

NOTES,

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL,

TO LAST EDITIONS.

ABBREVIATIONS:—*p.* PAGE; *c.* COLUMN; *s.* STANZA; *l.* LINE.

AFTER the Author's removal to Dumfriesshire, or rather after his appearance in Edinburgh, three distinct enterprises were undertaken by him: (1) The writing of occasional poems as circumstances or the wishes of his friends suggested, in which miscellaneous work, the lines in 'Friars-Carse Hermitage,' the song of 'The Whistle,' and 'Tam o' Shanter,' with three of his most exquisite lyrics are to be included: (2) A series of songs, or revision of songs, adapted to Scottish melodies for 'Johnson's Musical Museum,' including several already written or published, but by far the greater number original; a work to which he attached the utmost importance, and in which he laboured at intervals with enthusiastic, almost devotional, assiduity, till the end of his life: (3) A similar series, including some repetitions, for 'Thomson's Collection,' an occupation like the former, of intense interest, cut short like it by the hand of Death. In editions of his works which appeared in 1793 and 1794, and in a reprint of these after his death, in 1797, the new poems and some of the songs above referred to were introduced. These were professedly under his own editorial care; but if we may judge from the tenor of his letter to Lord Woodhouselee, in December, 1795, a few months before his own death, already referred to, and from other circumstances, the text seems scarcely ever to have enjoyed the advantage of his revision. 'Johnson's Museum,' in which his most important series of songs, original and revised, appeared, and which was in fact indebted almost entirely to himself, in one way or another, for its contents, and certainly for its popularity, began to be published in 1787. It consisted of six volumes, the last of which, however, did not appear until 1808. 'Thomson's Collection,' which was a more ambitious and perhaps a selecter work, more fashionable, and in that sense more important, was not, however, more comprehensive or original. In this work Burns's name was also the same tower of strength; and for its success his labours were indefatigable and exhausting. It consisted originally of four volumes, but only the first half-volume appeared during our Author's lifetime. Manuscript contributions by him intended for its pages, and then in Mr.

Thomson's hands, were frankly relinquished by that gentleman to Dr. Currie's care, for publication along with the rest of the Poet's works in the first posthumous edition: but the 'Collection' itself, which they were destined to enrich, and in which they ultimately appeared, continued to be issued at intervals, and was finally completed by a supplementary sixth volume so late as 1841.

In addition to the above, Burns was earnestly entreated by many of his most admiring friends to devote himself to the composition of some more elaborate work than he had hitherto undertaken—some epic or dramatic composition—and seems to have entertained transitory, half-serious thoughts of this, from time to time. But love and music, with him as with Anacreon, were paramount absorbing powers; to say nothing of the distracting influences, in his case, of pain and poverty. For these reasons ostensibly, the grand projected work was never accomplished, perhaps never in reality begun—fortunately, in our humble opinion, for his own poetical reputation—for no such work, epic or dramatic, from his hands could possibly have been successful. No epic beyond 'Tam o' Shanter'—the work of a day; nor comedy more complicated than the 'Jolly Beggars'—the effusion most probably of an evening or two, was likely to proceed from him: and as for regular tragedy, with its unities, its developments, &c., we believe that by mere instinct alone the man would be prevented from attempting it. His genius was essentially lyrical, his constitution impulsive, and his poetical articulation irrepressible. In virtue of these characteristics or endowments, he became the indisputably highest master of song; but by the very same conditions he was naturally excluded from the quiet laborious interweaving of dramatic plots, or the construction of effective dialogues. It was himself always, or human nature individualised in him; not human nature in detailed variety beyond him, that occupied or inspired his muse.

In a merely critical point of view, the poems and several of the songs now referred to, present as marked a contrast in certain details to the style of his earlier compositions, as works by the same Author in the same language could afford. It is

still in the Scottish language he writes, but the Scottish language of another world or region. The tone itself, acquired in Edinburgh, and cultivated in Dumfriesshire, is to a certain extent another tone than that which prevailed in Ayrshire: and it is only towards the close of his life that the rich old accents of the West perceptibly return in his lips and writings. The English form, the English idiom, the English style, is not unfrequently adopted, where the native corresponding form for him would have been infinitely preferable: —*in* is now generally superseded by —*ing*, and from ‘Tam o’ Shanter,’ the most conspicuous poem of the epoch, except in two solitary instances, is absolutely banished; that poem, however, it must be remembered, appeared originally in an English publication: *bony* now also becomes *bonny*; and *bonie*, with its still softer insinuating tenderness, is abbreviated into *bonnie*: changes which are all perceptible and suggestive, and perhaps inevitable in the circumstances; but not the less worthy of remark, as we shall hereafter see, in the retrospective history of his literary experience. Whether such changes were made in every case by the Author himself, however, or only by his editors, may well be doubted; in as much as the old forms are almost invariably found in the ‘Museum,’ copied undoubtedly from his own manuscript, and more particularly in those pieces which were written either in Ayrshire, or immediately after his settlement at Ellisland. In some of these, his most exquisite compositions, which depend for one half of their effect on the simplicity of their sounds,—‘Of a’ the airts the wind can blaw,’ for example, and ‘Were I on Parnassus Hill;’ and in several others of equal beauty, although not of the same personal interest, we rejoice to see them retained in the ‘Museum,’ although discarded elsewhere: so little do those who read or print the Scottish language at random understand the value of its syllables, or the source of its fascination!

p. 113. LINES WRITTEN IN FRIARS-CARSE HERMITAGE, ON NITHSIDE—are understood to be the earliest poetical effusion of our Author’s after settling in Dumfriesshire. The original outline of the poem was inscribed with a diamond on a pane of glass in the window of the Hermitage—which, on removal at a subsequent date, was unfortunately broken. The poem itself seems to have been one to which the Author attached the highest importance, having distributed many manuscript copies of it among his friends. Among these several considerable variations may be found—an additional proof how difficult it sometimes is to determine which of his own editions the Author himself preferred; and in one not hitherto published, which, by the possessor’s polite permission, we have had the privilege of examining, certain minor variations, besides those already known, appear. The original draft, according to Cunningham, we reserve for a place among the Author’s posthumous works; the minor variations may be found by the reader, at the conclusion of this Part. The poem is characterised by much quiet and beautiful, although by no means profound, philosophic reflection, partly Horatian and partly Addisonian in its style, and not unworthy of the Author in some of his highest moods; but has less depth and pathos a great deal than many of his earlier and simpler compositions. It is written entirely in the English language, and is a very favourable specimen of

our Author’s work in that way: all Scotch phraseology therefore, such as the ‘chimney-neuk,’ which sometimes appears instead of ‘chimney-nook,’ should be avoided in typography. Friars-Carse, a beautiful rural retreat on the Nith, lies a little to the north-west of Ellisland: and it is by no means an unsuggestive circumstance that, shortly after all this philosophy, it was the scene of that celebrated contest for the Whistle, where morals, or at least habits, of a strangely different character were illustrated and immortalised.

p. 113, c. 2, l. 1. Dangers, eagle-pinioned, bold,
Soar around each cliffy hold;
While cheerful Peace, with linnet song,
Chants the lowly dells among:

Quoted almost literally by Elizabeth to Leicester, in ‘Kenilworth’—

“He that would climb the eagle’s nest, my lord, cares not who are catching linnets at the foot of the precipice.”—*Kenilworth: Chap. xvi.*

p. 114, c. 1, l. 1. Thus resign’d and quiet, creep
To the bed of lasting sleep;
Sleep, whence thou shalt ne’er awake,
Night, where dawn shall never break;

Compare also song in ‘Lady of the Lake:’

Soldier, rest! thy warfare o’er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking;

Morn of toil, nor night of waking.
Can. I. xxxi.

p. 114. ODE, SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF MRS. [OSWALD] OF [AUCHENCRAIVE]—was written, as we are informed by the Author in a letter to Dr. Moore, in the month of January, 1789, at an inn in New Cumnock, on his way to Ayrshire; he having been turned out of the inn at Sanquhar, in “all the terrors of a tempestuous night,” with a ride of twelve miles more before him, to make room for “the funeral pageantry of the late great Mrs. Oswald,” who “was detested with the most manifest cordiality,” as the Author affirms, among “her servants and tenants.” A character of this kind could not fail at any time to inspire him with aversion and contempt, and the circumstances of his expulsion from a comfortable shelter at midnight for her unconscious sake would aggravate such sentiments into passionate fury. “The powers of poesy and prose,” he says, “sink under me, when I would describe what I felt.” Mr. Carlyle characterises this as “a piece that might have been haunted by the Furies of Æschylus.” Its coherence, which is fitful and dramatic, not continuous or prosaic, has been much injured by careless punctuation in many editions: ‘Death and Dr. Hornbook,’ the ‘Epistle to Graham of Fintra’ which immediately follows, and this ‘Ode’ afford perhaps the strongest instances of injury done to the sense, by neglect in this important particular.

p. 114. ELEGY ON CAPT. M[ATTHEW] H[ENDERSON]—is one of the most exquisite of pathetic compositions by Burns, or by any author. Not the ‘Lycidas’ of Milton, with its elaborate allegories and fictitious invocations, can compete with it in true tenderness and dignity. For brief poetic word-pictures, for the selection of the most felicitous terms, for volumes of sense and beauty in single phrases, it is scarcely possible indeed for any similar composition to surpass it; and for its truth to nature, in such a multitude of references, so happily combined, it is unrivalled: Thus ‘harebells,’ ‘foxgloves,’

'woodbines,' 'roses,' 'beans,' and 'flowering clover gay,' may all be seen in blossom at the same date, with 'heather-buds,' not *blooms*, intermingled; whilst the numerous varieties of birds mentioned, the 'cushat,' the 'curlews,' and the 'clam'ring craiks' especially, are visible or audible at the same season of the year. It is a calendar of rural life, in fact, as well as a convocation of sympathetic rural mourners. The strange allusion also to the Devil, in the first stanza, as having *power over Death*, is characteristic and significant; not orthodox by any means, yet not unscriptural. Of the gentleman to whose memory it is dedicated, very little with certainty seems to be known. The designation of 'Captain' was only some social or honorary title conferred upon him by his friends, or assumed in connection with some convivial society. He was an Edinburgh man, and seems to have been once named for Master of Ceremonies at the Assemblies there. Mr. Chambers, in whose edition the above hints concerning him are found, appears to have exerted his usual diligence in vain to trace the personal history of this gentleman farther. The date of the poem seems to have been at Ellisland, in the middle of July, or the beginning of August, 1790.

p. 114, c. 2, s. 3. Ye cliffs, the haunts of sailing yearns,
Where Echo slumbers!

