wit yestreen,
 That I ha'e coft the day—
 I'd paid my kane seven times to hell,
 Ere you'd been won away !”

Will and Jean.

“ Scotland's Scaith : or the History of Will and Jean,” was written by Hector Macneill, a lyric poet of fine taste and fancy, the author of “ Jeanie's Black E'e,” “ Come under my Plaidie,” “ My Boy Tammy,” and other popular songs and poems. He was born at Rosebank, on the Esk, near Roslin, on the 22nd of October, 1746, adopted a commercial profession, and spent about twenty-five years of his life in the West Indies. On his return to his native land, about 1788, he took up his residence in Stirling, and entered upon a literary career. He wrote several novels, and was editor for a time of the *Scots Magazine*. The latter years of his life were spent in Edinburgh, where he died on the 15th of March, 1818, in his 72nd year. Macneill's reputation rests chiefly on his lyrical history of “ Will and Jean,” an ower true tale. Resembling Wilson's ballad of “ Watty and Meg ” in subject, its popularity was also somewhat similar, 10,000 copies of “ Will and Jean ” having been sold in a single month. The poem, were it more widely diffused, would be popular still.

PART I.

WHA was ance like Willie Gairlace—
 Wha in neighbouring town or farm?
 Beauty's bloom shone in his fair face,
 Deadly strength was in his arm.

Wha wi' Will could rin or wrastle,
 Throw the sledge, or toss the bar?
 Hap what would, he stood a castle,
 Or for safety, or for war.

Warm his heart, and mild as manfu',
 With the bauld he bauld could be;
 But to friends wha had their handfu',
 Purse and service aye were free.

When he first saw Jeanie Miller,
 Wha wi' Jeanie could compare?
 Thousands had mair brows and siller,
 But were ony half sae fair?

Saft her smile raise like May morning,
 Glinting ower Demait's* brow;
 Sweet! wi' opening charms adorning
 Strevlin's† lovely plains below.

Kind and gentle was her nature;
 At ilk place she bore the bell;
 Sic a bloom, and shape, and stature!
 But her look nae tongue can tell!

Such was Jean when Will first, mawing,
 Spied her on a thrawart beast;
 Flew like fire, and, just when fa'ing,
 Kepp'd her on his manly breast.

Light he bare her, pale as ashes,
 'Cross the meadow, fragrant, green;
 Placed her on the new-mawn rashes,
 Watching sad her opening een.

* One of the Ochil Hills, near Stirling. *Dun-ma-chit* (Gaelic), the hill of the good prospect. It is pronounced Demyit.

† The ancient name of Stirling.

Such was Will, when poor Jean, fainting,
 Drapt into a lover's arms ;
 Waken'd to his saft lamenting,
 Sighed, and blushed a thousand charms.

Soon they lo'ed, and soon they buckled ;
 Nane took time to think and rue ;
 Youth, and worth, and beauty coupled—
 Love had never less to do.

Three short years flew by fu' canty
 Jean and Will thought them but ane ;
 Ilka day brought joy and plenty,
 Ilka year a dainty wean.

Will wrought sair, but aye wi' pleasure,
 Jean, the hale day, spun and sang—
 Will and weans, her constant treasure,
 Blest wi' them, nae day seem'd lang.

Trig her house, and, oh ! to busk aye
 Ilk sweet bairn was a' her pride !
 But at this time NEWS AND WHISKY
 Sprang na up at ilk roadside.

Luckless was the hour when Willie,
 Hame returning frae the fair,
 Overtook Tam, a neighbour billie,
 Sax miles frae their hame and mair.

Simmer's heat had lost its fury,
 Calmly smiled the sober e'en ;
 Lasses on the bleachfield hurry,
 Skelping barefoot ower the green.

Labour rang wi' laugh and clatter,
 Canty hairst was just begun,
 And on mountain, tree, and water,
 Glinted saft the setting sun.

Will and Tam, wi' hearts a' loupin,
 Mark'd the hale, but couldna' bide ;
 Far frae hame, nae time for stopping,
 Baith wish'd for their ain fireside.

On they travell'd, warm and drouthy,
 Cracking ower the news in town ;
 The mair they crack'd the mair ilk youthy
 Pray'd for drink to wash news down.

Fortune, wha but seldom listens
 To poor merit's modest prayer,
 And on fools heaps needless blessin's,
 Harken'd to our drouthy pair.

In a howm, whase bonnie burnie
 Whimpering row'd its crystal flood,
 Near the road, where trav'lers turn aye,
 Neat and bield, a cot-house stood.

White the wa's, wi' roof new theekit,
 Window brods just painted red ;
 Lown 'mang trees and braes it reekit,
 Hafflins seen and hafflins hid.

Up the gavel end, thick spreadin',
 Crap the clasping ivy green ;
 Back ower, firs the high craigs cleadin',
 Raised a' round a cozie screen.

Down below, a flowery meadow
 Join'd the burnie's rambling line ;—
 Here it was Meg Howe, the widow,
 This same day set up her sign.

Brattling down the brae, and near its
 Bottom, Will first marv'ling sees—
 “ *Porter, Ale, and BRITISH SPIRITS,* ”
 Painted bright between twa trees.

“Goodsake ! Tam, here’s walth for drinking ;
 (Wha can this new comer be ?)”

“Hoot !” quo’ Tam, “there’s drouth in thinking—
 Let’s in, Will, and syne we’ll see.”

Nae mair time they took to speak or
 Think of ought but reaming jugs,
 Till three times in humming liquor
 Ilk lad deeply laid his lugs.

Sloken’d now, refresh’d and talking,
 In cam’ Meg (weel skill’d to please)—
 “Sirs, ye’re surely tired wi’ walking—
 Ye maun taste my bread and cheese.”

“Thanks,” quo’ Will, “I canna tarry.
 Pick mirk night is setting in :
 Jean, poor thing ! ’s her lane, and eerie—
 I maun to the road and rin.”

“Hoot !” quo’ Tam, “what’s a’ the hurry ?
 Hame’s now scarce a mile o’ gate—
 Come ! sit down—Jean winna weary :
 Dear me, man, it’s no sae late !”

Will, owercome wi’ Tam’s oration,
 Baith fell to, and ate their fill ;
 “Tam,” quo’ Will, “in mere discretion,
 We maun hae the widow’s gill.”

After ae gill cam’ anither—
 Meg sat cracking ’tween them twa ;
 Bang ! cam’ in Mat Smith and’s brither,
 Geordie Brown, and Sandie Shaw.

Neighbours, wha ne’er thought to meet here,
 Now sat down wi’ double glee ;
 Ilka gill grew sweet and sweeter—
 Will got hame ’tween twa and three.

Jean, poor thing, had lang been greetin' ;
 Will, next morning, blamed Tam Lowes ;
 But, ere lang, a weekly meetin'
 Was set up at Maggy Howe's.

PART II.

Maist things hae a sma' beginning,
 But wha kens how things will end ?
 Weekly clubs are nae great sinning,
 If folk hae enough to spend.

But nae man o' sober thinking
 E'er will say that things can thrive,
 If there's spent in weekly drinking
 What keeps wife and weans alive.

Drink maun aye hae conversation,
 Ilka social soul allows ;
 But in this reforming nation,
 Wha can speak without the NEWS ?

News, first meant for state physicians,
 Deeply skill'd in courtly drugs ;
 Now, when a' are politicians,
 Just to set folks by the lugs.

Maggie's club, wha could get nae light
 On some things that should be clear,
 Found ere lang the fault, and ae night
 Clubb'd, and got the *Gazetteer*.*

* The Edinburgh Gazetteer, a violent opposition paper, published in 1793-4.

Twice a-week to Maggie's cot-house,
 Swift by post the papers fled ;
 Thoughts spring up, like plants in hot-house,
 Every time the news are read.

Ilk ane's wiser than anither—
 "Things are no gaun right," quo' Tam ;
 "Let us aftener meet thegither—
 Twice a-week's no worth a d—n."

See them now in grave convention,
 To mak a' things "square and even ;"
 Or at least wi' firm intention
 To drink sax nights out o' seven.

'Mid this sitting up and drinking,
 Gathering a' the news that fell,
 Will, wha wasna yet past thinking,
 Had some battles wi' himsel'.

On a'e hand, drink's deadly poison
 Bore ilk firm resolve awa' ;
 On the ither, Jean's condition
 Rave his very heart in twa.

Weel he saw her smother'd sorrow,
 Weel he saw her bleaching cheek !
 Mark'd the smile she strave to borrow,
 When, puir thing, she couldna speak !

Jean, at first, took little heed o'
 Weekly clubs 'mang three or four ;
 Thought, kind soul ! that Will had need o'
 Heartsome hours when wark was ower.

But when now that nightly meetings
 Sat and drank frae sax till twa—
 When she found that hard-earn'd gettings
 Now on drink were thrown awa ;

Saw her Will, wha ance sae cheerie
 Raise ilk morning wi' the lark,
 Now grown mauchless, dowf, and sweer aye
 To look near his farm or wark ;

Saw him tyne his manly spirit,
 Healthy bloom, and sprightly e'e ;
 And o' love and hame grown wearit ;
 Nightly frae his family flee ;—

Wha could blame her heart's complaining ?
 Wha condemn her sorrows meek ?
 Or the tears that now ilk e'ening
 Bleach'd her lately crimson'd cheek ?

Will, wha lang had rued and swither'd,
 (Aye ashamed o' past disgrace)
 Mark'd the roses as they wither'd
 Fast on Jeanie's lovely face.

Mark'd—and felt wi' inward racking,
 A' the wyte lay wi' himsel' ;
 Swore next night he'd mak a breaking—
 D—d the club and news to hell.

But, alas ! when habit's rooted,
 Few hae pith the root to pu' ;
 Will's resolves were aye non-suited—
 Promised aye, but aye got fou ;

Aye at first at the *convening*,
 Moralised on what was right ;
 Yet over clavers entertaining,
 Dozed and drank till braid daylight.

Things at length draw near an ending—
 Cash runs out ; Jean, quite unhappy,

Sees that Will is now past mending,
Tynes a' heart, and taks a—drappy ! *

Ilka drink deserves a posey—
Port makes men rude, *claret* civil ;
Beer maks Britons stout and rosy,
WHISKY maks ilk wife—a devil.

Jean, wha lately bore affliction
Wi' sae meek and mild an air,
School'd by whisky, learns new tricks soon,
Flytes, and storms, and rugs Will's hair.

Jean, sae late the tenderest mither,
Fond of ilk dear dawted wean :
Now, heart-harden'd a' thegither,
Skelps them round frae morn till e'en.

Jean, wha vogie, loed to busk aye
In her hame-spun, thrifty wark,
Now sells a' her braws for whisky,
To her last gown, coat, and sark !

Robin Burns, in mony a ditty,
Loudly sings in whisky's praise ;
Sweet his sang !—the mair's the pity
E're on it he wared sic lays.

O' a' the ills poor Caledonia
E'er yet pree'd, or e'er will taste,
Brew'd in hell's black Pandemonia,
Whisky's ill will scaith her maist !

* The author cannot refrain from seizing the last opportunity he may ever have, to caution his female readers against the vice here intentionally introduced. Women are not sufficiently aware of the dangers annexed to the *smallest* indulgence in spirituous liquors. A delicate frame or a susceptible mind experiencing a temporary relief from a pernicious stimulus, has recourse to it at a time when the best *cordials* are fortitude and resignation. Hence the deplorable habit of dram-drinking—a habit the most disgusting—the most degrading to the female character.

Wha was ance like Willie Gairlace ?
 Wha in neighbouring town or farm ?
 Beauty's bloom shone in his fair face,
 Deadly strength was in his arm !

When he first saw Jeanie Miller,
 Wha wi' Jeanie could compare ?
 Thousands had mair brows and siller,
 But were ony half sae fair ?

See them *now*—how changed wi' drinkin' !
 A' their youthfu' beauty gane ?—
 Daver'd, doited, dazed, and blinkin',
 Worn to perfect skin and bane !

In the cauld month o' November,
 (Claise, and cash, and credit out)
 Cow'ring ower a dying ember,
 Wi' ilk face as white's a clout ;

Bond and bill, and debts a' stopped,
 Ilka sheaf selt on the bent !
 Cattle, beds, and blankets roused,
 Now to pay the laird his rent.

No another night to lodge here,
 No a friend their cause to plead !
 He taen on to be a sodger,
 She, wi' weans, to beg her bread !

O' a' the ills poor Caledonia
 E'er yet pree'd, or e'er will taste,
 Brew'd in hell's black Pandemonia
 Whisky's ill will scaith her maist !

PART III.

Oh ! that folk wad weel consider
 What it is to tyne a—*name*,
 What this warld is a' thegither,
 If bereft o' honest fame !

Poortith ne'er can bring dishonour,
 Hardships ne'er breed sorrow's smart,
 If bright *Conscience* taks upon her
 To shed sunshine round the heart.

But wi' a' that wealth can borrow,
 Guilty shame will aye look down ;
 What maun then shame, want, and sorrow,
 Wandering sad frae town to town !

Jeanie Miller, ance sae cheerie,
 Ance sae happy, good, and fair,
 Left by Will, next morning, drearie,
 Taks the road o' black Despair !

Cauld the blast—the day was sleeting ;
 Pouch and purse without a plack !
 In ilk hand a bairnie greeting,
 And the third tied on her back.

Wan her face, and lean and haggard,
 Ance sae sonsy—ance sae sweet ;
 What a change !—unhoused and beggar'd,
 Starving, without claise or meat !

Far frae ilk kent spot she wander'd,
 Skulking like a guilty thief ;
 Here and there uncertain daunder'd,
 Stupified wi' shame and grief ;

But soon shame for bygane errors
 Fled ower fast for e'e to trace,
 When grim death wi' a' his terrors
 Cam' ower ilk sweet bairnie's face.

Spent wi' toil, and cauld, and hunger,
 Baith down drapt, and down Jean sat ;
 Dazed and doited now nae longer,
 Thought—and felt—and bursting grat.

Gloamin' fast, wi' mirky shadow,
 Crap ower distant hill and plain ;
 Darken'd wood, and glen, and meadow,
 Adding fearfu' thoughts to pain.

Round and round, in wild distraction,
 Jeanie turn'd her tearfu' e'e ;
 Round and round for some protection—
 Face nor house she couldna see !

Dark and darker grew the night aye ;
 Loud and sair the cauld winds thud !
 Jean now spied a sma' bit lichtie
 Blinkin' through a distant wood.

Up wi' frantic haste she started :
 Cauld nor fear she felt nae mair ;
 Hope for ae bright moment darted
 Through the gloom o' dark Despair.

Fast ower fallow'd lea she brattled,
 Deep she wade through bog and burn ;
 Sair wi' steep and craig she battled,
 Till she reach'd the hoped sojourn.

Proud, 'mang scenes o' simple nature,
 Stately auld, a mansion stood
 On a bank, whase sylvan feature
 Smiled out ower the roaring flood.

Summer here, in varied beauty,
 Late her flowery mantle spread,
 Where auld chestnut, aik, and yew tree,
 Mingling, lent their friendly shade.

Blasted now wi' winter's ravage,
 A' their gaudy livery cast,
 Wood and glen, in wailings savage,
 Howl and murmur to the blast !

Darkness stalk'd wi' Fancy's terror—
 Mountains moved, and castle rock'd !
 Jean, half dead wi' toil and horror,
 Reach'd the door, and loudly knock'd.

“Wha thus rudely wakes the sleeping ?”
 Cried a voice wi' angry grane ;
 “Help ! oh help !” quo' Jeanie, weeping—
 “Help my infants, or they're gane !

“Nipp'd wi' cauld—wi' hunger faintin'—
 Baith lie speechless on the lea !
 Help !” quo' Jeanie, loud lamentin',
 “Help my lammies, or they'll dee !”

“Wha thus travels, cauld and hungry,
 Wi' young bairns sae late at een ?
 Beggars !” cried the voice, mair angry,
 “Beggars ! wi' their brats, I ween.”

“Beggars *now*, alas ! wha lately
 Help'd the beggar and the poor !”
 “Fy ! gudeman,” cried ane discreetly,
 “Taunt nae poortith at our door.

“Sic a night and tale thegither
 Plead for mair than anger's din ;
 Rise, Jock,” cried the pitying mither—
 “Rise, and let the wretched in.”

"Beggars, now, alas ! wha lately
 Help'd the beggar and the poor !"
 "Enter !" quo' the youth, fu' sweetly,
 While up flew the open door.
 "Beggar, or what else, sad mourner !
 Enter without fear or dread ;
 Here, thank God ! there's aye a corner
 To defend the houseless head.
 "For your bairnies cease repining ;
 If in life, ye'll see them soon."
 Aff he flew ; and, brightly shining,
 Through the dark clouds brak the moon.

PART IV.

Here, for ae night's kind protection,
 Leave we Jean and weans a while ;
 Tracing Will in ilk direction,
 Far frae Britain's fostering isle.
 Far frae scenes o' saft'ning pleasure,
 Love's delights and beauty's charms !
 Far frae friends and social leisure—
 Plunged in murdering War's alarms !
 Is it nature, vice, or folly,
 Or ambition's feverish brain,
 That sae aft wi' melancholy
 Turns, sweet Peace, thy joys to pain ?—
 Strips thee of thy robes of ermine,
 (Emblems of thy spotless life),
 And in War's grim look alarming,
 Arms thee with the murderer's knife ?—

A' thy gentle mind upharrows—
 Hate, revenge, and rage upears ;
 And for hope and joy (twin marrows),
 Leaves the mourner drown'd in tears ?

Willie Gairlace, without siller,
 Credit, claise, or ought beside,
 Leaves his ance-loved Jeanie Miller,
 And sweet bairns, to warld wide !—

Leaves his native cozie dwelling,
 Shelter'd haughs, and birken braes,
 Greenswaird howes, and dainty mailing,
 Ance his profit, pride, and praise.

Deck'd wi' scarlet, sword, and musket,
 Drunk wi' dreams as fause as vain ;
 Fleech'd and flatter'd, roosed and buskit,
 Wow ! but Will was wond'rous fain :

Rattling, roaring, swearing, drinking—
 How could Thought her station keep ?
 Drams and drumming (faes to thinking)
 Dozed reflection fast asleep.

But in midst o' toils and dangers,
 Wi' the cauld ground for his bed,
 Compass'd round wi' faes and strangers,
 Soon Will's dreams o' fancy fled.

Led to battle's blood-dyed banners
 Waving to the widow's moan,
 Will saw glory's boasted honours
 End in life's expiring groan !

Round Valenciennes' strong-wa'd city,
 Thick ower Dunkirk's fatal plain,
 Will (though dauntless) saw wi' pity
 Britain's valiant sons lie slain.

Fired by Freedom's burning fever,
 Gallia strack death's slaughtering knell ;
 Frae the Schelde to Rhine's deep river,
 Britons fought—but Britons fell !

Fell unaided ! though cemented
 By the faith o' Friendship's laws ;
 Fell unpitied—unlamented,
 Bleeding in a thankless cause ! *

In the thrang o' comrades deeing,
 Fighting foremost o' them a',
 Swift fate's winged ball cam' fleeing,
 And took Willie's leg awa' ;

Thrice frae aff the ground he started,
 Thrice to stand he strave in vain ;
 Thrice, as fainting strength departed,
 Sigh'd—and sank 'mang hundreds slain.

On a cart, wi' comrades bleeding,
 Stiff wi' gore, and cauld as clay,
 Without cover, bed, or bedding,
 Five lang nights Will Gairlace lay

In a sick house, damp and narrow,
 (Left behind wi' mony mair),
 See Will next, in pain and sorrow,
 Wasting on a bed o' care.

Wounds, and pain, and burning fever,
 Doctors cured wi' healing art—
 Cured, alas ! but never, never
 Cool'd the fever at his heart.

* Alluding to the conduct of the Dutch.

For when a' were sound and sleeping,
 Still and on, baith ear' and late,
 Will in briny grief lay steeping,
 Mourning o'er his hapless fate.

A' his gowden prospects vanish'd,
 A' his dreams o' warlike fame,
 A' his glittering phantoms banish'd,
 Will could think o' nought but—hame !

Think o' nought but rural quiet,
 Rural labour, rural ploys,
 Far frae carnage, blood, and riot,
 War, and a' its murdering joys.

PART V.

Back to Britain's fertile garden
 Will's return'd (exchanged for faes),
 Wi' ae leg, and no ae farden,
 Friend, or credit, meat, or claise.

Lang through county, burgh, city,
 Crippling on a wooden leg,
 Gathering alms frae melting pity—
 See poor Gairlace forced to beg !

Placed at length on Chelsea's bounty,
 Now to langer beg thinks shame ;
 Dreams ance mair o' smiling plenty—
 Dreams o' former joys and hame.

Hame ! and a' its fond attractions
 Fast to Will's warm bosom flee ;
 While the thoughts o' dear connexions
 Swell his heart and blind his e'e.

“ Monster ! wha could leave neglected
 Three sma’ infants and a wife,
 Naked—starving—unprotected !
 Them, too, dearer ance than life.

Villain ! wha wi’ graceless folly
 Ruin’d her he ought to save,
 Changed her joys to melancholy,
 Beggary, and—perhaps a grave ! ”

Starting, wi’ remorse distracted,
 Crush’d wi’ Grief’s increasing load,
 Up he bang’d ; and, sair afflicted,
 Sad and silent took the road.

Sometimes briskly, sometimes flaggin’,
 Sometimes helpit, Will got forth ;
 On a cart, or in a waggon,
 Hirplin’ aye towards the north.

Tired ae e’enin’, stepping hooly,
 Pondering on his thrawart fate,
 In the bonny month o’ July,
 Willie, heedless, tint his gate.

Saft the southlan’ breeze was blawin’,
 Sweetly sugh’d the green aik wood ;
 Loud the din o’ streams fast fa’in’,
 Strak the ear wi’ thundering thud.

Ewes and lambs on braes ran bleeting,
 Linties chirp’d on ilka tree ;
 Frae the west, the sun, near setting,
 Flamed on Roslin’s * towers sae hie.

* Roslin Castle.

Roslin's towers, and braes sae bonnie,
 Craigs and water, woods and glen—
 Roslin's banks, unpeer'd by ony,
 Save the Muses' Hawthornden !*

Ilka sound and charm delighting,
 Will (though hardly fit to gang)
 Wander'd on through scenes inviting,
 List'ning to the mavis' sang.

Faint at length, the day fast closing,
 On a fragrant strawberry steep,
 Esk's sweet stream to rest composing,
 Wearied nature drapp'd asleep.

“Soldier, rise !—the dews o' e'ening
 Gathering, fa' wi' deadly scaith ;
 Wounded soldier, if complaining,
 Sleep na here and catch your death.

“Traveller, waken !—night advancing,
 Cleads wi' grey the neighbouring hill ;
 Lambs nae mair on knowes are dancing—
 A' the woods are mute and still.”

“What hae I,” cried Willie, waking,
 “What hae I frae nicht to dree ?
 Morn, through clouds in splendour breaking,
 Lights nae bright'ning hope to me.

“House, nor hame, nor farm, nor steading,
 Wife nor bairns hae I to see ;
 House, nor hame, nor bed, nor bedding—
 What hae I frae nicht to dree ?”

* The ancient seat of the celebrated poet, William Drummond, who flourished in 1585.

“Sair, alas ! and sad and many
 Are the ills poor mortals share ;
 Yet, though hame nor bed ye hae na,
 Yield na, soldier, to despair.

“What’s this life, sae wae and wearie,
 If Hope’s bright’ning beams should fail ?
 See ! though night comes dark and eerie,
 Yon sma’ cot-light cheers the dale.

“There, though wealth and waste ne’er riot,
 Humbler joys their comforts shed—
 Labour, health, content, and quiet ;
 Mourner, there ye’ll find a bed.

“Wife, tis’ true, wi’ bairnies smiling,
 There, alas ! ye needna seek—
 Yet there bairns, ilk wae beguiling,
 Paint wi’ smiles a mother’s cheek.

“A’ her earthly pride and pleasure
 Left to cheer her widow’d lot ;
 A’ her warldly wealth and treasure
 To adorn her lanely cot.

“Cheer, then, soldier ! ’midst affliction
 Bright’ning joys will aften shine ;
 Virtue aye claims Heaven’s protection—
 Trust to Providence divine !”

PART VI.

Sweet as Rosebank’s* woods and river,
 Cool when summer’s sunbeams dart,
 Came ilk word, and cool’d the fever
 That lang burn’d at Willie’s heart.

* Rosebank, near Roslin, the author’s place of nativity.

Silent stepp'd he on, pair fallow !
 Listening to his guide before,
 Ower green knowe and flowery hallow,
 Till they reach'd the cot-house door.

Laigh it was, yet sweet though humble,
 Deck'd wi' honeysuckle round ;
 Clear below Esk's waters rumble,
 Deep glens murmuring back the sound.

Melville's towers,* sae white and stately,
 Dim by gloamin' glint to view ;
 Through Lasswade's dark woods keek sweetly
 Skies sae red, and lift sae blue.

Entering now, in transport mingle,
 Mither fond and happy wean,
 Smiling round a canty ingle,
 Bleezin' on a clean hearthstane.

“ Soldier, welcome ! come, be cheerie,
 Here ye'se rest and tak' your bed ;
 Faint, waes me ! ye seem, and weary,
 Pale's your cheek sae lately red ! ”

“ Changed I am,” sigh'd Willie till her ;
 “ Changed nae doubt, as changed can be !
 Yet, alas ! does Jeanie Miller
 Nought o' Willie Gairlace see ? ”

Hae ye mark'd the dews o' morning
 Glittering in the sunny ray,
 Quickly fa', when, without warning,
 Rough blasts came and shook the spray ?

* Melville Castle, the seat of the Right Honourable Henry Dundas
 [afterwards Viscount Melville.]

Hae ye seen the bird, fast fleein',
 Drap, when pierced by death mair fleet ?
 Then, see Jean, wi' colour deein',
 Senseless drap at Willie's feet !

After three lang years' affliction,
 (A' their waes now hush'd to rest),
 Jean ance mair, in fond affection,
 Clasps her Willie to her breast ;

Tells him a' her sad—sad sufferings !
 How she wander'd, starving, poor,
 Gleaning pity's scanty offerings,
 Wi' three bairns, frae door to door.

How she served, and toil'd, and fever'd,
 Lost her health, and syne her bread ;
 How that grief, when scarce recover'd,
 Took her brain, and turn'd her head.

How she wander'd round the county
 Mony a live-lang night her lane ;
 Till at last an angel's bounty
 Brought her senses back again :

Gae her meat, and claise, and siller,
 Gae her bairnies wark and lear ;
 Lastly, gae this cot-house till her,
 Wi' four sterling pounds a year.

Willie, hearkening, wiped his een aye ;
 " Oh ! what sins hae I to rue !
 But say, wha's this angel, Jeannie ?"
 " Wha," quo' Jeannie, " but Buccleuch ? *

* The Duchess of Buccleuch, the unwearied patroness and supporter of the afflicted and the poor.

“ Here, supported, cheer’d, and cherish’d,
 Nine blest months I’ve lived, and mair;
 Seen these infants clad and nourish’d,
 Dried my tears, and tint despair :

“ Sometimes sewin’, sometimes spinnin’,
 Light the lanesome hours gae round ;
 Lightly, too, ilk quarter rinnin’
 Brings yon angel’s helping pound.”

“ Eight pounds mair,” cried Willie, fondly—
 “ Eight pounds mair will do nae harm ;
 And, oh Jean ! gin friends were kindly,
 Twall pounds soon might stock a farm.

“ There, ance mair, to thrive by pleughin’,
 Freed frae a’ that peace destroys—
 Idle waste and drucken ruin,
 War, and a’ its murdering joys !”

Thrice he kiss’d his lang-lost treasure—
 Thrice ilk bairn : but couldna speak :
 Tears of love, and hope, and pleasure
 Stream’d in silence down his cheek !

Aiken=Drum.

Commonly printed under the title of “The Brownie of Blednoch,” the ballad of “Aiken-drum” has wakened the drowsy wits of many a rural Scot. The author, William Nicholson, was a native of the parish of Borgue, in Galloway, and was born in August, 1782. In his youth weak eyesight prevented his progress at school, and afterwards unfitted him for the occupations of shepherd or ploughman. Consequently he began life as a pedlar, and wandered up and down in his native district for thirty years singing his

own songs, and reciting his own tales and ballads. Under the title of "Tales in Verse, and Miscellaneous Poems, descriptive of Rural Life and Manners," he issued in 1814 a collection of his rhymed wares, by which it has been said he cleared the handsome sum of £100. In 1828 a second edition of his poems appeared, with a memoir of the author from the pen of Mr. Macdiarmid of Dumfries. Latterly Nicholson fell into sadly dissipated habits, and became a wandering gaberlunzie. He died at Kildarroch, in Borgue, in May 1849. "We would rather have written these lines," said the late Dr. John Brown, "than any amount of Aurora Leighs, Festuses, or such like, with all their mighty 'somethingness,' as Mr. Bailey would say. For they, are they not the 'native woodnotes wild' of one of nature's darlings? Here is the indescribable, inestimable, unmistakable impress of genius. Chaucer, had he been a Galloway man, might have written it, only he would have been more garrulous, and less compact and stern. It is like 'Tam o' Shanter' in its living union of the comic, the pathetic, and the terrible. Shrewdness, tenderness, imagination, fancy, humour, word-music, dramatic power, even wit—all are here. I have often read it aloud to children, and it is worth anyone's while to do it. You will find them repeating all over the house for days such lines as take their heart and tongue."

There cam' a strange wight to our town en',
 An' the fient a body did him ken ;
 He tirded na lang, but he glided ben,
 Wi' a weary, dreary hum.

His face did glow like the glow o' the west,
 When the drumly cloud has it half o'ercast ;
 Or the struggling moon when she's sair distrest,
 O, sirs ! 'twas Aiken-drum.

I trow the bauldest stood aback,
 Wi' a gape an' a glower till their lugs did crack,
 As the shapeless phantom mumblin' spak'—
 "Hae ye wark for Aiken-drum ?"

O ! had ye seen the bairns' fright
 As they stared at the wild and unearthly wight :
 As they skulkit in 'tween the dark an' the light,
 And graned out " Aiken-drum ! "

" Sauf us ! " quoth Jock, " d'ye see sic een ? "
 Cries Kate, " There's a hole where a nose should ha'
 been :
 An' the mouth's like a gash that a horn had ri'en ;
 Wow ! keep 's frae Aiken-drum ! "

The black dog growlin' cowered his tail,
 The lassie swarfed, loot fa' the pail ;
 Rob's lingle brak as he men't the flail,
 At the sight o' Aiken-drum.

His matted head on his breast did rest,
 A lang blue beard wander'd down like a vest ;
 But the glare o' his e'e hath nae bard exprest,
 Nor the skimes o' Aiken-drum.

Round his hairy form there was naething seen,
 But a philabeg o' the rashes green,
 An' his knotted knees played aye knoit between—
 What a sight was Aiken-drum !

On his wauchie airms three claws did meet,
 As they trailed on the grun' by his taeless feet ;
 E'en the auld gudeman himsel' did sweat,
 To look at Aiken-drum.

But he drew a score, himsel' did sain,
 The auld wife tried, but her tongue was gane ;
 While the young ane closer clasped her wean,
 An' turned frae Aiken-drum.

But the cantie auld wife cam' till her breath,
 An' she thocht the Bible might ward aff scaith,
 Be it banshee, bogle, ghaist, or wraith—
 But it feared na Aiken-drum.

“His presence protect us!” quoth the auld gudeman;
 “What wad ye, whare won ye, by sea or lan’?
 I conjure ye—speak—by the beuk in my han’!”
 What a grane ga’e Aiken-drum!

“I lived in a land whare we saw nae sky,
 I dwalt in a spot whare a burn rins na by;
 But I’se dwell now wi’ you gin ye like to try—
 Hae ye wark for Aiken-drum?”

“I’ll shiel a’ your sheep i’ the mornin’ sune,
 I’ll berry your crap by the light o’ the mune,
 An’ ba’ the bairns wi’ an unkent tune,
 If ye’ll keep puir Aiken-drum.

“I’ll lowp the linn when ye canna wade,
 I’ll kirn the kirn, an’ I’ll turn the bread,
 An’ the wildest filly that ever ran rede,
 I’se tame ‘t,” quoth Aiken-drum.

“To wear the tod frae the flock on the fell,
 To gather the dew frae the heather bell,
 An’ to look at my face in your clear chrystal well,
 Might gi’e pleasure to Aiken-drum.

“I’se seek nae guids, gear, bond, nor mark;
 I use nae beddin’, shoon, nor sark;
 But a cogfu’ o’ brose ‘tween the light an’ the dark,
 Is the wage o’ Aiken-drum.”

Quoth the wily auld wife, “The thing speaks weel;
 Our workers are scant—we hae routh o’ meal;
 Gif he’ll do as he says—be he man, be he deil—
 Wow! we’ll try this Aiken-drum.”

But the wenches skirl'd, "He's no be here !
 His eldrich look gars us swarf wi' fear ;
 An' the fient a ane will the house come near,
 If they think but o' Aiken-drum.

"For a foul an' a stalwart ghaist is he,
 Despair sits broodin' abune his e'e-bree,
 And unchancie to light on a maiden's e'e,
 Is the glower o' Aiken-drum."

"Puir clipmalabors ! ye hae little wit ;
 Is'tna Hallowmas now, an' the crap out yet ?"
 Sae she silenced them a' wi' a stamp o' her fit—
 "Sit yer wa's down, Aiken-drum !"

Round a' that side what wark was dune
 By the streamer's gleam, or the glance o' the mune ;
 A word, or a wish, an' the brownie cam' sune,
 Sae helpfu' was Aiken-drum.

But he slade aye awa or the sun was up,
 He ne'er could look straught on Macmillan's cup ; *
 They watch'd—but nane saw him his brose ever sup,
 Nor a spune sought Aiken-drum.

On Blednoch banks, an' on chrystal Cree,
 For mony a day a toiled wight was he ;
 And the bairns they played harmless roun' his knee,
 Sae social was Aiken-drum.

But a new-made wife, fu' o' frippish freaks,
 Fond o' a' things feat for the five first weeks,
 Laid a mouldy pair o' her ain man's breeks
 By the brose o' Aiken-drum.

* A communion cup belonging to a minister of the name of Macmillan, long preserved in the parish of Kirkcowan, and employed as a test by which to ascertain the orthodoxy of suspected persons.

Let the learned decide when they convene,
 What spell was him an' the breeks between ;
 For frae that day forth he was nae mair seen,
 An' sair miss'd was Aiken-drum.

He was heard by a herd gaun by the Thrieve,
 Crying, " Lang, lang now may I greet an' grieve ;
 For, alas ! I ha'e gotten baith fee an' leave—
 O ! luckless Aiken-drum ! "

Awa', ye wrangling sceptic tribe,
 Wi' your pros an' your cons wad ye decide
 'Gain the sponisible voice o' a hale countryside,
 On the facts 'bout Aiken-drum ?

Though the Brownie o' Blednoch lang be gane,
 The mark o' his feet's left on mony a stane ;
 An' mony a wife an' mony a wean
 Tell the feats o' Aiken-drum.

E'en now, light loons that jibe an' sneer
 At spiritual guests an' a' sic gear,
 At the Glashnoch Mill hae swat wi' fear,
 An' look'd roun' for Aiken-drum.

An' gudely folks hae gotten a fright,
 When the mune was set, an' the stars gied nae light ;
 At the roarin' linn, in the howe o' the night,
 Wi' sughs like Aiken-drum.

Mill o' Tifty's Annie.

This ballad is founded on real circumstances, the heroine being the daughter of the Miller of Tifty, near Fyvie, in Aberdeenshire, and the hero the Trumpeter of the Laird of Fyvie. Both parties are said to have been remarkable

for their good looks. They had met, they had looked, they had been conquered, each by the beauty of the other. Andrew Lammie wished to make Annie (or rather Agnes, for such it appears was her real name) Smith his happy bride, and Annie as ardently wished to become so; but the obdurate parent stepped in in the shape and character of the Miller of Tifty, who esteemed the match beneath his dignity, and would have none of the Trumpeter. The unhappy result of the affair was that both lovers died of a broken heart. Annie's death, according to her gravestone in Fyvie Churchyard, took place on the 19th January, 1631. Andrew, however, it would appear, did not die as related in the ballad. It is asserted that several years afterwards the melancholy fate of Tifty's Annie being mentioned, and the ballad being sung in a company in Edinburgh where he was present, he remained silent and motionless, till at length he was discovered by a groan suddenly bursting from him, and several of the buttons flying from his waistcoat.

"The beauty, gallantry, and amiable qualities of Bonnie Andrew Lammie seem," says Mr. Jamieson, "to have been proverbial wherever he went; and the good old 'Cummer' in Allan Ramsay as the best evidence of the power of her own youthful charms, and the best apology for having 'cast a leggen girth hersel', says:—

I'se warrant ye have a' heard tell
 O' bonnie Andrew Lammie;
 Stiffly in luv' wi' me he fell,
 As soon as e'er he saw me.
 That was a day."

It is an extremely pathetic and affecting story.

AT Mill o' Tifty lived a man,
 In the neighbourhood of Fyvie;
 He had a lovely daughter fair,
 Was calléd bonnie Annie.

Her bloom was like the springing flower
 That salutes the rosy morning;
 With innocence, and graceful mien,
 Her beauteous form adorning.

Lord Fyvie had a Trumpeter,
 Whose name was Andrew Lammie ;
 He had the art to gain the heart
 Of Mill o' Tifty's Annie.

Proper he was, both young and gay,
 His like was not in Fyvie ;
 No one was there that could compare
 With this same Andrew Lammie.

Lord Fyvie he rode by the door
 Where livéd Tifty's Annie ;
 His Trumpeter rode him before,
 Even this same Andrew Lammie.

Her mother call'd her to the door--
 " Come hear to me, my Annie ;
 Did you ever see a prettier man
 Than the Trumpeter of Fyvie ? "

She sighéd sore, but said no more ;
 Alas for bonnie Annie !
 She durst not own her heart was won
 By the Trumpeter of Fyvie.

At night, when they went to their beds,
 All slept full sound but Annie ;
 Love so opprest her tender breast,
 Thinking on Andrew Lammie.

" Love comes in at my bedside,
 And love lies down beyond me ;
 Love has possess'd my tender breast,
 And love will waste my body.

" The first time I and my love met,
 Was in the woods of Fyvie ;
 His lovely form and speech so sweet
 Soon gain'd the heart of Annie.

“ He called me mistress ; I said, No—
I'm Tifty's bonnie Annie ;
With apples sweet he did me treat,
And kisses soft and many.

“ It's up and down in Tifty's den,
Where the burn runs clear and bonnie,
I've often gone to meet my love,
My bonnie Andrew Lammie.”

But now, alas ! her father heard
That the Trumpeter of Fyvie
Had had the art to gain the heart
Of Tifty's bonnie Annie.

Her father soon a letter wrote,
And sent it on to Fyvie,
To tell his daughter was bewitched
By his servant Andrew Lammie.

When Lord Fyvie this letter read,
Oh, dear ! but he was sorry ;
“ The bonniest lass in Fyvie's land
Is bewitched by Andrew Lammie.”

Then up the stair his Trumpeter
He calléd soon and shortly—
“ Pray, tell me soon, what's this you've done
To Tifty's bonnie Annie ? ”

“ In wicked art I had no part,
Nor therein am I cannie ;
True love alone the heart has won
Of Tifty's bonnie Annie.

“ But woe betide Mill o' Tifty's pride,
For it has ruin'd many ;
He'll no ha'e 't said that she should wed
The Trumpeter of Fyvie.

- “ Where will I find a boy so kind,
That'll carry a letter cannie :
Who will run on to Tifty's town,
Give it to my love Annie ? ”
- “ Here you shall find a boy so kind,
Who'll carry a letter cannie :
Who will run on to Tifty's town,
And gi'e 't to thy love Annie. ”
- “ It's Tifty he has daughters three,
Who all are wond'rous bonnie ;
But ye'll ken her o'er a' the lave,—
Gi'e that to bonnie Annie. ”
- “ It's up and down in Tifty's den,
Where the burn rins clear and bonnie,
There wilt thou come and meet thy love,
Thy bonnie Andrew Lammie. ”
- “ When wilt thou come, and I'll attend,
My love, I long to greet thee ? ”
“ Thou may'st come to the Bridge of Sleugh,
And there I'll come and meet thee. ”
- “ My love I go to Edinbro',
And for a while must leave thee. ”
She sighèd sore, and said no more,
But “ I wish that I were with thee. ”
- “ I'll buy to thee a bridal gown,
My love, I'll buy it bonnie. ”
“ But I'll be dead ere you come back
To see your bonnie Annie. ”
- “ If you'll be true and constant too,
As my name's Andrew Lammie,
I shall thee wed when I come back
To see the lands of Fyvie. ”

“ I will be true, and constant too,
To thee, my Andrew Lammie ;
But my bridal bed will ere then be made
In the green churchyard of Fyvie.”

“ Our time is gone and now comes on,
My dear, that I must leave thee ;
If longer here I should appear,
Mill o' Tifty he would see me.”

“ I now for ever bid adieu
To thee, my Andrew Lammie ;
Ere ye come back, I will be laid
In the green churchyard of Fyvie.”

He hied him to the head of the house,
To the housetop of Fyvie ;
He blew his trumpet loud and shrill,
’Twas heard at Mill o' Tifty.

Her father locked the door at night,
Laid by the keys fu' cannie ;
And when he heard the trumpet sound,
Said—“ Your cow is lowing, Annie.”

“ My father dear, I pray forbear,
And reproach no more your Annie ;
For I'd rather hear that cow to low,
Than hae a' the kye in Fyvie.

“ I would not for my braw new gown,
And a' your gifts sae many,
That it were told in Fyvie's land,
How cruel you are to Annie.

“ But if you strike me, I will cry,
And gentlemen will hear me ;
Lord Fyvie will be riding by,
And he'll come in and see me.”

At this same time my lord came in ;
 He said—" What ails thee, Annie ?"
 "'Tis all for love now I must die,
 For bonnie Andrew Lammie."

" Pray, Mill o' Tifty, gi'e consent,
 And let your daughter marry."

" It will be with some higher match
 Than the Trunpeter of Fyvie."

" If she were come of as high a kind
 As she's adorn'd with beauty,
 I would take her unto myself,
 And make her mine own Ladye."

" It's Fyvie's lands are fair and wide,
 And they are rich and bonnie ;
 But I would not leave my own true love,
 For all the lands of Fyvie."

Her father struck her wond'rous sore,
 As also did her mother ;
 Her sisters both they did her scorn—
 But woe be to her brother !

Her brother struck her wond'rous sore,
 With cruel strokes and many ;
 He brake her back in the hall door,
 For liking Andrew Lammie.

" Alas ! my father and mother dear,
 Why so cruel to your Annie ?
 My heart was broken first by love—
 My brother has broken my body.

" Oh, mother dear, make ye my bed,
 And lay my face to Fyvie ;
 Thus will I lie, and thus will die,
 For my love Andrew Lammie !

“Ye neighbours dear, both far and near,
Ye'll pity Tifty's Annie ;
Who dies for love of one poor lad,
For bonnie Andrew Lammie.

“No kind of vice e'er stained my life,
Nor hurt my virgin honour ;
My youthful heart was won by love,
But death will me exoner.”

Her mother then she made her bed,
And laid her face to Fyvie ;
Her tender heart it soon did break ;
She ne'er saw Andrew Lammie.

But the tidings soon went up and down,
Through all the lands of Fyvie ;
That she was dead and buriéd,
Even Tifty's bonnie Annie.

Lord Fyvie he did wring his hands ;—
“Alas ! for Tifty's Annie !
The fairest flow'r's cut down by love,
That e'er sprung up in Fyvie.

“Oh, woe betide Mill o' Tifty's pride !
He might have let them marry ;
I should have gi'en them both to live
Into the lands of Fyvie.”

Her father sorely now laments
The loss of his dear Annie,
And wishes he had gi'en consent
To wed with Andrew Lammie.

Her mother grieves both ear' and late,
Her sisters, 'cause they scorn'd her ;
Sorely her brother doth mourn and grieve,
For the cruel usage gi'en her.

But now, alas ! it was too late,
 For they could not recall her ;
 Through life unhappy is their fate,
 Because they did control her.

When Andrew hame from Edinbro' came,
 With meikle grief and sorrow ;
 " My love has died for me to-day,
 I'll die for her to-morrow.

" Now I will on to Tifty's den,
 Where the burn runs clear and bonnie ;
 With tears I'll view the Bridge of Sleugh,
 Where I parted last with Annie.

" Then will I speed to the churchyard,
 To the green churchyard of Fyvie ;
 With tears I'll water my love's grave,
 Till I follow Tifty's Annie."

Ye parents grave, who children have,
 In crushing them be canny,
 Lest, when too late, you do repent ;
 Remember Tifty's Annie.

Chevy Chase.

This rude, but graphic, old heroic ballad has commanded alike the admiration of the illiterate and the learned. Ben Jonson envied its author, and Sir Philip Sidney confessed how his own soul was moved by its vigorous strains. " I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas," said Sir Philip, " that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet ; and yet it is sung by some blind crowder, with no rougher voice than rude style, which being so evil apparelled in the dirt and cobweb of that uncivil age, what

would it be trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindar?"

Many authorities affirm that the ballad has no historical foundation whatever, and that its incidents have been borrowed from the older ballad which celebrates the "Battle of Otterbourne," fought by Percy and Douglas in the year 1388. This may be quite true; and if so, it just proves that, if fact is sometimes stranger than fiction, fiction is sometimes more enduring than fact.

There are two versions of "Chevy Chase" extant—an ancient and a modern one. The older copy is in antique orthography, and chiefly for that reason I have printed the modern one, which is described in the advertisement as "The Hunting of Chevy-Chase, a bloody battle fought by Earls Douglas and Percy, where above fourteen hundred Scotsmen and near two thousand Englishmen were slain in one day."

In English copies of the ballad, the position of parties, of course, are just reversed.

GOD prosper long our noble King,
Our lives and safeties all—
A woeful hunting once there did
In Chevy Chase befall.

To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl Percy took the way,
The child may rue that is unborn,
The hunting of that day.

The stout Earl of Northumberland
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure in the Scottish woods,
Three summer days to take—

The choicest harts in Chevy Chase
To kill and bear away;
These tidings to Earl Douglas came,
In Scotland where he lay,

Who sent Earl Percy present word,
He would prevent the sport ;
The English Earl not fearing him,
Did to the woods resort,

With twenty hundred bowmen bold,
All chosen men of might—
Who knew full well in time of need
To aim their shafts aright.

The gallant greyhounds swiftly ran,
To chase the fallow deer ;
On Monday they began to hunt,
When daylight did appear.

And long before high noon they had
An hundred fat bucks slain,
Then having dined, the rovers went
To rouse them up again.

Earl Percy to the quarry went,
To view the fallow dear,
Quoth he, “ Earl Douglas promised
This day to meet me here ;

“ But if I thought he would not come,
No longer would I stay.”
With that a brave young gentleman,
Thus to the Earl did say—

“ Lo ! yonder doth Earl Douglas come,
His men in armour bright ;
Full fifteen hundred Scottish spears,
All marching in our sight ;

“ All pleasant men of Teviotdale,
Dwell on the river Tweed,”
“ Then cease your sport,” Earl Percy said,
“ And take your arms with speed.

“ And now with me, my countrymen,
Your courage forth advance ;
For there was ne'er a champion yet,
In Scotland or in France,

“ That ever did on horseback come,
But, if my hap it were,
I durst encounter man for man,
With him to break a spear.”

Lord Douglas on a milk-white steed,
Most like a baron bold,
Rode foremost of his company,
His armour shone like gold.

“ Show me,” he said, “ Whose men ye be,
That hunt so boldly here ;
That without my consent do chase
And kill my fallow deer.”

The first man that did answer make
Was noble Percy, he,
Who said, “ We list not to declare
Nor show whose men we be.

“ Yet we will spend our dearest blood,
Thy choicest harts to slay,”
Then Douglas swore a solemn oath,
And thus in rage did say—

“ E'er thus I will out-bravèd be,
One of us two shall die ;
I know thee well, an Earl thou art,
Lord Percy—so am I.

“ But trust me, Percy, pity it were,
And great offence, to kill
Any of these our harmless men,
For they have done no ill.

“ Let thou and I the battle try,
 And set our men aside ; ”
 “ Accurs'd be he,” said Earl Percy,
 “ By whom this is denied.”

Then stept a gallant squire forth,
 Witherington by name ;
 Who said he would not have it told
 To Henry his King for shame,

“ That e'er my captain fought on foot,
 And I stood looking on ;
 Ye be two Earls,” said Witherington,
 “ And I a squire alone.

“ I'll do the best that I may do,
 Whilst I have power to stand—
 Whilst I have power to wield my sword,
 I'll fight with heart and hand.”

Our Scottish archers bent their bows,
 Their hearts were good and true ;
 At the first flight of arrows sent,
 They fourscore English slew.

To drive the deer with hound and horn,
 Douglas bade on the bent,
 A captain mov'd with meikle pride,
 The spears in shivers went.

They closed full fast on every side,
 No slackness there was found,
 And many a gallant gentleman
 Lay gasping on the ground.

Oh, but it was a grief to see,
 And likewise for to hear,
 The cries of men lying in their gore,
 All scattered here and there.

At last these two stout Earls did meet,
Like chieftains of great might ;
Like lions mov'd, they feared no lord,
They made a cruel fight.

They fought until they both did sweat,
With swords of temper'd steel—
Until the blood like drops of rain,
They trickling down did feel.

“Yield thee, Percy,” Douglas said,
“In faith, I will thee bring
Where thou shalt high advanced be
By James our Scottish King.

“Thy ransom I will freely give,
And this report of thee—
Thou art the most courageous knight
That ever I did see.”

“Nay, Douglas,” quoth Lord Percy then,
“Thy proffer I do scorn ;
I will not yield to any Scot
That ever yet was born.”

With that there came an arrow keen,
Out of an English bow,
Which struck Lord Douglas to the heart,
A deep and deadly blow.

Who never spoke more words than these—
“Fight on, my merry men all !
For why, my life is at an end,
Lord Percy sees my fall.”

Then leaving off, Lord Percy took
The dead man by the hand,
And said, “Lord Douglas, for thy life
I would have lost my land.

“O ! but my very heart doth bleed
With sorrow for thy sake,
For sure a more renownèd knight
Mischance did never take.”

A knight among the Scots there was,
Who saw Earl Douglas die,
Who straight in wrath did vow revenge
Upon the Earl Percy.

Sir Hugh Montgomery was he call'd,
Who, with a spear full bright,
Well mounted on a gallant steed,
Rode fiercely through the fight.

He pass'd the English archers all,
Without e'er dread or fear,
And through Earl Percy's body then
He thrust his hateful spear.

With such a vehement force and might
He did his body gore,
The spear went through the other side,
A long cloth yard and more.

So thus did these two nobles die,
Whose courage none could stain.
An English archer then perceived
His noble lord was slain.

He had a bow bent in his hand,
Made of a trusty tree,
An arrow of a cloth yard's length,
Unto the head drew he.

Against Sir Hugh Montgomery then
So right his shaft he set,
The grey goose wing that was therein
In his heart's blood was wet.

The fight did last from break of day
Till setting of the sun ;
For when they rung the evening bell,
The battle scarce was done.

With Earl Percy there was slain,
Sir John of Ogerton ;
Sir Robert Ratcliffe, and Sir John,
Sir James, the bold baron ;

Sir George, and also good Sir Hugh,
Both Knights of good account,
Good Sir Ralph Raby there was slain,
Whose prowess did surmount.

For Witherington I needs must wail,
As one in doleful dumps—
For when his legs were smitten off,
He fought upon his stumps.

And with Earl Douglas there was slain,
Sir Hugh Montgomery ;
Sir Charles Murray, that from the field
One foot would never fly ;

Sir Charles Murray of Ratcliffe too,
His sister's son was he :
Sir David Lamb, so well esteemed,
Yet saved he could not be.

And Lord Maxwell e'en likewise
Did with Earl Douglas die.
Of fifteen hundred Scottish men,
Went home but fifty-three.

Of twenty-hundred Englishmen,
Scarce fifty-five did flee ;
The rest were slain at Chevy Chase,
Under the greenwood tree.

Next day did many widows come
Their husbands to bewail ;
They washed their wounds with brinished tears,
But all could not prevail.

Their bodies, bathed in purple blood,
They carried them away ;
They kissed them dead a thousand times,
When they were cold as clay.

The news was brought to Edinburgh,
Where Scotland's King did reign,
The brave Earl Douglas suddenly,
Was by an arrow slain.

“ Now God be with him ! ” said the King,
“ Sith 'twill no better be ;
I trust I have within my realm
Five hundred good as he.”

Like tidings to King Henry came,
Within as short a space,
That Percy of Northumberland,
Was slain at Chevy Chase.

“ O heavy news ! ” King Henry said,
“ England can witness be—
I have not any captain more
Of such account as he.”

Now of the rest, of small account,
Did many hundreds die ;
Thus ends the Battle of Chevy Chase,
Made by the Earl Percy.

The Blaeberry Courtship.

This ballad was long a popular favourite with the peasantry of the northern counties of Scotland, and copies of it are occasionally asked for even yet. As a literary effort it is much below mediocrity, but there is a charm about the story which has made it dear to the heart of the rural Scot. In Whitelaw's "Book of Scottish Ballads" there is a modern and verbally improved version given, but I prefer to print here the old Chapman's copy in all its rude simplicity :—

“Will ye go to the Highlands, my jewel, with me?
Will ye go to the Highlands, my flocks for to see?
It is health to my jewel to breathe the sweet air,
And to pull the blaeberries in the forest so fair.”

“To the Highlands, my love, I will not go with thee,
For the road it is long, and the hills they are high ;
I love this green valley and sweet corn field
More than all the blaeberries your wild mountains
yield.”

“Our hills they are bonnie when the heather's in
bloom,
It would cheer a fine fancy in the sweet month of
June
To pull the blaeberries and carry them home,
And set them on your table when December comes
on.”

Out spake her father, that saucy old man,
“Why choose not a mistress among your own clan?
It's but poor entertainment to our Lowland dames
To promise them berries and blue heather blooms.

“ Kilt up your green plaidie, walk over yon hill,
 For the sight of your Highland face does me much ill ;
 I’ll wed my own daughter, and spare pennies too,
 To whom my heart pleases, and what’s that to you ? ”

“ My plaid it is broad, it has colours anew,
 Goodman, for your kindness, I’ll leave it with you ;
 I have got a warm cordial keeps the cold from me—
 The blythe blinks of love from your fair daughter’s e’e.

“ My flocks they are thin, and my lodgings but bare,
 And you that has meikle the more you can spare ;
 Some of your spare pennies with me you will share,
 And you winna send your lassie o’er the hills bare.”

He went to his daughter to give her advice,
 Said, “ If you go with him I’m sure you’re not wise ;
 He’s a rude Highland fellow, as poor as a crow,
 He’s of the clan Caithness for aught that I know.

“ But if you go with him, I’m sure you’ll go bare,
 You’ll have nothing your father or mother can spare ;
 Of all I possess I’ll deprive you for aye,
 If o’er the hills, lassie, you do go away.”

“ It’s father keep what you’re not willing to give,
 For I will go with him as sure as I live ;
 What signifies gold or treasure or fee,
 If the hills are between my true love and me ? ”

Now she is gone with him in spite of them a’,
 Away to a place where her eyes never saw ;
 He had no gallant steed for to carry her on,
 But still he said, “ Lassie, think not the road long.”

In a warm summer’s evening they came to a glen,
 Being wearied with travel, the lassie sat down ;
 “ Get up, my brave lassie, and let us step on,
 For the sun will go down before we get home.”

“My feet are all torn, my shoes are all rent,
I’m wearied with travel and just like to faint ;
Were it not for the sake of your kind companie,
I would lay myself down in the desert and die.”

“The day is far spent and the night’s coming on,
So step you aside to yon lonely mill-town,
And there ask lodgings for thee and for me,
For glad would I be in a barn for to lie.”

“The place it looks pleasant and bonnie indeed,
But the folks are hard-hearted to them that’s in need ;
Perhaps they’ll not grant us their barn nor byre,
But I will go and ask, as it is your desire.”

The lassie went foremost. “Sure I was to blame,
To ask for a lodging myself I thought shame ;”
The lassie replied, with tears not a few—
“It’s ill ale,” said she, “that’s sour when it’s new.”

In a short time thereafter they came to a grove,
Where the flocks they were feeding, a numberless drove,
Allan stood musing the flocks for to see,
“Step on,” says the lady, “that’s no pleasure to me.”

A beautiful laddie, with green tartan trews,
And twa bonnie lassies were buchting in ewes,
They said—“Honoured master, you’re welcome again,
Lang, lang have we look’d for your coming hame.”

“Bucht in your ewes, lassies, and gang your way hame,
I’ve brought a swan frae the south, I have her to tame,
Her feathers are fallen, say where can she lie ?”
“The best bed in the house her bed it shall be.”

The lady’s heart was far down, it couldna well rise
Till many a lad and lass came in with a phrase
To welcome the lady, to welcome her home—
Such a hall in the Highlands she never thought on.

The laddies did whistle, and the lassies did sing,
They made her a supper might served a king,
Long life and happiness they wished her all round,
And they made to the lady a braw bed of down.

Early next morning he led her outbye,
He bade her look round her as far's she could spy,
“ These lands and possessions are yours, love, for aye,
Ye winna gae round them in a lang simmer day.”

“ O Allan ! O Allan ! I'm indebted to thee,
It's a debt, my dear Allan, I never can pay ;
O Allan ! O Allan ! how came you for me ?
Sure I'm not worthy your bride for to be.”

“ How call you me Allan, when Sandy's my name ?
Why call you me Allan ? Sure you are to blame ;
For don't you remember when at the school with thee,
I was hated by all, but loved aye by thee ?

“ How oft have I fed on your bread and your cheese,
Likewise when you had but a handful of peas ;
Your cruel-hearted father hound at me his dogs,
They tore my bare heels, and rave all my rags.”

“ Is this my dear Sandy whom I loved so dear ?
I have not heard of you this many a year ;
When all the rest went to bed, sleep was frae me,
For thinking what fate had been doled out to thee.”

“ My parents were born lang, lang before me,
Perhaps by this time they are drowned in the sea,
These lands and possessions they left them to me,
And I came for thee, love, to share them with thee.

“ In love we began and in love we will end,
And in joy and delight our days we will spend ;
On a voyage to your father once more we will go,
And relieve the old man from his trouble and woe.”

With men and maid servants to wait them upon,
 Away to her father in a chaise they are gone ;
 The laddie went foremost—the brave Highland loon—
 Till they came to the road that leads into the town.

When he came to the gate he gave a loud roar—
 “ Come down, gentle farmer—see who's at your door,”
 When he looked from the window and saw his child's
 face,
 With his hat in his hand he made a great phrase.

“ Keep on your hat, farmer, and don't let it fa',
 For it sets not the peacock to bow to the crow,”
 “ It's hold your tongue, Sandy, and do not taunt me,
 For my daughter's not worthy your bride for to be.”

Now he held his bridle reins till he came down,
 And then he conveyed him to a fine room ;
 With rejoicing and feasting the time flew away,
 And the father and son lived in friendship for aye.

The Herd's Ghaist.

This old ballad, the full title of which, in the Chapman's copy in my possession, is—“The Herd's Ghaist, or the Perjured Laird's Doom ; a Legend of the Auld Kirk o' Pert,” has, so far as I have seen, not found a place in any of the collections, and, like some of the others introduced here, is in imminent danger of passing out of memory. By some of the older folks in the district to which it belongs—the parish of Pert, now united to that of Logie, in the north-eastern part of Forfarshire—the tale on which it is founded is thus narrated :—A simple herd boy having excited the ire of the laird of Pert, the latter, a powerful man, flung the unconscious victim of his anger among a cairn of stones, and thereby killed him on the spot. The circumstances hav-

ing caused judicial inquiry, the laird, to exculpate himself, charged one of his own hinds with the perpetration of the murder, for which, in those days when "might was right," the poor man was hanged. The fact was, however, traditionally transmitted, and the particulars, as related in the ballad, obtained a general belief among the peasantry, viz., that, till the conjurations of the miller, the sprite had wandered under the murky cloud of night, between the kirk of Pert and an old ford in the river below the North Water Bridge.

The old Kirk of Pert, so prominent in the ballad, is now a picturesque ruin on the banks of the North Esk, somewhat similar in appearance to Kirk Alloway on the Doon, immortalised by Burns in his tale of "Tam o' Shanter."

WHENE'ER the gowden sun gaed doun,
 An' gloomie ev'nin' fell,
 Frae a fireless flame o' azure hue,
 By foot o' Pert's kirke bell,

Ane winsome boy there wont to come,
 With slae black eyne an' hair ;
 His cheiks an' lips were deadlie pale,
 An' head an' feet were bare.

Though lang atween the kirke and furde
 This sprite a-wanderin' went,
 Nae livin' either heard its tale,
 Or cause o' mourning kent.

But ae dark nicht ane miller chiel'
 Had langst the road to gae,
 The lad kept rinnin' by his side,
 Lamentin' o'er his wae.

An' when they reach'd the kirkeyarde style,
 He cry'd—"O list to me ;
 An' set ane harmless murdert boy,
 Frae lanelie wand'rin' free !"

The sturdie miller aft heard tell
 That sic a sprite was seen ;
 Though laith to bide ane ghashtlie ca',
 At last he's courage ta'en.

An' 'bout himsell wi' hazel staff,
 He made ane roundlie score ;
 Then said—" My lad, in name o' Gude, *
 What do ye wander for ? "

The laddie ga'e ane eldritch screech—
 Ane wulsome look an' bauld ;
 An' aye's he spak the thunder roll'd,
 An' fire flauchts ne'er devaul'd.

" There, there's the cairn ! " the laddie scream'd,
 " Whare life was ta'en frae me ;
 For whilk ane guiltless hireman died
 Hie on yon wither'd tree—
 Whase life the murd'rer swore awa',
 To save's ain infamie :

" But, ho ! " mair shrillie cried the boy,
 With eye on lordlie grave ;
 " Come forth thou perjur'd laird o' Pert,
 Thy name it winna save !

" Not all thy gifts to hallie kirke,
 Or alms thou didst bestow,
 Will lay the clouds o' sin an' shame
 That round thy mem'rie flow ! "

* In the art of "laying ghaists," this is ever an important precautionary proceeding, because it is superstitiously believed, that if the conjurer describes the circle in the name of the Deity, no spirit can enter it ; but, if that particular be neglected, the circle is made in vain, and there are then a thousand to one chances of his being attacked by the spirit, and deprived of life.

On this ane grizzlie form appear'd,
 An' frae the kirke wa' hied—
 " Ah ! there's the murd'rous laird o' Pert ! "
 The laddie tremblin' cried.

The hoary sprite was mute, an' fain
 Wad flown to whence it came ;
 But aye's it near'd the darksome grave.
 There rose a smoth'rin' flame ;

An' by that flame, frae hallie kirke
 The laird's rich gifts were thrown ;
 While sprites of ancient kith an' kin,
 Thus sang in waefu' tone—

" Sin' Heav'n denies thee an' thy wealth,
 Sae surelie too shall we ;
 For though thou be our ain brither,
 We hate all perjurie !

" An' frae our fam'lie tomb for aye,
 Thy name it shall be ta'en :
 An' but in page of blude an' shame,
 Nae trace o' thee'll be seen ! "

.

Bereft of friends, an' hopes of peace,
 With grief the laird was pained ;
 Ilis sprite flew here, an' then flew there,
 But peace it ne'er obtained ;

Till frae the Esk ane frichtsme fiend,
 With joyful clamour flies,
 An' fondly graspt the Laird, as gin,
 He'd been it's weddit prize !

An' just's they fled, a siller cloud
Drew round the guiltless boy,
That bore him frae this land of woe
To shades of heav'nlie joy !

Helen of Kirkconnell.

This beautiful ballad is founded on a traditionary event, the date of which cannot be satisfactorily ascertained. The locality is in the parish of Kirkpatrick-Fleming, Dumfriesshire, and the characters of the story are said to have been Helen Irving or Bell, daughter of a laird of Kirkconnell, Adam Fleming of Kirkpatrick, her accepted suitor, and a rival admirer of the heroine, whose name has escaped tradition, but who is alleged to have been a Bell of Blacket House. According to the narration of Pennant, the disfavoured lover, whose suit was approved by the young lady's family, vowed to sacrifice the successful suitor to his resentment, and watched an opportunity while the happy pair were sitting on the banks of the Kirtle, that washes these grounds. Helen perceived the desperate lover on the opposite side, and fondly thinking to save her favourite, interposed ; and, receiving the wound intended for her beloved, she fell and expired in his arms. He instantly avenged her death ; then fled into Spain, and served for some time against the Infidels. On his return, he visited the grave of his unfortunate mistress, stretched himself on it, and, expiring on the spot, was interred by her side. They rest in the burial-ground of Kirkconnell. A cross and a sword are engraven on the tombstone, together with these words—" *Hic Jacet Adamus Fleming.*" There are various readings of the ballad, all of them possessing rare lyrical beauty. The original, printed by Sir Walter Scott, consists of two parts : the first being so much superior to the second as to create doubts in Scott's mind regarding their original connection.

The following I consider is the best copy of the modern version :

I WISH I were where Helen lies !
 For night and day on me she cries ;
 I wish I were where Helen lies,
 On fair Kirkconnell lee !

Curs'd be the heart that thought the thought,
 And curs'd the hand that fired the shot,
 When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
 And died to succour me.

O think ye na my heart was sair,
 When my love dropt down and spake nae mair :
 When she did swoon wi' meikle care,
 On fair Kirkconnell lee.

As I went down the water side,
 None but my foe to be my guide ;
 None but my foe to be my guide,
 On fair Kirkconnell lee.

I lighted down, my sword did draw,
 I hackéd him in pieces sma' ;
 I hackéd him in pieces sma',
 For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare !
 I'll weave a garland o' thy hair,
 And wear the same for evermair,
 Until the day I dee.

Oh, that I were where Helen lies !
 For night and day on me she cries ;
 Out of my bed she bids me rise,
 Says " Haste, and come to me ! "

Oh, Helen fair ! oh, Helen chaste !
 Were I with thee I would be blest,
 Where thou lies low and takes thy rest
 On fair Kirkconnell lee.

I wish my grave were growing green ;
 A winding-sheet drawn o'er my een,
 And I in Helen's arms lying
 On fair Kirkconnell lee.

I wish I were where Helen lies !
 For night and day on me she cries ;
 I wish I were where Helen lies,
 On fair Kirkconnell lee !

Captain Wedderburn's Courtship.

This popular and amusing ballad is reprinted from Mr. Jamieson's text, with a few variations supplied by Mr. Kinloch.

THE Laird o' Roslin's daughter,
 Walked thro' the woods her lane ;
 And by cam' Captain Wedderburn,
 A servant to the King.
 He said unto his serving man,
 " Were't not against the law,
 I wad tak' her to my ain bed,
 And lay her neist the wa'."

" I am walking here alane," she says,
 " Amang my father's trees ;
 And you must let me walk alane,
 Kind sir, now, if you please :
 The supper bell it will be rung,
 And I'll be mist awa ;
 Sae I winna lie in your bed,
 Either at stock or wa'."

He says, "My pretty lady,
 I pray lend me your hand,
 And ye'll hae drums and trumpets
 Always at your command ;
 And fifty men to guard you wi',
 That well their swords can draw ;
 Sae we'se baith lie in ae bed,
 And ye'se lie neist the wa'."

"Haud awa frae me," she said,
 "And pray let gae my hand :
 The supper bell it will be rung ;
 I can nae langer stand ;
 My father he will angry be,
 Gin I be mist awa ;
 Sae I'll nae lie in your bed,
 Either at stock or wa'."

Then said the pretty lady,
 "I pray tell me your name ?"
 "My name is Captain Wedderburn,
 A servant to the king :
 Though thy father and his men were here,
 O' them I'd have nae awe ;
 But wad tak' you to my ain bed,
 And lay you neist the wa'."

He lichtit aff his berry-brown steed,
 And set this lady on ;
 And held her by the milk-white hand,
 Even as they rade along ;
 He held her by the middle jimp,
 For fear that she should fa',
 To tak' her to his ain bed,
 And lay her neist the wa'.