'Yearns,' otherwise and more properly spelt 'earns,' signifies eagles. It is necessary to notice this; for in Currie's glossary, quoted, inadvertently no doubt, in some of our best editions since, it is interpreted as a verb, to 'long much,' without any addition to show its totally different signification as a noun. Compare Note on 'Scaring Water-Fowl in Loch-Turrit.'

p. 116. LAMENT OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS, ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING—was enclosed by the Author in a letter to Mrs. Graham of Fintra, February, 1791, with expressions of satisfaction on his part with the poetical success of this effusion, and distinct conviction that his "poetry would considerably outlive his poverty." The same poem appears as a song in the fifth volume of 'Johnson's Museum,' which was not published until the year after the Author's death; but in which it is distinctly stated to have been "written for this work by R. Burns." It is manifest from this, and many other similar indications, that Burns felt the deepest interest in this national undertaking of Johnson's, and dedicated the very best efforts of his muse to enrich it. On the poem itself we find no occasion for critical remark, farther than to observe, that a very beautiful counterpart to it may be found in Béranger's *Adieux de Marie Stuart*, beginning—

Adieu, charmant pays de France,
Que je doit tant chérir!
Berceau de mon heureuse enfance,
Adieu! te quitter, c'est mourir.

Béranger (Ed. 1851), Vol. I., p. 125.

in which, as might perhaps be expected, the Frenchman most eloquently, more than the widowed Queen herself, speaks; whereas in Burns it is the woman, the mother, and the queen alone—the mother above all, that is to be heard. There is a beautiful climax also in the 'Lament' of Burns, rising in every successive stanza, from the common charms of nature and the corresponding joys of all animate creation up to the highest pleasures of rational and social life, her own case alone excepted: yet the idea of death itself, which is painfully

anticipated in Béranger's 'Adieux' by the unnecessary vision of a scaffold—

J'ai eu voir, dans un songe horrible,
Un échafaud dressé pour moi:—

is here, with far higher sentiment and taste, most beautifully, yet pathetically, veiled as an event only possible in nature, and not even then in prison to be dreamt of, as a possible deed of violence by a jealous rival.

p. 117. THE EPISTLE TO R[OBERT] G[RAHAM], OF F[INTRA], Esq., which follows, but without an exact date in the summer of the same year, is the third epistle in reality addressed by the Author to that friend and patron. It cannot be maintained that either this, or certain others of these epistles to that gentleman, are of the highest poetical excellence. Of the rest, we shall speak in detail, as they occur hereafter. In the present instance, the Author seems to have been excited by some critical assaults to unusual vehemence of style, and accumulates denunciations, possibly not unjust although very severe, but by no means dignified, against all offenders. To such an extent, indeed, does he suffer himself to be so transported, that the coherence of the epistle itself is interrupted, and certain passages in it rendered positively obscure by their own vehemence: a remarkable contrast indeed to the ease and grandeur of the 'Dedication to Gavin Hamilton.' A considerable part of the poem is but an unconscious amplification in wrath of Anacreon's Ode in praise of beauty, as that gift from the Universal Mother which surpasses all others, hoofs, horns, and teeth, in Nature.

p. 117, c. 2, l. 17. In naked feeling, and in aching pride,
incorrectly printed in some editions,

In naked feelings, &c.

The true idea is, that the Poet, in contradistinction to

Mammon's trusty cur,
Clad in rich Dulness' comfortable fur,

has been exposed by Nature without any covering, an organism of 'naked feeling' all over, to the visitations of adversity—intensely expressive and painful. Other changes, by which the sense has been injured, might also be pointed out; but it is unnecessary, the text in this edition being correct.

p. 118, c. 1, l. 1. Thy sons ne'er madden in the fierce extremes
Of Fortune's polar frost, or torrid beams.

Thus Shelley afterwards—

And let alternate frost and fire
Eat into me, and be thine ire, &c.
Prometh. Unbound.

— l. 15. Not so the idle Muses' mad-cap train, &c.

Compare passages in Epistles, especially to Smith and Lapraik,

The followers o' the ragged Nine, &c.; p. 67.

and with passage immediately preceding compare also certain stanzas in 'Address to the Unco Guid'—

Your minds are just a standing pool,
Your lives a dyke! p. 36.

The sentiment of contempt implied in these contrasts seems to have been one of the strongest in the Poet's mind through life.

p. 118. THE LAMENT FOR JAMES, EARL OF GLENCAIRN—whose untimely death, "like sun eclipsed at noon," occurred at the beginning of this year, January, 1791, on his return from the south of Europe, in the forty-second year of his age—is an

effusion of genuine sorrow, love and gratitude, although in an allegorical strain. Glencairn, as we have already said, was the Augustus or Mæcenas of the Poet's fortunes; and his sense of obligation to that esteemed nobleman for his kindness, as well as his admiration of his character, were among the sincerest and most honourable of his life. In a literary point of view, it is by no means of equal merit, and is remarkable for a rather unpleasant intermingling of Scotch and English idioms; but there is much beautiful and plaintive elegy in the composition, with references to the shortness and uncertainty of life, which remind us indirectly of the complaint of Job. In more than one instance the coincidence of phraseology in this 'Lament' with the well-known Paraphrases of Scripture in our Scottish Psalmody, particularly the VIII. and xv., is so striking, that the Author might have been accused of plagiarism in this as in some other cases, if the Collection in which they appear had not been so universally in circulation at the time. It must have been more familiarly known to the people even than his own poems, and could not therefore be quoted from by him without discovery. It must be remembered also, that this is one of the poems which appeared under the editorship of a third party, who might not be so well acquainted with the psalmody of the people as Burns certainly was, and by whom therefore the inverted commas necessary to distinguish the most conspicuous line might easily be omitted. The instance of correspondence to which we refer is as follows:—

p. 118, c. 2, s. 5. I've seen sae mony changefu' years,
On earth I am a stranger grown;
I wander in the ways of men,
Alike unknowing and unknown.
The living know that they must die;
But all the dead forgotten lie:
Their mem'ry and their name is gone,
Alike unknowing and unknown.—*Par.* xv. 4.

Another line, in stanza III.,

Ye woods that shed on a' the winds
The honours of the aged year!

reminds us with equal distinctness of the celebrated verse in Sternhold and Hopkins's translation of Psalm XVIII.—

And on the wings of all the winds
Came flying all abroad :—*ver.* x.

But Burns intended no concealment. In writing to Lady Glencairn, his Lordship's mother, on the subject of this sad bereavement, he quotes, as being most expressive of his own feelings, a portion of Psalm CXXXVII.—eulogising it devoutly:

If thee, Jerus'lem, I forget,
Skill part from my right hand, &c.

To which and the succeeding lines, the concluding stanza of the 'Lament' has some resemblance: with which also the reader may compare Isaiah XLIX. 15, 16, as translated in Paraphrase XXIV. 4, 5, 6, which seems to be in fact the foundation of it: and if heathen parallels are required, of which Burns had no knowledge, let him turn to Virgil, *Eclog.* I., where, with a little more exaggeration, he will find them—

Ittyr. Ante leves ergo pascentur in aethere cervi; &c.
Sooner fleet stags shall feed in ambient air; &c.

On this subject, in conclusion, it may not be inappropriate to mention here, on the authority of relatives, that a favourite occupation of Burns in the dusk of the evening, particularly

of Sabbath evening, at Dumfries, was to pace about the room, with his face and eyes cast upwards, repeating aloud the well-known hymn in the Scottish collection beginning—

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue etherial sky, &c.—*Addison*:

a pleasant enough contrast certainly to supposed, or real, but exaggerated orgies at "the Globe." The scene of the 'Lament' is on Lugar Water, and apparently in the neighbourhood of the old Tower of Auchinleck, but at no great distance from Ochiltree House, formerly the property and residence of the Stewarts, Lords of Ochiltree—but which had recently been acquired by purchase for the family of Glencairn. The reader may compare at leisure the attitude of Allan-Bane, the ancient minstrel of the banished Douglas, and his strain of lamentation, in 'Lady of the Lake,' *Can.* II. iv.—vii.

p. 119. LINES TO SIR JOHN WHITEFORD, BARONET, accompanying the foregoing 'Lament,' are remarkable chiefly as being referred to specially by the Author, in his letter to Lord Woodhouselee, December 6, 1795, directing his Lordship to correct an erroneous expression in the concluding line. "I am much indebted to you," he says, "for taking the trouble to correct the press-work. One instance, indeed, may be rather unlucky. If the lines to Sir John Whiteford are printed, they ought to read—

And tread the shadowy path to that dark world unknown.

'Shadowy' instead of 'dreary,' as I believe it stands at present. I wish this could be noticed in the Errata. This comes of writing, as I generally do, from memory." This letter, which seems to refer directly in the first place to the Edition of 1794, or 1793, has been given for the first time to the world very recently (1866) by the *Inverness Courier*. The error it refers to seems not to have been attended to by his Lordship, since it has appeared in every edition of the Poet's works up to the present hour. Two things are sufficiently manifest from this circumstance—(1) That Burns certainly did not revise either his own manuscript or the latest editions of his own works with much care; (2) That those to whom he entrusted this important office do not seem to have burdened themselves with much anxiety in the matter. No further commentary on the subject is required.

p. 119. TAM O' SHANTER: *A Tale*—one of the most celebrated, and by many esteemed the very finest, of our Author's productions, being that which immediately follows, requires in this place some lengthened critical notice, although hereafter it may again be referred to. It was written, or at least composed, at Ellisland, on a broomy ridge by the river-side, a much-frequented haunt of the Author's, in one continuous fit of inspiration during an autumnal day, in 1790. It is affirmed by Mr. M'Diarmid to have been actually committed to writing on the spot—"on the top of a sod-dike over the water," and read by the Poet immediately afterwards to his wife, "in great triumph at the fireside." It is at least an ascertained fact (on Mr. Lockhart's authority) that he was discovered by his wife in an agony of laughter, reciting aloud certain lines of the poem which he had just conceived, the tears in the meantime rolling down his cheeks: and that she withdrew from the neighbourhood for a moment, along with her

children, that they might not interrupt his ecstasy. The lines referred to were those beginning—

Now Tam, O Tam! had thae been queans, &c.