He took her to his lodging-house ;
 His landlady look'd ben ;
 Says, " Mony a pretty lady,
 In Edinbruch I've seen ;
 But sic a lovely face as thine
 In it I never saw ;
 Gae mak' her down a down-bed,
 And lay her neist the wa'.

" O haud away frae me," she says ;
 " I pray you let me be ;
 I winna gang into your bed,
 Till ye dress me dishes three :
 Dishes three ye maun dress me,
 Gin I should eat them a',
 Afore that I lie in your bed,
 Either at stock or wa'.

" It's ye maun get to my supper
 A cherry without a stane ;
 And ye maun get to my supper
 A chicken without a bane ;
 And ye maun get to my supper
 A bird without a ga' ; *
 Or I winna lie in your bed,
 Either at stock or wa'."

" It's when the cherry is in the blume,
 I'm sure it has nae stane ;
 And when the chicken's in the egg,
 I wat it has nae bane ;

* Gall. It is a popular notion in Scotland that the dove sent from the ark by Noah flew until it burst its gall, and transmitted this physical peculiarity to its descendants.—AYTOUN.

And, sin' the flood o' Noah,
 The doo she has nae ga' ;
 Sae we'll baith lie in ae bed,
 And ye'se lie neist the wa'."

"O haud your tongue, young man," she says,
 "Nor that gate me perplex ;
 For ye maun tell me questions yet,
 And that is questions six :
 Questions six ye'll tell to me,
 And that is three times twa,
 Afore I lie in your bed,
 Either at stock or wa'."

"What's greener than the greenest grass ?
 What's higher than the trees ?
 What's waur nor an ill woman's wish ?
 What's deeper than the seas ?
 What bird sings first ? And whereupon
 First doth the dew down fa' ?
 Ye sall tell afore I lay me down,
 Between you and the wa'."

"Vergris * is greener than the grass ;
 Heaven's higher than the trees ;
 The deil's waur nor a woman's wish ;
 Hell's deeper than the seas ;
 The cock craws first ; on cedar tap
 The dew down first doth fa' ;
 Sae we'll baith lie in ae bed,
 And ye'se lie neist the wa'."

"O haud your tongue, young man," she says,
 "And gie your fleechin ower,
 Unless ye find me ferlies,
 And that is ferlies four ;

* Verdigris.

Ferlies four ye maun find me,
 And that is twa and twa ;
 Or I'll never lie in your bed,
 Either at stock or wa'.

“ It's ye maun get to me a plum,
 That in December grew ;
 And ye maun get a silk mantel,
 That waft was ne'er ca'd through ;
 A sparrow's horn ; a priest unborn,
 This night to join us twa ;
 Or I'll no lie in your bed,
 Either at stock or wa'.”

“ My father he has winter fruit,
 That in December grew ;
 My mother has an Indian gown,
 That waft was ne'er ca'd through ;
 A sparrow's horn is quickly found ;
 There's ane on every claw,
 And twa upon the neb o' him ;
 And ye shall get them a'.

“ The priest, he's standing at the door,
 Just ready to come in ;
 Nae man can say that he was born,
 Nae man, unless he sin ;
 A wild boar tore his mother's side,
 He out o' it did fa' ;
 Sae we'll baith lie in ae bed,
 And ye'll lie neist the wa'.”

Little kenn'd Girzie Sinclair,
 That morning when she raise,
 That this would be the hindermost
 O' a' her maiden days.

But now there's no within the realm,
 I think, a blyther twa ;
 And they baith lie in ae bed,
 And she lies neist the wa'.

The Murder of King Kenneth.

This ballad, which is evidently a production of the present century, is founded upon the account of Kenneth's reign as given by Hollinshed in his somewhat mythical *Chronicle of Scotland*.

The best authorities state that Kenneth succeeded Culen about A.D. 971, and that his career was honourable and brilliant until near its close, when it was darkened by the murder either of a cousin or a brother. Hollinshed says it was a cousin ; and St. Berchan calls Kenneth "*Fingalach*," or the fratricide.

It is agreed by all our historians that Kenneth was killed by stratagem, somewhere near Fettercairn, about A.D. 994-5. Tradition points to Lady Finella as the contriver, and to the castle of Greencairn as the scene of his death. The figures upon the well-known sculptured stone which stands within the chapel of St. Palladius at Fordoun, are (as noticed in the ballad) popularly associated with the murder of the King.

It is interesting to remember that King Malcolm, Kenneth's father, was killed at no great distance from Fordoun, viz., at Fetteresso, where his burial place is pointed out near the Railway Station of Stonehaven.

ONE fine summer's eve, whilst wand'ring alone,
 I came to a sweet bubbling well,
 Where sat an old man, in a deep pensive mood,
 'Neath the wide spreading trees of a dell.

I softly stept forward, and greeted the sage,
 Who gave me a kind look and smile—
 "What a nice lonely spot thou hast chosen to rest,
 And the long summer eve to beguile."

“ ’Tis a sweet spot, indeed ! ” he frankly replied,
 “ And hath beauties that’s known but to few ;
 Of this well and dell, and the hills that’s around,
 We have many a legend, I trow.

“ But pray thee,” he said, “ taste the water : thou’lt find,
 It is wond’rously pleasing and cool.”
 I knelt by the side of the worthy old man,
 And drank from the time-honour’d pool.

“ But, stay, stay, my friend ! ” he cried in much haste,
 “ Of its virtues, I fear, thou can’st tell :
 For unless thou believ’st in our great Mother Church
 No charm hath this little well.”

“ The water’s as sweet to my taste, worthy sire,
 As tho’ I to thy Church did’st belong.”
 “ Aye !—but never a blessing thou ask’d from Above,
 So to God, and our Saint, thou’st done wrong.”

“ And what is the name of thy Saint ? ” I enquired,
 “ For a stranger I am to this place.”
 He cross’d his old breast, and with rev’rence replied,
 “ PALLADIUS—whose Soul is in Peace ! ”

“ Oh, tell me, I pray, what Palladius did here,
 For he flourish’d in ages bygone ; ”
 In silence again he sought aid from Above,
 Then spake in a grave hollow tone—

“ Palladius,” he said, “ came here from afar—
 From the Great Holy City of Rome ;
 And crush’d on his way the Pelagians’ creed,
 And near to this well was his home.

“ ’Twas here he proclaimed the glad tidings of Life,
 And first gave us Bishops, they say ;
 But after a long and a holy career,
 He sank to his cold bed of clay.

- “ And within yonder chapel, just over our heads,
We are told that his relics do lie ;
And that the poor pilgrims with long staves and gowns,
Came here from all airts of the sky ;
- “ There knelt they and worshipp’d for days upon end,
And fared from but barely stored scrips ;
Nor had they a measure of wine—but alone
This water to moisten their lips.
- “ And this crystal stream—thou may’st smile, but it’s true—
Was long thought so wondrous pure,
That the deadliest wounds of body or soul,
From its virtues received a cure !
- “ But the mightiest pilgrim that ever came here,
Was a monarch both famous and wise ;
But, alas for his fate !” the sage bent his head,
And tears gather’d fast in his eyes.
- “ Why griev’st thou, my friend ?” I enquir’d from my heart,
“ Was the stranger of thy kin or race ?”
- “ Ah, no ! but I grieve as all Christians should do,
When Religion cloaks deeds of disgrace,
- “ When teachers and patterns of Virtue are first
To stain their own creeds by a crime,
They stagger weak minds, and enforce a belief
That Faith’s but a creature of Time.
- “ The beggar that does as he would be done to,
Is a gem for the Crown that’s on high ;
But those who do not—whether king, peer, or priest—
Have minds that I dare not envy !
- “ But within yon old chapel, if with me thou’ll go,
I’ll show thee a trophy most fine.”
He rose slowly up, and with help climb’d the brae,
For his age it was four score and nine.

“ I thank thee,” he smilingly said as he leant
 ’Gainst the trunk of a shadowy tree—
 “ If thou livest as long in the world as I,
 Thou’lt be glad of assistance, like me !”

We enter’d the building—a small dingy place,
 With an arch in the eastermost end—
 “ ’Tis there,” he said gravely, “ Palladius was laid,
 And on him may Our Lady attend !

“ But here is the relic,” he softly observ’d,
 As he touched a rudely carv’d stone.
 “ To what,” I enquir’d, “ do those horsemen refer,
 For they seem as of ages bygone ?”

“ So truly they do, my young friend,” he said,
 “ And none their real meaning doth know ;
 Some say they relate to a treacherous deed
 Which threw the whole nation in woe !”

“ And what was the nature of that woeful deed ?
 For in tales of the past I delight.”
 “ I’ll tell it,” he said, “ tho’ the story be long,
 If thou’st got the patience to wait.”

I gladly consented, and thus he began—
 “ When Kenneth the bold ruled our isle,
 When his wars with the Danes were almost forgot,
 And the pleasures of peace ’gan to smile.

“ ’Twas then that young Malcolm, a good holy prince,
 And Kenneth’s successor in sway,
 Fell dang’rously ill, and suddenly died,
 To Scotia’s great grief and dismay.

“ ’Twas certain he died from a poisonous draught,
 But given by whom was unknown,
 Till suspicion arose from Kenneth’s great zeal
 For his son to succeed to the throne.

“ And the more to disguise his great sin and shame,
Sly Kenneth assumed meikle grief ;
And so craftily played he the wolf and the lamb,
That his falsity gained belief.

“ But with all the cunning and skill he possess’d,
Wild visions he could not allay ;
And the form of Malcolm, the young and the good,
It met him by night and by day.

“ Did he sit on the throne, or mix in the dance,
Or join in the sports of the chase,
The sweet guileless form of Malcolm aye rose
And constantly harrow’d his peace.

“ And once as he lay on his tapestried couch,
He was roused by this dire warning call—
‘ O Kenneth, prepare ; for the vengeance of God
On thee and thy kinsmen shall fall ! ’

“ He hastily sprang from his soft downy bed,
And called on the Church for his sake,
To pray for his soul—but good fathers deem’d
That Kenneth some penance should make—

“ That to the lov’d relics of saints and of priests,
He humbly and quickly should go ;
There kneel and confess, and crave strength to withstand
The power of his deadliest foe.

“ In those pious wand’rings King Kenneth came here,
And knelt at Palladius’ shrine ;
And crav’d him to plead for his pardon and peace,
That he ’mongst the holy might shine.

“ But as he repair’d with his suite by yon hill,
Greencairn’s proud turrets were seen ;
And their high-born Lady perceiving the train,
Came forth with the grace of a queen.

“ ‘O mightiest monarch !’ she said, as she knelt,
 ‘ Pray honour this dwelling of mine ;
 I am fain that your Highness and courtiers so loyal
 Should partake of a goblet of wine !’

“ They enter’d the hall, and quaff’d off the wine—
 Such splendour was ne’er before shown—
 The walls gleam’d with em’rals, and under their feet
 Choice grasses and rashes were strewn.

“ Finella beholding the courtiers’ surprise,
 As well as the King’s wistful gaze,
 Said cunningly and sweetly—‘ My sire, take thy choice
 Of aught, from the casket to vase !’

“ ‘ But here, if your Highness will step to this room,
 I’ll show thee an object more rare.’
 The King and Finella pass’d out from the hall,
 And enter’d a grand spiral stair ;

“ And there to the monarch she showed a great tower,
 With curtains from roof to the floor,
 All finely embroider’d with costlier gems
 Than royalty had e’er seen before.

“ And there he beheld a Knight made of brass,
 Of form both handsome and bold ;
 One hand held a sword of the richest device—
 The other an apple of gold.

“ ‘ Where got you this figure, my Lady?’ he said,
 ‘ For its beauty outvies all I’ve seen,’
 ‘ O take thou the apple, my Sire,’ she replied,
 ‘ A present from me to thy queen !’

“ Suspecting no harm, the King seized the prize,
 Which he straight from the effigy bore ;
 But, alas ! ’twas the charm to some hidden spring,
 For the figure ope’d wide like a door,

And from its false body wild poisoned darts flew,
Which pierced the king to the core !

“ So ’mongst those grand trophies he weltered in blood,
And powerless had felt the just sting.
For Finella’s own son and kinsmen were slain
By order of this very king !

“ Such, then, was the wonderful way she reveng’d
The wounds her proud heart had sustained ;
And won for her friend, Constantinus, the throne,
Altho’ but a short time he reign’d.

“ But some say the King mix’d in a great hunt,
That Finella had thrown in his way ;
And two of these horsemen are thought to be those
That murder’d the King on that day.
While the one in the middle, as I have been told,
Is the King in his princely array.

“ And that pointed weapon just over those spheres,
Which are joined by a crown, some aver,
Show the sceptre, the crown, and shields that were used
In Scotland when Kenneth rul’d there.

“ Tho’ all this, no doubt, is mere matter of guess,
’Tis certain, ere letters were known,
Our fathers recorded great deeds in the way
Which we see upon this very stone.”

“ But how died Finella ? ” I ask’d of the sage,
He answer’d—“ Real records are lost ;
But tradition hath told that she took her own life
In a deep rocky den near the coast—
That she leapt from the cliffs to a wild boiling pool,
Where her body was torn and toss’d ! * ”

* Den Finella, a singularly romantic spot, upon the estate of Lauriston, in the parish of St. Cyrus, Kincardineshire, is the supposed scene of Lady Finella’s death.

“ And ’tis written,” he added, “ that proofs were beheld
Of Heaven’s dread vengeance and ire ;
That it rained mighty showers, and blew mighty winds,
And the sun and the moon were like fire !

“ That Finella’s fine castle was razed to the ground,
And left, as is yet to be seen,
A mass of extensive, but unshapely ruins,
On the top of a hillock so green. *

“ But this tragic story thou surely had’st known,
And of our Apostle heard tell ;
For many more tales, unsung and unwrote,
Could be told of PALLADIUS’ WELL ! ”

The Wife o’ Auchtermuchty.

This is one of the very best of our old Scottish humorous ballads, and comes down to us in an uncorrupted state in consequence of its preservation in the manuscript collection made by Mr. George Bannatyne in 1568. It is supposed to be the composition of a Sir John Moffat, a priest (one of the Pope’s knights), who flourished in the early part of the sixteenth century, and was the author of a fine serious poem beginning “ Brother, be wise, I rede you now,” which has been printed in Lord Hailes’s collection. “ The Wife o’ Auchtermuchty ” was first printed by Allan Ramsay in his *Evergreen*, with some alterations and additions by the editor ; and this version has been often reprinted. The present copy is from the Bannatyne manuscript, modernised

* Ruins of Greencairn Castle, the reputed residence of Lady Finella, are still to be seen upon a knoll, about a mile to the west of the village of Fettercairn. The hill of Strathfinla, or Finella, between Fordoun and Fettercairn, is said to have its name from Lady Finella.

only as respects spelling, and supplemented by twenty-four lines which do not occur in Mr. Bannatyne's version.

The story is so humorous, and the troubles the unfortunate gudeman gets into on turning housewife are described with such graphic detail, that one could have wished to believe that it chronicled an actual experience in an Auchtermuchty household over three hundred years ago, but, as Mr. David Laing pointed out, the story is not original ; a tale strongly resembling it in incident and turn of humour occurring in "Silva Sermonum Jucundissimorum," published at Basle in 1568, and into which, in all probability, it was copied from some earlier collection of kindred native matter.

It is scarcely necessary to add that the popular song of "John Grumlie" is based on "The Wife o' Auchtermuchty."

IN Auchtermuchty there dwelt ane man,
 Ane husband, as I heard it tauld,
 Wha weel could tipple out a can,
 And neither loved hunger nor cauld.
 While ance it fell upon a day,
 He yokit his pleugh upon the plain,
 Gif it be true as I heard say ;
 The day was foul for wind and rain.

He lows't the pleugh at the land's end,
 And drave his oxen hame at e'en ;
 When he cam' in he lookit ben,
 And saw his wife baith trig and clean,
 Sitting at the fire, full biek and bauld,
 With ane fat soup, as I heard say ;
 The man being very weet and cauld,
 Between thae twa it was nae play.

Quoth he "Where is my horses' corn ?
 My ox has neither hay nor strae ;
 Dame, ye maun to the pleugh the morn,
 I sall be housewife, gif I may.

The seed time it proves cauld and bad,
 And ye sit warm, nae troubles see ;
 The morn ye sall gae wi' the lad,
 And syne ye'll ken what husbands dree."

"Husband," quoth she, "content am I
 To tak' the pleugh my day about,
 Sae ye will rule baith calves and kye,
 And all the house baith in and out.
 And now sin' ye hae made the law,
 Then guide a' richt, and dinna break ;
 They siccar ride that never fa',
 We'll see gif naething ye neglect.

"But sin' that ye will hoose-life ken,
 First ye sall sift, and syne sall kneed ;
 And aye as ye gang but and ben,
 Look that the bairns fyle not the bed.
 Ye'se lay ane saft wisp to the kiln,
 (We have ane dear farm on our head),
 And aye as ye gang furth and till,
 Keep weel the goslings frae the gled."

The wife was up right late at e'en,
 (I pray God give her ill to fare !)
 She kirk'd the kirk, and skimm'd it clean,
 Left the gudeman but bleddoch bare.
 Then in the morning up she gat,
 And on her heart laid her disjune ;
 Syne put as muckle in her lap,
 As micht hae served them baith at noon.

Says, "Jock, be thou the maister of wark,
 And thou sall haud and I sall ca',
 I'se promise thee ane gude new sark
 Either of round claith or of sma'."

She lows't the oxen aucht or nine,
 And took ane gad-staff in her hand ;
 Up the gudeman raise after-syne,
 And saw the wife had done command ;

He ca'd the goslings forth to feed,
 There was but sevensome o' them a' ;
 And by there comes the greedy gled,
 And lickt up five, left him but twa,
 Then oot he ran in all his mane,
 How soon he heard the goslings cry ;
 But than, or he cam' in again,
 The calves brak lowse and sookit the kye.

The calves and kye met in the loan,
 The man ran with ane rung to redd,
 When by there comes an ill-willy cow,
 And brodit his buttock so that it bled.
 Then hame he ran to ane rock of tow,
 And he sat down to try the spinning ;
 I trow he loutit ower near the lowe,
 Quoth he " This wark has ane ill beginning."

Hynd to the kirn then did he stour,
 And jummilt at it while he swat ;
 When he had jummilt a full lang hour,
 The sorrow a scrap of butter he gat.
 Albeit nae butter he could get,
 Yet he was cummerit with the kirn,
 And syne he het the milk ower het,
 And sorrow a spark of it would yirn.

Then ben there cam' ane greedy sow,
 I trow he cunn'd her little thank,
 For in she shot her greedy mou',
 And aye she winkit and aye she drank.

He cleikit up ane crookit club,
 And thought to hit the sow ane rout,
 The twa goslings the gled had left,
 That straik dang baith their barns out.

He gat his foot upon the spyre,
 To get the bawcon for the pat ;
 He backwards fell into the fire,
 And brak' his head on the kaiming stock ;
 On the fire he set the meikle pat,
 And gat twa cans and ran to the spout,
 Ere he cam' in, what think ye o' that ?
 The fire had burnt the bottom oot.

The leam up through the lum did flow,
 The soot took fire, and fyled him than :
 Ane lump fell down and burnt his pow,
 I wat he was a sorra man.
 Swith he gat water in a pan,
 Wi' whilk he slocken'd out the fire ;
 To sweep the house he syne began,
 To haud a' richt was his desire.

Then he bore kindling to the kiln,
 But it stert up all in ane lowe ;
 Whatever he heard, whatever he saw,
 That day he had nae will to mou'.
 Then he gaed to tak' up the bairns,
 Thought to have found them fair and clean,
 The first that he gat in his arms,
 Was all bedirten to the een.

The first that he gat in his arms,
 It was all dirt up to the een ;
 "The deil cut off her hands," quoth he,
 "That filled ye a' sae fou' yestreen !"

He trail'd the foul sheets down the gate,
 Thought to have washed them on ane stane ;
 The burn was risen great of spate,
 Away frae him the sheets were ta'en.

Then up he gat on ane knowe-head,
 On her to cry, on her to shout ;
 She heard him, as she heard him not,
 But stoutly steer'd the stots about.
 She drave the day unto the night,
 She lows'd the pleugh, and syne cam' hame ;
 She fand all wrang that should been right ;
 I trow the man thought right great shame.

Quoth he, " This office I forsake,
 For all the dayis of my life,
 For I wald put ane house to wrack,
 Had I been twenty days guidwife."
 Quoth she, " Weel mot ye brook your place,
 For truly I will ne'er accep' it ;"
 Quoth he, " Fiend fall the limmer's face,
 But yet ye may be blythe to get it."

Then up she gat ane muckle rung,
 And the guidman made to the door ;
 Quoth he, " Dame, I sall hald my tongue,
 For an we fecht, I'll get the waur."
 Quoth he, " When I forsook my pleugh,
 I trow, I but forsook mysel' ;
 And I will to my pleugh again,
 For I and this house will ne'er do well."

The Weary Coble o' Cargill.

This fine old ballad—probably the composition of some local bard who lived contemporary with the event which it

narrates—has received a considerable amount of attention from the students of ballad lore. It was first printed by William Motherwell in his “Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern,” who had it from the recitation of an old woman then residing in the neighbourhood of Cambus Michael, in Perthshire. In Motherwell’s opinion it possesses the elements of good poetry, and he adds that, had it fallen into the hands of those who make no scruple of interpolating and corrupting the text of oral song, it might have been made, with little trouble, a very interesting and pathetic composition. According to tradition, the ill-fated hero of the ballad, who was a butler to Chancellor Drummond of Stobhall, had a leman, or sweetheart, in each of the two villages of Kercock and Ballathie, on the opposite side of the Tay, and it was on the occasion of his paying a visit to his Kercock love that she of Ballathie, in a frenzy of jealousy and revenge, scuttled the boat in which he was to recross the Tay to Stobhall. There are two versions of the ballad; the original, recovered by Motherwell, and a modern improved version which has not hitherto appeared in any collection. A serious defect of the older version is seen in the fact that it gives no reason *why* “the lass o’ Balathy toun” should have scuttled the boat in which her lover was to recross the river. It says “his bed was made in Kercock ha’, o’ gude clean sheets and o’ the hay;” but that can scarcely be regarded as sufficient cause for jealousy when it is immediately followed by the assurance that “he wadna rest a’e nicht therein, but on the proud waters he wad gae.” The modern version wisely provides a *causis belli*.

David Drummond, the hero of the ballad, was, tradition says, the son of a certain John Drummond in Kercock, and that the heroine was named Jeanie Low or Gow, and was daughter of the joiner of the *then* laird of Ballathie—hence her acquaintance with the fatal augur. Tradition further tells that the “lass of Ballathie toun” had no sooner “bored the coble in seven parts” than she relented the cruel deed, and hastened to fashion seven pins wherewith to plug the fatal holes; but before her return with these her fickle lover had “put his feet into the boat” and left the shore, and she reached the bank of the river just in time to hear his cries for help, and witness the coble sinking in mid waters. She went out of her reason; and the terrible cause of her mental derangement continuing to pull at the tangled ends of her ravelled memory, she persistently made

pins to the end of her days. Since her demise her patient ghost has "kept on the business;" and there are people living who aver that "when winter nights are dark and drear" the ghost of "Pinnie" may still be heard on the banks of the Tay.

(OLD VERSION.)

DAVID DRUMMOND'S destinie,
 Gude man o' appearance o' Cargill,
 I wat this bluid rins in the flude
 Sac sair against his parents' will.

She was the lass o' Ballathy toun,
 And he the butler o' Stobhall,
 And mony a time she wauked late
 To bore the Coble o' Cargill.

His bed was made in Kercock ha',
 O' gude clean sheets and o' the hay,
 He wadna rest a'e nicht therein
 But on the proud waters he wad gae.

His bed was made in Ballathy toun,
 O' gude clean sheets and o' the strae,
 But I wat it was far better made
 Into the bottom o' bonnie Tay.

She bored the Coble in seven parts,
 I wat her heart nicht hae been sair,
 For there she got the bonnie lad lost,
 Wi' the curly locks and the yellow hair.

He put his foot into the boat,
 He little thocht o' ony ill;
 Put before that he was mid waters,
 The weary Coble began to fill.

“ Wae be to the lass o' Ballathy toun,
 I wat an ill death may she dee,
 For she bored the Coble in seven parts,
 And let the waters perish me !

“ Help ! oh help ! I can get nane,
 Nae help o' man can to me come,”
 This was about his dying words,
 When he was chok'd up to the chin.

“ Gae tell my father and my mother,
 It was naebody did me this ill,
 I was a-going my ain errands
 Lost at the Coble o' bonnie Cargill.”

She bored the boat in seven parts,
 I wat she bored it wi' gude will,
 And there they got the bonnie lad's corpse
 In the kirk shot o' bonnie Cargill.

Oh, a' the keys o' bonnie Stobhall,
 I wat they at his belt did hing ;
 But a' the keys o' bonnie Stobhall
 They now lie low into the stream.

A braver page unto his age
 Ne'er set a foot upon the plain ;
 His father to his mother said,
 “ Oh, sae sune's we've wanted him !”

I wat they had mair love than this
 When they were young and at the scule,
 But for his sake she wauked late
 And bored the Coble o' bonnie Cargill.

“ There's ne'er a clean sark gae on my back,
 Nor yet a kame gae in my hair ;
 There's neither coal nor candle licht
 Shine in my bower for evermair.

“ At kirk or market I’se ne’er be at,
 Nor yet a blythe blink in my e’e;
 There’s ne’er a ane shall say to anither,
 That’s the lassie gar’d the young man dee.”

Between the yetts o’ bonnie Stobhall
 And the Kirkstyle o’ bonnie Cargill,
 There is mony a man and mother’s son,
 That was at my luv’e’s burial.

(MODERN VERSION.)

The course o’ true love ne’er runs smooth,
 So say the sages o’ langsyne,
 My waefu’ tale upbears the truth—
 This weary, waefu’ tale o’ mine.

A youthfu’ pair wha offer’d fair
 O’ nuptial joy to drink their fill,
 But ither drink for them was brewed
 Within the Coble o’ Cargill.

The lad was Chanc’llor Drummond’s page,
 When gude Earl James was wi’ the King,
 And a’ the keys o’ bonnie Stobha’,
 I wat they at his belt did hing.

She was the belle o’ Ballathie toun,
 O’ lovers she had wile and will;
 But sad her fate—she waukit late,
 And bor’d the Coble o’ Cargill.

She bor’d the Coble in seven parts,
 Na doot her heart was sick and sair,
 When there she sealed the laddie’s fate,
 Wi’ the curly locks and the yellow hair.

His bed was made in Kercock ha',
O' gude clean sheets and o' the strae,
But he wadna' sleep a'e nicht therein,
For a' a mither's lips could say.

He would across the flooded Tay,
He widna bruik o' ony ill,
And wi' wary step he bent his gaet,
To the weary Coble o' Cargill.

Wi' youthfu' airm he grasped the oar,
I trow he grasp'd it wi' gude will,
But e'er he was mid waters through
The weary Coble began to fill.

He baled the boat wi' baith his hands,
Forsooth he bailed it heartily,
But the augur's skaith soon stopped his breath,
And gart the bonnie laddie dee.

“ Oh, help, oh, help, I can get nane,
Nae help o' man can come to me,
For the rollin' flow o' the burden'd stream
Is hastenin' on my destiny.

“ My bed was made in Kercock ha',
O' gude clean sheets and o' the hay,
But gentler hands ha'e smooth'd the sands,
And I maun sleep beneath the Tay.

“ Gae hame and tell my parents baith
I blame mysel' for a' this ill ;
When waukin' late I met my fate
By the weary Coble o' Cargill.”

Deceitfu' barge, thy helpless charge,
Is laid behind yon sacred fane,
Where vesper bell and native song
Shall ne'er be heard by him again.

And a' within the barony
Were present at his funeral,
And bore him from his master's ha'
To the lonely kirkyard o' Cargill.

Alas, for Jean ! when a' was dune,
Her conscience work'd and wadna still,
Confessed the fate that drove her late
To bore the Coble o' Cargill.

“ On Beltane e'en upon the Green
He danced wi' Bess o' Bishopha',
Her witchin' glance and winnin' een
I thocht had wiled his heart awa'.

“ A fearfu' frame crept o'er me then,
And held o' me the mastery,
And my wither'd heart was blawn in flame
By that dread demon, jealousy.

“ Our early vows made fause by him,
The very thocht my heart did kill,
And spell-bound, driven by that dream,
I bor'd the Coble o' Cargill.

“ Oh, wha could guess 'twad come to this
When we were young and at the schule,
And pu'd the slaes on Ballathie Braes,
And broke the weirdly cake at Yule.

“ There's ne'er a sark gae on my back,
Nor yet a kame gae in my hair,
Nor will there coal or candle licht
Shine in my bower for evermair.

“ At kirk or fair I'se ne'er be seen,
Nor yet a blythe blink in my e'e,
Nae finger's end shall point to Jean
And say I gart my laddie dee.

“ Yon ruin'd walls shall be my hame,
 Where ghaists and howlets nightly cry ;
 And the sadd'nin' sound o' the rollin' stream
 Shall nichtly sing my lullaby.

“ This bracken bush shall be my bower,
 Where aften by the moon I see
 Yon spectre boat wi' my love afloat,
 Wha wags his windin'-sheet at me.”

The Piper o' Peebles.

This is a tale quite as graphic and much more gruesome than “Thrummy Cap,” to which, by the bye, it bears quite a family resemblance. The author, William Anderson, was born in the parish of Kingoldrum, where his father was for many years the respected schoolmaster. He was educated with a view to succeeding his father, but had to settle instead as a private teacher in the neighbouring town of Kirriemuir. “The Piper o' Peebles” he published, by subscription, in 1793. In a short preface to the little work he maintains that “the subsequent essay is a real original,” and not even the most distant imitation of anything he had ever seen. Besides the “Piper,” which has been often reprinted, Anderson wrote and published a curious poem entitled “Vulcan, St. Patrick, the Smith, and the Devil.” He also wrote a volume of “Humorous Essays in Verse,” which was never printed. He died about the end of last century.

Fan common fouk had scrimper skill,
 An' gentles scarce had wealth at will ;
 Twa hunder year or mair sin' syne—
 When fashions werena near sae fine,
 Fan hodden-grey, undy'd or drest,
 Was sonsy weeds to busk the best
 That yokit plows, an' paid the lairds
 Sae mony marks, for fine cornyards—

Fan barefoot horse, like pedlars' packs,
 Boot bear the middens on their backs,
 To muck the riggs in ilka field,
 In the barseed, e'er they were till'd—
 An' carry fire to rich an' poor,
 Baith peats an' truffis, frae moss an' muir ;
 An' cadge the craps, fan cuttit down
 In hairst, hame o'er unto the town—
 Fan coops an' carts were unco rare,
 An' creels an' corrocks boot to sair—
 Fan knockit bear made Sunday's kail,
 An' fouk in pots brew'd Braithel ale.
 Fan nane but meadow girse was mawn,
 An' nane but hamit linjet sawn—
 Fan lint was beaten wi' the mell,
 An' ilk ane sungled to themsel'.
 Fan wives wi' rocks an' spindles span,
 An' brawest lasses us'd nae lawn—
 Fan stiffen wasna sought, nor blue
 To mutches—fan the sarks were few,
 An' very stark, but no that saft,
 An' cenil worn wi' washing aft—
 Some had but ane, an' some had twa,
 An' mony mae had nane ava.
 Fan lasses, wi' their rocks set out
 To ane anither night about—
 Wad gane a mile o' ground an' mair,
 Sometimes no' very free o' fear,
 To hear auld stories ilka night
 In winter fan there was moonlight,
 Upo' their spindles, near the tap,
 They biggit ay a bulgy knap
 O' thread, cross-brath'd, firm to defend
 The rest frae reav'ling o'er the end.
 Sometimes they strave, an' them that wan,
 Aye thought they first deserv'd a man.

To save their plaiden coats, some had
Upo' the hench a bonnet braid
Of an auld wecht, or kairding skin,
To rub an' gaur the spindle rin
Down to the ground wi' whirling speed,
An' twine upo' the floor the thread ;
An' some their right side cleas row'd up,
An' snooved upo' the nakit hip—
Lang ainna nights they counted half
Done, fan they coost their whorles aff.
They row'd their yarn upon hand reels,
Afore the use o' spinning wheels ;
Tell'd ilka cut that they ty'd up,
By double—down comes jig an' whup,
An' scores, and so forth, as exact
As reels can count, that's made to chack.
Fan fouk grey-hair'd, play'd burly-bracks,
Wi' youngsters round about the stacks,
Mixt men, wives, lads and lasses too,
An' hirds that hadna hose or shoe.
Fan cummers sled, an' hurl'd as weel
On ice as ony vady chiel' ;
Fan very few cud write or read,
An' commons took on trust their creed,
An' sought nae reasons, *why* nor *what*
They sud believe—do this or that.
An' mony wont-to-be's nae doubt,
An' customs we ken nought about
Were then in vogue, that's now forgotten,
An' them that used them lang syne rotten.
A time's for a' thing we can name ;
A time too for the rippling kame ;—
A time to flourish, time to fail,
Sae to the tenor of our tale.
About thae times, besouth Kinghorn,
A country laird became forlorn

Wi' bags o' debt—a burden sair
 For ony honest mind to bear.
 If in his youth he had been rash,
 An' prodigally spent his cash ;
 Or if misfortunes unforeseen
 Had multiplied against him been,
 We dinna ken—it matters not,
 Death accidental—drown'd or shot ;
 But daily dogg'd, an' dunn'd, an' deaved
 Wi' creditors, that clam'ring crav'd,
 He tint the heart, an' cudna eat
 Wi' melancholy, half his meat.
 He dream'd o' gloomy prisons grim,
 An' dreary dungeons dark and dim,
 With iron doors, padlocks, and bars,
 As stark as mith out-wear the stars,
 Where he was trail'd to lie on strae ;
 An', starting waken'd—sobbing wae !
 The large estate that his forbears
 Possess'd, for some three hundred years,
 Free as the water i' the well,
 He saw, he shortly boot to sell ;
 With all his chattels, goods, an' gear,—
 An' be, alas ! a laird nae mair.
 His friends forsook him, fan they saw
 His wealth on wings had flown awa' ;
 An' want, that formidable fae,
 Gat grips an' wadna let him gae.
 Sad sorrow aye maun light on some ;
 An' wha can flee frae ills to come ?
 Crushed down with agonizing care,
 His mind was brooding dark despair—
 But blest Religion bade him try
 To fix his heart on things on high
 That wad endure, when earth an' sea,
 An' sun an' moon sud cease to be.

Then with submission he began
To bear his trouble like a man.
A'e gloamin', fan the sun was set,
An' fields wi' falling dew were wet ;
In's avenues, as at the air,
Where aft he gaed, fan it was fair
To shed his sorrows, out o' sight,
Upo' the wind—a waefu' wicht :—
A man came riding, mighty braw,
Upon a beast as black's a crow ;
Clear siller bells in bunches hang
At his horse mane, an' sweetly rang ;
An' yet for a' his princely pride,
He had nae servant for a guide.
With ceremony most discreet,
He paid his complements complete ;
Speer'd how he was, an' said that he
On purpose came express to see,
An' on condition, help him too,
In ony thing that he cud do.
The poor insolvent laird seemed shy—
The stranger smiling, answer'd why ?
“The troubles that distract your mind
Are printed in your face, I find.
Out with your wants, nor hod afraid
Your straits, frae ane that offers aid ;
I'll prove your friend, fan far awa',
The best on earth ye ever saw ;
I understand, wi' debt ye're drown'd,
An' I have hail ten thousand pound
That nane alive kens aught about,
An' I intend to lay it out.
Ye's get it on your single bond,
As I frae Scotland maun abscond
To France, or in a woody swing
For lies a neighbour tauld the king ;

An' said I meant to tak' his life,
 To lat a gallant get his wife.
 Afore forefaulted by the law,
 Frae court the streen, I cam' awa',
 Bespake a ship, an' canna stay
 At hame, aboon anither day.
 To-morrow night, if ye incline,
 I'se bring the bag, an' bond to sign,
 At twal o'clock. Be sure let nane
 Be in the room, but you your lane ;
 Nae witnesses sall syne the deed,
 Or see you write, or hear me read.
 Fan we get matters settled then
 I'se tell you a' my story plain ;
 An' ere the sun be up, I'se be
 Frae a' their fingers, on the sea ;
 An' if I never come again,
 The siller, sir, is a' your ain.
 Wha' wadna write their name wi' blude,
 For sic a lusty gift, an' gude ? ”
 The Laird replied—“ I maun confess,
 I hinna words that can express
 My obligations—hech !—indeed !
 Of money I hae muckle need.
 Pray, Sir, what is your name?—are ye
 By bluid relation sib to me ? ”
 The stranger said, “ Ye needna speir
 Particulars at present here ;
 Neist fan we meet, I'se lat you see
 I'm near as sib as sib can be.
 Meantime I cannot stay, Adieu ! ”
 An' at a gallop aff he flew.
 The Laird took to the house, an' read
 A chapter, ere he gade to bed,
 In pray'r implored Messiah's peace
 To guide him in the ways of grace.

Then cam' the hour, that dreary hour,
 Fan spectres grim begin their tour,
 An' stalk in frightfu' forms abroad,
 Performing feats amazing odd !
 That hour foul hags broomsticks bestride,
 An' thro' the air exulting ride
 To their nocturnal revels rude,
 An' actions damn'd, debauch'd, and lewd,
 With Satan's self, their hellish head !
 An' cast their cantrips o'er the dead,
 Till coffins frae the grave arise !
 An' corpse frae coffins in surprise !
 With gogling een, an' wither'd hands,
 Start up at their obscene commands !
 In winding sheets, lang lodg'd in dust :
 If tales be true, the simple trust,
 That hour fan fairies in a ring
 Trip round the green, an' dance, an' sing,
 Before to banquet they retreat,
 To some waste house to sit in state ;
 Frae golden goblets drink the wine,
 An' feast on delicacies fine :
 That hour fan ghaists on burial stanes,
 Play o'er the knowes wi' dead fowk's banes ;
 Or stroll wi' sullen strides along,
 Where they ha'e gi'en or gotten wrang ;
 An' grane wi' grief, as some pretend,
 Whare they'll be conjured afeihend.
 That hour, the dullest in the night,
 The Laird, alane, with candle-light,
 In expectation waited keen
 The issue of his tryst the streen.

The stranger at the hour exact
 Brought up the stair upo' his back
 As muckle gowd, an' rather mair,
 That wad outweigh twal pecks o' bere.

Upon a table large an' stout
 He toom'd the yellow metal out,
 An' said he hadna time to bide
 Till it was counted—he boot ride
 Within an hour—the Laird might trust
 The sum was there, exact an' just.
 He then drew out the bond an' read,
 An' i' the tail it plainly said
 That after fifteen years, in fine,
 The Laird sud be his servant syne,
 Frae that aback, an' wi' his blude
 Subscribe to mak' the bargain gude.
 As upright fouk abhor mischief ;
 As honest men despise a thief ;
 As dogs detest a grunting sow,
 So laigh the Laird disdain'd to bow !
 The article, for evermair
 Of servitude, displeas'd him sair.
 To write wi' blude he wadna fash,
 An' yet he fain wad keep the cash.
 He bang'd his arms about it round,
 An' sternly on the stranger frown'd :
 Exclaimed—“ Thou subtle source of sin,
 The earth's the Lord's, an' all therein ;
 Hence, Satan ! to your black abode,
 In name of my Almighty God ! ”
 Fierce as the lightning darts on high,
 Rude as the thunder rends the sky,
 As fierce, an' with as loud a roar,
 The Devil made himself a door
 Thro' the house-head, a flame he flew,
 Of stinking brimstane, burning blue !
 Of force infernal—mighty proof—
 He seemed to carry aff the roof !
 The Laird looked up in sad surprise,
 An' thought he saw the sable skies.

The candle trembled, as with fright,
An' glimmer'd dim, a dowy light;
The house frae tap to bottom shook,
An' as a wanrest wagg'd the crook ;
The tott'ring chairs on ither clink ;
The looms, they rattled i' the bink ;
The cock was waken'd, clapt an' crew
An hour o'er soon, fan Satan flew.
The shaking syne began to cease,
An' in a minute a' was peace.
Again the candle burnt fu' bright ;
The house was hale, an' a' thing right.
He lock't the door, laid up the gowd,
An' blest the Being that bestow'd
Upon him pow'r to countermine
An' baffle Satan's black design.
He paid his debt ere very lang,
An' thrive as fast as he gaed wrang ;
His friends came flocking back wi' speed,
Wad help him fan he hadna need ;
So cowards that flee the hostile plain,
When foes retreat, can fight the slain.
Sedate, he circumspectly spent
His time at hame, in calm content,
A votary of virtue white,
An' in devotion took delight,
Belov'd by young, an' auld, an' a'
That ken'd him, either gryte or sma'.
Sixteen year after, he was at
A braithel where the broth was fat.
In ancient times, a taiken sure,
The bridegroom wasna' reckon'd poor.
A vast o' fouk a' round about
Came to the feast, they dined the-rout,
Twa pair o' pipers playing gaed
About the table as they fed,

Mirth spread her mantle o'er them a',
But sorrow wasna' far awa'.
While suppin' at the sav'ry skink,
An' takin' whiles a waught o' drink,
A gentleman, in decent dress,
Came riding up, as on express,
An' order'd ane o' them that saired
The company to tell the Laird
To speak a word. He came in haste ;
The gentleman upo' the beast
Held doon his head to hark or speir
Some secrets ithers sudna hear.
As, seemingly, they thus consort,
A pistol loot a loud report,
An' at the Laird's feet, frae his horse,
The stranger fell a blacken'd corse.
The fouk at table start, an' saw
Him from the saddle flound'ring fa'.
The steed in fury took the flight,
An' soon ran backward out o' sight.
Confus'd frae dinner, fast they ran,
To see the murder'd gentleman,
As on the ground he lifeless lay
Afore the Laird that luckless day.
The short pouch pistol that had shot
Him dead, outbye a bit they got.
Awhile in silence scowl'd the crowd,
An' syne a kebbly-lebby loud
Gat up, an' twenty at a time
Gae their opinions of the crime.
Some curs'd, an' cry'd, "be sure to guard,"
An' ithers socht to grip the Laird ;
An' some said "let him rin awa',"
An' some cry'd "that's against the law,
For malefactors, man or wife,
An' murderers sud loss the life."

The Laird stood staring, till his een
Thocht everything was blue an' green.
As criminal they seiz'd him soon,
An' took him aff that afternoon
Into Auld Reekie, corpse an' a',
An' gie them up unto the law,
Produced the pistol did the deed,
An' proof to swear fan there was need.
The Laird was fairly in a fang,
An' naething for him now but hang.
He's prison'd an' examined too,
But a' that they cud say or do,
He still deny'd the guilt, an' said—
“ To suffer death I'm no' afraid ;
But of the murder I am free,
An' innocent as ane can be.
If he be shot he shot himsel' ;
Or it was me he meant to fell.
Gar surgeons search the body round,
If they can find the fatal wound ;
Tho' he be dead, there hasna been
Nae blude that onybody's seen ;
An' dinna bury him afore
Somebody ken him, I implore.
His friends will seek him soon nae doubt ;
The horse gaun hame will set them out ;
Fan they come here, perhaps ye'll find
What drift wi' me he had design'd.”
The Court conceived thae cautions right,
An' gar'd inspect the corpse that night.
Some doctors came to seek the hole,
That thro' his body sent the soul ;
But fan they lows'd his breast, they swore
He had been dead ten days afore.
They cudna touch him for a stink,
An' ken'dna what to say or think.

With odours, an' the like, belyve,
 They drown'd the dreadfu' smelling dyve,
 Syne gribbled him, but gat nae wound ;
 His hyde, they said, was heal and sound.
 The doctors said he cudna be
 A gentleman o' nae degree ;
 His hands were thick an' hard—his skin,
 Fan he was living, had been din ;
 An' tho' his coat an' vest were bra',
 His sark an' gravat wasna sma'.
 A notice was sent thro' the town,
 To a' the strangers up an' down,
 To come an' see him ; mony ran,
 But nane kenn'd aught about the man.
 For near an ook, day after day,
 Perfum'd in public view he lay,
 An' country fouk to see him sent,
 But nane o' a' the crowds that went
 Ken'd aught about him, name, or place,
 Nor ever living saw his face.
 The town o' him was weary'd sair,
 An' wadna keep him muckle mair,
 As nae relations came to look
 Or spier about him a' the ook.
 That day there had come in a crew
 Of cairds, wha drank till they were fou,
 An' on the street, the strolling gang,
 Fell out, an' faught, an' grat, an' sang.
 Amo' the rest, a muckle wife,
 To save her skin, forsook the strife,
 Observed the dead man—gaed to see,
 Wi' twa three mae, what he might be.
 But fan his visage she survey'd—
 “ Preserve's ! ” in sad surprise she cried—
 “ That's the Piper of Peebles ! Wha
 Has buskit him, fan dead, sae bra' ?

I saw him yerdit, I can swear ;
 Frae his lang hame, fou cam' he there ?
 The living may repent wi' speed
 Fan fouk are flittin' frae the dead ! ”
 She blest hersel', an' brought the crew
 To prove her testimony true.
 They look't at's face, syne at his hands,
 And felt his sark, it hadna bands ;
 An' positively a' protest
 It was the Piper, better drest
 Than fan he liv'd, for he was poor,
 An' loo'd a drink to drake the stour.
 The cairds were brought before the Court
 An' Magistrates, to mak' report
 Of the defunct. A fortnight back,
 As far as they cud prove for fact.
 Just this day fortnight, they replied,
 In's bed at hame the Piper dy'd ;
 Neist afternoon he was inter'd
 Amang poor fouk in the kirk-yard.
 “ We saw him buried ; but we have
 Nae notion how he left the grave.”
 A carl, as crooked as a creel,
 Said, “ Twenty years I kenn'd him weel,
 In Peebles piper, pawkie loon,
 He had a clunker on his crown,
 Like half an errack's egg, an' yon
 Undoubtedly is Duncan Drone.”
 Anither wife, too, made remark,
 She sauld his wife the burial sark ;
 She kend it brawly by the sleeve,
 An' on the breast they might believe
 There was a cross o' oo'en thread,
 Of twa ply twisted blue an' red.
 Thae marks mith sair to prove the man
 Tho' fouk the cause sud never scan,

Foosh him the living there to fleg,
 An' bring the town to cost an' plague."
 The doctors there, declar'd they saw
 The clunker, an' the cross an' a'.
 They loot them see the pistol syne ;
 A carl exclaimed—" That pistol's mine !
 Just this day-aught-days thro' the night
 I watna fou it took the flight.
 I thought my wife had stown't, in short,
 An' pay'd her on suspicion for't.
 I had new cramm'd it near the mou ;
 It's no' been fir'd—I find it fu',
 Weel calfin'd wi' a clout o' green,
 As at this minute may be seen."
 They drew the shot, to their surprise—
 " Lat wark bear witness, there," he cries,
 " Is documents ye needna doubt,
 Baith find an' see the forrage clout."
 That made them marvel maist as sair
 As how the dead man had come there.
 The vouchers of the vagrant crew,
 Tho' vastly strange, prov'd very true ;
 Clear'd up the main point, seem'd so dark,
 Tho' mystery still involv'd the mark.
 The Court were a' convinced in mind
 The prisoner was wrang confin'd ;
 The doctors with the cairds agreed
 That of the murder he was free'd,
 An' from the prison an' the cause
 He was assullied with applause.
 The Laird saw syne it had been Nick
 Contriv'd an' carried on the trick,
 Had pu'd the Piper frae the mould,
 That was in Peebles on him shool'd ;
 An' cabbaged cleading by the road,
 An' buskit him fu' brow an' snod ;

An' stown the pistol, bred the strife
 Atween the tinkler an' his wife ;
 An' brought him to the braithel, where
 He left him dead wi' sic a rair
 That fouk wad sworn they saw him shot
 That very instant on the spot.
 Auld Horny thought to gar him howd
 Upo' the gallows for the gowd
 He gat langsyne, an' wadna' set
 His signature to show the debt.
 But in his drift the Devil failed,
 The second time the Laird prevailed,
 Liv'd lang at hame, in wealth an' ease,
 An' dy'd at last of nae disease
 But mere auld age. Renown'd, his race
 Unto this day possess his place.

The Queen's Marie.

This ballad, of which there are various readings, has often excited the curiosity of antiquarians, who have ransacked history and biography for the discovery of some incident to which it may be referred. The special mention of the Queen's Maries identifies the reign of Mary Stuart with the period of the ballad, and the character of Darnley was such that an intrigue on his part with one of the Maids of Honour, was an occurrence very likely to have taken place. But there is no record of any such scandal. However, John Knox, in his "History of the Reformation," states that a Frenchwoman who served in the Queen's Chamber had given birth to and murdered an illegitimate child, for which crime she was, together with her partner in guilt, condemned, and was hanged in the public street in Edinburgh. Both Sir Walter Scott and Professor Aytoun were of opinion that the ballad was founded on that event, and that many alterations had been made in the course of tradition. The father of the child, according to Knox, was

the Queen's own apothecary ; but it is easy enough to account for this humble personage being changed into Lord Darnley, and the French chamber-maid into Marie Hamilton. The Queen's Maries were four young ladies chosen from the highest families in Scotland, who were sent to France in her train, and returned with her to Scotland. Keith gives their names as Marys Livingston, Fleming, Seton, and Beatoun. Neither Mary Livingston nor Mary Fleming are mentioned in the ballad ; nor are the Mary Hamilton and Mary Carmichael of the ballad mentioned by Keith. But the discrepancy may be accounted for in this way. The Queen's Maries are mentioned in so many ballads, in all probability there was a continued corps of maidens in the royal household, known under the designation, and, if so, it could hardly have subsisted without occasional recruits.

A song, under the title of "The Four Maries," was a few years ago extracted from the body of this ballad, the last stanza *only* being original—

But what care I for a nameless grave,
If I've hope for eternitie?
And I pray that the faith of the dying thief,
May be granted through grace unto me.

A very beautiful verse it is, and fitly concludes a very beautiful and affecting song.

THERE lived a lord into the West,
And he had daughters three,
And the youngest has gane to Holyrood,
To be a Queen's Marie.

Marie Hamilton to the kirk has gane,
Wi' ribbons in her hair ;
The King thought mair o' Marie Hamilton,
Than ony that were there.

Marie Hamilton to the kirk has gane,
Wi' ribbons on her breist ;
The King thought mair o' Marie Hamilton,
Than he listened to the priest.

Marie Hamilton to the Kirk has gane,
Wi' gloves upon her hands ;
The King thought mair o' Marie Hamilton,
Than the Queen and a' her lands.

She hadna been in the King's Court,
A twelvemonth and a day,
Till she could neither sit nor gang,
Wi' the gaining o' some play.

The King has gane to the Abbey garden,
And pu'd the savin' tree,
To scale the babe frae Marie's heart,
But the thing it wadna be.

Word's gane up, and word's gane doun,
And word's gane to the ha',
That Marie Hamilton's brought to bed,
And the bonnie babe's awa'.

Then in and cam' the Queen hersel',
Wi' the gowd strings in her hair,
Saying " Marie Hamilton, where is the babe
That I heard greet sae sair ? "

" There is nae babe within my bower,
And I hope there ne'er will be ;
It was mysel' wi' a stitch in my side,
I was sick—just like to dee ! "

" O haud your tongue, Marie Hamilton !
Let a' thae words gae free,
And tell me where is the little babe
That I heard greet by thee ? "

" I rowed it in my handkerchief,
And threw it in the sea ;
I bade it sink, I bade it swim,
It wad get nae mair o' me. "

“ O wae be to thee, Marie Hamilton !
 An ill death may you dee !
 For if ye had saved the babie’s life,
 It might have honoured thee.

“ But rise, rise up, Marie Hamilton,
 Rise up, and follow me ;
 For I am going to Edinburgh town,
 A gay wedding to see.”

O slowly, slowly, rase she up,
 And slowly put she on,
 And slowly rode she out the way
 Wi’ mony a weary groan.

The Queen was clad in scarlet,
 Her merry maids all in green ;
 And every town that they cam’ to,
 They took Marie for the queen.

But little wist Marie Hamilton,
 When she rode on the brown,
 That she was gaun to Edinburgh,
 And a’ to be put down.

“ Ride hooly, ride hooly now, gentlemen,
 Ride hooly now wi’ me,
 For never I’m sure a wearier bird
 Rode in your companie.”

As she gaed up the Cannongate,
 The Cannongate sae free,
 Monie a lady look’d owre her window,
 Weeping for sweet Marie.

As she gaed up the Parliament Close,
 A-riding on her horse,
 There was many a burgess lady
 Sat weeping at the Cross.

“ O what means a' this greeting ?
I'm sure it's no for me ;
For I am come to Edinburgh town
A gay wedding to see.”

As she gaed up the Tolbooth stairs
She laughed loud laughters three ;
But or ever she cam' doon again
She was condemned to dee.

“ O dinna weep for me, ladies !
Ye needna weep for me ;
Had not I killed my ain dear bairn
This death I wad'na dee.

“ Cast aff, cast aff my gown,” she said,
“ But let my petticoat be ;
And tie a napkin ower my face,
That the gallows I may na see.

“ Yestreen the Queen had four Maries ;
The nicht she'll hae but three ;
There was Marie Beatoun, and Marie Seton,
And Marie Carmichael, and me.

“ O aft, aft hae I dressed the Queen,
And put gowd in her hair ;
But now I've gotten for my doom,
The gallows tree to share.

“ O aften hae I dressed my queen,
And aften made her bed ;
But now I've gotten for my reward,
The gallows tree to tread.

“ O happy, happy, is the maid,
That's born o' beauty free ;
It was my dimpling rosie cheeks
That's been the dule o' me.

“ I charge ye all, ye mariners,
 When ye sail ower the faem,
 That ye lat na my father or mither ken,
 But that I’m coming hame.

“ Ye mariners, ye mariners,
 When ye sail ower the sea,
 O let na my father or mither ken,
 I hung on the gallows tree.

“ O little did my mither think,
 That day she cradled me,
 What lands I was to travel ower,
 What death I was to dee.

“ O little did my father think,
 That day he held up me,
 That I, his last and dearest hope,
 Should hang upon a tree.

“ But weep nae mair for me, ladies,
 Weep nae mair for me ;
 The mither that kills her ain bairn,
 Deserves weel for to dee.”

Sir Patrick Spens.

“ The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spens,” as Coleridge describes it in one of his odes, is one of the most graphic and vigorous in the language. The historical event on which it is founded has been the subject of considerable discussion among the editors of the collections, some maintaining that it refers to the marriage of James III. with the Princess of Norway and Denmark ; others believing it to refer to the expedition sent in 1290 to bring home Margaret, the Maid of Norway, after the death of her father, Alex-

ander III. But the weight of testimony is in favour of its bearing reference to the fate of the Scottish nobles, who in 1281, conveyed Margaret, daughter of Alexander III., to Norway, on the occasion of her nuptials with King Eric. In their returning home from the marriage ceremony, according to Fordoun, the Abbot of Balmerinoch, Bernard of Monte-Alto, and many other persons were drowned.

“The king sits in Dunfermline toun,” says the ballad, and it may not be altogether unnecessary to explain that from the time of Malcolm Canmore to that of Alexander III. Dunfermline was a favourite residence of the Scottish sovereigns.

The phrase in the last verse—“Half owre, half owre to Aberdour,”—evidently means that Sir Patrick’s ship was half way across the German Ocean when she foundered and sank.

The authorship has been ascribed to Lady Wardlaw, the authoress of “Hardyknute,” but without sufficient reason.

THE king sits in Dunfermline toun,
 Drinking the blude-red wine ;
 “O whaur will I get a skeely skipper, *
 To sail this ship o’ mine ?”

Up and spake an eldern knight
 Sat at the king’s right knee :
 “Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
 That ever sail’d the sea.

The king has written a braid letter
 And seal’d it wi’ his hand,
 And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
 Was walking on the strand.

“To Noroway, to Noroway,
 To Noroway owre the faem ;
 The king’s daughter of Noroway,
 ’Tis thou maun tak’ her hame.”

* Skilful Captain.

The first line that Sir Patrick read,
 A loud laugh laughed he ;
 The neist line that Sir Patrick read,
 The tear blindit his ee.

“ O wha is this has done this deed,
 Has tauld the king o’ me,
 To send us out this time o’ year
 To sail upon the sea ?

“ Be ’t wind or weet, be ’t hail or sleet,
 Our ship maun sail the faem ;
 The king’s daughter of Noroway,
 ’Tis we maun tak’ her hame.”

They hois’d their sails on Mononday morn,
 Wi’ a’ the speed they may ;
 And they hae landed in Noroway
 Upon a Wednesday.

They hadna been a week, a week,
 In Noroway but twae,
 When that the lords o’ Noroway
 Began aloud to say—

“ Ye Scotsmen spend a’ our king’s gowd,
 And eke a’ our queen’s fee.”

“ Ye lee, ye lee, ye leears loud,
 Sae loud’s I hear ye lee !

“ For I brought as much o’ the white monie
 As ser’d my men and me,
 And a half-fou * o’ the gude red gowd,
 Out owre the sea with me.

* The eighth of a peck.

“ Mak’ haste, mak’ haste, my merry men a’,
 Our gude ship sails the morn,”
 “ Now ever alake, my master dear,
 I fear a deidly storm.

“ I saw the new moon late yestreen,
 Wi’ the auld moon in her arm ;
 And if we gang to sea, master,
 I fear we’ll come to harm !”

They hadna sail’d a league, a league,
 A league, but barely three,
 When the lift grew dark and the wind blew loud,
 And gurly grew the sea.

The ankers brak, and the tap-masts lap,
 It was sic a deadly storm,
 And the waves cam’ owre the broken ship,
 Till a’ her sides were torn.

“ O whaur will I get a gude sailor
 Will tak’ the helm in hand,
 Till I gang up the tall tap-mast,
 And see gif I spy land ?”

“ O here am I, a sailor gude,
 To tak’ the helm in hand,
 Till ye get up the tall tap-mast—
 But I fear ye’ll ne’er spy land.”

He hadna gane a step, a step,
 A step but barely ane,
 When a bolt flew out o’ the gude ship’s side,
 And the saut sea it cam’ in.

“ Gae fetch a wab o’ the silken claith,
 Anither o’ the twine,
 And wap them into our gude ship’s side,
 And let na the sea come in.”

They fetch'd a wab o' the silken clait,
Anither o' the twine,
And they wapp'd them into the gude ship's side
But aye the sea cam' in.

“Ye'll pick her weel, an' span her weel,
And mak' her hale and soun',”
But ere he had the words weel spoke
The bonnie ship was down.

O laith, laith, were our gude Scots lords
To weet their coal-black shoon,
But lang ere a' the play was play'd
They wat their hats abune.

And mony was the feather bed
That floated on the faem,
And mony was the gude lord's son
That never mair cam' hame.

The ladyes wrang their fingers white,
The maidens tore their hair ;
A' for the sake of their true loves,
For them they'll see nae mair.

O lang, lang may the ladyes sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand.

And lang, lang may the maidens sit,
Wi' the gowd kaims in their hair,
A' waiting for their ain dear loves,
For them they'll see nae mair.

Half owre, half owre to Aberdour,
It's fifty faddoms deep,
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

The Haughs of Cromdale.

“This is the worst specimen of the truth of Scottish song that is to be met with,” says Hogg in his *Jacobite Relics*, “two events being jumbled together in it that happened at the distance of many years from each other. These seem to be the battle of Auldearn, won by Montrose and the Clans; and that on the plains of Cromdale, in Strathspye, where the two Colonels, Buchan and Cameron, suffered themselves to be surprised in their beds by Sir Thomas Livingston, and though at the head of 1500 brave Highlanders, utterly defeated and scattered. This latter is the only battle on record that ever was really fought at Cromdale. It appears, therefore, more than probable that on that action the original song has been founded; for the first twenty lines contain an exact and true description of that shameful defeat, and these twenty lines may be considered as either the whole or part of the original song; and as they are middling good, and the air most beautiful, they had of course become popular. Some bard who had been partial to the clans, fired with indignation at hearing the disgrace of his countrymen sung all over the land, had added to the original verses an overcharged account of the battle of Auldearn, won by Montrose, then favourite leader against the Whigs; but, by a vile anachronism, he has made it to happen on the day following the action at Cromdale, whereas it happened just forty-five years before it. Although, therefore, I have placed the ballad among the songs of this early period, I am persuaded it had its origin at a much later date; but it would have been ridiculous to have placed a song that treated wholly of Montrose subsequent to events that happened long after his death. Yet the part of the ballad that describes the victory won by that hero cannot be the original part of it, else the writer would never have placed the action at Cromdale, which is almost a day’s journey from Auldearn, and in no way connected with the scene of that engagement. It would never do now to separate this old and popular song into two parts; but nothing can be more evident than that one part of the song describes the battle won by Montrose and the clans, on the 4th of May, 1645, and the other part, that won by Livingston over the clans, on the first of May,

1690. The names of the clans mentioned in the song are those that were present with Montrose at Auldearn; the route that the defeated army took, together with the number of them that reached Aberdeen, all accord with the truth of history; so that at whatever period the song was made, it evidently alludes to that action." James Maidment, in his *Scottish Ballads and Songs, Historical and Traditionary*, prints a version of the "Haughs of Cromdale" differing in many respects from the copy here appended, but what is, 'on the face of it clearly evident, only a further corrupt version of a corrupted body. Auldearn is in the county of Nairn, within a few miles of the county town. Cromdale is a village in Inverness-shire.

As I came in by Auchindoun,
 A little wee bit frae the toun,
 Where to the Highlands I was bound,
 To view the haughs of Cromdale.

I met a man in tartan trews,
 I speer'd at him what was the news,
 Quo' he, "The Highland army rues
 That e'er we came to Cromdale.

"We were in bed, sir, every man,
 When the English host upon us came;
 A bloody battle then began,
 Upon the haughs of Cromdale.

"The English horse they were so rude,
 They bathed their hoofs in Highland blood,
 But our brave clans they boldly stood,
 Upon the haughs of Cromdale.

"But, alas! we could no longer stay,
 For o'er the hills we came away,
 And sore we do lament the day
 That e'er we came to Cromdale."

Thus the great Montrose did say,
“ Can you direct the nearest way,
For I will o’er the hills this day,
And view the haughs of Cromdale.”

“ Alas, my lord, you’re not so strong,
You scarcely have two thousand men ;
There’s twenty thousand on the plain,
Stand rank and file on Cromdale.”

Thus the great Montrose did say,
“ I say, direct the nearest way,
For I will o’er the hills this day,
And see the haughs of Cromdale.”

They were at dinner every man,
When great Montrose upon them came ;
A second battle then began,
Upon the haughs of Cromdale.

The Grant, Mackenzie, and M’Kay,
Soon as Montrose they did espy,
O then, they fought most valiantly,
Upon the haughs of Cromdale.

The M’Donalds they returned again,
The Camerons did their standard join,
M’Intosh play’d a bloody game
Upon the haughs of Cromdale.

The M’Gregors fought like lions bold,
M’Phersons none could them control,
M’Lauchlans fought like royal souls,
Upon the haughs of Cromdale.

M’Leans, M’Dougals, and M’Neils,
So boldly as they took the field,
And made their enemies to yield,
Upon the haughs of Cromdale.

The Gordon boldly did advance,
 The Frasers fought with sword and lance,
 The Grahams they made their heads to dance,
 Upon the haughs of Cromdale.

The loyal Stewarts, with Montrose,
 So boldly set upon their foes,
 And brought them down with Highland blows,
 Upon the haughs of Cromdale.

Of twenty thousand Englishmen,
 Five hundred fled to Aberdeen,
 The rest of them lie on the plain
 Upon the haughs of Cromdale.

Gilderoy.

The subject of this old song, which has yet a certain popularity in most country districts in Scotland, was a man named Patrick Macgregor, but more familiarly Gillieroy (the red-haired lad), whose life and morals were, like those of his more illustrious namesake, framed on

“The good old rule, the simple plan,
 That they should take who have the power,
 And they should keep who can.”

Gilderoy was, in fact, a notorious freebooter, or cattle-lifter, who flourished in the early part of the seventeenth century, and was the leader of a numerous gang of caterans, who practised stouthrief and robbery with violence far and wide, but chiefly in the Highlands of Perthshire and Aberdeenshire. In February, 1636, seven of his accomplices were taken, tried, condemned, and executed at Edinburgh. They were apprehended, chiefly through the exertions of the Stewarts of Athole, and in revenge Gilderoy burned several houses belonging to the Stewarts, which act proved his speedy ruin. A reward of a thousand pounds was offered for his apprehension; and he was soon taken, along with five more accomplices (some accounts say ten), and the whole gang were executed at the Cross of

Edinburgh on the 27th July, 1636, the leader, as a mark of unenviable distinction, receiving a higher gibbet than the others—a circumstance which is alluded to in the ballad. Some wonderful stories are told of this wild cateran, such as his having picked the pocket of Cardinal Richelieu while he was celebrating high mass in the church of St. Dennis, Paris ; his having carried off with consummate assurance a trunk of plate from the house of the Duke Medina-Celi at Madrid ; and his having attacked Oliver Cromwell and two servants while travelling from Portpatrick to Glasgow, and shooting the Protector's horse, which fell upon him and broke his leg, whereupon he placed Oliver on an ass, tied his legs under its belly, and dismissed the pair to seek their fortune. The ballad itself is said to have been originally composed by the hero's mistress, a young woman belonging to the higher ranks of life, who had become attached to the noted cateran, and was induced to live with him. It is to be found in black letter broadsides as far back as 1650. The present improved version was first printed in Durfey's *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, volume v., 1719, and is said to have been re-set by Lady Wardlaw, authoress of the well-known ballad of "Hardyknute." The original, according to Percy, contained "some indecent luxuriations that required the pruning hook."

O GILDEROY was a bonny boy ;
 Had roses till his shoon ;
 His stockings were of silken soy,
 Wi' garters hanging doon,
 It was, I ween, a comely sicht,
 To see sae trim a boy ;
 He was my joy, my heart's delight,
 My handsome Gilderoy.

O, sic twa charming een he had ;
 His breath as sweet's a rose ;
 He never wore a Highland plaid,
 But costly silken clothes ;
 He gained the love of ladies gay,
 Nane e'er to him was coy ;
 Ah, wae's me ! I mourn the day,
 For my dear Gilderoy.

My Gilderoy and I were born
 Baith in a'e town thegither :
 We scant were seven years before,
 We 'gan to love each other,
 Our daddies and our mammies, they
 Were fill'd with meikle joy,
 To think upon the bridal day
 'Twixt me and Gilderoy.

For Gilderoy, that love of mine,
 Gude faith, I freely bought
 A wedding sark of holland fine,
 Wi' silken flowers wrought,
 And he gied me a wedding ring,
 Which I received with joy ;
 Nae lad and lassie e'er could sing
 Like me and Gilderoy.

Wi' meikle joy we spent our prime,
 Till we were baith sixteen ;
 And aft we pass'd the langsome time
 Amang the leaves sae green ;
 Aft on the banks we'd sit us there,
 And sweetly kiss and toy ;
 Wi' garlands gay wad deck my hair,
 My handsome Gilderoy.

O, that he still had been content
 Wi' me to lead his life ;
 But ah, his manfu' heart was bent
 To stir in feats of strife ;
 And he in many a venturous deed
 His courage bald wad try,
 And now this gars my heart to bleed
 For my dear Gilderoy.

And when of me his leave he took,
 The tears they wat mine e'e,
 I gave him a love-parting look,
 My benison gang wi' thee !
 "God speed thee weel, mine ain dear heart.
 For gane is all my joy ;
 My heart is rent sith we maun part,
 My handsome Gilderoy."

My Gilderoy baith far and near
 Was fear'd in ilka toun,
 And bauldly bear away the gear
 Of mony a lowland loun ;
 Nane e'er durst meet him hand to hand,
 He was say brave a boy ;
 At length wi' numbers he was ta'en
 My handsome Gilderoy.

The Queen of Scots possessit noucht,
 That my love lat me want ;
 For cow and ewe he to me brought,
 And e'en when they were scant ;
 All those did honestly possess,
 He never did annoy,
 Who never failed to pay their cess
 To my love Gilderoy.