The poem itself, according to his brother Gilbert, was written in consequence of a friendly agreement with Captain Grose, who was then on a visit at Carse House in the neighbourhood. The Captain, as the world knows, was a devout antiquary in difficulties, and at that time engaged in collecting materials for a work on Scottish Antiquities. He promised at the Carse, on Burns's request, to delineate Kirk-Alloway in his collection, if Burns himself would supply a witch or ghost story in connection with the subject. 'Tam o' Shanter' was imagined in consequence, at first in prose but afterwards in verse, and appeared for the first time in Grose's work, April, 1791. It contained originally four additional lines of an unpleasant character, which were subsequently obliterated by the Author's authority and request. It occasioned immediately much complimentary criticism from the highest authorities, and from that day to this it has been a theme of world-wide interest and admiration. As a literary production, it has been variously estimated on the one hand as the crowning effusion of our Author's muse, and on the other, by equally competent and equally distinguished critics, as by no means entitled to such a rank. Wordsworth makes it the text of a devout philosophic eulogy; Carlyle, with much admiration of its external beauty, decrees for it little higher than a third-rate place, founding his depreciation on its want of genuine poetic vitality and coherence as a work of art—of which, more, immediately hereafter. As one sustained and continuous flight of imagination, it is unquestionably our Author's highest effort; but it wants the intensity, the profundity, and the pathos of many of his smaller pieces. Its most dramatic elements are surrounded or suffused with humour, which destroys their tragic influence, or prevents it at least from encroaching too far; but this we consider an instance of consummate skill: whilst its descriptive and suggestive elements, uncontrolled, transport and electrify the reader. Its groundwork is superstition; its agency sensuality and drink; its crisis natural and inevitable; and its termination, as it should be, a dramatic relief. Humanity and wisdom pervade it; and mirth suppressed, or "Laughter holding both her sides," is glancing incontinent through every line. The chief personages represented were respectively—(1) Douglas Graham, of Shanter farm, near Turnberry Point on the Carrick Shore; a very small, commonplace hero, indeed—incorrectly represented by some editors as 'stalwart;' whose old scratch-wig, looking-glass, and pocket-Bibles we have more than once inspected in the museum of a deceased antiquarian in Ayrshire. His wife, Helen M'Taggart, was not without excuse, perhaps, in the occasional use of her tongue for his edification, however ineffectual such domestic eloquence might be. (2) John Davidson, a humble journeyman shoemaker, an acquaintance of Graham's, resident not in Ayr, but at Glenfoot, in the neighbourhood of Shanter farm; who was the veritable 'Souter.' One John Laughlan, a leather merchant in Ayr, afterwards of Cunning Park in that neighbourhood, and whose remains are interred at Alloway Kirk, has been erroneously identified by some with this

celebrated character. From these instances alone, it is evident how much the Poet's imagination has altered of time and place in the narrative, and out of what slight materials, as to character and *personnel*, he has built up the principal figures. A third remaining instance demonstrates this. (3) "A solitary-living woman, named Katie Steven, who dwelt at Laighpark, in the parish of Kirkoswald, and died there early in the present century, is thought to have been the personage represented under the character of 'Cutty Sark.' . . . Neither her name nor her figure being appropriate (for she was a little woman), we confess we have doubts of this parallel."—*Chambers*. The parallel, notwithstanding, appears to be true; as we learn from a minute account carefully drawn up by the Rev. Mr. Hogg, of Kirkmahoe, who obtained his information from a respectable authority in the neighbourhood; and to whose courteous assistance, in this and other kindred researches, we are much indebted. Poor Kate, or Catherine Steen or Steven, it appears, was an inoffensive but peculiar woman; of diminutive stature and sometimes of strange attire, of vagrant but industrious habits; who carried her "rock and spindle" with her from house to house to spin, and was kindly, or at least civilly, received everywhere, from fear, perhaps, of her reputed supernatural gifts, as much as from affection. By such occasional beneficence from her neighbours she obtained a livelihood; which she amassed in an outhouse or shieling at Laighpark Kiln, the farm of her friendly patron, Mr. Murdoch. She bequeathed to Mr. Murdoch, on her deathbed, "her meal-barrel, her baking-brod, and her bread-roller;" with a "whisky bottle in the cupboard, to make themselves comfortable" at her funeral. The 'meal-barrel' was a twenty-pint cask, originally used for very different purposes; the 'baking-brod,' a few staves of a similar vessel rudely nailed together; the 'bread-roller,' a long-necked brandy bottle; but the 'whisky bottle,' with its contents, genuine. On the night of her 'lyke-wake,' the hearth-stone at which the neighbours were assembled mysteriously sank, and the company fled in dismay. The house, it seems, had been an old smuggler's howff with underground chambers, one of which had given way. The stone was duly replaced before the funeral; but with earth containing corn from a new-sown field, which soon filled the hovel with verdure, and confirmed after death Kate's reputation in the district during life, as a 'no cannie woman.' With all these scenes and characters, Burns in his youth, during his brief residence at Kirkoswald, was familiarly acquainted; and during one of his fishing rambles on the shore, taking refuge in Shanter farm during a passing storm, is said to have listened with curiosity and amusement to a conjugal lecture, by no means sparing, from Helen M'Taggart to her delinquent spouse. The scenes themselves, Shanter, Glenfoot, and Laighpark are all obliterated now; Shanter alone being marked by a monumental grassy mound; and all their former inmates are quietly sleeping in Kirkoswald churchyard—Mr. Graham, of course, with a decorous memorial inscribed on his head-stone; and the witch in undistinguishable verdure, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." (4) 'Kirkton Jean,' of whom subordinate mention occurs, kept a respectable public-house—

'the public' of the village of Kirkoswald—at that time. Her name, we learn from Mr. Chambers, was Kennedy, the widespread patronymic of the district. The supposed scene of the carousal in Ayr is still indicated, in the High Street of that renowned Burgh.

As to the text of the poem, it is remarkable, as has already been observed, for presenting the English termination *-ing* in almost every instance in which the Scottish *-in* would have been otherwise employed. The two exceptions are where the syllable ends a line, to rhyme with 'herrin' and 'woman,' in which cases *-in* appears: and these exceptions demonstrate Burns's preference for the old form in such situations, which may be understood to be almost a rule with him.

p. 120, c. 2, l. 5. Or like the snow-falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever;

'Snow-falls,' sometimes incorrectly printed 'snowfall,' which signifies the entire fall of snow: whereas 'snow-falls' denotes the separate individual flakes as they descend, and separately melt on touching the river. It is true that the verb 'melts,' in the singular, does not exactly harmonise with 'snow-falls' in the plural; but a pause in the line takes place, and the verb seems then to be applied to the separate snow-flakes, as each of them, in its own turn, is seen to melt. Mr. Chambers quotes from Ovid a very fine parallel to this figure, in which Burns certainly could never be accused of plagiarism:—

Candidior nivibus, tunc, cum cecidere recentes,
In liquidas nondum quas mora vertit aquas.

Ovid, *Amor.* III. v. 11.

Fairer than snows, when newly they have fallen,
Which time hath not yet turned to watery waste.

Even if such parallel had been intentional on the Poet's part, the change of the original by the introduction of a river, to melt the snow-flake in an instant, gives it an entirely new aspect in every way adapted to his own theme, where the very idea of time, or of delay even for a moment, is excluded. Otherwise, and with another object, but not less beautifully, Petrarch—

Qualor tenera neve per li colli
Dal sol percossa veggio di lontano;
Come 'l sol neve, mi governa Amore, &c.

Parte Prima: *Canzon* xv.

Sometimes, far off, on mountain ranges green,
The tender snow smit by the sun I've seen:
As melts that snow the sun, so Love melts me, &c.

— l. 33. By this time he was cross the ford,
Where in the snaw the chapman smoor'd; &c.

The various scenes here enumerated lie on the old road from Ayr to Maybole, which passed behind the cottage in which the Poet was born, and is now obliterated in the process of cultivation and other improvements. Kirk-Alloway, a small but ancient religious edifice on the margin of the Doon, about two miles from Ayr, similar to, but much smaller than, other buildings of a corresponding era at Kirkoswald and Old Dailly, farther to the west, has been carefully restored since the Poet's fame attracted universal attention to the spot. During these repairs it was marked with an imaginary date on the lintel of its southern door, by one of the workmen employed; on which, therefore, no reliance should be placed. The building itself was probably disused as a place of public worship before the Poet's birth, the last administration of

baptism in it having taken place in 1756. In the entrance of the churchyard repose the ashes of the Poet's father; and here it was his original intention that his own bones should be entombed, having, with other neighbours, engaged in repairing the walls of the burying ground to entitle his family in asserting that right. The original tombstone erected by the Poet over his father's grave has long since been "carried away piecemeal," says Mr. Chambers: and is now replaced by a much larger and more enduring slab, bearing the well-known epitaph already before the reader. The churchyard is now one of the most aristocratic and coveted places of sepulture in the district. The old Bridge of Doon, a little beyond, is a fine semicircular arch of great antiquity, supposed to be of Roman architecture. A similar structure, but neither so large nor so firm, remains still in use over a mountain stream above Inverkip in Renfrewshire, about thirty miles to the north, manifestly of the same date and workmanship, and on the same old west-coast line of traffic or defence, which is still marked by military station-mounds called 'Danish-camps;' and on the very route at this moment traversed by modern railways. Whilst these notes were being taken (1866), the celebrated venerable fabric was being subjected to a thorough repair, in order to ensure its stability; in which process, however, the ivy, which used to hang in such graceful luxuriant festoons from its highest parapets, had been all shorn away. This loss, it is to be hoped, for Burns's sake, time and the good taste of the trustees will by-and-by also repair.

p. 121, c. 2, l. 11. Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,
Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linnen!

"The manufacturer's term for a fine linen, woven in a reed of 1700 divisions."—*Cromek*. For the use of double *n* in word linen, see remarks on Author's language, in Appendix.

— l. 24. For mony a beast to dead she shot,
And perish'd mony a bonnie boat, &c.

'The shot o' dead'—that is, either the 'shot' of evil for death at the beast, or death by lapse of the bowels in the beast, through fatality—*Scotticè*, 'schotten,' or 'schuten'—was a crime in witchcraft of the worst malignity and the deepest dye; and consisted of an imprecation for disease and death on any living creature, man or beast. In the days of our forefathers, and even so recently as the date of 'Tam o' Shanter,' it was firmly believed in by the rural population. To our esteemed friend Rev. Mr. Hogg's paper on the subject, above quoted, we are indebted for the following illustration in solemn religious form, from the Kirk-Session records of the parish of Tinwald, Dumfriesshire, August, 1699. It appears, that "John Carruthers and Jean Wilson were scolding together, and the said Jean *did imprecate him and his beast*. . . . John being summoned, declared it was not Jean Wilson (who was brought up by another party on a like charge), but Bessie Kennedy who, upon a certain Sabbath, did wish that his horse might *shoot to dead*—whereupon it fell sick, and he bringing it home and sitting at his house reading, the said Bessie Kennedy came by; and he telling her that his horse had not thriven since she cursed it, she wished that the *shoot of dead* might light on him and it both." [That is, that he and it might perish by some fatal

In some modern editions the force of the last line here has been considerably weakened by editorial misprints:

Nor ever pleasure glad thy cruel heart!

a variation which may be more in harmony with syntax, but is by no means so expressive of vehemence as the original unusual form of double negative.

p. 122. ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON: Remarkable for its concise and beautiful epitome of the immortal poems to whose Author's honour it is dedicated. There seem to have been two copies of this poem, the first of which will be found among Author's posthumous works. The 'Address,' as it here stands, was enclosed in a letter to the Earl of Buchan, at whose solicitation it was written, and by whom Burns, with some pomp, was invited to be present at the ceremonial—a sort of compliment, however, which he properly declined to accept. [See Literary Correspondence.] Mr. Chambers suggests that the arrangement of the 'Address' occurred to Burns after glancing at Collins's corresponding *Ode to Evening*; which is not impossible: but it is easier to suppose that it was suggested directly by Thomson's own works. In the verse describing Winter, for example, an indirect quotation from the original appears, which might be challenged in other circumstances as a plagiarism; but which in reality is no more than a graceful compliment to the author of the 'Seasons,' where it stands. Thomson says—

The Winter keen
Shook forth his waste of snows:—*Spring*, l. 317.

which Burns sympathetically and beautifully expands for the occasion thus:

p. 123, c. 1, s. 2. While maniac Winter rages o'er
The hills whence classic Yarrow flows,
Rousing the turbid torrent's roar,
Or sweeping, wild, a waste of snows:

On any other supposition, Collins might as well be accused of having borrowed that very *Ode* of his to *Evening* from the same source (although the superior beauty of that *Ode* we cannot perceive): so that Thomson would, in reality, be the author of inspiration for them both.

p. 122, c. 2, s. 1. While virgin Spring, by Eden's flood,

That is, the river Eden, on which the village Edenham or Ednam, birth-place of the Poet Thomson, is situated, on the confines of Roxburghshire and Berwickshire.

p. 123. ON THE LATE CAPTAIN GROSE'S PEREGRINATION: We have already, in our Notes on 'Tam o' Shanter,' referred to the origin of our Author's acquaintance with this gentleman, which took place in Captain Riddel's at Friars-Carse. The antiquary's fortunes, as well as his personal appearance, are humorously glanced at in the poem. He was an Englishman of respectable birth, of good talents, liberal education, and admirable wit; a captain and paymaster of militia; extravagant, convivial, and immensely stout; and ultimately reduced by his habits of self-indulgence to poverty. He was driven by necessity, as well as induced by taste, to adopt antiquarian literature as a profession; and had already, between 1773 and 1788, produced important works in this department, with artistic illustrations by his own pencil, in England and Wales. His concluding work in this peculiar walk was the 'Anti-

quities of Scotland,' to which Robert Burns has thus, and by his own contribution of 'Tam o' Shanter' to its pages, communicated an immortal interest. These works of Grose's are handsome and valuable productions, and still realise a premium in the catalogues of select libraries. He died suddenly of an apoplectic attack, in Dublin, in the summer of 1791.

Two annotations by the Author are subjoined—

p. 123, c. 1, s. 3. By some auld, howlet-haunted biggin,*
Or kirk deserted by its riggin.

* Vide his *Antiquities of Scotland*: [a reference no doubt to Kirk-Alloway as therein described.]

— c. 2, s. 2. He has a fouth o' auld nick-nackets:
Rusty airm caps and jinglin jackets.†

† Vide his treatise on Ancient Armour and Weapons.

p. 124. TO MISS C[RUICKSHANKS], A VERY YOUNG LADY—to whose honour, also, the song of the 'Rosebud' has been dedicated—is a tribute of affectionate, almost parental, regard for the child of an intimate and esteemed friend of the Author's, Mr. William Cruickshanks, of the High School, Edinburgh. It was in this gentleman's house the Poet was kindly accommodated and attended to, when suffering from a bruised limb; and it was this "very young lady"—then a girl of twelve, who entertained and delighted him with her performances on the piano, of those exquisite old Scotch airs, to which he was then adapting his verses for the 'Musical Museum.' Mr. Cruickshanks's house, we learn from Mr. Chambers, overlooked the green behind the Register House; and the window of the Poet's room looked in that direction. Mr. Cruickshanks died in 1795, a year before the Poet's death. The 'Rosebud,' who married Mr. Henderson, writer, in Jedburgh, has still representatives surviving.

p. 124. SONG—ANNA, THY CHARMS: Appears also in 'Johnson's Museum.' "It is adapted to a very beautiful and plaintive air composed by Oswald, and published in the first volume of his 'Caledonian Pocket Companion,' under the title of 'Bonny Mary.'"—*Stenhouse*. The song itself, although brief and epigrammatic, is in Burns's happiest vein; and embalms a compliment to female beauty in the richest aroma of devotion.

p. 124. ON READING, IN A NEWSPAPER, THE DEATH OF J[OHN] M'L[EOU], Esq. This effusion of sympathy was occasioned by the death of the youngest son of the Laird of Raasay, which took place in the month of July, 1787. The lady to whom the lines are addressed had many family bereavements of a distressing nature to sustain, and the Poet's affectionate condolence in such circumstances has been recorded in more than one form. [See Note on song 'Raving winds around her blowing.'] The present composition is remarkable for the unequal length of the first line, as compared with the corresponding third line, in most of the stanzas; a style unusual with our Author, and intended possibly to give some additional distinctive force to the sentiment. In the original manuscript, between fourth and fifth stanzas, the following lines appear, which have been introduced in the text of Mr. Chambers's edition, although we think wisely omitted by the Poet himself:

Were it in the Poet's power
Strong as he shares the grief,
That pierces Isabella's heart,
To give that heart relief!

p. 125. THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR-WATER : *

* Bruar Falls, in Athole, are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful; but their effect is much impaired by the want of trees and shrubs.—R. B.

The deficiency here noticed, and complained of in 'Petition,' was generously and abundantly supplied by the plantation of woods, in accordance with the Poet's suggestion, along the rocky chasm. It was during his tour with Nicol to the north that this visit to Bruar-Water occurred; and as we learn from his letter to Professor Walker [see *Literary Correspondence*], the verses now before us were mostly "the effusion of half-an-hour,"—on the spot—a "little brushed up" subsequently, as he rode on in the carriage. The scene, which is universally admired, and has often been described by tourists, is about three or four miles west of Blair, in Athole, on the road between Perth and Inverness. Dr. Garnet thus describes the scene, as it existed in Burns's day:—

"We went up the left bank of this river, whose channel is the most rugged that can be conceived. The rocks which form it have been worn into the most grotesque shapes by the fury of the water. A foot-path has lately been made by the Duke of Athole, which conducts the stranger in safety along the side of the chasm, where he has an opportunity of seeing, in a very short time, several very fine cascades; one over which a bridge has been thrown forms a very picturesque object. This is called the lower fall. The water here rushes under the bridge and falls in a full broad sheet over the rocky steep, and descends impetuously through a natural arch into a dark black pool, as if to take breath, before it resumes its course, and rushes down to the Garry. Proceeding up the same side of the river, we came in sight of another rustic bridge and a noble cascade of three falls or breaks, one immediately above another, but the lowest is equal in height to both the others taken together. This is called the upper Fall of Bruar," &c.

The passage itself, of which the above abridgment must here suffice, may be found at greater length in 'Tour through the Highlands,' by Thomas Garnet, M.D.

The Poet's visit to His Grace at Blair-Athole on this occasion has been rehearsed by Professor Walker in his usual guarded, half-patronising, circumstantial style, not without geniality either, as interesting and instructive. Josiah Walker was then tutor to His Grace's family at Blair-Athole, and was subsequently appointed, through that influence it may be conjectured, to the Chair of Humanity in the University of Glasgow; where we can well recollect his magisterial deportment, and occasional solemn comments on the classic text of Cicero or of Ovid. Peace be to his memory, and the reflected glory of ducal prestige in his attention to Robert Burns.

"I had often like others," says the worthy Professor, "experienced the pleasures which arise from the sublime or elegant landscape; but I never saw those feelings so intense as in Burns. When we reached a rustic hut on the river Tilt, where it is overhung with a woody precipice, from which there is a noble water-fall, he threw himself on the heathy seat, and gave himself up to a tender, abstracted, and rapturous enthusiasm of imagination. . . . It was with much difficulty I prevailed on him to quit this spot; and to be introduced in proper time to supper. . . . Much attention was paid to Burns, both before and after the Duke's return, of which he was perfectly sensible, without being vain; and at his departure, I recommended to him, as the most appropriate return he could make, to write some descriptive verses on any of the scenes with which he had been so much delighted. After leaving Blair he, by the Duke's advice, visited the Falls of Bruar, and in a few days I received a letter from Inverness, with the verses inclosed." [Burns's "rapturous enthusiasm" on the occasion above referred to was not quite so unalloyed as the worthy narrator innocently imagined. The ducal taste in fancy-gardening among such scenes, as we elsewhere learn from himself, was not entirely to his mind.]

We are further informed by the Professor, that the ladies in the Duke's family, in their anxiety to prolong the Poet's stay, sent a bribe to the driver to take a shoe off one of the post-horses in his chaise—"But the ambush failed. *Proh mirum!*

[one sees the future classical Professor there;] the driver was *incorruptible*."

p. 126, c. 1, s. 2. So may, old Scotia's darling hope,
Your little angel band, &c.

"The 'little angel band' consisted of Lady Charlotte Murray, aged twelve, afterwards the wife of Sir John Menzies of Castle-Menzies; Lady Amelia, aged seven, afterwards Viscountess Strathallan; and Lady Elizabeth, an infant of five months, afterwards Lady Macgregor Murray of Lanrick."—*Chambers*.

p. 126. ON SCARING SOME WATER-FOWL, IN LOCH TURIT :
Loch Turit lies in a wild glen of the same name, among the mountains beyond Oughtertyre in Strathearn, which the Poet examined during his visit to Sir William Murray there, in whose family at the same time was resident also Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose—heroine of his well-known song, 'Blythe, blythe and merry was she.' The date of the poem must therefore have been about the middle of October, 1787, on his return from the north to Edinburgh. According to Mr. Chambers, Miss Murray remembered the first rehearsal of it by the Poet himself, at table in Oughtertyre House, with vehement emphasis on the concluding lines. In the whole piece, one recognises with infinite satisfaction the prevailing humanity of the Poet's nature; his inherent love of liberty, and commingled detestation of oppression and cruelty. It is the same hand discernible here, which inscribed monologues of sympathy to helpless field mice, and protested against the barbarities of sport at the expense of any animated, much more of any sensitive or timid being.

— c. 1, l. 5. Why disturb your social joys,
Parent, filial, kindred ties?

is but a repetition, for example, of

The feather'd field-mates, bound by Nature's tie,
Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie!—*Brigs of Ayr*.

In another direction, we find indications of the strictly accurate, as well as poetical, character of all his observations. Let the reader compare the following passages—

— l. 19. The eagle, from the cliffy brow,
Marking you his prey below;

Dangers, eagle-pinioned, bold,
Soar around each cliffy hold;—*Lines in Hermitage:*

Ye cliffs, the haunts of sailing years,
Where Echo slumbers!—*Elegy on Henderson:*

and he will be satisfied of this. Such references to the eagle, which in a sense are but repetitions of one another, occur only *during*, or *after* the Poet's tour to the Highlands; and are the clearest proofs of the fidelity to nature by which his writings are characterised. No false or fanciful imagery is admitted by him, and nothing takes its place for immortality on his pages, until he himself has seen or heard it. From actual observation, therefore, we may certainly affirm, and not from any other source, are such allusions drawn; although a similar descriptive reference to the habits of the eagle, of equal, if not even of greater, beauty, may also be found in Thomson:

Invited from the cliff; to whose dark brow
He clings, the steep-ascending eagle soars
With upward pinions thro' the flood of day:—*Summer: l. 607.*

They shall mount up with wings as eagles: they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.—*Isaiah: xl. 31.*

Compare also Note on 'Lines in Hermitage,' where the same

idea will be found quoted apparently from our Author, and without any acknowledgment, by Scott, in the mouth of Queen Elizabeth. Let the burden of such obligation, therefore, if it must be attended to at all, go round; for this is by no means the only instance in which the illustrious author of *Waverley* seems to be very clearly, although perhaps unconsciously, indebted to Robert Burns.