Wae worth the loun that made the laws
 To hang a man for gear !
 To reave of life, for ox or ass,
 For sheep, or horse, or mear.
 Had not their laws been made so strict
 I ne'er had lost my joy ;
 Wi' sorrow ne'er had wat my cheek,
 For my dear Gilderoy.

Gif Gilderoy had done amiss,
 He micht have banish'd been ;
 Ah, what sair cruelty is this,
 To hang sic handsome men !
 To hang the flower o' Scottish land,
 Sae sweet and fair a boy !
 Nae lady had sae white a hand
 As thee, my Gilderoy !

Of Gilderoy sae fear'd they were,
 They bound him meikle strong ;
 Till Edinburgh they led him there,
 And on a gallows hung ;
 They hung him high abune the rest,
 He was sae trim a boy ;
 There died the youth whom I loved best,
 My handsome Gilderoy.

Thus having yielded up his breath,
 I bore his corpse away ;
 Wi' tears that trickled for his death,
 I washed his comely clay ;
 And siccar in a grave sae deep,
 I laid the dear loved boy ;
 And now for ever maun I weep
 For winsome Gilderoy.

The Broom o' Cowdenknowes.

Many poets have sung of the Broom of the Cowdenknowes, and the first ballad—probably the subjoined—having these words for its title is said to have been the production of a Mellerstane maid, whose name was Crosbie ; and that the words of her song were set to music by David Rizzio, the ill-fated musician of Mary Stuart. “The beautiful air of Cowdenknowes,” says Sir Walter Scott, in

his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, "is well known and popular. In Ettrick Forest the following words are uniformly adapted to the tune, and seem to be the original ballad." Cowdenknowes is situated upon the River Leader, about four miles from Melrose.

O THE broom, and the bonnie, bonnie broom,
 And the broom o' the Cowdenknowes !
 And aye sae sweet as the lassie sang
 I' the ewe-bucht, milking the ewes.

The hills were high on ilka side,
 And the bucht i' the lirk o' the hill,
 And aye, as she sang, her voice it rang,
 Out ower the head o' yon hill.

There was a troop o' gentlemen
 Cam' riding merrilie by,
 And ane o' them has rade out o' the way,
 To the bucht to the bonnie May.

"Weel may ye save an' see, bonnie lass,
 An' weel may ye save an' see."
 "An' sae wi' you, ye weel-bred knight,
 An' what's your will wi' me?"

"The nicht is misty and mirk, fair May,
 And I hae ridden astray.
 And will ye be sae kind, fair May,
 As come out and point my way?"

"Ride on, ride on, ye ramp rider,
 Your steed's baith stout and strang ;
 For out of the bucht I daurna come,
 For fear that ye do me wrang."

"O winna ye pity me, bonnie lass ?
 O winna ye pity me ?
 And winna ye pity my poor steed,
 Stands trembling at yon tree ?"

“ I wadna pity your poor steed,
 Tho’ it were tied to a thorn ;
 For if you would gain my love the night,
 Ye wad slicht me ere the morn.

“ For I ken ye by your weel-buskit hat,
 And your merry twinkling e’e,
 That ye’re the laird o’ the Oakland hills,
 An’ ye may weel seem for to be.”

“ O I’m not the laird o’ the Oakland hills,
 Ye’re far mista’en o’ me ;
 But I’m ane o’ the men about his house,
 And richt aft in his companie.”

He’s ta’en her by the milk-white hand,
 And by the grass-green sleeve ;
 He’s laid her down by the ewe-bucht wa’,
 And speired at her sma’ leave.

O he’s ta’en out a purse o’ gowd,
 And streaked her yellow hair ;
 “ Now, tak’ ye that, my bonnie, bonnie May,
 O’ me till ye hear mair.”

Then he lap on his berry brown steed
 And he rade after his men,
 And ane an’ a’ cried out to him,
 “ O, master, ye’ve tarried lang !”

“ O I’ve been east, an’ I’ve been west,
 And I’ve been far ower the knowes,
 But the bonniest lass that ever I saw,
 Is i’ the bucht milking the ewes.”

She’s ta’en her milk-pail on her head,
 And she’s gane singing hame ;
 “ O whaur hae ye been, my a’e dochter ?
 Ye hae na been your lane.”

“ O naebody was wi' me, father,
 O naebody has been wi' me ;
 The nicht is misty and mirk, father,
 Ye may gang to the door an' see.

“ But wae be to your ewe-herd, father,
 And an ill death may ye dee ;
 He loves the bucht at the back o' the knowe,
 And a tod has frichted me.

“ There cam' a tod to the ewe-bucht door,
 The like I never saw,
 And ere he had taken the lamb he did,
 I had loured* he had ta'en them a'.”

When twenty weeks were come an' gane,
 Twenty weeks an' three,
 The lassie begoud to look thin an' pale,
 And thought lang for his twinkling e'e.

It fell on a day, on a het summer day,
 She was ca'in' out her kye,
 She spied a troop o' gentlemen,
 A' merrillie riding bye.

“ Weel may ye save an' see, bonnie May,
 Weel may ye save an' see,
 I wat ye be a very bonnie May,
 But wha's aucht that babe ye are wi' ?”

Never a word did the lassie say,
 For never a ane could she blame,
 And never a word did the lassie say,
 But, “ I hae a gudeman at hame.”

* Rather.

“Ye lee, ye lee, my weel-faured May,
 Sae loud as I hear ye lee ;
 For dinna you mind yon misty nicht
 I was in the bucht wi’ thee.

“I ken you by your middle sae jimp,
 And your merrie twinkling e’e,
 Ye’re the bonnie lass o’ the Cowdenknowes,
 And ye may weel seem to be.”

He’s lichted aff his berry brown steed,
 And he’s set that fair May on :
 “Ca’ out your kye, gude father, yoursel’,
 I’ll ne’er ca’ them out again.”

“It’s I am the laird o’ the Oakland hills,
 I hae thirty ploughs an’ three,
 And I hae gotten the bonniest May
 That’s in a’ the south countrie.”

Barbara Allan.

This—one of the simplest and most affecting of ballads—contains perhaps less superfluous language than almost any like composition in our literature. Still, the few simple verses tell the love-tragedy of Sir John Grahame and Barbara Allan so completely as to leave nothing untold that the reader would care to know. The composition is of great antiquity, and there is literally nothing known of its history. Mr. Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe supposes Annan, in Dumfriesshire, to have been the scene of the story, and says that the peasantry of Annandale sang more verses of the ballad than have appeared in print. It may be mentioned that Bishop Percy in his *Ancient Songs and Ballads* gives an extended version of the same story under the extended title of “Barbara Allan’s Cruelty ; or, the Young Man’s Tragedy.” In this arrangement “Scarlet

Town" is named as the residence of the heroine, and "Jemmye Grove" is substituted for Sir John Grahame, but the whole seems a fabrication on the briefer and older set. The air to which the ballad is sung is beautiful and expressive, and is considered to be of an age equal to the poetry. Read or sung, the second last verse of this ballad never fails in the purpose of rare effect—

"She hadna gane a mile but twa,
When she heard the deid-bell knellin',
And every jow that the deid-bell gi'ed,
It cried 'Woe to Barbara Allan!'"

There is an eerieness expressed in the last two lines that fastens itself in the mind of the hearer, and will scarcely pass away.

It was in and about the Martinmas time,
When the green leaves were a-fallin',
That Sir John Grahame, in the west countrie,
Fell in love wi' Barbara Allan.

He sent his man down through the town,
To the place where she was dwallin'.
"O, haste and come to my master, dear,
Gin ye be Barbara Allan."

O, hooly, hooly rose she up
To the place where he was lyin',
And when she drew the curtain by,
"Young man, I think ye're dyin'."

"It's oh, I'm sick, I'm very, very sick,
And it's a' for Barbara Allan ;"
"O, the better for me ye'se never be,
Though your heart's bluid were a-spillin'."

"O, dinna ye mind, young man," she said,
"When ye the cups were fillin',
That ye made the healths gae round and round,
And slichtit Barbara Allan?"

He turned his face unto the wa',
 And death was with him dealin'—
 “ Adieu, adieu, my dear friends a',
 And be kind to Barbara Allan.”

And slowly, slowly raise she up,
 And slowly, slowly left him ;
 And sighin', said she could not stay
 Since death of life had reft him.

She hadna gane a mile but twa,
 When she heard the deid-bell knellin' ;
 And every jow that the deid-bell gi'ed,
 It cried “ Woe to Barbara Allan !”

“ O, mother, mother, mak' my bed,
 And mak' it saft and narrow ;
 Since my love died for me to-day,
 I'll die for him to-morrow.”

The Ikain o' Mathers.

This graphic and gruesome ballad depicts an incident which is happily almost without a parallel in Scottish history. The story is briefly this. About the middle of the fifteenth century, the Sheriff of Mearns, Melvil of Glenberrie, exercised his authority with so high a hand that the gentlemen of the county complained of his conduct to the King, James I. of Scotland. Baron Barclay of Mathers, in particular, made frequent complaint, tired of which, in a moment of unguarded impatience the King said to him, “ Sorra care gif that Shirra were sodden an' suppit in broo !” “ As your Majesty pleases,” replied Barclay, and instantly withdrew from the royal presence. Coming home in haste he convened a meeting of those gentlemen of the county—Straiton of Laurieston, Wishart of Pitarrow, and Arbutnot, and others—who were as much dissatisfied with the conduct of the Sheriff as he was himself, and, met in

solemn conclave, the aggrieved Barons resolved to adhere literally to the King's word. They simulated friendship for the unfortunate Sheriff, and organised a hunting party to the forest of Garvock, and invited him to make one of their number. During the hunt the Barons gradually led the party to a place in the midst of the forest known to this day as "Brownie's Kettle," and "Shirra's Pot." Here they had privately caused a fire to be built, and a large cauldron full of water to be boiled upon it, on coming to which great surprise was expressed. The whole party alighted from their horses to examine the cauldron, whereupon the luckless and unsuspecting Sheriff was seized and unceremoniously tumbled into the boiling pot. After he was boiled for some time, the Barons then fully completed their barbarous act by taking each a spoonful of the gruesome soup. The Sheriff was thus, according to the King's expression, literally "sodden and suppit in broo." When the King learned of the tragical event he was greatly incensed against the Barons of the Mearns, four of whom were forthwith outlawed, and had their estates forfeited to the Crown for their share in the diabolical act. Barclay, to screen himself against His Majesty's vengeance, fled to the Kaim of Mathers, a tower which he had erected upon a cliff which overhangs the sea, in the parish of St. Cyrus, about six miles to the north of Montrose, the only access to which was by a narrow and almost impassable isthmus, and here he remained until opportunity favoured his escape to France. In course of time his estates were restored to him, and he returned to his native land. The famous Barclays of Ury, in Aberdeenshire, were lineal descendants of this infamous Barclay of Mathers. The ballad is, I suspect, not so ancient as its style of orthography might lead one to infer.

PART I.

'Twas all within Redcastle's towers,
 So merry was the nyght ;
 Kyng James, our sov'reign liege was there
 Wyth peers of stalwart myght.

And they did quaffe the gude brown ale
 In cuppes of gold so sheen ;
 And they did sing the minstrelle's song
 Of deeds that erst had been.

Up spake the kyng with kyndlie hearte,
 And eke with meikle grace ;
 “ Whae'er hath oughite of grief to tell,
 Now tell it to mie face.

“ For whilome in mie prison pent
 Bie Henrie's * yron hand,
 I heard the tales of lethal strife
 Wythin mie Scottish land.

“ Now woe betyde the man wha strives
 In angry raid and feud !
 Hym shall we hang on gallows tree
 Wha scaiths hys neyghbour's gude.”

“ Mie liege,” quod ane of gloomy speche
 (Which struck them alle wyth awe)
 “ I claim the freedom whych ye gyve,
 And bryng the loon to lawe.

“ The Sheriffe of our Merne's land
 Is ane of wycked hearte,
 And many a wyfe bye his misdeeds,
 Hath borne a wydowe's parte :

“ For he hath ta'en the laird's best steed,
 And the ladie's golden ryng :
 And all he saith, in guerdon due
 To James our sovereign kyng.”

“ Now,” quod the kyng, in wrathful haste
 And choler hotte as flame,
 “ What manne is he wha synneth so,
 And in hys sovereign's name ?

* Henry IV. of England.

“ It bootes me not to speer hys kyn—
A traytour false is he :—
I care ne though the loon was seethed,
And suppit wyth the brie.”

Ne mair the knyght did staie to hear,
But up he got wyth speed,
And, calling to his servaunt, sed,
“ Make haste and bryng mie steed.”

Hys coal-black steed he vaulted onne,
And prycked hys flanks full sore,
Untyll thae were besprent and wet
So grievous all wyth gore.

And now he came besyde the Eske—
Ane ryver deepe and wyde ;
He plunged hym in and rode the streame,
Dysdaining wynd and tyde.

And now he came to Merne's land
And faster does he scoure,
Untyll behind the green-clad woddies
He marketh Mathers tower.

Hys ladye sate within her room,
So gaudie and so gaie ;
She waited for her dear husbände,
And marvelled at hys staie.

“ Oh tell me now, mie Marian lass,”
Unto her maid quod she,
“ Where dost thou think mie husband is?
He cometh not to me.”

But when that she had spoken so,
Certes thae both dyd hear
Ane horsemanne gallop on the waie,
Who now approaches near.

'Twas Luath first that made a growl
 When he the sound dyd marke ;
 And then to meet his maister dear
 He ran, and eke dyd bark.

The knyght stops at the castle doore—
 The ladie runs to hym ;
 “ Gyve me a juge of wyne,” quod he ;
 “ Mie head begyns to swym.”

“ O where, O where !” the ladye cryed,
 “ Hath mie true husband been ?
 I trow 'twas at the Maison Dieu,*
 Or at Seyncte Magdalene.†

“ And sure the Freers have started thee
 Wyth tales of dool and woe ;
 I never saw thee look so wyld,
 It therefore must be so.”

“ Ladie,” quod he, “ I hate the Freers,
 And all the tales thae tell ;
 Thaer Kirkzard sprites confound me not,
 I fear nae ghaist frae hell.

“ Thae call me aye the gloomy knyght ;
 I was not born to laugh.
 Gyn I have frowned thys parte of life,
 I'll frown the other half.”

Now, he hath told hys serving-manne
 To wake hym from his bedde,
 Soon as Dan Sol upon the sea
 Should shew hys golden hedde.

* A religious house in Brechin.

† A Chapel on the road between Brechin and Montrose. The burial ground is still used.

But ne'er a word dyd he reveal
 Unto hys ladie dear
 Of what he was to do next morn—
 Though you shall quickly hear.

PART II.

The huntsman's merry horn hath wound
 Its call so loud and shrille ;
 And manie a knyght and nymble steed
 Hath met on Garvock hylle.

Pittarow's gallaunt knyght was there,
 And the laird of Laurystoun ;
 Glenbervy with hys brothers twae
 And Edzell with hys sonne.

The wycked Sheriff too was there,
 Philip Melvil was hys name ;
 And twenty more frae the sea coast,
 With gloomy Urie came.

Now up thae mount with fleet griehound
 And through the forest steer—
 Thae thynk nought of the goodlie syght,
 But they thynk upon the deer.

Thae thynk not of the fair countrie
 That ligget low and sweet ;
 The woodes, and streams, and parkes so green
 And Conveth* at their feet.

Thae thynk not of the Grampyans hygh,
 That ryse upon thaer view ;
 Of Clachnabane wyth crowne of stane.
 And Battack's head so blue.

* The ancient name of Laurencekirk.

But onne thae ryde with cheerie haste ;
 “Tantylvie ! ho !” thae crie—
 The leafie wodde shakes back the sound,
 And makes the lyche replie.

Thae gallop east, thae gallop west,
 And round the hylle thae chase—
 The fox squats deeper in hys lair,
 And maulkin quyttes her place.

The birds are fryghted from thair nests,
 The raven dull doth croak,
 The owlette starteth from hys sleep,
 Hys cradle the dark green oak.

But ne'er a stag that daie is seen
 Y-skiping through the glade—
 Albeit the menne ilk lessel beat,
 Albeit the griehounds bayed.

So now 'tis time to thynk of rest,
 All worn and spent with moil ;
 “Then blow the horn, good John of Cair
 And let us cease from toil.”

He stood wythin a narrow dell,
 Just eastward of the hyll ;
 And John of Cair has wound his horn,
 That blew so loud and shrylle.

There knyght and laird, and carle also,
 And panting griehound came ;
 They all dyd wear a woefull face—
 For why ? Thae caught no game.

Wythin the dell a blazing fire
 Of faggots meetlie ryven,
 Dyd burn around so cheerylie
 And sent its smeck to heaven

And onne the fyre a dayntie potte
 (Or Caldron it mote be) :
 Seyncte Marie's bell is not so bigge
 That ryngeth in Dundee.

The fyre does burn—the potte does boil,
 And “hubble, hubble,” cries ;
 For it was fylled wyth water fair,
 And barlie grots lykewyse.

Thae squatted down uponne the ground,
 Y-clad wyth plumie ferne ;
 But some were seated higher up,
 Upon a stonie cairn.

Ne wordes this dolefull council spake ;
 But looked wyth eyen of yie,
 Sometymes uponne the gloomie knyght—
 Sometymes uponne the fyre.

Up spake the Sheriffe, and sed he—
 “ Syth we have found it so
 That there is nought whereof to eat,
 Then homeward lette us go :

“ For I have there a goodlie dish,
 My wyfe prepareth well ;
 And she dyd byd me come to eat
 By chyme of Fordoun's bell.” *

“ Then,” quod the knyght of gloomie face
 “ Go home, if thet you maie ;
 But we have here a feaste to eat
 Upon this hunting daie.

* His residence was at Kincardine, then the county town.

“ And we have sworn an holic oath—
 Before the sunne go down
 We here shall taste of well-boiled flesh,
 And barley-broth so brown ! ”

Then up the Sheriffe got in haste
 To look wythin the potte :
 He fain would see gyf flesh was there,
 But surelie it was not.

But then, as farther to enquiry
 Hys wordes he dyd begyn,
 Thae turned hym o'er the cauldron's brym
 And hurlit hym heddelong in.

He turned hym round wyth manie plash ;
 At whyche the knyghts dyd smyle.
 And held hym down wyth stycks and staves,
 Most horryd and most vyle.

And now that he is seethed full well,
 What more had thae a-do,
 But to fulfyll thaer wycked oath,
 And make the King's word true ?

Ilk had a horne to suppe wythal ;
 And thus it came to pass,
 Thae took an mouthfull of the broth—
 The human broth it was !

Thae looked lycke deevyls at thaer feaste
 In hell's black cave below—
 I would not been among thaer crew
 For Barclay's land and moe.

PART III.

The knyght has sent hys servyng menne
In secret haste awaie,
To spie some place besyde the sea
Where he mote safelie staie.

The land of Mathers all was hys,
And on the steepie shore
A fearfull rocke * looks o'er the waves,
A-lystening to their roar.

So there thae buyld a lordlie kaim
All onne the stonie rock,
Which mote defie the sovereign's arms,
And eke the tempest's shock.

It mounted even from the clyffe,
Most fryghtfull to be seen :
Twae yron yettes dyd stand before
And a deepe fosse between.

Now comes the gloomie murtherer
Up from the murkie ground,
Whereyn hys ladie hyd him safe
From danger all around.

For sure the kyng sent forth hys lawes,
Wyth manie menne abroad,
And horses, all caparysoned,
To meet hym on the road.

* There are two rocks—the deep rent between them being about a yard wide. A portion of one of the towers still remains on the most westerly rock; and on the other (which communicates with the land and by which alone one can descend) are the ruins of battlements

'Twas "noon of nyght"—which time he choose
 To speed hym on the waie—
 Ne honest manne would shun the lyght
 That beameth in the daic.

Hys ladye on the palfrie rode,
 And eke hys lyttle one ; *
 And all so near unto the Kaim
 As you mote caste a stone.

And there thae met the horsemenne, who
 Informed were bie spyes—
 Now all hys guyltless famylie
 Sent forth most pyteous cryes.

"Stand back !" sed he, "or bie the Godde
 Who thys strong arm dyd make, †
 I'll cleave thie helmet to thie beard ;
 Whereat youre troppe shall quake."

"O knave !" quod then the horsemanne bold,
 "What man would yield to thee,
 Sith thou wouldst boyl hys bodie all,
 And sup hym wyth the brie ?

"But yield thiself, thou man-eater !
 Thie wife and menials all ;
 And sue for pardonne to the kyng,
 Wha syttes at Sterlyng's hall."

Ne moe of parlie dyd thae holde
 And broyl of scoffing words,
 But forth thae drew the sheenyng steel
 And clashed thae fyerie swordes.

* Afterwards Colonel David Barclay, who purchased Ury.

† The Barclays of Ury were remarkable for their size and strength.

Lycke terryer dog wyth furyous brock
 Thae grippet each other round,
 Tyll Urie wrung the horsemanne's neck,
 And flung him onne the ground.*

But now the sudden raid is o'er ;
 And who hath wonne the daie ?
 The knyght hath slayne the leader hold ;
 But the ladye is borne awaie.

And Urie heard her dolefull cries,
 But could ne helpe hys dame—
 For why ? The horsemenne followed fast
 As he ran to the Kaim.

Now see hym there, a woefull wretch
 In drearie prison pent,
 No tears, nor sighs, nor wordes had he
 To give hys sorrow vent.

But sometimes mopyng bie himself,
 All mournfull and alone,
 Ye would have heard hym strike the floor
 And utter forth a groan.

Hys food was aye the aiten cake,
 Hys drink the lympyd well ;
 Ne could he look on sodden flesh—
 He shuddered at the smell.

All long and yrksome was hys nyght
 As he did watch to see
 The moonbeams dancing on the waves
 So sheen and merrylie :

* About the place here described, viz., a stone-cast from the Kaim, there were dug up several human bones by the tenants of West Mathers, while improving that part of the farm.

He heard the hawk whoop round the tower,
 He heard the sea-mew screame ;
 And the roaring waves that shook the rock
 Would shake hym from hys dream.

All long and yrksome was the daie,
 As he dyd sytte and spie
 The seals dysporting in the sea,
 Tossing the waters hygh.

He saw the salmon spryng at even,
 The coote and wylde-ducks swym ;
 But though thae all were verie glad,
 Ne gladness was for hym.

Thys was the lyfe of the gloomie knyght,
 Untill the daie dyd come
 When good Kyng James hys pardon made,
 And called hym to hys home.*

Now woe betyde the cruel deed !
 And woe betyde the pain !
 And grant good Godde that never more
 The lycke may come again !

Binnorie, O Binnorie.

There are various versions of this rarely beautiful and affecting ballad. Pinkerton, Scott, and Jamieson have all given renderings of it. The present copy is somewhat different from any of these. Whether or not the ballad is based on any real incident it is impossible to say. The main idea may not even have been originally Scotch, as a similar story exists in other literatures besides our own.

* He was pardoned by James II., because he was a distant relation of the Arbuthnott family, *i.e.*, he claimed the privilege of Clan Macduff, and paid the fine for homicide and obtained pardon.

THERE were twa sisters lived in a bower,
Binnorie, O Binnorie !

There cam' a knight to be their wooer,
By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He courted the eldest wi' glove and ring,
Binnorie, O Binnorie !

But he lo'ed the youngest abune a' thing,
By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

The eldest she was vexed sair,
Binnorie, O Binnorie !

And sair envied her sister fair,
By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

The eldest said to the youngest ane,
Binnorie, O Binnorie !

“ Will ye see our father's ships come in,
By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie ? ”

She's ta'en her by the lily hand ;
Binnorie, O' Binnorie !

And led her down to the river strand,
By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

The youngest stood upon a stane ;
Binnorie, O Binnorie !

The eldest cam' and pushed her in,
By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

“ O sister, sister, reach your hand.”
Binnorie, O Binnorie !

“ And ye shall be the heir o' half my land,
By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.”

“ O sister, I'll not reach my hand.”
Binnorie, o' Binnorie !

“ And I'll be the heir o' all your land,
By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.”

“ Shame fa’ the hand that I should take,”
 Binnorie, o’ Binnorie !

“ It has twined me and my world’s make,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o’ Binnorie.”

“ O sister, sister, reach your glove,”
 Binnorie, o’ Binnorie !

“ And sweet William shall be your love,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o’ Binnorie.”

“ Sink on, nor hope for hand or glove,”
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !

“ And sweet William shall better be my love,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o’ Binnorie.

“ Your cherry cheeks, and yellow hair,”
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !

“ Had garr’d me gang maiden evermair,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o’ Binnorie.”

Sometimes she sank, sometimes she swam,
 Binnorie, o’ Binnorie !

Until she cam’ to the miller’s dam ;
 By the bonnie mill-dams o’ Binnorie.

The miller’s daughter was baking bread,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !

And gaed for water as she had need,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o’ Binnorie.

“ O father, father, draw your dam !”
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !

“ There’s a mermaid or a milk-white swan,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o’ Binnorie.”

The miller hasted and drew his dam,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !

And there he found a drown’d woman,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o’ Binnorie.

Upon her fingers, lily white,—

Binnorie, O Binnorie !

The jewel-rings were shining bright,

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Ye couldna see her yellow hair,

Binnorie, O Binnorie !

For gowd and pearls, a' sae rare,

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Ye couldna see her middle sma',

Binnorie, O Binnorie !

Her gowden girdle was sae braw,

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Ye couldna see her lily feet,

Binnorie, O Binnorie !

Her gowden fringes were sae deep,

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

“Sair will they be, whae'er they be,”

Binnorie, O Binnorie !

“The hearts that live to weep for thee,

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.”

Its by there come a harper fine,

Binnorie, O Binnorie !

Wha harp'd to nobles when they dine,

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And when he looked that lady on,

Binnorie, O Binnorie !

He sighed, and made a heavy moan,

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He made a harp o' her breast bane,

Binnorie, O Binnorie !

Whase sounds would melt a heart o' stane,

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He's ta'en three locks o' her yellow hair,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !

And wi' them strung his harp sae rare,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He went into her father's ha',
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !
 And played his harp before them a',
 By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie,

He laid the harp upon a stane,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !
 It straight began to play alane,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And first the harp sung loud and clear,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !
 " Farewell, my father and mother dear,"
 By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Neist when the harp began to sing,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !
 'Twas " Farewell, William," said the string,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And then as plain as plain could be,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie !
 " There sits my sister, wha drowned me,
 By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie."

The Wife o' Beith.

Copies of this curious old rhyme are now very rare indeed, although in the not very remote period of "John Cheap, the Chapman," it circulated in thousands in the east and north-east, and in tens of thousands in the west and south-west of Scotland. Its subject is a daring one, and many

will esteem the treatment as irreverent, but it was not so regarded in the day of its popularity, and is therefore an interesting relic of a time when plain speaking was fashionable—when the oratory of the pulpit was frequently as homely in expression and rude in design as the wicked “Wife o’ Beith; an allegorical dialogue, containing nothing but what is recorded in Scripture.”

IN Beith once dwelt a worthy wife,
Of whom brave Chaucer mention makes.
She livéd a licentious life,
And namely in venereal acts,
But death did come for all her cracks;
When years were spent and days out driven,
Then suddenly she sickness takes,
Deceased forthwith, and went to heaven.

But as she went upon the way,
There followed her a certain guide,
And kindly to her he did say,
“Where mean you, dame, for to abide?
I know you are the Wife of Beith,
And would not then that you go wrong,
For I’m your friend, and will be leath
That you go through that narrow throng;
This way is broader, go with me,
And very pleasant is the way;
I’ll bring you there, where you should be,
Go with me, friend—say me not nay.”

She lookéd on him, then did speer,
“I pray you, sir, what is your name?
Shew me the way how you came here?
To tell to me it is no shame.

Is that a favour ’bout your neck?
And what is that upon your side?

I knew you by your colours first,
Is it a bag or silver sack?
What are you then? where do you bide?”

“ I was a servant unto Christ,
And Judas likewise is my name.”

“ Forsooth, indeed, you are to blame ;
Your Master did you not betray ?
And hang yourself when you had done ?
Where'er you bide I will not stay ;
Go then, you knave, let me alone.”

“ Whate'er I be, I'll be your guide,
Because you know not well the way.”

“ What would you me, where do you dwell
I have no will to go with thee ;
I fear it is some lower cell,
I pray thee therefore let me be ;
I know your way it is to hell,
For you are none of the eleven ;
Go haste you then unto your cell,
My way is only unto heaven.”

“ That way is by the gates of hell,
If you intend there for to go,
Go, dame, I will not you compel,
But I with you will go also.”

Where smoke and darkness did abound,
And pitch and sulphur burnéd still,
With yells and cries hills did resound ;
The Fiend himself came to the gate,
And askéd him where he had been.

“ Do you not know ? Have you forgot ?
Seeking this wife could not be seen.”

“ Good dame,” he said, “ would you be here
I pray you then tell me your name.”

“ The Wife of Beith, since that you speer,
But to come in I were to blame.”

“ I will not have you here, good dame,
For you were mistress of the flyting ;
If once within this gate you came,
I would be troubled with your biting.

Cummer, go back, and let me be,
 Here are too many of your rout ;
 For women lewd like unto thee,
 I cannot turn my foot about."

"Sir thief, I say I shall bide out,
 But gossip thou wast ne'er to me ;
 For to come in, I'm not so stout,
 And of my biting thou'st be free :
 But, Lucifer, what's that on thee ?
 Hast thou no water in this place ?
 Thou look'st so black, it seems to me
 Thou ne'er dost wash thy ugly face."

"If we had water for to drink,
 We should not care for washing then ;
 Into these flames and filthy stink,
 We burn with fire unto the doom ;
 Upbraid me then, good wife, no more,
 For first when I heard of thy name,
 I knew thou hadst such words in store
 Would make the Devil to think shame."

"Forsooth, sir thief, thou art to blame,
 If I had time now for to bide.
 Once you were well, but may think shame,
 That lost heaven for rebellious pride ;
 Who traitor-like fell with the rest,
 Because you would not be content,
 And now of bliss art dispossesst,
 Without all grace for to repent ;
 Thou mad'st poor Eve for to consent
 To eat of the forbidden tree
 (Which we poor daughters may relent),
 And made us almost like to thee ;
 But God be blest, who passed thee by,
 And did a Saviour provide
 For Adam's whole posterity,
 All those who do in him confide.

Adieu, false friend, I may not bide,
 With thee I may no longer stay ;
 My God in death He was my guide,
 O'er hell I'll get the victory."

Then up the hill the poor wife went,
 Oppressed with stinking flames and fear,
 Weeping right sore with great relent,
 For to go else she wist not where—
 A narrow way with thorns and briers,
 And full of mires was her before ;
 Sighéd oft with sobs and tears,
 The poor wife's heart was wondrous sore,
 Tired and torn she went on still,
 Sometimes she sat, and sometimes fell,
 Until she came to a high hill,
 And then she lookéd back to hell.
 When that she had climbed up the hill,
 Before her was a goodly plain ;
 Where she did rest and weep her fill,
 Then she rose to her feet again ;
 Her heart was glad, the way was good,
 Up to the hill she hy'd with haste,
 The flowers were fair where that she stood,
 The fields were pleasant to her taste.

Then she espied Jerusalem,
 On Sion's mount where that it stood,
 Shining with gold light as the sun,
 Her silly soul was then right glad ;
 The ports were pearls shining bright,
 Glorious it was for to behold,
 The precious stones gave such a light,
 The walls were of transparent gold.
 High were the walls, the gates were shut,
 And long she thought for to be in ;
 But then for fear of biding out,
 She knockéd hard and made some din.

To knock and cry she did not spare,
Till father Adam did her hear.

“Who is't that raps so rudely there?
Heaven cannot well be won by weir.”

“The Wife of Beith, since that you speer,
Hath stood these two hours at the gate.”

“Go back,” saith he, “you must forbear,
Here may no sinners entrance get.”

“Adam,” quoth she, “I shall be in,
In spite of all such churls as thee—
Thou'rt the original of all sin,
For eating of the forbidden tree—
For which thou art not flyting free,
But for thy foul offences fled.”

Adam went back, and let her be,
Looking as if his nose had bled.

Then Mother Eve did at him speer
“Who was it that made such a din?”

He said “A woman would be here,
For me, I durst not let her in.”

“I'll go,” said she, “and ask her will,
Her company I would have fain.”

But aye she cried and knockéd still,
And in no ways she would refrain.

“Daughter,” said Eve, “you will do well,
And come again another time ;
Heaven is not won by sword or steel,
Nor one that's guilty of a crime.”

“Mother,” said she, “the fault is thine,
That knocking here so long I stand :
The guilt is more than that of mine,
If thou wilt rightly understand ;
Our misery thou didst begin,
By thee thy husband was deceived.”

Eve went back where Noah was,
And told him all how she was blam'd,

Of her great sin and first trespass,
Whereof she was so much ashamed.

Then Noah said, "I will go down,
And will forbid her that she knock."
"Go back," he said, "ye drunken lown,
You're none of the celestial flock."

"Noah," she said, "hold thou thy peace ;
Where I drank ale, thou didst drink wine,
Discovered was to thy disgrace,
When thou wast full like to a swine :
If I was drunk I learned at thee,
For thou'rt the father and the first.
That others taught, and likewise me,
To drink when we have had no thirst."

Then Noah turned back with speed,
And told the Patriarch Abraham then
How that the carlin made him dread,
And how she all his deeds did ken.
Abraham then said, "Now get you gone !
Let us no more hear of your din !
No lying wife, as I suppose,
May enter in these gates within."

"Abraham," she said, "will you but spare ?
I hope you are not flyting free.
You of yourself had such a care,
Denied your wife and made a lee.
O then I pray you let me be,
For I repent of all my sin,
Do thou but ope the gates to me,
And let me quietly come in."

Abraham went back to Jacob then,
And told his nephew how he sped,
How that of her he nothing wan,
And that he thought the carlin mad.

Then down came Jacob throu' the close,
And said, "Go backward down to hell !"

“ Jacob,” quoth she, “ I know thy voice,
 That gate pertaineth to thysel’
 Of thy old trumperies I can tell—
 With two sisters thou led’st thy life
 And the third part of these tribes twelve
 Thou got with maids besides thy wife :
 And stole thy father’s benison,
 Only by fraud thy father frae ;
 Gave thou not him for venison
 A kid, instead of baked rae ? ”

Jacob himself was tickled so,
 He went to Lot where he was lying,
 And to the gate pray’d him to go,
 To staunch the carlin of her crying.