Of the two unfinished sketches which follow—the one, *p. 126, IN THE INN AT KENMORE, TAYMOUTH*: and the other, *p. 127, AT THE FALL OF FYERS, NEAR LOCH-NESS*: not much, in the way of critical exposition, requires to be said. Their high poetical beauty speaks for itself, and the circumstances of their composition, apparently on the spot, are sufficient to attest the Author's power of description and pictorial word-work on such subjects: But a question of quotation, connected with one of them, will require investigation. The scenes themselves are now familiar to most tourists, as every other spot has become that has the remotest association with his name; but independently of this, they are both remarkable for the greatest natural beauty and sublimity—the *Fall of Fyers*, indeed, for more than sublimity, inspiring actual terror, and overawing such a man as Johnson, by the depth and dread gloom of the chasm into which it launches. It has been admirably described by Mr. Robert Chambers, who quotes also the opinion of Dr. Clarke, that it was “a finer water than that of Tivoli, and of all he had ever seen inferior only to Terni.” Johnson saw it to disadvantage, in drought; but was sufficiently impressed by its giddy grandeur to turn his eyes away. Although the pieces appear together as fragments, they were written in reality at a short interval, the one before, and the other after, the ‘*Petition of Bruar-Water*.’ On Wednesday, August 30, 1787, Burns seems to have visited Taymouth, which he enters in his diary, as “described in rhyme,” attaching no particular importance, it would appear, to his inscription on “the chimney-piece” there. Similar brief terms he employs with reference to his beautiful song, ‘*The Birks of Aberfeldy*.’ On Tuesday, September 5, he was at the *Fall of Fyers*. His occupation there was twofold—the one, recording with his pencil his impressions on the spot; the other, remembering with affectionate and prayerful gratitude “the little angel band” whom he had left behind at Blair-Athole: “I declare,” says he to Professor Walker, “I prayed for them very sincerely to-day at the *Fall of Fyers*.” Beautiful all this, and needs no commentary of ours. “In the evening,” as we learn from other sources, “after returning from his drive, Burns dined by appointment with Mr. Inglis, the provost [of Inverness], who had a party to meet with him. He was enraptured with the Highland scenery, but rather thoughtful and silent than otherwise during the evening.” Such details of fact, and reverential preoccupation of mind, we think it right to accumulate here, for both in the ‘*Petition of Bruar-Water*’ and in the lines at the ‘*Fall of Fyers*,’ an expression, characteristic and beautiful enough, occurs, which, by misconception of the man's nature, might be easily interpreted to his disadvantage as an author.

Or find a shelt'ring, safe retreat,
From prone-descending show'rs.

Petition of Bruar Water: Stanza vii.

As deep recolling surges foam below,
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,
And viewless Echo's ear, astonished, rends.—*At Fall of Fyers:*

seem to contain two very plain quotations from Thomson—in the one case, from his description of a waterfall, in the other, of a thunderstorm, and both within a few hundred lines of each other. We produce the lines in question:—

At first, an azure sheet, it rushes broad;
Then whitening by degrees, as prone it falls,
And from the loud-resounding rocks below
Dashed in a cloud of foam, &c.—*Summer: l. 594.*

Down comes a deluge of sonorous hail,
Or prone-descending rain. Wide-rent, the clouds
Pour a whole flood, &c.;—*Summer: l. 1144.*

It is possible our Poet may have been ruminating with Thomson on such scenes, and that an expressive phrase like this may have adhered insensibly to his imagination. But to have used that phrase twice at so short an interval, without acknowledgment, if he did it consciously, would have been to repeat himself, as well as to quote from Thomson; of which a person, so occupied as he was at the moment, can with no shadow of reason be suspected. If otherwise, and he was conscious of adopting such language as his own, being in reality another's, how little he cared for the credit of it, may be concluded from the fact already stated, that such scenes are referred to in his diary with comparative indifference, as “described in rhyme.”

p. 127. ON THE BIRTH OF A POSTHUMOUS CHILD: These stanzas, emanating from the purest affection and most disinterested feelings of love, are entitled to rank in the category of eloquent prayer. They are, in fact, but a beautiful poetical elaboration of the divine sentiment—

Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.—*Jeremiah, xlix. 11:*

and in a most remarkable manner was this prayer of faith and love responded to. The child here interceded for was the grandson of Mrs. Dunlop. His mother was her daughter Susan, and his father was a Frenchman of birth and fortune, Henri by name. Mons. Henri died soon after his marriage to Miss Dunlop, at Loudon Castle, Ayrshire: which bereavement occurred June 22, 1790; and the child was born in the November following. Receipt of this intelligence transported the Poet to an absolute ecstasy of sympathetic joy with his beloved friends, intense and devotional as any religious sentiment could be. [See Letter on the occasion to Mrs. Dunlop.] The poetical expression of this transport was the prayer before us. Madame Henri and her son subsequently retired to France; where she unfortunately died. The child was then confided to the care of his grandfather, the elder Henri; and, after a series of romantic vicissitudes connected with the Revolution, came finally into possession of his patrimonial estates in peace. The particulars of this interesting account are prettily detailed by Mr. Chambers—Vol. III., *p. 154*, of his Edition.

p. 127. THE WHISTLE: Before entering on details, we quote the Author's own introductory remarks to this much celebrated poem.

“As the authentic *prose* history of the Whistle is curious, I shall here give it.—In the train of Anne of Denmark, when she came to Scotland with our James the Sixth, there came over also a Danish gentleman of gigantic stature and great

prowess, and a matchless champion of Bacchus. He had a little ebony Whistle, which at the commencement of the orgies he laid on the table; and whoever was last able to blow it, every body else being disabled by the potency of the bottle, was to carry off the Whistle as a trophy of victory. The Dane produced credentials of his victories, without a single defeat, at the courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, Moscow, Warsaw, and several of the petty courts in Germany; and challenged the Scots Bacchanalians to the alternative of trying his prowess, or else acknowledging their inferiority.—After many overthrows on the part of the Scots, the Dane was encountered by Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxwellton, ancestor of the present worthy baronet of that name: who, after three days and nights hard contest, left the Scandinavian under the table,

And blew on the Whistle his Requiem shrill.

Sir Walter, son to Sir Robert before-mentioned, afterwards lost the Whistle to Walter Riddel of Glenriddel, who had married a sister of Sir Walter's.—On Friday, the 16th of October, 1790, at Friars-Carse, the Whistle was once more contended for, as related in the ballad, by the present Sir Robert Lawrie; Robert Riddel, Esq., of Glenriddel, lineal descendant and representative of Walter Riddel, who won the Whistle, and in whose family it had continued; and Alexander Ferguson, Esq., of Craigdarroch, likewise descended of the great Sir Robert; which last gentleman carried off the hard-won honours of the field."

The reader will by and by perceive that the date here given (1790) must certainly be a mistake on the Poet's part.

On the much controverted subject of the contest and Burns's presence on the occasion, we have the means at command, through the courtesy of Sir James Stuart Menteath, Bart., of Mansfield, of presenting to our readers the fullest information. With respect to some of the parties, not Burns, additional particulars might be given, but it is unnecessary here. The chief authority against Burns's personal connection with the affair is the late Professor Wilson, in his celebrated Essay; who founds some very strong dogmatic assertions on the subject upon a letter written by Burns to Captain Riddel on the morning of the day on which the contest took place, but which has evidently been misinterpreted or misapplied by the Professor. In this passage, which seems to us, from beginning to end, extremely unworthy of the Professor's own reputation as a gentleman and scholar, for taste and manliness, after some uncalled-for remarks on Dr. Currie and late Professor Walker, we find the following words in conclusion:

"Why, you see that this 'Letter' and 'The Whistle'—perhaps an improper poem in priggish eyes, but in the eyes of Bacchus the best of triumphal odes—make up the whole of Burns's share in this transaction. *He was not at the Carse.* The 'three potent heroes' were too thoroughly gentlemen to have asked a fourth to sit by with an empty bottle before him, as umpire of that debate. Burns that evening was sitting with his eldest child on his knee, teaching it to say 'Dad'—that night he was lying in his own bed, with bonnie Jean by his side—and 'yon bright god of day' saluted him at morning on the Scaur above the glittering Nith."

It is unnecessary to remind the reader that these assertions are entirely at variance with the Poet's own declarations in the song itself: but it is worthy of remark, that Professor Wilson should have been so prejudiced with a theory as to forget that it was entirely contrary to Robert Burns's very nature to make imaginary statements about himself of the kind here supposed:—

"I winna lie, come what will o' me."

Although, therefore, we had no other evidence than that of the song itself, we might affirm, with almost as much certainty, that Burns was present at the contest for the Whistle, as that he was present at the celebration of the Holy Fair. As to the gentlemanly character of the three principal actors, on which the Professor rests so much, we have not a word to say in controversy; or that they would be stinted in their hospitality to any witness of their convivial contest, need never be supposed. The fact was otherwise. But that their ideas of

social dignity would prevent their admitting, or even inviting, a witness or two to be present on the occasion, to assist in determining the issue, is a supposition on the Professor's part entirely gratuitous and unfounded. The Professor throughout may have been replying indirectly to Allan Cunningham's ridiculous story "that the Poet drunk bottle for bottle in this arduous contest, and, when daylight came, seemed much disposed to take up the conqueror;" but his own assertions are, if possible, more ridiculous than the story itself. The facts of the case, as ascertained from documents of unquestionable reliability, are as follows.

Preparatory to the contest itself, the subjoined memorandum of preliminaries was executed:—

(1) MEMORANDUM FOR THE WHISTLE.

The Whistle gained by Sir Robert Lawrie, (now) in possession of Mr. Riddel of Glenriddel, is to be ascertained to the heirs of the said Sir Robert, now existing, being Sir R. L., Mr. R. of G., and A. F. of C. and to be settled under the arbitration of Mr. Jno. M'Murdo: the business to be decided at Carse, the 16th of October, 1789.

(Signed) ALEX. FERGUSON.
R. LAWRIE.
ROBT. RIDDELL.

COWHILL, 10th October, 1789.

Jno. M'Murdo accepts as Judge—
Geo. Johnston witness to be present—
Patrick Miller witness to be pret. if possible.

Minute of Bet between Sir Robt. Lawrie and Craigdarroch. 1789.

The above information seems to have been supplied by Mr. M'Murdo, on request, to Captain Miller, then of Dalswinton, with Note as follows:—

(2) The original Bett between Sir Robt. Lawrie and Craigdarroch, for the noted Whistle, which is so much celebrated by Robt. Burns's Poem—for which Bett I was named Judge—1789.

The Bett decided at Carse—16th Oct. 1789.
Won by Craigdarroch—he drank ups. of 5 Bottles of Claret.
To Capt. Miller, 1793.

The originals of above were in possession of Thomas H. Cromek, Esq., Wakefield, Yorkshire, August 27, 1864: *Fac-simile* furnished by him to Sir J. S. Menteath—of same date; from which the above, by kind permission, has been printed. Whatever may be thought of such an arrangement now, it is manifest from the signatures of parties attached, as principals, witnesses, and umpires, including no less a personage than Mr. Miller of Dalswinton, the accomplished country gentleman, the enthusiastic patron of scientific enterprise, and actual nursing-father of steam navigation, that the challenge was looked upon as no serious immorality, or breach of christian decorum at the time; and there is less need, therefore, for any apology on Burns's account for being present, still less to deny, in the face of facts, that he was there at all. Whether the witnesses and umpires did actually all assemble, we have not the means of attesting. That M'Murdo, who specifies the quantity of wine drunk by Craigdarroch on the occasion, was there, may be taken for granted, although the omission of his name in the affidavit below may occasion some doubt on that point; but that Robert Burns was present, that document beyond the possibility of dispute determines:—

(3) Closeburn Hall, Decr. 2, 1841.

I, Wm. Hunter, Blacksmith, in Lake-head, parish of Closeburn, was for three years and a half previous to my being apprenticed to John Kilpatrick, blacksmith, in Burnland, parish of Dunscore, servant to Captain Robt. Riddel, of Friars-Carse, in Dumfriesshire. I remember well the night when the *Whistle* was drunk

for at Friars-Carse by the three gentlemen, Sir Robt. Lawrie, Mr. Ferguson of Craigdarroch, and Captain Riddell. Burns the poet was present on the occasion. Mrs. Riddell and Mrs. Ferguson of Craigdarroch dined with the above gentlemen. As soon as the cloth was removed, the 2 ladies retired. When the ladies had left the room, Burns withdrew from the dining-table, and sat down in the window, looking down the river Nith; a small table was before him. During the evening, Burns nearly emptied two bottles of spirits, the one of Brandy and the other of Rum, mixing them in tumblers with warm water, which I often brought to him hot. He had paper, pen, and ink before him; and continued the whole evening to write upon the paper. He seemed, while I was in the room, to have little conversation with the three gentlemen at their wine. I think, from what I could observe, he was composing the 'Whistle,' as he sat with his back to the gentlemen; but he occasionally turned towards them. The corks of the wine were all drawn by me; and it was claret the three gentlemen drank. As far as I can recollect, I did not draw more than fifteen bottles of claret. It was about sunrise when the two gentlemen were carried to bed. Craigdarroch never, during the course of the night, fell from his chair. The other two gentlemen often fell; and I had to help, with the assistance of Burns, one or other to their chairs. After Burns, myself, and the other servants, now dead, had carried up stairs Sir Robt. Lawrie and Capt. Riddell, Craigdarroch walked himself up stairs without any help. Craigdarroch then went into one bedroom, where Sir Robt. Lawrie was, and blew stoutly the Whistle—next he entered Capt. Riddell's bedroom, and blew the Whistle as stoutly there—Burns being present. Burns, after he had seen and assisted the two above-named gentlemen to bed, walked home to his own farmhouse of Ellisland, about a mile from Friars-Carse. He seemed a little the worse of drink, but was quite able to walk and manage himself. Burns often afterwards talked to me of the evening that was passed at Friars-Carse, when the Whistle was drunk for—and he told me again and again, that he wrote the whole poem of the 'Whistle' that evening at Friars-Carse. Indeed he filled that evening, I well recollect, four sheets of paper, larger than the present one (large post) with writing, all of which he took home with him. As I was apprentice to Kilpatrick, the blacksmith, who always shod Burns's horses, when he was at Ellisland, I often saw Burns while I was shoeing his horses. All the above particulars I am willing to verify on oath.

(Signed) WILLIAM HUNTER.

Decr. 2d, 1841.

In the above conclusive deposition, it will be observed, the facts chiefly deposed to are Burns's presence at the contest, his occupation during the evening, and the comparative sobriety and self-command he maintained to the end. In all other circumstances mentioned, however, there is perfect agreement between the deposition and the poem, both as to time, sunrise, at which the contest concluded, and the approximate quantity of wine drunk, as divided between the three. There is still nearer agreement on this point between the Deposition and the Memorandum of Bett by M'Murdo, which seems absolutely conclusive on the subject. Burns, therefore, may have employed 'round numbers' in his narrative, when he said "Six bottles a-piece"—an exaggeration, or a mistake, very excusable, indeed, in such 'totals.' So much for the social habits of our forefathers—knights, squires, and high ruling-elders included. The deposition above quoted was sent by Sir J. S. Menteath to Professor Wilson, with a request that the Professor would correct the statement on this subject in his essay; which, we regret to say, was rather ungraciously refused. The deposition, we believe, was afterwards published in the *Scotsman*, July 30, 1864, in a letter from Sir J. Menteath, dated the 27th day of that month.

As for Burns's presence on the occasion, and his comparative sobriety, notwithstanding the amount of spirits he is said by Hunter to have drunk, there can be no doubt. Both facts have been verified by another witness, named Hiddleston, in conversation with Dr. Grierson of Thornhill, August, 1864: and no one who has seen the path from the river side to the cottage at Ellisland, which Burns must have ascended alone; or who reflects for a moment that he had the loose manuscript sheets of such a poem, written during that very night, in his

hand or in his pocket, can seriously doubt it. Hiddleston, it appears, declared, on universally accepted rumour at the time, that "Burns that night was as sober as a judge:" in which case, there must have been some exaggeration in Hunter's affidavit as to the quantity of spirits, rum or brandy, drunk by him—if indeed it was a physical possibility for a man to drink such a quantity (nearly two bottles) and retain his senses at all. Hunter's narrative in that respect, therefore, we are much inclined to question: not that we doubt the old man's memory by any means; but that on such an occasion, we believe the bottles "in the window" had been tampered with by "the other servants, now dead," after Burns left the room. [See also interesting statement by Mrs. Burns on these, and some collateral topics of importance: M'Diarmid Memoranda, in Appendix.]

Further, on the subject of Burns's presence, we have the conclusive testimony of Sir Charles G. S. Menteath of Closeburn, Bart., minutely and courteously narrated to us by his son, Sir James Menteath of Mansefield, the present Baronet, to whom his father had communicated the facts, and to whose affectionate care in many ways the reputation of the Poet has been indebted for no slight protection. To Sir Charles, the Poet himself gave a copy of the ballad, with a full account of the circumstances of its composition, from which Sir Charles's acquaintance with the facts was derived. This copy was presented by the then Lady Menteath, Sir James's mother, to Cutlar Ferguson, Esq., of Craigdarroch, one day at dinner, after his return to this country from India. Mr. Ferguson, then Member for Galloway, carried the manuscript with him to Parliament, and having opened it to a friend in the House, the excitement of Hon. Members became so great, that the Speaker was under the necessity of calling the House to order. O Pitt! that the mere echo of the Exciseman's voice should supersede the eloquence of most gifted statesmen, and stop the very progress of legislation for the empire! Other original copies of 'The Whistle' besides this are extant—one in possession of Dr. Grierson, Thornhill, a gift from Gilbert Burns to the late William Grierson, Esq., Dumfries; and another, carefully written out by the Poet on Government Excise paper, and in beautiful preservation, handsomely framed, at the Crichton Institution in that town. This copy, we learn from a paragraph in *Dumfries Courier*, November 11, 1862, is supposed to be the original commemorative copy, when first extended by the Poet from his own rough draft, and is believed "never to have been out of Friars-Carse House until it went to be framed." It was removed at date of the above paragraph, by the trustees of the late Mrs. Crichton, to the Museum of the Crichton Institution, Dumfries, for preservation there. It presents a few orthographical and other variations of the text, which will be found among 'Various Readings' at the conclusion of this part. The Whistle itself, for a while supposed to have been irrecoverably lost, has been recently discovered, and is now (1867) in possession of the then champion's representative and descendant. We think it right to mention, in conclusion, that the late Mr. C. Kirkpatrick Sharpe, a very high authority in such matters, after examining the family records and searching in vain for some trace of the original Sir Robert, expresses serious

doubts about the truth of the legend. We do not participate much in these antiquarian doubts. There may be some discrepancy or omission as to dates and names, which some accidental discovery will by and by account for. But the Whistle itself is there; and the contest for its possession, as a valuable heirloom, actually took place. The legend connected with it, therefore, may be accepted as substantially correct. A tradition of that kind could not have been fabricated without detection; and such stories are scarcely ever without some foundation in fact.

NOTES ON SONGS.

"We might write," says Mr. Carlyle truly, "a long essay on the songs of Burns; which we reckon by far the best that Britain has yet produced"—but not quite so truly, when he speaks in the same breath of this very gift of song-writing as a mere chink or "small aperture;" unless he were prepared to describe by some corresponding term the corresponding gift of psalmody, which has been an aperture in heaven indeed, for the refreshment and illumination of the world. Song-writing in one form or another, and it has had many forms, is in fact a permanent sphere of intellectual action of the highest order; an exhaustless fountain of delight, and universal channel of sympathy for mankind; where the richest soul may revel and expend itself without limitation or reproach. In the form in which we are most acquainted with it, and as compared with the more elaborate style of the epic, or descriptive, or dramatic poem, in which continuous labour on exalted themes must be bestowed, it has, doubtless, a narrower, almost an inferior, look, as if incapable of occupying or developing the loftiest powers. But this is true only in relation to its occasional topics, and not in relation to the gifts which it implies, or the effects it is capable of producing. The mountain of ore, when cut or cast into a palace or a pyramid, may be a grand monument of art, but it is thenceforth fixed, dispensing only rays: the same mountain, drawn out into a thread, will compass and electrify the world; and it requires more skill and labour, by many degrees, to draw out that thread and wind it round the planet, than to build or sculpture the most elaborate monument. The entire fusion of the soul, in such a process, is indispensable; and if the gate of Song through which it flows be of necessity contracted, and the outpouring brief for the time, it must still be intensely pure, and in its very current carry a portion of the soul away with it, never to return. If the process be uninterrupted for a season, or continued for a lifetime, the soul itself will be found at last diffused through every link, and departing articulate in the latest line.