Lot says, “ Fair dame, make less ado,
 And come again another day.”

“ Old harlot carle, and drunkard too,
 Thou with thine own two daughters lay,
 Of thine untimely seed I say,
 Proceeded never good, but ill.”

Poor Lot for shame then stole away,
 And left the wife to knock her fill.

Meek Moses he went down at last,
 To pacify the carlin then—
 “ Now, dame,” said he, “ knock not so fast,
 Your knocking will not let you ben.”

“ Good Sir,” said she, “ I am aghast,
 When that I look you in the face ;
 If that your law till now did last,
 Then surely I had ne’er got grace :
 But, Moses, sir, now by your leave,
 Although of heaven thou be possesst,
 For all you saw did not believe.
 But you in Horeb there transgresst
 Wherefore by all it is confesst,
 You got but once the land to see,

And in the mount was put to rest,
 Vea buried there, where you did dee."

Then Aaron said, "You whorish wife,
 Go ! get you gone, and rap no more !
 With idols you have led your life ;
 Or then you shall repent it sore."

" Good Aaron Priest, I know you well,
 The golden calf you may remember,
 Who made the people plagues to see,
 This is of you recorded ever ;
 Your priesthood now is nothing worth,
 Christ is my only priest, and he,
 My Lord, who will not keep me forth,
 So I'll get in, in spite of thee."

Up started Samson at the length,
 Unto the gate apace came he,
 To drive away the wife with's strength,
 But all in vain—it would not be.

" Samson," says she, " the world may see,
 Thou wast a Judge who proved unjust,
 Those gracious gifts which God gave thee,
 Thou lost them by licentious lust.
 From Dalila, thy wicked wife,
 The secrets chief couldst not refrain,
 She daily sought to take thy life,
 Thou lost thy locks and then was slain ;
 Tho' thou wast strong it was in vain
 Haunting with harlots here and there."

Then Samson turned back again,
 And with the wife could mell nae mair.

Then said King David " Knock no more.
 We are all troubled with your cry."

" David," quoth she, " how cam'st thou there ?
 Thou might'st bide out as well as I—
 Thy deeds no ways thou can'st deny,
 Was not thy sin far worse than mine ?

Who with Uriah's wife did lie,
And caused him to be murdered syne?"

Then Jonas said, "Fair dame, content you,
If you intend to come to grace,
You must dree penance and repent you,
Ere you can come within this place."

"Jonas," quoth she, "how stands the case?
How came you here to be with Christ?
How dare you look Him in the face,
Considering how you broke your tryst?"

So Jonas then he was ashamed,
Because he was not flyting free,
Of all his faults she had him blamed,
He left the wife and let her be.

"Saint Thomas, then, I counsel thee
Go speak unto yon wicked wife,
She shames us all, and as for me,
Her like I never heard in life."

Thomas then said, "You make such strife,
When you are out, and meikle din,
If ye were here, I'll lay my life,
No peace the saints would get within;
It is your trade for to be flyting,
Still in a fever as one raves,
No marvel though you wives be biting,
Your tongues are made of aspen leaves."

"Thomas," quoth she, "let be your taunts,
You play the pick-thank, I perceive,
Tho' you be brother'd 'mong the saints,
An unbelieving heart you have.
Thou brought'st the Lord unto the grave.
But would'st no more with him remain,
And wast the last of all the lave
That did believe he rose again.
There might no doctrine do thee good,
No miracles made thee confide,

Till thou beheld Christ's wounds and blood,
 And putt'st thy hands into his side ;
 Didst thou not daily with him bide,
 And see the wonders which he wrought ?
 But blest are they that do confide,
 And do believe, yet saw him not.
 Thomas," she says, " will ye but speer,
 If that my sister, Magdalene,
 Will come to me, if she be here,
 For comfort sure you give me nane."

He was so blythe and turnéd back,
 And thankéd God that she was gane ;
 He had no will to hear her crack,
 But told it Mary Magdalene.

When that she heard her sister's mocks,
 She went unto the gate with speed ;
 And asked her " Who's there that knocks ?"

" 'Tis I, the Wife of Beith, indeed."

She said, " Good mistress, you must stand
 Till you be tried by tribulation."

" Sister," quoth she, " give me your hand ;
 Are we not both of one vocation ?
 It is not through your occupation
 That you are placéd so divine ;
 My faith is fixed on Christ's passion,
 My soul shall be as safe as thine."

Then Mary went away in haste,
 The carlin made her so ashamed,
 She had no will of such a guest,
 To lose her pains and be so blamed.

" Now, good Saint Paul," said Magdalene,
 " For that you are a learnéd man,
 Go and convince this woman then,
 For I have done all that I can ;
 Sure if she were in hell, I doubt
 They would not keep her long e'en there,

But to the gate would put her out,
And send her back to be elsewhere."

Then went the good apostle Paul;
To put the wife in better tune—

"Wash off that filth that files thy soul,
Then shall heaven's gates be opened soon."

"Remember, Paul, what thou hast done,
For all the epistles thou didst compile,
Though now thou sittest up above,
Thou persecuted'st Christ a while."

"Woman," he said, "thou art not right ;
That which I did, I did not know ;
But thou didst sin with all thy might,
Although the preachers did thee show."

"Saint Paul," she said, "it is not so :
I did not know so well as ye,
But I will to my Saviour go,
Who will his favour shew to me ;
You think you are of flyting free,
Because you was wrapt up above,
But yet it was Christ's grace to thee,
And matchlessness of his dear love."

"Then, Paul," says she, "let Peter come ;
If he be lying let him rise,
To him I will confess my sin,
And let him quickly bring the keys ;
Too long I stand, he'll let me in,
For why I cannot longer tarry,
Then shall ye all be quit of din,
For I must speak with good Saint Mary."

"Peter," said she, "let Christ arise,
And grant me mercy in my need ;
For why, I ne'er deny'd him thrice,
As thou thyself hast done indeed."

"Thou carlin bold, what's that to thee ?
I got remission for my sin ;

It cost many sad tears to me
 Before I entered here within.
 It will not be thy meikle din
 Will cause heaven's gates opened be,
 Thou must be purified of sin,
 And of all sins must be made free."

"Saint Peter, then, no thanks to you
 That so you were rid of your fears ;
 It was Christ's gracious look, I trow,
 That made you weep those bitter tears.
 The door of mercy is not closed,
 I may get grace as well as ye,
 It is not so as ye supposed—
 I will be in in spite of thee."

"But, wicked wife, it is too late,
 Thou should'st have mourn'd when on earth,
 Repentance now is out of date :
 It should have been before thy death,
 Thou mightest well have turned wrath
 To mercy then, and mercy great,
 But now the Lord is very loth,
 And all thy cries not worth a jot."

"Ah ! Peter, then, what shall I do !
 He will not hear me as I hear,
 Shall I despair of mercy too ?
 No, no, I'll trust in mercy dear ;
 And if I perish, here I'll stay
 And never go from heaven bright
 I'll ever hope and always pray,
 Until I get my Saviour's sight."

"I think indeed you are not right,
 If you had faith you could win in ;
 Importune then with all your might,
 Faith is the feet wherewith ye come :
 It is the hands will hold him fast,
 But weak faith may not presume ;

'Twill let you sink, and be aghast—
Strongly believe, or you're undone."

"But, good Saint Peter, let me be,
Had you such faith, did it abound?
When you did walk upon the sea,
Was you not like for to be drown'd,
Had not our Saviour helpéd thee,
Who came and took thee by the hand
So can my Lord do unto me,
And bring me to the promised land.
Is my faith weak, yet He is still
The same, and ever shall remain;
His mercies last, and His good will.
To bring me to His flock again,
He will me help and me relieve,
And will increase my faith also,
If weakly, I can but believe,
For from this place I'll never go."

But Peter said, "How can that be?
How durst thou look Him in the face?
Such horrid sinners like to thee
Can have no courage to get grace;
Here none comes in but they that's stout,
And suffered have for the good cause;
Like unto thee are keepéd out,
For thou hast broke all Moses' laws."

"Peter," said she, "I do appeal,
From Moses, and from thee also.
With him and you I'll not prevail,
But to my Saviour I will go;
Indeed of old you were right stout,
When you did cut off Malchus' ear;
But after that you went about,
And a poor maid then did you fear.
Wherefore, Saint Peter, do forbear.
A comforter indeed you're not;

Let me alone, I do not fear,
 Take home the whistle of your groat :
 Was it your own, or Paul's good sword,
 When that your courage was so keen ?
 You were right stout, upon my word—
 Then would you fain at fishing been—
 For at the crowing of the cock,
 You did deny your master thrice,
 For all your stoutness turned a block,
 Now flyte no more if ye be wise."

Yet at the last the Lord arose,
 Environéd with angels bright,
 And to the wife in haste He goes,
 Desired her soon pass out of sight.

"O Lord," quoth she, "cause do me right,
 But not according to my sin ;
 Have you not promised day and night,
 When sinners knock to let them in ?"

He said, "Thou wrests the Scriptures wrong—
 The night is come ; thou spent the day ;
 In whoredom thou hast livèd long,
 And to repent thou didst delay ;
 Still my commandments thou abus'dst,
 And vice committedst busily,
 Since now my mercy thou refus'dst,
 Go down to hell eternally !"

"O Lord, my soul doth testify
 That I have spent my life in vain ;
 Ah ! make a wand'ring sheep of me,
 And bring me to thy flock again."

"Think'st thou there is no count to crave
 Of all these gifts in thee was planted ?
 I gave thee beauty, 'bove the lave,
 A pregnant wit thou never wanted."

"Master," quoth she, "it must be granted,
 My sin is great ; give me contrition—

The forlorn son, when he repented,
Obtained his father's full remission."

"I spared my judgments many times,
And spiritual pastors did thee send ;
But thou renewd'st thy former crimes,
Aye more and more me to offend."

"My Lord," quoth she, "I do amend,
Lamenting for my former vice—
The poor thief at the latter end
For one word went to Paradise."

"The thief heard never of my teaching,
My heavenly precepts and my laws,
But thou wast daily at my preachings
Both heard and saw, and yet miscaws."

"Master," quoth she, "the Scripture shows,
The Jewish woman which play'd the lown,
Conform unto the Hebrew laws,
Was brought to thee to be put down,
But nevertheless thou let her go,
And made the Pharisees afraid."

"Indeed," says Christ, "it was right so,
And that my bidding was obey'd.
Woman," he said, "I may not cast
The children's bread to dogs like thee
Although my mercies yet do last,
There's mercy here, but none for thee."

"But, loving Lord, may I presume,
Poor worm, that I may speak again?
The dogs for hunger were undone,
And of the crumbs they were right fain—
Grant me one crumb then that doth fall
From thy best children's table, Lord,
That I may be refreshed withal,
It will me help enough afford."

"The gates of mercy now are closed,
And thou canst hardly enter in—

It is not so as thou supposed,
For thou art deadly sick in sin."

"'Tis true indeed, my Lord most meek—
My sore and sickness I do feel—
Yet thou the lame didst truly seek,
Who lay long at Bethsaida's pool,
Of many that thee never sought—
Like to the poor Samaritan,
Whom thou unto thy fold hast brought,
Even as thou didst the widow of Nain.
Most gracious God, didst thou not bid
All that were weary come to thee?
Behold, I come ! even overload
With sin ; have mercy upon me !"

" The issues of thy soul are great,
Thou art both leprous and unclean,
To be with me thou art not fit,
Go from me then, let me alone."

" Let me thy garments once but touch,
My bloody issue shall be whole,
It will not cost thee very much
To save a poor distresséd soul.
Speak thou the word, I shall be whole,
One look of thee shall do me good,
Save now, good Lord, my silly soul,
Bought with thine own most precious blood—
Sweet Lord, my God, say me not nay,
For if I perish here I'll die."

" Poor silly wretch, then speak no more
Thy faith, poor soul, hath savéd thee ;
Enter thou into my glore,
And rest throu' all eternity !"

How soon our Saviour these words said,
A long white robe to her was given ;
And then the angels did her lead,
Forthwith within the gates of heaven ;

A laurel crown set on her head,
Spangled with rubies and with gold ;
A bright white palm she also had,
Glorious it was for to behold ;
Her face did shine like to the sun,
Like threads of gold her hair hang down ;
Her eyes like lamps unto the moon,
Of precious stones rich was her crown,
Angels and Saints did welcome her,
The heavenly choir did sing, rejoice ;
King David with his harp was there ;
The silver bells gave a great noise.
Such music and such melody
Was never either heard or seen,
When this poor saint was placed so high,
And of all sins made freely clean ;
But then when thus she was possest,
And lookéd back on all her fears ;
And that she was come to her rest,
Free'd from all sins, and all her tears,
She from her head did take the crown,
Giving all praise to Christ on high,
And at his feet she laid it down,
For that the Lamb had made her free.
Now doth she sing triumphantly,
And shall rejoice for evermore,
O'er death and hell victoriously
With lasting pleasures laid in store.

Of WIFE OF BEITH I make an end,
And do these lines with this conclude—
Let none their lives in sin now spend,
But watch and pray, be doing good ;
Despondent souls, do not despair—
Repent, and still believe in Christ ;
His mercies, which last for evermore,
Will save the souls that in Him trust.

Edom o' Gordon.

Many versions are extant of this graphic and melancholy ballad, which is founded on a real event which took place in the north of Scotland in the year 1571, during the struggles between the party who held out for the imprisoned Queen Mary, and those who maintained the authority of her infant son, James VI. The person here designated "Edom o' Gordon," was Adam Gordon of Auchindown, brother and deputy of the Marquis of Huntly. Gordon committed many acts of oppression on the Clan Forbes, under colour of the Queen's authority; and, in one collision with that family, killed Arthur, brother to Lord Forbes. He gained also several successes over the neighbours and feudal enemies of the Gordons, but the chronicler of the history of King James VI. remarks of him that, "what glory and renown he obtained by these victories were all casten down by the infamy of his next attempt; for immediately after his last conflict he directed his soldiers to the Castle of Towie, desiring the house to be rendered to him in the Queen's name, which was obstinately refused by the lady, and she burst forth with certain injurious words, and the soldiers being impatient, by command of their leader, Captain Ker, fire was put to the house, wherein she and the number of twenty-seven persons were cruelly burnt to the death." The ballad was first printed by Lord Hailes in 1755 from the recitation of a lady at Glasgow. It was afterwards given by Percy in his *Reliques* with some alterations from his old MS. "The author of 'Edom o' Gordon' had no theories of art," says a recent writer. "He uttered only what he saw and felt, but what words could add to that picture of the burning tower, the unutterable sigh of the mother for 'a'e blast o' the western wind,' and the mute reproach of the face on the grass, more terrible to the marauder than the gleam of hostile spears?"

IT fell about the Martimas,
 When the wind blew shrill and cauld,
 Said Edom o' Gordon to his men,
 "We maun draw till a hauld.

“ And whatna hauld shall we draw till,
My merrie men and me ?
We will gae to the house o' the Rodes
To see that fair ladye.”

The ladye stude on her castle wa',
Beheld baith dale and down ;
There she was ware o' a host o' men
Cam' riding towards the toun.*

“ O see ye not my merrie men a',
O see ye not what I see ?
Methinks I see a host o' men—
I marvel wha they be.”

She ween'd it had been her ain dear lord
As he cam' riding hame ;
It was the traitor, Edom o' Gordon,
Wha reck'd nae sin nor shame.

She had nae suner buskit hersel',
And putten on her gown,
Till Edom o' Gordon and his men
Were round about the town.

They had nae suner supper set,
Nae suner said the grace,
Till Edom o' Gordon and his men
Were closed about the place.

The ladye ran to her tower head,
As fast as she could hie,
To see if, by her fair speeches,
She could wi' him agree.

* This word in Scotland signifies not only a city or town, but a farm steading or residence.

But when he saw the ladye safe,
 And her yetts a' lockit fast,
 He fell into a rage o' wrath,
 And his look was all aghast.

“Come down to mē, ye ladye gay,
 Come down, come down to me ;
 This night ye'll lie within my arms,
 The morn my bride shall be.”

“I winna come down, ye fause Gordon,
 I winna come down to thee ;
 I winna forsake my ain dear lord,
 That is sae far frae me.”

“Gi'e owre your house, ye ladye fair,
 Gi'e owre your house to me ;
 Or I sall burn yoursel' therein,
 But and your babies three.”

“I winna gi'e owre, ye fause Gordon,
 To nac sic traitor as ye ;
 And if ye burn my ain dear babes,
 My lord shall mak' ye dree.

“But reach my pistol, Glaud, my man,
 And charge ye weel my gun ;
 For, but if I pierce that bloody butcher,
 My babes may live undone.”

She stude upon her castle wa',
 And let twa bullets flee ;
 She mist the bloody butcher's heart,
 And only razed his knee.

“Set fire to the house !” quo' the fause Gordon,
 All wud wi' dule and ire ;
 “Fause ladye ! ye shall rue that shot,
 As ye birsle in the fire.”

“ Wae worth, wae worth ye, Jock, my man,
 I paid ye weel your fee ;
 Why pu' ye out the grund-wa-stane,
 Lets in the reek to me ?

“ And e'en wae worth ye, Jock, my man,
 I paid you weel your hire ;
 Why pu' ye out the grund-wa-stane,
 To me lets in the fire ?”

“ Ye paid me weel my hire, ladye,
 Ye paid me weel my fee ;
 But noo I'm Edom o' Gordon's man,
 Maun either do or dee.”

'Twas then outspak her youngest son,
 Sat on the nurse's knee ;
 Says, “ Mither dear, gi'e owre the house,
 For the reek it smothers me.”

“ I wad gie a' my gowd, my bairn,
 Sae wad I a' my fee,
 For a'e blast o' the wastlin' wind,
 To blaw the reek frae thee !”

'Twas then outspak her dochter dear—
 She was baith jimp and sma'—
 “ O row me in a pair o' sheets,
 And tow me owre the wa'.”

They row'd her in a pair o' sheets,
 And tow'd her owre the wa' ;
 But on the point o' Gordon's spear
 She got a deadly fa'.

O bonnie, bonnie was her mouth,
 And cheery were her cheeks ;
 And clear, clear was her yellow hair,
 Whereon the red bluid dreeps.

Then wi' his spear he turn'd her owre,
O but her face was wan !
He said, " You are the first that e'er
I wish'd alive again."

He turn'd her owre and owre again,
O but her skin was white !
" I might hae spared that bonnie face,
To hae been some man's delight."

" Back and boun, my merrie men a',
For ill dooms I do guess ;
I canna look on that bonnie face,
As it lies on the grass !

" Wha looks to freits,* my master dear,
It's freits will follow him ;
Let it ne'er be said brave Edom o' Gordon
Was daunted by a dame."

But when the ladye saw the fire
Come flaming owre her head,
She wept, and kiss'd her children twain,
Said, " Bairns, we be but dead."

The Gordon then his bugle blew,
And cried, " Awa' ! awa' !
The house o' the Rodes is a' in a flame,
I hault it time to ga."

O then she spied her ain dear lord
As he cam' owre the lea ;
He saw his castle a' in a lowe,
Sae far as he could see.

* Omens.

'Twas sair, O sair his mind misgave,
 And O, his heart was wae ;
 " Put on, put on, my mighty men,
 As fast as ye can gae.

" Put on, put on, my mighty men,
 As fast as she can drie ;
 For he that is hindmost o' the thrang
 Sall ne'er get gude o' me !"

Then some they rade, and some they ran,
 Fu' fast out ower the bent ;
 But ere the foremost could win up,
 Baith ladye and babes were brent.

He wrang his hands, he rent his hair,
 And wept in waefu' mood ;
 " Ah, traitors ! for this cruel deed,
 Ye sall weep tears o' bluid."

And after the Gordon he has gane,
 Sae fast as he might drie.
 And soon i' the Gordon's foul heart's bluid,
 He's wroken* his dear ladye.

And mony were the buirdly men
 Lay gasping on the green ;
 And mony were the fair ladies
 Lay lemanless at hame.

And mony were the buirdly men
 Lay gasping on the green ;
 For o' fifty men the Gordon brocht,
 There were but five gaed hame.

* Revenged.

O round and round the wa's he went,
 Their ashes for to view ;
 At last into the flames he ran
 And bade the world adieu.

The Twa Corbies.

This brief but striking ballad is from Scott's *Border Minstrelsy* ; and the fuller version subjoined, evidently a more modern composition, is from Motherwell's collection. There is an English copy printed by Ritson entitled "The Three Ravens," but the Scotch versions have the advantage of the English in point of graphic force and realistic horror.

As I was walking all alane
 I heard twa corbies making a mane ;
 The tane unto the tither did say,
 " Where sall we gang and dine to-day ? "

" In behint yon auld fael dyke
 I wot there lies a new-slain knight ;
 And naebody kens that he lies there,
 But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

" His hound is to the hunting gane,
 His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,
 His lady's ta'en another mate,
 So we may mak' our dinner sweet.

" Ve'll sit on his white hause-bane,
 And I'll pick out his bonny blue e'en ;
 Wi' a'e lock o' his gowden hair
 We'll theck our nest when it grows bare.

“Mony a ane for him makes mane,
But nane sall ken where he is gane ;
O'er his white-banes, when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair.”

MOTHERWELL'S COPY.

THERE were twa corbies sat on a tree,
Large and black as black might be,
And one until the other gan say,
“Where shall we gang and dine to-day ?
Shall we dine by the wild saut sea ?
Shall we dine 'neath the greenwood tree ?

“As I sat on the deep sea sand,
I saw a fair ship nigh at land ;
I waved my wings, I beat my beak,
The ship sunk, and I heard a shriek ;
There they lie—one, two, and three ;—
I shall dine by the wild saut sea.”

“Come, I will show ye a sweeter sight,
A lonesome glen, and a new-slain knight ;
His blood yet on the grass is hot,
His sword half drawn, his shafts unshot,—
And no one knows that he lies there,
But his hawk, his hound, and his lady fair.

“His hound is to the hunting gane,
His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,
His lady's away with another mate,
So we shall make our dinner sweet ;
Our dinner's sure, our feasting free,
Come, and dine 'neath the greenwood tree.

“Ye shall sit on his white hause-bane,
 I will pick out his bonny blue een ;
 Ye’ll take a tress of his yellow hair,
 To theek your nest when it grows bare :
 The gowden down on his young chin
 Will do to row my young ones in !

“O ! cauld and bare his bed will be,
 When winter’s storms sing in the tree ;
 At his head a turf, at his feet a stone,
 He will sleep, nor hear the maiden’s moan ;
 O’er his white bones the birds shall fly,
 The wild deer bound, and foxes cry !”

Annie o’ Lochryan.

There are various versions of this beautiful and affecting ballad, which appear in the collections under the headings of “The Lass of Lochryan,” “Fair Annie of Lochryan,” “Lord Gregory,” and the one here adopted. It was first printed, in an imperfect state, by Herd, afterwards it appeared in a more complete form in Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. Sir Walter’s rendering represents Lord Gregory as confined by fairy charms in an enchanted castle ; but Jamieson states that he heard the ballad chanted in Morayshire, and that no mention was made of enchantment or fairy charms. Burns and Dr. Wolcot (the well-known Peter Pindar), wrote each a song for Thomson’s collection, entitled “Lord Gregory,” founded on the subject of the present ballad. Lochryan is a beautiful but wild and secluded bay, which projects from the Irish Channel into Wigtonshire, in Galloway ; and along the coast may been seen the ruins of various castles, such as the one described in the ballad. The following is Jamieson’s version, slightly altered and amended :—

“O WHA will shoe my bonnie foot ?
 And wha will glove my hand ?
 And wha will lace my middle jimp
 Wi’ a new-made London band ?

“ And wha will kame my yellow hair
Wi' a new-made siller kame ;
And wha will be father to my young bairn
Till love Gregory come hame.”

“ Your father'll shoe your bonnie foot,
Your mother glove your hand ;
Your sister lace your middle jimp
Wi' a new-made London band.

“ Your brother will kame your yellow hair,
Wi' a new-made siller kame ;
And the King o' Heaven will father your bairn
Till Lord Gregory come hame.”

“ O gin I had a bonny ship,
And men to sail wi' me,
It's I wad gang to my true love,
Sin' he winna come to me !”

Her father's gi'en her a bonny ship,
And sent her to the strand ;
She's ta'en her young son in her arms,
And turned her back to land.

She hadna been on the sea sailing,
Abune a month or more,
Till landed has her bonny ship,
Near to her true love's door.

The night was dark, the wind blew cauld,
And her love was fast asleep,
And the bairn that was in her twa arms
Fu' sair began to greet.

Lang stood she at her true love's door,
And lang tirded at the pin ;
At length up gat his fause mother,
Says, “ Wha's that wad be in ?”

“ O it is Annie of Lochryan,
Your love come ower the sea,
But and your young son in her arms,
Sae open the door to me ! ”

“ Awa', awa', ye ill woman,
Ye're no come here for gude ;
Ye're but a witch, or a vile warlock,
Or mermaid o' the flude ! ”

“ I'm nae a witch, nor vile warlock,
Nor mermaid o' the sea ;
But I am Annie o' Lochryan,
O open the door to me ! ”

“ Gin ye be Annie o' Lochryan,
As I trow nae you be,
What token can you gie that e'er
I kept your companie ? ”

“ O dinna ye mind, love Gregory,
When we sate at the wine,
How we changed the napkins frae our necks,
It's no sae lang sin'syne ? ”

“ And yours was gude, and gude enough,
But nae sae gude as mine ;
For yours was o' the cambric clean,
But mine o' the silk sae fine.

“ And dinna ye mind, love Gregory,
As we twa sate at dine,
How we changed the rings frae our fingers,
And I can show thee thine ? ”

“ And yours was gude, and gude eneugh,
Yet nae sae gude as mine ;
For yours was o' the gude red gowd,
But mine o' the diamond fine.

“Sae open the door, love Gregory,
Open the door, I pray,
For thy young son is in my arms,
And he'll be dead ere day !”

“Awa', awa', ye ill woman,
Gae frae my door for shame ;
For I hae gotten anither fair love,
So ye may hie ye hame !”

“O hae ye gotten anither fair love,
For a' the oaths ye sware ?
Then fare ye weel, Lord Gregory,
For me ye'se ne'er see mair !”

O hooly, hooly, gaed she back,
As the day began to peep ;
She set her foot on gude ship board,
And sair, sair did she weep.

“Tak' doun, tak' doun the mast o' gowd,
Set up the mast o' tree ;
It ill sets a forsaken lady,
To sail sae gallantlie !

“Tak' doun, tak' doun the sails o' silk,
Set up the sails o' skin ;
Ill sets the outside to be gay,
When there's sic grief within.”

Lord Gregory started frae his sleep,
And to his mother did say :
“I dreamt a dream this nicht, mither,
That maks my heart richt wae.

“I dreamt that Annie o' Lochryan,
The flower o' a' her kin,
Was standing mournin' at my door,
And nane would let her in.”

“Gin it be for Annie o’ Lochryan,
That ye mak’ a’ this din ;
She stood a’ last nicht at your door,
But I trow she wan na in !”

“O wae betide ye, ill woman !
An ill death may ye dee,
That wadna open the door to her,
Nor yet wad wauken me.”

And he’s gane down to yon shore side
As fast as he could fare,
He saw fair Annie in the boat,
And the wind it tossed her sair.

“It’s “Hey Annie !” and “Ho Annie !
O Annie, winna ye bide ?”
But aye the mair that he cried “Annie !”
The faster row’d the tide.

It’s “Hey Annie !” and “Ho Annie !
O Annie speak to me !”
But aye the louder he cried “Annie !”
The louder roared the sea.

The wind blew loud, the sea grew rough,
And the ship was rent in twain ;
And soon he saw his fair Annie,
Come floating owre the main.

He saw his young son in her arms ;
Baith tossed abune the tide ;
He wrang his hands, and fast he ran,
And plunged in the sea sae wide.

He clutched her by the yellow hair,
He drew her to the strand ;
But cauld and stiff was every limb,
Afore he reached the land.

O first he kissed her cheery cheek,
 And syne he kissed her chin,
 And lang he kissed her ruby lips,
 But there was nae breath within.

“O wae betide my cruel mither,
 An ill death may she dee,
 She turned my true love frae my door,
 Wha cam' sae far to me !

“O wae betide my cruel mither,
 An ill death may she dee,
 She turned my fair Annie frae my door,
 Wha died for love o' me !”

O he has mourn'd fair Annie,
 Till the sun was gangin' down,
 Syne wi' a sech his heart it burst,
 And his soul to heaven has flown.

The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow.

This beautiful and pathetic ballad is founded on a real incident, and refers to a duel fought at Deucharswyre, of which Annan's Treat is a part, between John Scott of Tushielaw, and his brother-in-law, Walter Scott, third son of Robert of Thirlestane, in which the latter was slain. The brothers-in-law had quarrelled about some lands, it is supposed, which the elder Scott of Tushielaw, had conveyed to his daughter on the occasion of her marriage. The unfortunate hero, a knight of great bravery, termed in tradition the Baron of Oakwood, was the main ancestor of Lord Napier. There are several versions of the ballad, Buchan, Motherwell, Herd, Chambers, Scott and others, having each included versions or variations of it in their collections. The present will be found to differ materially from any copy previously printed. Hamilton of Bangour's well-known ballad, beginning, “Busk ye, busk ye, my

bonnie, bonnie bride," as well as the Rev. John Logan's poem "The Braes of Yarrow," was clearly suggested by this ruder, but not less graphic and affecting performance.

LATE at e'en, drinking the wine,
 And ere they paid the lawing,
 They set a combat them between
 To fight it in the dawning.

"You took our sister to be your wife,
 And thought her not your marrow ;
 You stole her frae her father's back,
 When she was the Rose o' Yarrow."

"I took your sister to be my wife,
 And I made her my marrow ;
 I stole her frae her father's back,
 And she's still the Rose o' Yarrow."

He has hame to his lady gane,
 As he had done before, O ;
 Says, "Madam, I maun keep a tryst,
 In the dowie dens o' Yarrow."

"O stay at hame, my noble Lord,
 O stay at hame, my marrow ;
 My cruel brother will you betray
 In the dowie dens o' Yarrow."

"O fare ye weel, my ladie fair,
 O fare ye weel, my Sarah ;
 For I maun gae, though I ne'er return
 Frae the dowie dens o' Yarrow."

She kiss'd his cheek, she kaim'd his hair,
 As oft she'd done before, O ;
 She belted him wi' his noble brand,
 And he's awa' to Yarrow.

As he gaed up the Tennies bank,
I wot he gaed wi' sorrow ;
For in a glen nine armed men,
Were waiting him in Yarrow.

“ O come ye here to hunt or hawk,
The bonnie forest thorough ?
Or come ye here to part your land,
In the dowie dens o' Yarrow.”

“ I come not here to hunt or hawk,
The bonnie forest thorough ;
Nor come I here to part my land,
But I'll fight wi' you on Yarrow.

“ If I see all, ye're nine to ane,
And that's unequal marrow ;
Yet I will fight while lasts my brand,
On the bonnie banks o' Yarrow.”

Four has he hurt, and five has slain,
On the bloody braes o' Yarrow,
Till that stubborn knight came him behind,
And ran his body thorough.

“ Gae hame, gae hame, gude-brother John,
And tell your sister, Sarah,
To come and lift her leafu' lord,
He's sleeping sound on Yarrow.”

As he gaed owre yon high high hill,
As he had done before, O ;
There he met his sister dear,
Was coming fast to Yarrow.

“ O gentle wind that bloweth south,
From where my love repaireth,
Convey a kiss from his dear mouth,
And tell me how he fareth !

“ Yestreen I dream’d a dreary dream,
 God keep us a’ frae sorrow !
 I dream’d I pu’d the birk sae green,
 Wi’ my true love, on Yarrow.”

“ I’ll read your dream, my sister dear,
 I’ll tell you a’ your sorrow ;
 You pu’d the birk wi’ your true love ;
 He’s killed, he’s killed on Yarrow.”

She’s torn the ribbons frae her hair,
 That were baith braid and narrow ;
 She’s kilted up her green claithing,
 And she’s awa’ to Yarrow.

Sometimes she walk’d, sometimes she ran,
 As oft she’d done before, O !
 And a’ between fell in a swoon,
 Lang ere she came to Yarrow.

As she sped down yon high, high hill,
 She gaed wi’ dule and sorrow ;
 And in the glen spied ten slain men,
 On the dowie banks o’ Yarrow.

She’s ta’en him in her twa white arms,
 She’s searched his wounds all thorough ;
 And kiss’d them till her lips grew red,
 On the dowie houms o’ Yarrow.

“ Now haud your tongue, my daughter dear,
 For a’ this breeds but sorrow ;
 I’ll wed you to a better lord
 Than him you’ve lost on Yarrow.”

“ O haud your tongue, my father dear,
 Nor lichtly sae my sorrow ;
 A fairer rose did never bloom,
 Than’s pu’d this day on Yarrow.”

She kissed his lips, she kaimed his hair,
As oft she'd done before, O !
Syne wi' a sigh her heart did break,
On the dowie braes o' Yarrow.

Thomas the Rhymer.