Song-writing, as among ourselves, may be said to be an institution of the western world, and of the latter days. There seems to be no sort of composition, in ancient classic literature at least, that can be set precisely on a footing with it. Callimachus indited hymns, and Tyrtæus war-songs; Anacreon and Horace musical odes; Catullus and his brethren epithalamic chaunts; Pindar gave loose rein to syllables in mere unmeasured rhapsody, and the choruses of the tragedians were but explanatory declamations; we have scraps of choral

chanting also in the comedies of old; but songs, as we of this late epoch understand them, seem to be wanting. Sappho and Alcæus, who used the lyre, may have come nearer to what we call songs in their passionate effusions; but the nearest perhaps on record, dedicated, however, exclusively to religious purposes, are the psalms of the Hebrews. These, notwithstanding, are more chaunts than songs, and require certain external concomitants, now unknown to us, for their own perfection. We do not now read or rehearse as David sang, and never will. That art, with the inspiration that appertained to it, for propitiating Deity or confounding Devils, is gone. Upon the whole, the song, as contra-distinguished from the poem on the one hand, and from the ballad or metrical recitation on the other, seems to be a distinctive articulate utterance of our own—that is, of the modern world, and chiefly of the races inhabiting the central, western, and northern regions of Europe; from which, by the medium of the very atmosphere, it has been diffused and appropriated among mankind. In this species of composition, vulgarly debased and capable of abuse to any conceivable extent, also vulgarly misunderstood, various intellectual and moral qualifications of the highest order are required to produce perfection. *First*, morally, the profoundest passion, sensibility, sympathy, and tenderness of individual mental constitution; realising in self the various ecstasies of all other men for the moment: *second*, intellectually, the power of regulating and sub-dividing these into brief limited periods, and of embodying their expression, and of harmonising such subordinate periods of ecstasy into one whole burst of measured passion, pain, pity, love, grief, mirth, or joy, as the case may be: *third*, artistically, the gift of accommodating all this to the spirit of music, to the notes of an air, to the rhythm of a melody; so that the words and the sounds shall seem to float together out of the soul, and to float together from the lips into the ears of men: and *finally*, the commingled gift of poetry and painting, so to embellish and enrich the whole with pictorial touches of description, sentiment or humour, discriminating when and where, as to prevent the possibility of mere sameness or fatigue in the repetition of ideas; that it may thus echo and re-echo for ever. To produce one such work in perfection, would secure lasting fame for its author; to produce any considerable number, would set him among the foremost benefactors and rulers of his race or kin. A nation with one great song in its lips dedicated to liberty, is free; with a code of religious or moral songs, is self-governed; with a collection of miscellaneous amatory and social songs, is self-sufficient in happiness. The 'Marseillaise Hymn' revolutionised France; 'Luther's Hymn' enfranchised Germany; 'When Israel went out of Egypt' will yet be the gathering cry of a dispersed nationality, the oldest in existence: 'Yankee Doodle,' with its contemptuous iteration, drove British arms out of America; and 'Old John Brown,' with a deeper pathos in its simple melody than any modern national chaunt we know, promises fair to reunite once more a bleeding and dismembered Republic: 'Scots wha hae,' among ourselves, is more potent than any Magna Charta; and 'Auld Langsyne' will be a perpetual guarantee for the moral rejuvenescence in love and truth of the whole western world.

In all the above conditions of song-writing, Burns was not only gifted, but supreme; and in the number and variety of his compositions, beyond comparison, the greatest master who ever thus adapted the highest intellect, or devoted the most passionate and susceptible nature to the requirements and delight of his fellow-men. Other men have also written songs, and other nations besides Scotland have their codes of songs; but to judge by their effect on the world at large, and by their acceptability to mankind, it should seem as if it would require all the songs of any one nation put together to equal in beauty, in variety, and power the songs of Robert Burns alone. In addition to which, they are almost all characterised by the highest dramatic perfection; that is, by the expression or delineation in speech of the passion and position of the singer, and frequently by the embodiment, in a single verse, of what might be expanded into whole acts or scenes in a lyric drama. There is scarcely one song of his, indeed, that does not include many attributes of beauty, and the whole together may be left without fear beside the finest and most varied creations of the intellect. To conclude an estimate like this with comparisons between him and his fellow-countryman Ramsay, or the English Dibdin and Walcot, or the Irish Sheridan and others, with all their special gifts and powers, as competitors in song, would be unseasonable. They are not to be compared. The only sort of parallels at all to his finest effusions are to be found in the occasional scattered fragments of song, that have been strewn in the memory of the people for generations, by solitary and often nameless hands; and which, if collected and systematically arranged, might bear some analogy in pith, in pathos, or in music to what he alone has produced—many of these, sympathetically rescued and transformed by him, being actually in possession of the world: and a similar comparison might be made for the same sort of fragmentary reliques in the sister language, purified and preserved by Shakspear; and for Shakspear's own songs, which, next to Burns's, of all similar compositions are the finest. But none of these, nor all of them together have ever exercised the same influence, or spread with the same rapidity among mankind, or settled with the same ease, and indissoluble hold upon their lips, as the outpourings of Robert Burns's heart and voice. With one writer, however, of a remoter date and of another country, not in the province of Song, but in the adjoining region of Canzonette and Sonnet, from whom we shall have occasion hereafter, as we have already had, to produce coincidences of language in illustration of Burns, a very brief parallel at this point may be justified. In Petrarch, are the same intense vehemence of expression, the same eloquent passionate appeals to Nature, the same identification of the soul with her, and with the one beloved object that she everywhere represents or hides; the same artistic use of words, but with more, much more artistic antithesis; more involution, and therefore less perspicuity; the same command of exquisite figures, and the happiest rhymes; the same lyrical transitions from form to form, and from situation to situation; in a word, the same poetic transcendentalism and perfection of thought and language. But the intellectual comprehensiveness, the varied human experience, the versatility and the wisdom; the pro-

phetic instinct, the sympathy, the geniality, the humour, and breadth, seem to be wanting; or to be extinguished or absorbed in insatiable sorrow or fruitless desires, issuing, it may almost be said, in transcendental selfishness. Of humour, indeed, there is the melancholy pensive shadow, which mocks itself by quaint and studied contradiction; the *pensierosa ombra* that saddens in the very heart of the author, that sickens and dies in every effort at articulation, or takes refuge in the bitterness of despair, and impossible yearnings that overreach the stars. This, apparently, and not much more, is in him. But the profoundest grief in Burns's soul was tempered and soothed with the grandest sympathy, and was never suffered permanently to tarnish or to bronze a sky, in which love for his fellow-creatures, of every condition and of every caste, was the perpetual azure background.

Whilst glancing at such conspicuous parallels, we cannot omit reference to the name of Béranger, from whose pages we have already quoted, and may hereafter occasionally quote, and whose reputation as the lyrist of France is now at least European. By critics and biographers in his native country he is spoken of enthusiastically as another Horace; and by many among ourselves he has been accepted as a second Burns. The French Horace or the French Burns he may indeed be called, for want of better analogies; but certainly he is neither Horace nor Burns. With Horace, except in *esprit* and as a satirical lyrist, he cannot correctly be compared at all; although individual pieces, such as *La double Ivresse*, are highly Horatian or Anacreontic in their polished sensuality. He was essentially a *chansonnier*; Horace was a writer of epistles and odes, and never used a chorus, or looped on a refrain, in his life. With Burns, on the other hand, as a song-writer, some distant parallels might more reasonably be established for him, if his *chansons* were *songs*, at least as Burns understood and wrote them. In other respects he has but little resemblance to Burns, who was much else as well as a song-writer; but between the songs of Burns and the *chansons* of Béranger there are several most remarkable points of distinction. (1) The songs of Burns are natural musical works of commingled fancy, thought, and passion; the *chansons* of Béranger are for the most part artificial, rather prolix recitations, where neither fancy nor passion predominates, and thought is chiefly satirical and observant. (2) In the songs of Burns, where choruses accidentally occur, these are to a certain extent independent of the songs to which they are attached; and in many cases the songs themselves would be complete, so far as sentiment is concerned, without them; in the *chansons*, the chorus, the burden, the refrain, the repetition pervades everything, and is so looped on to every verse, that no verse whatever would be perfect without it, and the *chanson* itself would collapse in the very utterance, if such invariable supplements were removed. In many of the *chansons*, such repetitions constitute at least one half of several pages, and can scarcely be less than a third part of the whole together. (3) In the songs of Burns, distinct individuality, which is the very soul of all true lyric effusion, is the conspicuous characteristic; in the *chansons* there is no such individuality at all, no living present of life in words. There may be much talk of love—*L'Amour*—for example, but there is

not love itself; and only here and there the reflected image of love, as if the author knew nothing of it in reality. Concentrated passion like Petrarch's, for any one object, was utterly foreign to this man; conflicting passion like Robert Burns's, for several objects together or in succession, would have destroyed him before his twentieth year. His lyrics, in short, are essentially bacchanalian and licentious; in which he certainly resembles Horace. *Le bon Vin* and *La belle Fillette* are invariable concomitants in the triumphs of his muse. He could not have written 'My ain kind dearie' without a cask, or 'Willie brewed a peck o' maut' without an actress, in the background. 'My Nanie, O!' in its sweet transporting purity, was absolutely beyond his imagination.

(4) Which is most observable, the *chansons* of Béranger are either mere political chaunts in the style of the demi-monde, in which the vicissitudes of harlotry are identified with the fortunes of France; or they are recitations of licentious amours from salons and cabarets, too gross to be translated, and too shamelessly flagrant in their allusions to be openly printed or sung anywhere, perhaps, in the modern world but in Paris. Among the exploded indecencies of Ramsay, they might be paralleled; but scarcely a trace of such ideas is to be found in the pages of Burns: nowhere indeed, we may say, but among the 'Jolly Beggars,' where alone, being dramatic, they are appropriate. At the best, these *chansons* of Béranger are but echoes from the theatre and the casino, or the boulevard at midnight, and want the clear tinkle of the morning stream, and the rustle of the leaves, and the music of the atmosphere, and the melody of the birds, which everywhere accompany the footsteps of our own national poet. Yet there are many magnificent pieces intermingled. *Charles Sept*, for example, has true heroic love devotion in it; *Les Gueux* reminds us forcibly of 'A man's a man for a' that;' whilst *Les Gaulois et les Francs* is like an occasional distant revival of 'Scots wha hae.'