Few personages, says Sir Walter Scott, are so renowned in tradition as Thomas of Ercildoune, known by the appellation of *The Rhymer*. Uniting, or supposed to unite, in his person the powers of poetical composition and of vaticination, his memory, even after the lapse of five hundred years, is regarded with veneration by his countrymen. The residence, and probably the birth-place, of this ancient bard was Ercildoune (Earlston), a village situated upon the Leader, two miles above its junction with the Tweed, and where the ruins of an ancient tower are still pointed out as the Rhymer's Castle. The uniform tradition bears that his surname was Lermont or Learmont, and that the appellation was conferred on him in consequence of his poetical compositions. He is supposed to have lived towards the latter end of the thirteenth century; and shortly after his death we find him celebrated as a prophet and as a poet. Whatever doubts the learned might have as to the source of the Rhymer's prophetic skill, the vulgar mind had no hesitation in ascribing the whole to intercourse between the bard and the Queen of Fairies. The popular tale bears that Thomas was carried off at an early age to Fairyland, where he acquired all the knowledge which made him afterwards so famous. After seven years' residence he was permitted to return to the earth to enlighten and astonish his countrymen by his prophetic powers; still, however, remaining bound to return to his royal mistress when she should intimate her pleasure. Accordingly, while Thomas was making merry with his friends in the tower of Ercildoune, a person came running in, and told with marks of fear and astonishment that a hart and hind had left the neighbouring forest, and were composedly and slowly parading the streets of the village. The prophet instantly arose, left his habitation, and followed the wonderful animals to the forest, whence he was

never seen to return. According to the popular belief, he still "drees his weird" in Fairyland, and is one day expected to revisit earth. The Eildon Tree, from beneath the shade of which he delivered his prophecies, now no longer exists, but the spot is marked by a large stone, called Eildon Tree Stone. The prophecies ascribed to Thomas of Ercildoune have been the principal means of securing to him remembrance amongst the sons of his people. These are alluded to by Barbour, by Wyntoun, and by Henry the Minstrel, or Blind Harry, as he is usually termed. None of these authors, however, give the words of any of the Rhymer's vaticinations, but merely narrate historically his having predicted the events of which they speak. The ballad is in three parts. The first and second are old, the third is modern, and was written by Sir Walter Scott to commemorate the Rhymer's poetical fame, and the traditional account of his marvellous return to Fairyland.

PART I.

TRUE Thomas lay on Huntlie bank ;
 A ferlie he spied wi' his e'e ;
 And there he saw a ladye bright,
 Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her shirt was o' the grass-green silk,
 Her mantle o' the velvet fyne ;
 At ilka tett of her horse's mane
 Hang fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas, he pull'd off his cap,
 And louted low down to his knee,
 "All hail, thou mighty queen of heaven !
 For thy peer on earth I never did see."

"O no, O no, Thomas," she said ;
 "That name does not belang to me ;
 I am but the queen of fair Elfland,
 That am hither come to visit thee.

“Harp and carp, Thomas,” she said ;
“Harp and carp along wi’ me ;
And if you dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your bodie I will be.”

“Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird* shall never danton me,”
Syne he has kissed her rosy lips,
All underneath the Eildon Tree.

“Now, ye maun go wi’ me,” she said ;
“True Thomas, ye maun go wi’ me ;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Thro’ weal or woe as may chance to be.”

She mounted on her milk-white steed,
She’s ta’en true Thomas up behind ;
And aye, whene’er her bridle rung,
The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on,
The steed gaed swifter than the wind,
Until they reached a desert wide,
And living land was left behind.

“Light down, light down, now, true Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee ;
Abide and rest a little space,
And I will show you ferlies three.

“O see you not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorns and briers ?
That is the path of righteousness,
Though after it but few enquires.

* *That weird, etc.*—That destiny shall never frighten me.—*Scott.*

“ And see not ye that braid braid road,
 That lies across that lily leven?
 That is the path of wickedness,
 Though some call it the road to heaven.

“ And see not ye that bonnie road,
 That winds about the fernie brae?
 That is the road to fair Elfland,
 Where thou and I this night maun gae.

“ But, Thomas, ye maun hold your tongue,
 Whatever ye may hear or see ;
 For, if you speak word in Elflyn land,
 Ye’ll ne’er get back to your ain countrie.”

O they rade on, and farther on,
 And they waded through rivers aboon the knee,
 And they saw neither sun nor moon,
 But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk mirk night, and there was nae stern light,
 And they waded through red blude to the knee ;
 For a’ the blude that’s shed on earth,
 Rins through the springs o’ that countrie.

Syne they came on to a garden green,
 And she pu’d an apple frae a tree—*
 “ Take this for thy wages, true Thomas ;
 It will give thee the tongue that can never lee.”

“ My tongue is mine ain,” true Thomas said ;
 “ A gudely gift ye wad gie to me !
 I neither dought to buy nor sell,
 At fair or tryst where I may be.

* The traditional commentary upon this ballad informs us that the apple was the produce of the fatal Tree of Knowledge, and that the garden was the terrestrial paradise. The repugnance of Thomas to be debarred the use of falsehood, when he might find it convenient, has a comic effect.—*Scott*.

“I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
 Nor ask of grace from fair ladye,”
 “Now hold thy peace!” the lady said,
 “For as I say, so must it be.”

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
 And a pair of shoes of velvet green ;
 And, till seven years were gane and past,
 True Thomas on earth was never seen. *

PART II.

When seven years were come and gane,
 The sun blinked fair on pool and stream ;
 And Thomas lay on Huntlie bank,
 Like one awakened from a dream.

He heard the trampling of a steed,
 He saw the flash of armour flee,
 And he beheld a gallant knight
 Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

He was a stalwart knight, and strong ;
 Of giant make he 'peared to be ;
 He stirr'd his horse, as he were wode,
 Wi' gilded spurs, of faushion free.

* The above ballad is given in the “Border Minstrelsy” from a copy obtained from a lady, residing not far from Ercildoun, corrected and enlarged by one in Mrs. Brown’s MSS. In Mr. Jamieson’s collection of “Popular Ballads and Songs,” the original old romance upon which this ballad is founded is given from a MS. said to be of the fifteenth century, in the public library at Cambridge, collated with a MS. in the library of the Cathedral of Lincoln, and another MS. in the Cotton Library. Sir Walter, in an appendix to the present ballad, also quotes a portion of the original romance. “The same incidents are narrated,” he says, “even the expression is often the same, yet the poems are as different in appearance as if the older tale had been regularly and systematically modernised by a poet of the present day.” The copy, as given by Mr. Jamieson, is divided into three “Fyttes,” or cantos, the second and third being devoted mainly to “prophecies.” The length of the production, and its antiquated diction, not to speak of other objections which certain details in the narrative might call forth, make us refrain from quoting it.—*Whitelaw.*

Says—"Well met, well met, true Thomas !
 Some uncouth ferlies show to me."
 Says—"Christ thee save, Corspatrick brave !
 Thrice welcome, good Dunbar, to me !

"Light down, light down, Corspatrick brave,
 And I will show thee curses three,
 Shall gar fair Scotland greet and grane,
 And change the green to the black livery.

"A storm shall roar this very hour,
 From Rosse's Hills to Solway sea."
 "Ye lied, ye lied, ye warlock hoar !
 For the sun shines sweet on fauld and lea."

He put his hand on the earlie's head ;
 He showed him a rock, beside the sea,
 Where a king lay stiff, beneath his steed,*
 And steel-dight nobles wiped their e'e.

"The neist curse lights on Branxton hills ;
 By Flodden's high and heathery side
 Shall wave a banner red as blude,
 And chieftains throng wi' meikle pride.

"A Scottish king shall come full keen ;
 The ruddy lion beareth he—
 A feather'd arrow sharp, I ween,
 Shall make him wink and warre to see.

"When he is bloody, and all to bledde,
 Thus to his men he still shall say—
 'For God's sake, turn ye back again,
 And give yon southern folk a fray !

* King Alexander, killed by a fall from his horse, near Kinghorn.—
Scott.

Why should I lose, the right is mine?
My doom is not to die this day.' *

“Yet turn ye to the eastern hand,
And woe and wonder ye shall see;
How forty thousand spearmen stand,
Where yon rank river meets the sea.

“There shall the lion lose the gylte,
And the libbards bear it clean away;
At Pinkyn Cleuch there shall be spilt
Much gentill blude that day.”

“Enough, enough of curse and ban;
Some blessings show thou now to me,
Or, by the faith o' my bodie,” Corspatrick said,
“Ye shall rue the day ye e'er saw me !”

“The first of blessings I shall thee show,
Is by a burn, that's called of bread; †
Where Saxon men shall tine the bow,
And find their arrows lack the head.

“Beside that brigg, out ower that burn,
Where the water bickereth bright and sheen,
Shall many a falling courser spurn,
And knights shall die in battle keen.

“Beside a headless cross of stone,
The libbards there shall lose the gree;
The raven shall come, the erne shall go,
And drink the Saxon blude sae free.

* The uncertainty which long prevailed in Scotland concerning the fate of James IV. is well known.—*Scott*.

† One of Thomas's rhymes, preserved by tradition, runs thus:—

“The burn of breid
Shall run fou reid.”

Bannock-burn is the brook here meant. The Scots give the name of *bannock* to a thick round cake of unleavened bread.—*Scott*.

The cross of stone they shall not know,
So thick the corses there shall be."

"But tell me now," said brave Dunbar,
"True Thomas, tell now unto me,
What man shall rule the isle Britain,
Even from the north to the southern sea?"

"A French queen shall bear the son,
Shall rule all Britain to the sea;
He of the Bruce's blude shall come,
As near as in the ninth degree.

"The waters worship shall his race;
Likewise the waves of the farthest sea;
For they shall ride ower ocean wide,
With hempen bridles, and horse of tree."

PART III.

When seven years more had come and gone
Was war through Scotland spread,
And Ruberslaw show'd high Dunnyon*
His beacon blazing red.

Then all by bonnie Coldingknow,†
Pitched palliouns took their room,
And crested helms, and spears a rowe,
Glanced gaily through the broom.

* Ruberslaw and Dunnyon are two hills above Jedburgh.—*Scott*.

† An ancient town near Ercildoune, belonging to a family of the name of Home. One of Thomas's prophecies is said to have run thus:—

Vengeance! vengeance! when and where?

On the house of Coldingknow, now and ever mair!

The spot is rendered classical by its having given name to the beautiful melody called the "Broom o' the Cowdenknowes."—*Scott*.

The Leader, rolling to the Tweed,
 Resounds the ensenzie ; *
 They roused the deer from Caddenhead
 To distant Torwoodlee. †

The feast was spread in Ercildoune,
 In Learmont's high and ancient hall,
 And there were knights of great renown,
 And ladies, laced in pall.

Nor lacked they, while they sat at dyne,
 The music, nor the tale,
 Nor goblets of the blood red wine,
 Nor mantling quaighs ‡ of ale

True Thomas rose, with harp in hand,
 When as the feast was done ;
 (In minstrel strife, in Fairy Land,
 The elfin harp he won.)

Hush'd were the throng, both limb and tongue,
 And harpers for envy pale ;
 And armed lords lean'd on their swords,
 And harken'd to the tale.

In numbers high the witching tale
 The prophet pour'd along ;
 No after bard might e'er avail
 Those numbers to prolong.

Yet fragments of the lofty strain
 Float down the tide of years,
 As buoyant on the stormy main,
 A parted wreck appears.

* *Ensenzie*—War-cry, or gathering word.

† Torwoodlee and Caddenhead are places in Selkirkshire.—*Scott*.

‡ *Quaighs*—Wooden cups, composed of staves hooped together.

He sung King Arthur's Table Round ;
 The Warrior of the Lake ;
 How courteous Gawaine met the wound,
 And bled for ladies' sake. *

But chief, in gentle Tristrem's praise, †
 The notes melodious swell ;
 Was none excell'd, in Arthur's days.
 The knight of Lionelle.

For Marke, his cowardly uncle's right,
 A venomed wound he bore ;
 When fierce Morholde he slew in fight,
 Upon the Irish shore.

No art the poison might withstand ;
 No medicine could be found,
 Till lovely Isolde's lily hand
 Had probed the rankling wound.

With gentle hand and soothing tongue
 She bore the leech's part ;
 And, while she o'er his sick-bed hung,
 He paid her with his heart.

O fatal was the gift, I ween,
 For, doom'd in evil tide,
 The maid must be rude Cornwall's queen,
 His cowardly uncle's bride.

* See, in the *Fabliaux* of Monsieur le Grand, elegantly translated by the late Gregory Way, Esq., the tale of the "Knight and the Sword."—*Scott*.

† Thomas the Rhymer is the reputed author of the celebrated romance of "Sir Tristrem," the earliest specimen of Scottish poetry extant, an edition of which was published by Sir Walter Scott, in 1804, from a MS. copy in the Advocate's Library, Edinburgh, with a copious historical and critical introduction, and also a very happy imitative continuation of the romance by the editor.

Their loves, their woes, the gifted bard
In fairy tissue wove
Where lords, and knights, and ladies bright,
In gay confusion strove.

The Garde Joyeuse, amid the tale,
High rear'd its glittering head ;
And Avalon's enchanted vale
In all its wonders spread.

Brangwain was there, and Segramore,
And fiend-born Merlin's gramarye ;
Of that famed wizard's mighty lore,
O who could sing but he ?

Through many a maze the winning song
In changeful passion led,
Till bent at length the listening throng
O'er Tristrem's dying bed.

His ancient wounds their scars expand,
With agony his heart is wrung ;
O where is Isolde's lily hand,
And where her soothing tongue ?

She comes ! she comes !—like flash of flame
Can lovers' footsteps fly ;
She comes ! she comes !—she only came
To see her Tristrem die.

She saw him die : her latest sigh
Joined in a kiss his parting breath ;
The gentlest pair that Britain bare,
United are in death.

There paused the harp ; its lingering sound
Died slowly on the ear ;
The silent guests still bent around,
For still they seem'd to hear.

Then woe broke forth in murmurs weak ;
 Nor ladies heav'd alone the sigh ;
 But, half ashamed, the rugged cheek
 Did many a gauntlet dry.

On Leader's stream, and Learmont's tower,
 The mists of evening close ;
 In camp, in castle, or in bower,
 Each warrior sought repose.

Lord Douglas in his lofty tent,
 Dream'd o'er the woeful tale ;
 When footsteps light, across the bent,
 The warrior's ears assail.

He starts, he wakes ;—" What, Richard, ho
 Arise, my page, arise !
 What venturous wight, at dead of night,
 Dare step where Douglas lies ? "

Then forth they rush'd ; by Leader's tide,
 A selcouth * sight they see—
 A hart and hind pace side by side,
 As white as snow on Fairnalie. †

Beneath the moon, with gesture proud,
 They stately move and slow ;
 Nor scare they at the gathering crowd,
 Who marvel as they go.

* *Selcouth*—wondrous.

† An ancient seat upon the Tweed, in Selkirkshire. In a popular edition of the first part of Thomas the Rhymer, the Fairy Queen thus addresses him :—

" Gin ye meet wad wi' me again,
 Gang to the bonnie banks of Fairnalie."—*Scott*.

To Learmont's tower a message sped,
As fast as page might run ;
And Thomas started from his bed,
And soon his cloaths did on.

First he woxe pale, and then woxe red ;
Never a word he spoke but three ;
“ My sand is run ; my thread is spun ;
This sign regardeth me.”

The elfin harp his neck around,
In minstrel guise, he hung ;
And on the wind, in doleful sound,
Its dying accents rung.

Then forth he went ; yet turned him oft
To view his ancient hall ;
On the grey tower, in lustre soft,
The autumn moon-beams fall.

And Leader's waves, like silver sheen,
Danced shimmering in the ray ;
In deepening mass, at distance seen,
Broad Soltra's mountains lay.

“ Farewell, my father's ancient tower ;
A long farewell,” said he ;
“ The scene of pleasure, pomp, or power,
Thou never more shalt be.

“ To Learmont's name no foot of earth
Shall here again belong,
And, on thy hospitable hearth,
The hare shall leave her young.

“ Adieu ! Adieu !” again he cried,
All as he turned him roun'—
“ Farewell to Leader's silver tide !
Farewell to Ercildoune ! ”

The hart and hind approach'd the place,
 As lingering yet he stood ;
 And there, before Lord Douglas's face,
 With them he cross'd the flood.

Lord Douglas leap'd on his berry-brown steed,
 And spurr'd him the Leader o'er ;
 But, though he rode with lightning speed,
 He never saw them more.

Some sayd to hill, and some to glen,
 Their wondrous course had been ;
 But ne'er in haunts of living men
 Again was Thomas seen.

Young Grigor's Ghost.

This is the very poorest, from a literary point of view, of all the old chap ballads. That fact notwithstanding, few of its order in their day enjoyed greater popularity. Certainly the story is affecting, and therein, doubtless, lay all the charm.

PART I.

All ye young lovers in Scotland draw near,
 Unto the sad story which now ye shall hear,
 Concerning two lovers that lived in the north,
 Amongst the high mountains that stand beyond Forth.
 The maid was the daughter of a gentleman
 Of the name of M'Farlane, and of the same clan ;
 But Grigor was born in a Highland isle,
 And by blood relation her cousin we style.

But where riches are wanting we oftentimes see
 Few men are esteemed for their pedigree.

His father was forced, when he was a child,
To leave his own realm ; and, when he was exiled,
His lands they were forfeit, I here let you know,
Because of rebellion, the truth for to show.
Both gold and vast riches he with him did give
For his education, and how he might live.

And solely he to the care of his friend,
Was left by his father to be maintained ;
He learned him, indeed, to read and to write,
In all rules of arithmetic he made him perfite,
In Latin and French he taught him also,
That he through the world was fit for to go.
The king was recruiting, all hands did employ,
While her father as a servant used this young boy.

In all kinds of drudgery he made him to serve,
And still did keep him as a corps of reserve ;
Such a beautiful young man was not in the place,
None could compare with him in stature and grace.
The charming Miss Katie was oft in the way,
One day in love's passion she to him did say—
“ My dear cousin Grigor, I've something to tell,
Which now from my bosom this day I reveal.

“ You know that with lovers I'm plagued to the
heart,
But you are the object that makes me to smart ;
If you do but love me, dear cousin, said she,
I'm happy for ever, so therefore be free.”
Then, said he, “ Dear Katie, I'm all in a stun,
I suppose your intentions are nothing but fun ;
But had I a subject to balance with you,
I'd think myself happy your suit I might trow.”

“ O,” said she, “ Dear Grigor, I'm no way in jest,
And if you deny me then death's my request ;

You know well the substance and wealth that I have,
 'Tis enough to uphold us both gallant and brave.
 I know that my parents for more riches are bent,
 But a few years by nature will make them extinct,
 Till which time, my Grigor, I do make this vow,
 That I never will marry another but you."

O, then he consented and flew to her arms,
 And said, "My dear Katie, I'm killed by your
 charms ;
 But if your parents this fond love should know,
 They soon will contrive for our sad overthrow."
 "Of that my dear Grigor, be silent I pray,
 This night we will part, and will meet the next day,
 Under the broad oak by the cave in the glen,
 Where more of my mind to you I'll explain."

PART II.

Her mother next morning, by the blink of her eye,
 Betwixt her and Grigor great love did espy.
 And she to her husband the same soon revealed,
 Giving orders to watch them when down in the field.
 All day then her father went looking about.
 And aifter her he still kept a look out,
 Till hard on the evening she went to the glen,
 Where Grigor was waiting to hear her explain
 The way they would manage and make matters go.
 Her father did follow and heard them also,
 He stepped in softly, stood over the cave,
 Hearing their discourses, how they would behave,
 At length he advanced, cried, "Grigor, what now?
 Is this my reward from an orphan like you?
 You know I've maintained you since seven years old,
 And now your intentions they seem very bold."

Then Grigor ask'd pardon, and thus he did say,
"Sir, I'm at your mercy, then do as you may."
The old man in a passion there chiding did stand,
Till Katie took courage and speech into hand.
"Why mean ye, dear father, on us for to frown?
Was this man a beggar? I'm sure he's our own;
He's of our kindred, our flesh, and our blood.
And you know very well his behaviour is good.

"'Tis him that I chose for my husband, and shall;
Go, give all your riches to whom that you will,
Do you think I'm a hog or a horse to be sold,
Away to some num-skull that has nought but gold!"
The father in a rage to the mother did go,
And told their proceedings with sorrow and woe;
He seem'd that night as his anger had been gone,
Lest that young Grigor from the place should
abscond.

But he sent a messenger into Inverness,
Which brought out a party young Grigor to press,
And for to make ready gave no time, we hear;
He ask'd but one favour, a word of his dear.
When being denied, the old man, with a frown,
Said, "Soldiers can have sweethearts in every town."
At this the young lady cried bitterly,
"May the heavens requite you for your cruelty!"

Young Grigor took courage and marched away,
When the captain viewed him 'twas this he did say,
"For the lady that lov'd you, sir, I pity her case,
Who's lost such a beautiful, sweet, blooming face."
His lady cried out, "What a wretch can he be,
Caus'd press this young man for no perjury.
His long yellow hair to his middle hangs down,
O'er his broad shoulders so fine round and round."

Now Grigor considering his pitiful case,
 Received the bounty, and swore to the peace ;
 His captain unto him a furlough he gave,
 To see his dear Katie he once more did crave.
 Two lines he then sent her by a trustworthy hand,
 That he under the oak at midnight would stand,
 For to wait upon her, and hear her complaint,
 And there for to meet him she was well content.

Her vows she renewed, and with tears not a few,
 And a gold ring on's finger as a token she drew,
 Which was not to move, come death or come life,
 Till that happy moment he made her his wife.
 She fain would go with him but he answered " No,
 For your parents would follow and cause us more woe.
 My Maker be witness, and this green oak," said he,
 " That I never shall love a woman but thee ! "

And there then he left her a-weeping full sore,
 Poor creature, she never got sight of him more.
 In a short time thereafter he went to the sea,
 And left sight of Britain with the tear in his eye,
 And went to America, their orders being so,
 There proved a gallant soldier, and valour did show ;
 For his good behaviour they ne'er could him blame.
 From a corporal to a sergeant he very soon became.

PART III.

Being near Fort Niagara in the year fifty-nine,
 On the thirtieth of July, as he always did incline
 To frequent the green-wood, at some distant place,
 To breathe out his sorrows his mind to solace.
 Among the savage Indians, alas ! there he fell,
 But how he was murdered we cannot well tell,

For on the next morning they found him there dead.
Two Indians lay by him, each wanting his head.

Cut off with his broadsword, as is understood,
As there all about him was nothing but blood ;
Five wounds on his body, his hair scalped away,
His clothes, sword, and pistol, all made a prey.
And one of his fingers from his hand they had cut,
On which was the ring from his lover he got.
In that very moment in Scotland we hear,
A dreadful spectre to his love did appear.

As she was a-weeping under the green oak,
He quickly passed by her and not a word spoke,
Yet shaking his left hand, where the ring he did wear,
It wanted a finger, and blood dropped there.
Whereat the young lady was struck with amaze,
And rose to run after and on him to gaze,
She knew it was Grigor, but how in that place,
It made her to wonder and dread the sad case.

With terror and grief home she did repair,
And spent the whole night in weeping and prayer ;
So early next morning she rose with the sun,
And went back to the green oak to weep all alone.
For always she esteemed that place as we hear,
As on it she got the last sight of her dear ;
As there she sat weeping and tearing her hair ;
Again the pale spectre to her did appear.

And with a wild aspect it stared in her face,
Then said, "O dear Katie, do not me embrace,
For I'm but a spirit though shining in blood,
My body lies murdered in yon foreign wood.
There's two wounds in my body and three in my side,
With hatchets and arrows, and all deep and wide ;
My scalp and fine hair for a premium are sold,
And also my finger with the ring of pure gold,

Which you drew upon it as a mark of true love,
 Love's stronger than death, for it does remove,
 But my earnest desire it is for you, my dear,
 And till you are with me I'll still wander here.
 This world's but vanity, all's a vain show,
 'Tis nought to the pleasures where we are to go."
 She went to embrace him, being void of all fright,
 But he in a moment went out of her sight.

Then home in great horror to her father did run,
 Crying "O! cruel father, now what have you done?
 Grigor, lov'd Grigor, came to me in blood,
 And his body lies slain in an American wood.
 He showed me his wounds, and each bleeding sore,
 And therefore my pleasures on earth are no more,
 Her father looked at her as one being amazed,
 Then said, "My dear Katie, your brains they are
 craz'd."

But still she maintained it, and cried like a child,
 Never after was seen for to laugh or to smile;
 Brought to her all doctors, whose skill was in vain,
 But still gave opinion she was sound in the brain.
 Her body decayed, her face grew wan and pale,
 She soared to her true love, beyond death's dark
 vale,
 First her, then her mother, in one night expired.
 I hope she enjoys the bliss she desired.

Now the old father cries, bereft of all joys,
 He has plenty of gold, but no girls or boys.
 Let all cruel parents to this take great heed,
 His pretty young daughter is now with the dead.

Archie Allan.

Of the same class, "Archie Allan" is a picture of Scottish rural life not less graphic and true to nature than "Watty and Meg" and "Will and Jean," and, like these more popular poems, will never cease to find admirers. Its author, Alexander Laing, a lyric poet of luxuriant fancy and correct taste—the author of "The Braes o' Mar," "Pawky Adam Glen," "My Ain Wife," and other well-known songs—was a native of Brechin, and was born on the 14th of May, 1787. He died on the 14th of October, 1857, and was buried in the Old Churchyard of his native city. "Archie Allan" was first published in 1827, and very soon ran into several editions, as it well deserved to do. It is a tale of a healthy character, related with no ordinary powers of Doric grace, sweetness, and simplicity. In remarkably brief compass there is furnished the history of a peasant from youth to extreme old age, and from rural happiness to mendicity and wretchedness; the felicity of a first marriage, and the misery resulting from a second imprudent matrimonial connection.

Ay ! poor Archie Allan—I hope he's nae poor !
 A mair dainty neebour ne'er entered ane's door—
 An' he's worn awa frae an ill-doin' kin,
 Frae a warld o' trouble, o' sorrow, an' sin,
 Wad ye hear o' the hardships that Archie befel ?
 Then listen a wee an' his story I'll tell.

Now twice twenty towmonts, an' twenty are gane,
 Sin' Archie an' I could hae ranket as men—
 Sin' we could hae left ony twa o' our eild,
 At a' kinds o' farm-wark, at hame, or a-field ;
 Sin' we could hae carried the best bow o' bear,
 An' thrown the fore-hammer out-owre ony pair.
 Ah ! then we ware forward, an' flinty an' young,
 An' never ance ken'd what it was to be dung ;
 We ware lang fellow servants, an' neebours fu' dear,
 Fouk didna flit than about ilka hauf-year !

Whan he was the bridegroom, an' Mary his bride,
 Mysel', an' my Jeanie, ware best man an' maid,
 'Twas a promise atween us—they could na refuse,
 Had our bridal been first, they had gotten the glo'es.

Aweel, they ware married, an' mony ware there,
 An' Luv never low'd on a happier pair ;
 For Archie had nae woman's skaith he could rue,
 An' Mary was sakeless o' breakin' her vow.
 They had lo'ed ither lang, an' the day was to be,
 Whan their ain gather'd pennie wad set them up
 free ;

Sae, clear o' the warld, an' cantie, an' weel ;
 They thrive out an' in like the buss i' the beil' ;
 Their wants ware na monie, their family was sma',
 Themsel's, an' but a'e lassie bairn, was a' ;
 Sae, wi' workin' an' winnin', wi' savin' an' care,
 They gather'd an' gather'd nae that little gear.

Yet nae narrow bodies—nae niggards were they—
 Nae slaves to the warld, to want—an' to hae ;
 Tho' they ken'd weel enouch a' the bouk o' their ain,
 They wad tak', they wad gi'e, they wad borrow or
 len' ;

Whan a friend or a neebour gaed speerin' their weel,
 They had meal i' the bannock, an' maut i' the yill ;
 They had hearts that cou'd part, they had hands
 that ware free,
 An' leuks that bade welcome, an' warm as cou'd be ;
 Gaed ye in—came ye out, they ware aye, aye the
 same,
 There's few now a days 'mang our neebours like
 them !

Thus, blythesome an' happy, time hasten'd awa',
 Till their dochter was twenty, or twenty an' twa ;

Whan she, a' the comfort an' hope o' their days,
 Fell into some dowie, some ling'rin' disease ;
 She was lang ill the lassie, an' muckle she bore.
 An' monie cures they gie'd her, but death winna cure ;
 She dwyn'd like a flower 'mang the new maw'n grass,
 Some luve disappointment they said was the cause—
 Ay ! happen what may, there maun aye be a mean,
 Her grave was na sad, an' her truff was na green,
 Whan Mary, hir mither, a' broken an' pin'd,
 Wi' trachle o' body—wi' trouble o' mind—
 Was reliev'd frae her sorrows—was also weel sair'd,
 An' laid by her bairn i' the silent kirk yaird !

Oh, sirs ! sic a change—it was waesome to see,
 But life's like a journey, an' changes maun be,
 Whan the day o' Prosperity seems but at noon,
 The night o' Adversity aften comes down ;
 I've liv'd till my locks they are white as the snaw
 Till the freends of my youth they are dead an' awa' ;
 At deathbed an' burial nae stranger I've been,
 But sorrow like Archie's I've never yet seen,
 The death o' his lassie I ken'd it was sair,
 But the death o' her mither was harder to bear ;
 For a' that was lovely, an' a' that was leal,
 He had lost i' the death o' his Mary Macneill !

Whan the buryin' was bye, whan relations were gane,
 Whan left i' the house, wae an' wearie, his lane,
 As a neebour wad do, I gaed yont the gate-end,
 An hour i' the gloamin's wi' Archie to spend ;
 For the fate o' our neebour may sune be our fa',
 An' neebours are near us whan kindred's awa'.
 We spak' o' the changes that time ever brings,
 O' the frail fadin' nature o' a' earthlie things ;
 O' life an' it's blessings—that we hae them in len',
 That the Giver whan He wills has a right to his ain ;

That here tho' we hae nae continuin' hame,
 How the promise is sure i' the Peacemaker's name,
 To them that wi' patience, wi' firmness an' faith,
 Believe in His merits an' trust in His death ;
 To them—tho' the coffin an' pale windin'-sheet,
 Tho' the cauld grave divide them, in heav'n they shall
 meet—

Shall yet hae a blythe and a blest meetin' there,
 To ken separation an' sorrow nae mair.

Thus kindly conversin', we aften beguil'd
 The hours o' the gloamin' till three summers smil'd ;
 Till time in its progress had yielded relief,
 Had dealt wi' his men'ry and lessen'd his grief—
 Tho' nae like the man I had seen him, 'tis true,
 Yet fell knief an' cantie my auld neebour grew.
 Sometime than-about as it happen'd to be,
 I had na seen Archie for twa weeks or three ;
 When a'e night a near neebour woman came ben,
 An' says, " Ha'e ye heard o' the news that's a-gain ?
 It's been tell'd me sin' mornin' by mae fouk na anc,
 That our friend Archie Allan was beuket yestreen."
 " Aweel, weel," quo I, " It may even be sae,
 There's aye heart wi' auld fouk, we'll a' get a day ;"
 But whan it was tell'd wha the bride was to be,
 I heard an' said naething—I thought it a lee !

'Twas a' very gude he shou'd marry again—
 A man in a house is but drearic his lane ;
 But to think he wad ever tak anc for a wife,
 Wha had lived sic a loose an' a throwither life—
 Wha had been far an' near whar it cou'd na be nam'd,
 An' was come o' a family but little esteem'd—
 To think he wad tak her ! I cou'd na believ'd,
 But me an' monie ithers were sairly deceiv'd,
 For the Sunday thereafter, wha think ye was cry'd,
 But Archibald Allan and Marg'ret Muresyde ?

Weel, how they foregather'd, an' a' what befel,
 Tho' it's painful to speak o't, ye'll wish me to tell.
 She came in about here as it happen'd to fa',
 An' was nearest door neebour to him that's awa' ;
 An' seein' a fu' house, an' a free-hearted man,
 That ken'd na the warld, wi' her wiles she began—
 Seem'd sober an' decent as ony ye'll see,
 An' quiet an' prudent as woman cou'd be—
 Was aye brawly busket, an' tidy, an' clean,
 An' aye at the kirk on the Sabbath was seen—
 Was better na monie, an' marrow't by few,
 Till a' came about as she'd wish'd it to do ;
 But scarcely her hand an' her troth he had tane,
 Till she kyth'd in her ain dowie colours again—
 Their courtship was short, an' short their honeymune—
 It's aye rue'd at leisure what's owre rashly dune.

We've a' our ain fau'ts an' our failin's atweel,
 But Maggy Muresyde !—she's a Never-do-weel—
 An' the warst o' it was, in an unlucky hour,
 She had got ilka plack o' the purse in her pow'r ;
 An' sune did she lift it, an' sune, sune it gaed—
 In pennies 'twas gather'd—in pounds it was spread.
 Her worthless relations, an' ithers siclike,
 Came in about swarmin', as bees till a bike ;
 An' they feasted, an' drank, an' profan'd the Blest
 Name.

An' Sunday an' Saturday—a' was the same—
 Waes me ! it was sair upon Archie to see
 The walth he had won, an' had lyin' sae free,
 To comfort an' keep him, whan ailin' or auld,
 Sae squander'd by creatures sae worthless an' bauld—
 An' sair was he troubl'd to think o' their sin,
 An' the awfu' account they wad hae to gi'e in ;
 Yet griev'd as he was at the rash lives they led,
 He durst na ance say it was ill that they did !

But time an' your patience wad fail me to tell,
 How she spent an' abus'd baith his means an' himsel',
 For constant an' on as the rin o' the burn,
 Her hand it was aye i' the unhappy turn—
 Till siller, an' gear, an' a' credit was gane,
 Till he had na a pennie or aught o' his ain ;
 Till age an' vexation had wrinkl'd his brow,
 Till he had na a morsel to gang in his mou' !

Aweel ! neither able to want nor to win,
 A'e mornin' last week, ere the daylight came in—
 Thro' the lang eerie muirs, an' the cauld plashy snaw,
 Wi' his staff in his hand he had wander'd awa'—
 To seek a fa'n bit for his daily supply,
 An' to thole the down-leuk o' the proud an' the high.
 O ! had I but seen him whan he gaed a-field,
 I wad ta'en him in-with to my ain couthie beild ;
 An' wi' my auld neebour shar'd frankly an' free,
 My bannock, my bed, an' my hinmost bawbee.

How far he had gane—how he'd far'd thro' the day,
 What trials he had met wi', I canna weel say ;
 But whan the grey hour o' the gloamin' fell down,
 He sought the fireside o' some distant farm-town—
 Wi' the door hauffin's up, an' the sneck in his han'
 He faintly inquired—wad they lodge a poor man ?
 The mistress gaz'd on him, an' drylie she spak',
 “ We may lodge you the night, but ye maunna come
 back”—

Said beggars an' gang'rels ware grown unco rife,
 Speer'd what place he came frae—gin he had a wife ?—
 Ay ! that was a question !—O, sirs, it was sair,
 Had na he ha'en a *Wife* !—he wad never been there !
 Cauld, cauld at their backs thro' the evenin' he sat,
 An' cauld was the bed, an' the beddin' he gat,
 The floor an' the roof-tree was a' they could spare,
 An' he lay down, alas ! to rise up never mair ;—

Was he lang or sair ill, there was naebody saw,
 Gin the daylight came in—he had worn awa' !
 Wha ance wad ha'e thought it, that Archie wad been
 A beggar—an' dee't in a barn his lane !
 But we need na think *this* will, or *that* winna be,
 For the langer we live the mae uncós we see.

The Witch of Fife.

Few poets of any country or time have rivalled James Hogg, our own delightful "Etrick Shepherd," in the delineation of the mysterious and uncanny. His "Kilmeny" is a fairy tale for beauty of conception and grace of diction perhaps without a peer in literature ; and "The Witch of Fife" is dashed with an eerie humour scarcely less potent to fascinate, horrify, and amuse than the immortal tale of "Tam o' Shanter." With "Kilmeny," it forms one of the tales in "The Queen's Wake."

"Quhare haif ye been, ye ill womyne,
 These three lang nightis fra hame ?
 Quhat garris the sweit drap frae yer brow,
 Like clotis of the saut sea faem ?

"It fearis me muckil ye haif seen,
 Quhat guid man never knew ;
 It fearis me muckil ye haif been
 Quhare the gray cock never crew.

"But the spell may crack, and the brydel breck,
 Then sherpe yer werde will be ;
 Ye had better sleippe in yer bed at hame,
 Wi' yer deire littil bairnis and me."—

"Sit doune, sit doune, my leil auld man,
 Sit doune, and listen to me ;
 I'll gar the hayre stand on yer crown,
 And the cauld sweit blind yer e'e.

“ But tell nae wor lis, my guid auld man,
 Tell never word again ;
 Or deire shall be yer courtisye,
 And driche and sair yer pain.

“ The first leet night, quhan the new moon set,
 Quhan all was douffe and mirk,
 We saddled our naigis wi’ the moon-fern leif,
 And rode fra Kilmerrin kirk.

“ Some horses ware of the brume-cow framit,
 And some of the grein bay tree ;
 But mine was made of ane humloke schaw,
 And a stout stallion was he.

“ We raide the tod doune on the hill,
 The martin on the law ;
 And we huntyd the hoolet out of brethe,
 And forcit him doune to fa’.”—

“ Quhat guid was that, ye ill womyne ?
 Quhat guid was that to thee ?
 Ye wald better haif been in yer bed at hame,
 Wi’ yer deire littil bairnis and me.”—

“ And aye we raide, and se merrily we raide,
 Throw the merkist gloffis of the night ;
 And we swam the floode, and we darnit the woode,
 Till we cam’ to the Lommond height.

“ And quhan we cam’ to the Lommond height,
 Se lythlye we lyctid doune ;
 And we drank fra the hornis that never grew
 The beer that was never browin.

“ Then up there raise ane wee, wee man,
 Fra nethe the moss-gray stane ;
 His fece was wan like the collifloure,
 For he nouthir had blude nor bane.

“ He set ane reid-pipe till his muthe,
 And he playit se bonnilye,
 Till the gray curlew and the black-cock flew
 To listen his melodye.

“ It rang se sweit through the grein Lommond,
 That the nychte-winde lowner blew ;
 And it soupit alang the Loch Leven,
 And wakinit the white sea-mew.

“ It rang se sweit through the grein Lommond,
 Se sweetly butt and se shill,
 That the wezilis laup out of their mouldy holis,
 And dancit on the mydnycht hill.

“ The corby craw cam’ gledgin’ near.
 The ern ged veeryng bye ;
 And the troutis laup out of the Leven Loch,
 Charmit with the melodye.

“ And aye we dancit on the green Lommond,
 Till the dawn on the ocean grew ;
 Ne wonder I was a weary wycht
 Quhan I cam’ hame to you.”

“ Quhat guid, quhat guid, my weird, weird wyfe,
 Quhat guid was that to thee ?
 Ye wald better haif bein in yer bed at hame,
 Wi’ yer deir littil bairnis and me.”

“ The second nycht, quhan the new moon set,
 O’er the roaryng sea we flew ;
 The cockle-shell our trusty bark,
 Our sailis of the grein sea-rue.

“ And the bauld windis blew, and the fire-flauchtis flew,
 And the sea ran to the skie ;
 And the thunner it growlit, and the sea-dogs howlit,
 As we gaed scouryng bye.

“ And aye we mountit the sea grein hillis,
 Quhill we brushit through the cloudis of the hevin ;
 Than sousit dounright like the stern-shot light,
 Fra the liftis blue casement driven.

“ But our taickil stood, and our bark was good,
 And se pang was our pearly prow ;
 Quhan we enldna speil the brow of the wavis,
 We needilit them throu’ belowe.

“ As fast as the hail, as fast as the gale,
 As fast as the mydnycht leme,
 We borit the breiste of the burstyng swale,
 Or fluffit i’ the flotyng faem.

“ And quhan to the Norraway shore we wan,
 We muntyd our steedis of the wynde,
 And we splashit the floods, and we darnit the woode,
 And we left the shour behynde.

“ Fleit is the roe on the grein Lommond,
 And swift is the couryng grew,
 The rein-deir dun can eithly run,
 Quhan the houndis and the hornis pursue.

“ But nowther the roe nor the rein-deir dun,
 The hinde nor the couryng grew,
 Culde fly owr montaine, muir, and dale,
 As our braw steedis they flew.

“ The dales were deep, and the doffrinis steep,
 And we raise to the skyis ee-bree ;
 Quhite, quhite was our rode, that was never trode,
 Owr the snawis of eternity !

“ And quhan we cam’ to the Lapland lone,
 The fairies war all in array ;
 For all the genii of the north
 War keipyng their holeday.

“The warlock men and the weird wemyng,
 And the fays of the wood and the steip,
 And the phantom hunteris all war there,
 And the mermaidis of the deip.

“And they washit us all with the witch-water,
 Distillit frae the muirland dew,
 Quhill our beauty blumit like the Lapland rose,
 That wylde in the foreste grew.”—

“Ye lee, ye lee, ye ill womyne,
 Se loud as I heir ye lee !
 For the warst-iaured wyfe on the shoris of Fyfe
 Is cumlye comparit wi’ thee.”—

“Then the mermaidis sang and the woodlandis rang,
 Se sweetly swellit the quire ;
 On every cliff a herpe they hang,
 On every tree a lyre.

“And aye they sang, and the woodlandis rang,
 And we drank, and we drank se deip ;
 Then saft in the armis of the warlock men
 We laid us doune to sleep.”—

“Away, away, ye ill womyne,
 An ill deide met ye dee !
 Quhan ye hae pruvit se false to yer God
 Ye can never pruve true to me.”—

“And there we learnit fra the fairy foke,
 And fra our master true,
 The wordis that can beire us throu’ the air,
 And lokkis and barris undo.

“Last nycht we met at Maisry’s cot —
 Richt weil the wordis we knew—
 And we set a foot on the black cruik-shell,
 And out at the lum we flew.

“ And we flew owr hill, and we flew owr dale,
 And we flew owr firth and sea,
 Until we cam’ to merry Carlisle,
 Quhare we lightit on the lea.

“ We gaed to the vault beyond the towir,
 Quhare we enterit free as ayr ;
 And we drank, and we drank of the bishopis wine
 Quhill we culde drynk nae mair.”—

“ Gin that be true, my guid auld wyfe,
 Whilk thou hast tauld to me,
 Betide my death, betide my lyfe,
 I’ll beire thee companye.

“ Neist tyme ye gaung to merry Carlisle
 To drynk of the blude-reide wyne,
 Beshrew my heart, I’ll fly with thee,
 If the deil should fly behynde.”

“ Ah ! little do ye ken, my silly auld man,
 The daingeris we maun dree ;
 Last nycht we drank of the bishopis wyne,
 Quhill near, near ta’en war we.

“ Afore we wan to the Sandy Ford
 The gor-cockis nichering flew ;
 The lofty crest of Ettrick Pen
 Was wavit about with blue,
 And, flichtering throu’ the ayr, we fand
 The chill chill mornying dew.

“ As we flew owr the hillis of Braid
 The sun raise fair and cleir ;
 There gurlly James, and his baronis brow,
 War out to hunt the deir.

“ Their bowis they drew, their arrowis flew,
 And piercit the ayr with speide,
 Quhill purpil fell the mornyng dew
 Wi’ witch-blude rank and reide.

“ Littil do you ken, my silly auld man,
 The dangeris we maun dree ;
 Ne wonder I am a weary wycht,
 Quhan I come hame to thee.”—

“ But tell me the word, my guid auld wyfe,
 Come tell it speedilye ;
 For I lang to drynk of the guid reide wyne,
 And to wyng the air with thee.

“ Yer hellish horse I wilna ryde,
 Nor sail the seas in the wynde ;
 But I can flee as weil as thee,
 And I’ll drynk quhill ye be blynd.”—

“ O fy ! O fy ! my leil auld man,
 That word I darena tell ;
 It wald turn this warld all upside down,
 And make it warse than hell.

“ For all the lasses in the land
 Wald munt the wynde and fly ;
 And the men wald doff their doublets syde,
 And after them wald ply.”—

But the auld guidman was ane cunningg auld man,
 And ane cunningg auld man was he ;
 And he watchit, and he watchit for mony a nycht,
 The witches’ flychte to see.

Ane nycht he darnit in Maisry’s cot ;
 The fearless haggis cam’ in ;
 And he heard the word of awsome weird,
 And he saw their deidis of synn.

Then ane by ane they said that word,
 As fast to the fire they drew ;
 Then set a foot on the black cruik-shell,
 And out at the lum they flew.

The auld guidman cam' frae his hole
 With feire and muckil dreide,
 But yet he cudna think to rue,
 For the wyne cam' in his head.

He set his foot on the black cruik-shell,
 With ane fixit and ane wawlying e'e ;
 And he said the word that I darena say,
 And out at the lum flew he.

The witches skalit the moon-beam pale ;
 Deep groanit the trembling wynde ;
 But they never wist till our auld guidman
 Was hoverynd them behynde.

They flew to the vaultis of merry Carlisle,
 Quhare they enterit free as ayr ;
 And they drank and they drank of the bishopis wyne
 Quhill they culde drynk ne mair.

The auld guidman he grew se crouse,
 He dauncit on the mouldy ground,
 And he sang the bonniest sangs of Fyfe,
 And he tuzzlit the kerlyngs round.

And aye he piercit the tither butt,
 And he suckit, and he suckit sae lang,
 Quhill his een they closit, and his voice grew low,
 And his tongue wald hardly gang.

The kerlyngs drank of the bishopis wyne
 Quhill they scentit the morning wynde ;
 Then clove again the yielding ayr,
 And left the auld man behynde.

And aye he sleipit on the damp damp floor,
 He sleipit and he snorit amain ;
 He never dreamit he was far fra hame,
 Or that the auld wyvis war gane.

And aye he sleipit on the damp damp floor,
 Quhill past the mid-day highte,
 Quhan wakenit by five rough Englishmen
 That trallit him to the lychte.

“ Now quha are ye, ye silly auld man,
 That sleipis se sound and se weil ?
 Or how gat ye into the bishopis vault
 Throu’ lokkis and barris of steel ? ”

The auld guidman he tryit to speak,
 But ane word he culdna fynde ;
 He tryit to think, but his head whirlit round,
 And ane thing he culdna mynde :—
 “ I cam’ fra Fyfe,” the auld man cryit,
 “ And I cam’ on the mydnight wynde.”

They nickit the auld man, and they prickit the auld
 man,
 And they yerkit his limbis with twyne,
 Quhill the reid blude ran in his hose and shoon,
 But some cryit it was wyne.”

They lickit the auld man, and they prickit the auld man
 And they tyit him till ane stane ;
 And they set ane bele-fire him about,
 To burn him skin and bane.

“ O wae to me ! ” said the puir auld man,
 “ That ever I saw the day !
 And wae be to all the ill wemyng
 That lead puir men astray !

“ Let nevir ane auld man after this
 To lawless greide inclyne ;
 Let nevir ane auld man after this
 Rin post to the deil for wyne.”

The reik flew up in the auld manis face,
 And chouckit him bitterlye ;
 And the lowe cam' up with ane angry blese
 And it syngit his auld breek-knee.

He lukit to the land fra whence he cam',
 For lukis he culde get nae mae ;
 And he thochte of his deire little bairnis at^hhame
 And O the auld man was wae !

But they turnit their faces to the sun,
 With gloffe and wonderous glair,
 For they saw ane thing beth large and dun,
 Comin' swaipin down the ayr.

That burd it cam' fra the landis o' Fyfe,
 And it cam' rycht tymeouslye,
 For quha was it but the auld manis wife,
 Just comit his dethe to see.

Scho put ane reide cap on his helde,
 And the auld guidman lookit fain,
 Then whisperit ane word intil his lug,
 And tovit to the ayr again.

The auld guidman he ga'e ane bob,
 I' the mids o' the burnyng lowe ;
 And the shekils that band him to the ring,
 They fell frae his armis like towe.

He drew his breath, and he said the word,
 And he said it with muckil glee,
 Then set his fit on the burnyng pile,
 And away to the ayr flew he.

Till aince he cleirit the swirlyng reike,
 He lukit beth ferit and sad ;
 But whan he wan to the lycht blue ayr,
 He lauchit as he'd been mad.

His armis war spred, and his heid was hiche,
 And his feit stack out behynde ;
 And the laibies of the auld manis cote
 War wauffing in the wynde.

And aye he neicherit, and aye he flew,
 For he thochte the ploy se rare ;
 It was like the voice of the gainer blue,
 Quhan he flees through the ayr.

He lukit back to the Carlisle men
 As he borit the norlan sky ;
 He noddit his heid, and ga'e ane girn,
 But he nevir said guid-bye.

They vanisht far i' the liftis blue wale,
 Ne mair the English saw,
 But the auld manis lauche cam' on the gale,
 With a lang and a loud gaffa.

May evir ilke man in the land of Fyfe,
 Read what the drinkeris dree ;
 And nevir curse his puir auld wife,
 Rychte wicked altho' scho be.

The Marchioness of Douglas.

Than the following verses, which form the initial portion of the somewhat lengthy ballad commonly found in the collections under the above title, there is nothing more beautiful and pathetic in the whole range of Scottish ballad poetry. But these verses are so much superior to those

that follow them, that one may reasonably doubt their original connection.

The marriage of James, second Marquis of Douglas, in 1670, to Lady Barbara Erskine, eldest daughter of John, ninth Earl of Mar, proved a most unfortunate one. By a train of proceedings somewhat similar to those of Iago, a gentleman of the name of Lowrie, a discarded lover of the heroine, succeeded in completely breaking up the affections of the previously loving couple ; and the verses form the plaint of the abandoned and heart-broken lady.

O waly, waly up yon bank.
 And waly, waly down yon brae ;
 And waly by yon bonnie burnside
 Where I and my love went to gae.

Hey, nonnie, nonnie, love is bonnie,
 A little while, when it is new ;
 But when it's auld its waxes cauld,
 And fades away like morning dew.

I leant my back unto an aik,
 I thought it was a trusty tree ;
 But first it bowed, and syne it brake,
 And sae did my fause love to me.

O wherefore should I lusk my head,
 Or wherefore should I kaim my hair,
 Since my true love has me forsook,
 And says he'll never love me mair !

O had I wist before I kissed
 That love had been sae ill to win,
 I'd locked my heart wi' a key o' gold,
 And pinned it wi' a siller pin,

As we came in by Glasgow toun,
 We were a comely sight to see ;
 My love was clad in the black velvet,
 And I mysel' in Cramasie.

Now Arthur's Seat shall be my bed,
 The sheets shall ne'er be pressed by me ;
 St. Anton's Well shall be my drink,
 Since my love has forsaken me.

O Martinmas wind, when wilt thou blow
 And shake the green leaves aff the tree ;
 O gentle death when wilt thou come
 And take a life that wearies me ?

It's no the frost that freezes fell,
 Nor driftin' snaw's inclemencie ;
 It's no sic cauld that makes me cry,
 But my love's heart grown cauld to me.

It's O, if my young babe were born,
 And set upon the nurse's knee,
 And I mysel' were dead and gone,
 And the green grass growing over me.

Tayis Bank.

This is one of the oldest of our "Scots ballants," and, like the minstrelsy of the olden time generally, it is probably more a thing of actual history than a creature of the poet's imagination. It belongs to the latter end of the fifteenth or the early years of the sixteenth century, and is one of the most perfect lyrical specimens of its time extant. This is its first appearance in any ballad collection. Its authorship has been attributed to King James IV., and the ascription is backed by some show of probability ; the poetic fire was in his blood—the verses contain evidence of a high paternity—and whether himself the "makkar" or not, his Majesty is obviously the first person in the ballad. The ill-fated "Bonnie Margaret Drummond" is as obviously the heroine of the verses ; and the beautiful banks of the river Tay in the vicinity of Stobhall will henceforth possess an additional attraction for all who may here meet with the

ballad for the first time. Our royal wooer, we can well imagine, while a guest at Stobhall, had stolen unobserved from the Castle to keep tryst with his fair *inamorata* in the sweet, inviting seclusion afforded by the wooded bank of the river, and impatient to enjoy unfettered admiration of his "dyament of delyt," as he calls her, within "that semely schaw," he had gone early, and wiled away the laggard moments inditing verses to his mistress's eyebrows.

The antiquated orthography of the effusion will prove a bar of difficulty to many a one in reading and understanding it; and that the writer's drift might be more readily perceived by the general nineteenth century reader. I had once thought of modernizing the spelling, but a trial at once showed that when rigged out in modern orthography very much of the native charm of the verses had evaporated. Consequently I resolved to "lat weel-dune alane, lest ill-dune nicht follow."

Quhen Tayis bank was blumyt brycht,
 With blosumes brycht and bred,
 By that river that ran doun rycht
 Vndir the ryss I red ;
 The merle meltit with all her mycht
 And mirth in mornying maid,
 Throw solace, sound, and semely sicht,
 Alswth a sang I said.

Vndir that bank, quhair bliss had bene,
 I bownit me to abyde ;
 Ane holene, hevinly hewit grene,
 Rycht heyndly did me hyd ;
 The sone schyne our the schawis schene
 Full semely me besyd ;
 In bed of blumes bricht besene
 A sleip cowth me ourslyd.

About all blumet was my bour
 With blosumes broun and blew,
 Orfret with mony fair fresch flour,
 Helsum of hevinly hew ;

With shakeris of the schene dew schour
 Schynnyng my courtenis schew,
 Arrayit with a rich vardour
 Of natouris werkis new.

Rasing the birdis fra thair rest,
 The reid sun raiss with rawis ;
 The lark sang loud, quhiil, liycht nycht lest
 A lay of luvis lawis ;
 The nythingall woik of hir nest
 Singing the day vpdawis ;
 The mirthfull maveiss merriest
 Schill schowttit throw the schawiss.

All flouris grew that firth within,
 That cowth haif in mynd ;
 And in that flud all fische with fyn,
 That creat wer be kynd ;
 Vnder the rise the ra did ryn,
 Our ron, our rute, our rynd,
 The dvn deir dansit with a dyn,
 And herdis of hairt and hynd.

Wod winter with his wallow and wynd,
 But weir, away wes went ;
 Brasit about with wyld wodbynd
 Wer bewis on the bent ;
 Allone vndar the lusty lynd
 I saw ane lusum lent
 That fairly war so fare to fynd
 Vnder the firmament.

Scho wes the lustiest on lyve,
 Allone lent on a land,
 And fairest figuor, be set, Syve,
 That evir in firth I fand,

Her comely cullour to discryve
 I dar nocht tak on hand ;
 Moir womanly borne of a wyfe
 Wes neuer, I dar warrand.

To creatur that wes in cair,
 Or cauld of crewelty,
 A blicht blenk of her vesage bair
 Of baill his bute mycht be ;
 Hir hyd, hir hew, hir hevinly hair
 Mycht havy hairtis uphie ;
 So angelik vnder the air
 Neur wicht I saw with E.

The blosumes that were blycht and brycht
 By hir wer blacht and blew ;
 Scho gladit all the foull of flicht
 That in the forrest flew ;
 Scho mycht haif comfort king or knight
 That ever in cuntre I knew,
 As waill, and well of warldly wicht
 In womanly vertew.

Hir cullour cleir, hir countinace,
 Hir cumly cristall ene,
 Hir portratour of most plesance,
 All pictour did prevene.
 Off every vertew to avance
 Quhen ladeis prasit bene,
 Rychtest in my remembrance
 That rose is rutit grene.

This myld, meik mensuet Mergrite,
 This perle polist most quhyte,
 Dame Natouris deir dochter discreit,
 The dyament of delyt ;

Never formit wes to found on feit
 Ane figour more perfyte.
 Nor non on mold that did hir meit,
 Mycht mend hir wirth a myte.

This myrthfull maid to meit I went,
 And merkit furth on mold ;
 Bot sone within a wane sho went,
 Most hevinly to behold ;
 The bricht sone with his bemys blent
 Vpoun the bertis bold,
 Farest vnder the firmament
 That formit wes on fold.

A paradyce that place but peir
 Wes plesant to my sicht ;
 Of forrest, and of fresch reveir,
 Of firth, and fowll of flicht,
 Of birdis, bath on bonk and breir,
 With blumes breck and bricht
 As hevin in to this erd down heir,
 Hertis to hald on hicht,

So went this womanly away
 Amang thir woddis wyd,
 And I to heir thir birdis gay
 Did in a bonk abyd ;
 Quhair ron and ryss raiss in aray
 Endlang the reuer syd ;
 This hapnit me in a time in May
 In till a morning tyd.

The reuer throw the ryse cowth rowt,
 And roseris raiss on raw ;
 The schene birdis full schill cowth schowt
 Into that semely schaw ;

Joy was within and joy without,
 Vnder that vnlenkest waw,
 Quhair Tay ran down with stremis stout
 Full strecht vnder Stobschaw.

Belle Margaret.

The^ssubjoined meritorious ballad has not, so far as I am aware, appeared in any previous collection—certainly in no previous collection of any importance. It is evidently a modern imitation of the old romantic style. It came to my hand sometime ago in MS. from a Border correspondent, who had kept it for some time and could not remember how it came into his possession or anything about it.

Glenewan, he was the bonniest knight
 In a' the King's companie.
 Belle Margaret, she was the fairest maid
 In a' the south countrie.

The King and his train have huntin' gane,
 Huntin' the roe and deer,
 And they lighted down at her father's yett,
 And bade him make good cheer.

When a' the tables were spread and ser'd,
 And they sat down to dine,
 Oh, in there cam' Belle Margaret,
 And a' to pour the wine.

Her heid-gear was o' the pearls white,
 And o' the emeralds green,
 But naebody saw the jewels she wore
 For love o' her bonnie een.

Her dress was o' the silken web,
 Weel broidered roond wi' lace,
 But naeboddy saw the gown she wore,
 For love o' her bonnie face.

The King looked on Belle Margaret
 As low she looted doon,
 "It seems to me this bonnie May
 Fu' weel wad set a croon."

The King looked after Belle Margaret
 As she gaed doon the ha',
 "I swear she has the fairest face
 That ever a mortal saw.

"O tell me, wha is yon fair ladye,
 And of what kin she came?"
 "She's my a'e daughter—my only bairn,
 Belle Margaret is her name."

"An askin', an askin' kindly, laird,
 An askin' grant o' mine."
 "What needs an askin', sir," he said,
 "When a' I ha'e is thine?"

"I winna ask o' gowd or gear,
 Nor yet o' land or fee,
 But I'll ask your daughter, Belle Margaret,
 To be queen o' my land and me."

The father left the stately ha',
 A joyfu' man was he,
 And when he came to his daughter's bower
 He looted to his knee.

"Rise up, rise up, dear father," she said,
 "What means this courtesie?"
 It ill befits thee, father dear,
 To bend the heid to me."

“It weel befits me, daughter,” he said,

“To do as I have seen ;

This day ye are my a'e daughter,

The morn you'll be my queen.

“This day I'm but a simple laird

Wi' little land in fee,

But the morn I'll be the foremost man

In the King's brave companie.”

Oh, she grew red, and rosy red,

And she grew pale and wan ;

“I little thocht my loveliness

Wad be wared on an auld grey man.”

“For shame, for shame, Belle Margaret,

Sic words o' scorn to say,

The proodest dame in a' the land

May envy ye this day.

“For where ye drank the wan water,

Ye noo shall drink the wine ;

Your very horse be shod wi' gowd,

And wi' the siller fine.

“Ye shall ha'e maidens thrice three score

To be at your command ;

And the greatest noble in the realm

Be prood to kiss your hand.

“Come down, come down Belle Margaret,

Amongst the companie ;

This night the King makes feast and mirth,

The morn he'll wedded be.”

Belle Margaret sits and speaks nae word,

But pale and wan looks she ;

Then by there comes her foster brother,

Says, “Margaret, what ails thee?”

“ There’s naething ails me, Ritchie,” she said,
 “ There’s naething wrang wi’ me ;
 But I’m blate amang the stranger lords
 And the gay, gay companie.

“ Oh, tell me wha’s yon stout auld knight
 Sits at the King’s right hand ? ”
 “ That’s gude Earl Moray,” Ritchie said,
 “ Better ne’er bore a brand.”

“ And wha is yon—yon sturdy man
 That looks so black and grim ? ”
 “ Yon is the laird of Cattersha’,
 And weel the King lo’es him.”

“ And wha is yon—yon blythe young knight
 Wi’ the gay, gay glancin’ e’e ? ”
 “ Oh, that is young Glenewan,” he said,
 “ The flower o’ chivalrie.”

Belle Margaret sighed. “ Thanks, Ritchie dear.
 Now leave and let me be,
 For I’ve a pain into my side,
 And sair it wearies me.”

Belle Margaret filled the the goblet fu’,
 To each she gied his share,
 But when she came to Glenewan’s side
 She passed as nane were there.

Glenewan he frowned and bit his lip
 A slighted man to be,
 But when she had gane through the ha’
 There was nane but slept save he.

Belle Margaret came unto his side,
 She knelt upon her knee,
 Says—“ Gentle knight, come let us ride—
 Thegither let us flee.”

“If I should steal or gowd or gear,
I'd dree the judgment pain,
Much mair gin I stole the bonnie May
The King marks for his ain.

“And daur ye venture, Belle Margaret,
An outlaw's wife to ride,
Whén ye may be fair Scotland's queen?
I counsel you to bide.”

“Aweel, aweel, Glenewan,” she said
“I'll no ask twice of ye,
I've a'e dear foster sister.
Sae weel as she lo'es me !

“I'll bid her busk her like a page
And ride alang wi' me,
I winna wed wi' the auld grey King,
Far rather wad I dee.”

He turned and swore by the mune and stars,
“It's ne'er be said o' me
That for a May sae brave and fair
I wadna daur to dee.”

And he has saddled the bonnie broon steed,
And she has saddled the grey,
And by the dim light o' the mune
The twasome rade away.

They rade and rade, and they better rade.
By the a'e licht o' the mune,
Until they came to St. Elmie's tower,
And the priest has made them ane.

And he has biggit a bonnie bower
Among the gay green heather,
And there for mony a happy year
The twasome dwelt thegither.

They sought them here, they sought them there,
 They sought them far and wide,
 But never mair the auld grey King
 Saw either squire or bride.

The Gay Goss-hawk.

There are three distinct versions of this fascinating old ballad—that printed by Sir Walter Scott in the “Border Minstrelsy,” under the above title ; that by Motherwell in his “Minstrelsy Ancient and Modern,” entitled “The Jolly Goss-Hawk ;” and another version given by Buchan in his “Ancient Ballads,” under the title of “The Scottish Squire.” Some difference of opinion has existed as to whether Scott’s or Motherwell’s copy is the best. Dr. Robert Chambers awarded the palm to the former, and I think with good reason. At the same time it deserves to be noted that so good a judge as Professor Aytoun asserted a preference for the latter, and himself furnished, by collation and excision, a version shorter than any previous one. Dr. Chambers has attempted to prove that the ballad was the production of Lady Wardlaw, the reputed authoress of “Hardyknute,” but although his theorising is ingenious it cannot be regarded as conclusive. He notes the style of luxurious description, so different from the bold style of the ballads of the people, and the circumstance that it is *seven* brothers that hew the heroine’s bier, and *seven* sisters that sew her shroud—*seven* being the number of the brothers of the heroine in “Clerk Saunders,” who discover the sleeping lovers, and *seven* being the number of the brothers of Lord William’s mistress in the “Douglas Tragedy”—and would fain make out that “Hardyknute,” “Sir Patrick Spens,” “Gil Morrice,” “Clerk Saunders,” “Johnie o’ Bradislee,” and the “Douglas Tragedy,” and others, had a common feminine origin. But his contentions in the connection take largely the form of special pleading, and are not at all reliable. Why, *seven* is a conventional number in ballad literature, and cannot on any account be taken as evidence that compositions in which it occurs have a common origin.

In Buchan’s version, which possesses considerable merit,

a parrot, it may be remarked, takes the place of the goss-hawk as the messenger of peace.

The subjoined is Sir Walter Scott's version :—

“ O waly, waly, my gay goss-hawk,
Gin your feathering be sheen ;”

“ And waly, waly, my master dear,
Gin ye look pale and lean.

“ O have ye tint at tournament.
Your sword, or yet your spear ?
Or mourn ye for the Southern lass,
Whom you may not win near ?”

“ I have na tint at tournament
My sword nor yet my spear ;
But sair I mourn for my true love
Wi' mony a bitter tear.

“ But weel's me on ye, my gay goss-hawk,
Ye can baith speak and flee ;
Ye sall carry a letter to my love,
Bring an answer back to me.”

“ But how sall I your true love find,
Or how should I her know ?
I bear a tongue ne'er wi' her spak',
An eye that ne'er her saw.”

“ O weel sall ye my true love ken,
Sae sune as ye her see ;
For o' a' the flowers o' fair England
The fairest flower is she.

“ The red that's on my true love's cheek
Is like blood-drops on the snaw ;
The white that is on her bare breast,
Like the down o' the white sea-maw.

“ And even at my love’s bower door
There grows a flowering birk ;
And ye maun sit and sing thereon
As she gangs to the kirk.

“ And four-and-twenty fair ladies
Will to the mass repair ;
But weel may ye my ladye ken,
The fairest ladye there.”

Lord William has written a love letter,
Put it under his pinion grey ;
And the bird is awa’ to Southern lands,
As fast as wings can gae.

And even at that ladye’s bower
There grew a flowering birk ;
And he sat down and sung thereon
As she gaed to the kirk.

And weel he kent that ladye fair
Amang her maidens free ;
For the flower that springs in May morning
Was nae sae sweet as she.

He lighted at the ladye’s yett,
And sat him on a pin ;
And sang fu’ sweet the notes o’ love,
Till a’ was cosh within.

And first he sang a low low note,
And syne he sang a clear ;
And aye the o’erword o’ the sang
Was—“ Your love can no’ win here.”

“ Feast on, feast on, my maidens a’,
The wine flows you amang ;
While I gang to my shot-window,
And hear yon bonny bird’s sang.

“Sing on, sing on, my bonnie bird,
 The sang ye sung yestreen ;
 For weel I ken by your sweet singing
 Ye ha’e my true love seen.”

O first he sang a merry sang,
 And syne he sang a grave ;
 And syne he peck’d his feathers grey,
 To her the letter gave.

“Have there a letter from Lord William,
 He says he’s sent ye three ;
 He canna wait your love langer,
 But for your sake he’ll dee.”

“Gae bid him bake his bridal bread,
 And brew his bridal ale ;
 And I shall meet him at Mary’s kirk,
 Lang, lang ere it be stale.”

The ladye’s gane to her chamber,
 And a moanfu’ woman was she,
 As gin she had ta’en a sudden brash,
 And were about to dee.

“A boon, a boon, my father dear,
 A boon I beg o’ thee !”
 “Ask not that haughty Scottish lord,
 For him ye ne’er shall see.

“But for your honest asking else,
 Weel granted it shall be.”

“Then gin I dee in Southern land,
 In Scotland gar bury me.

“And the first kirk that ye come to,
 Ye’s gar the mass be sung ;
 And the neist kirk that ye come to,
 Ye’s gar the bells be rung.

“ And when ye come to St. Mary’s kirk,
Ye’s tarry there till night.”
And so her father pledged his word,
And so his promise plight.

She has ta’en her to her bigly bower,
As fast as she could fare ;
And she has drank a sleepy draught,
That she had mixed wi’ care.

And pale, pale grew her rosy cheek,
That was sae bright o’ blee ;
And she seemed to be as surely dead
As any one could be.

Then spak’ her cruel step-minnie,
“ Tak’ ye the boiling lead
And drap a drap on her besome,
To try if she be dead.”

They took a drap o’ boiling lead,
They drapp’d it on her breist ;
“ Alas ! alas !” her father cried,
“ She’s dead without the priest !”

She neither chattered wi’ her teeth,
Nor chivered wi’ her chin ;
“ Alas ! alas !” her father cried,
“ There is nae breath within.”

Then up arose her seven brothers,
And hew’d to her a bier ;
They hew’d it frae the solid oak,
Laid it o’er wi’ silver clear.

Then up and gat her seven sisters,
And sewed to her a kell ;
And every steek that they put in,
Sewed to a siller bell.

The first Scots kirk that they cam' to,
 They garr'd the mass be sung ;
 The neist Scots kirk that they cam' to,
 They garr'd the bells be rung.

But when they cam' to St. Mary's kirk,
 There stood spearmen all in a raw ;
 And up and started Lord William,
 The chieftain amang them a'.

“Set down, set down the bier,” he said,
 “Let me look her upon ;”
 But as soch as Lord William touched her hand,
 Her colour began to come.

She brightened like the lily flower,
 Till her pale colour was gone ;
 With rosy cheek and ruby lip,
 She smiled her love upon.

“A morsel o' your bread, my Lord,
 And one glass o' your wine ;
 For I hae fasted these three lang days,
 All for your sake and mine.

“Gae hame, gae hame, my seven bauld brothers ;
 Gae hame and blaw your horn !
 I trow ye wad ha'e gi'en me the skaith,
 But I've gi'en you the scorn.

“Commend me to my grey father,
 That wished my saul gude rest ;
 But wae be to my cruel step-dame,
 Garr'd burn me on the breast.”

“Ah, woe to you, you light woman !
 An ill death may you dee !
 For we left father and sisters at hame
 Breaking their hearts for thee.”

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