In their circumstances—in their poverty, in their afflictions, and above all in their intense patriotic devotion, even to the use of language, the men greatly resembled each other; living both—the one disappearing and the other advancing—at an ominous crisis, and sharing enthusiastically in the new-born sentiments of liberty, they had both much to endure from political suspicions; and the courage of the Frenchman had as severe a trial to undergo at Paris in the days of the Restoration, as the constancy of his elder brother at Dumfries under the discipline of the Excise. But otherwise, their *morale* was entirely different. Béranger seems to describe nothing with interest or effect but what is questionable in life, in religion, or in morals—because everything around him possibly was questionable enough; but without the relief of brighter prospects for purity or truth, nay, with absolute cynical mirth and *gaieté* at the dismal realities of corruption, social and domestic, as they stood. The higher nature of Burns, which raised himself above this, and his prophetic faith in Humanity which looked joyfully beyond it, are both totally wanting. God forbid that any grandmother should have spoken in the hearing of her grandchildren through him, as *Grand'mère* does through Béranger; that such a premium on prostitution, as that offered by St. Peter at the gate of Béranger's Paradise,

should ever be heard of in Scotland; or the future of manhood and womanhood in truth and love, among ourselves or in society at large, be postponed with such levity as in the *Ainsi Soit-il* of Béranger, whilst Christ lives! Let any one, who scruples to accept this judgment, compare for himself at leisure the *Ma Grand'mère* of Béranger with that picture of domestic life in the 'Twa Dogs,' in the 'Cotter's Saturday Night,' or in 'John Anderson, my Jo;' his *Ainsi Soit-il!* concluding stanza and all, with the prayer in 'A man's a man for a' that;' his dull licentious burlesque of *La Descente aux Enfers* with the 'Address to the Deil;' and his *Deux Sœurs de Charité*, if there does not seem to be a sort of profanity in the very idea of such comparison, with 'Mary in Heaven,' that he may be satisfied on the subject. For such scandals in type as *Ami Robin*, *Ces Demoiselles*, *Le Soir des Noces*, and a few others that might be named, we seek for no comparisons anywhere. Alas for the country in which lines like those are not indignantly resented by women, or can be chanted with shouts and eulogies in the mouths or in the hearing of men!

We ought not, perhaps, to conclude this brief comparative review without mention, at least, of the most eloquent and accomplished, and for a while the most popular, song-writer of more recent times in our own country—we refer to Thomas Moore, author of the 'Irish Melodies.' Without entering into elaborate parallel, however, in this case, we must content ourselves with observing that, although Moore was unquestionably the most elegant sentimental versifier of modern times, and as a song-writer entitled to no mean rank, there is a certain gulf between him and Burns which no mere sentiment, no mere elegance of diction, no mere refinement of language or idea, could ever enable him to pass over. His words and verses were not himself as Burns's were: that made the grand distinction. In mere critical respects, this other difference is also most perceptible between them: Moore requires in general a verse, a stanza, or sometimes more, to elaborate an idea; which may be harmonious and beautiful enough when entirely wrought out, but would be prosaic otherwise: Burns requires only a line, or a word, sometimes a mere syllable, for the most suggestive thoughts; which need no elaboration, which are musical and beautiful separately, as they stand; and would have been poetical, semi-perfect in themselves—like comma, colon, and semi-colon periods of sense and melody, although they had never been united as they are. Moore, in fact, was a most successful artistic *litterateur* in song-writing, or in writing what might and did pass, for many years, as songs: Burns was no *litterateur* at all, but a vital artist in impassioned rhythmic sense, in all that appertained to lyric speech and music, who never in his life wrote anything as a song which was not a song in reality, and will remain a song for ever. To quote examples in verification of this is unnecessary: any two pages of the respective authors, on comparison, will satisfy a critic on the subject.

It is here, perhaps, the proper place to advert to Burns's method of song-writing as a cultivated art. Although incomparably the finest song-writer of his own or any age, he knew too well the difficulty of such art to engage in it carelessly. From all that he has stated on the subject himself, and what we have since learned otherwise, the essential conditions

of success with him in such composition seem to have been (1) An air to suit his fancy, and intimate acquaintance with the air itself, which he took every means of acquiring, before beginning to write or 'croon'—that the words might naturally adjust themselves to it, or to a certain extent, by invisible relationships, grow out of it; (2) Something like a key-note of sentiment in words or ideas, original or suggested, to start the composition; (3) A congenial mood of mind—although it should be at different intervals—to produce or perfect the composition; And if to these were added (4) the presence or the recollection of some living heroine, as muse; or of some genuine and not imaginary theme, as subject—one, at least, that roused by sympathetic association or personal interest his whole passionate nature, the conditions might be said to be complete. If the mood sufficed for the occasion, the work might be finished in a few hours; if the mood failed or was interrupted, the work must also be abandoned until inspiration again returned; for nothing like constraint, in any form or in any circumstances, was endurable by his constitution. Many of his finest songs were undoubtedly composed on the spot—almost where he stood or sat, or by the road-side as he journeyed along; or they were laid aside and resumed again, when the current of his ideas, or the strain of music, revisited his imagination: but all were equally, at the moment or by snatches, the offspring of an untrammelled fancy. The season apparently most favourable for such compositions with him, even from his youth, was the cool of the evening or of the morning—Sabbath morning itself not excepted [for beautiful illustration of which, in his earliest life, see *Original Reminiscences* in Appendix]; and the scene, the depth of some secluded grove, or the lonely brink of some river-side:

Adown some trotting burn's meander,
An' no think lang:
O sweet to stray, and pensive ponder
A heartfelt sang!

At Ellisland, he had the richest choice of such retreats; and not unfrequently selected them during his professional rides, among the hills and valleys in the neighbourhood. At Dumfries, he seems to have preferred the woods by Lincluden Abbey—

As I stood by yon roofless tower;

or the nearer, although only partial seclusion of the 'Dock Green,' a pleasant enough suburban promenade on the north side of the Nith. When the rough draft of the composition had been so achieved, his practice was to retire to his room, and to seat himself, pen in hand, on a simple hardwood chair, which he swayed to and fro, balanced on its back legs, and so, in soothing swinging attitude, to finish his work as he was committing it to paper. These rough drafts were frequently revised, before they were parted with as perfect. "He had plenty of Excise paper," says Mrs. Burns, "and he scrawled away." The room so consecrated at first was the little 'mid-room' between the two large rooms, and communicating, we believe, with both, in the upper storey of a long old-fashioned house, where his family was originally domiciled in Dumfries; at the foot of Bank Street, close by the river-side, and about half-way between the town's steeple in High Street on the one hand, and Dame Devorgoila's bridge on the other. The same

finishing process was afterwards conducted in the parlour of the other house, where he subsequently lived and died. Very sacred are such regions, and modest quadrangular chambers!

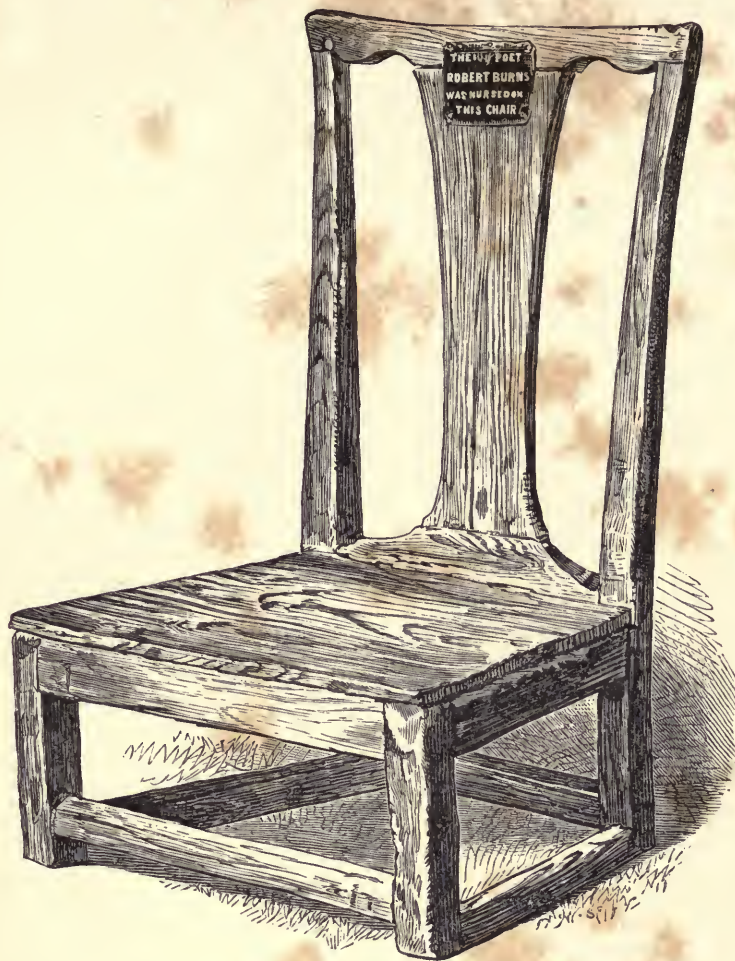
During some part of this process, also, the composition was brought to the touchstone of music itself, by actual singing or playing; and any slight alteration that might then appear advisable to himself was made. Although by no means a performer, he occasionally guided himself, in this work of practical revision or preparation, by 'stepping a tune' on the fiddle, that he might more perfectly ascertain the modulations of the air. His chief assistant at home, however, was Mrs. Burns herself, whose 'wood-note wild' had always fascination for him; and elsewhere, as occasion might determine (especially if the use of the spinnet or piano were required), any musician in his numerous circle of such friends, from the child of twelve years old, like Miss Jenny Cruickshanks, to the young lady of twenty, like Miss Lewars; and by no means unfrequently some artist of the ruder sex, with hautboy, flute, or violin. But notably among all natural and unsophisticated assistants in such process of musical testing, was old Kirsty Flint—Christina Kirkpatrick, by maiden name—of whose invaluable service in this department we have received an interesting account from Sir James S. Menteth, Bart., on whose patrimonial estate, then of Closeburn, in the neighbourhood of Thornhill, this singular vocalist was a resident. Although neither a beauty nor otherwise attractive, except by intelligence, her powers of song and her intimate acquaintance with the finest old airs then remembered in the country had irresistible interest for Burns; and whilst he could afford time, he allowed no song to pass as finished from his hands until he had first heard it chaunted, or literally 'piped,' in every key, and perhaps to more than one air, by this wonderful performer. His custom was to sit in an old arm-chair by her cottage fireside, and listen mute, noting the harmony of syllables and sounds, as she thus rehearsed his own compositions; and receiving, it is said, with affability and gratitude, hints of other airs which seemed to her own ear, or in her own lips, more suitable for the several effusions. The late Professor Gillespie, of St. Andrews (as quoted by Mr. Chambers), describes an occasion on which he, as a school-boy, was once attracted to the cottage door by the startling beauty of such rehearsals—"Burns's horse being tied to the sneck by the bridle." The Poet's mother, as we also learn from Sir James Menteth, was on terms of friendly intercourse with Kirsty, and, on leaving that neighbourhood, bequeathed to her, in memorial of their friendship and of her services in such manner to the Poet, the "low-seated deal-chair" on which he was nursed; and which "was obligingly presented" to Sir James by Kirsty, on her death-bed.* From such spontaneous inspiration, then, by music, and after such elaborate care in composition, were these inimitable lyrics provided for the world; and never possibly else, but on similar conditions, will anything hereafter be produced to equal them.

POSTSCRIPT.—Although both in the writing and singing of certain songs, the chorus is of essential importance, and was

* This interesting relique is still in the worthy Baronet's possession; and we hope to be able, by his kind permission, to present an engraving of it to our readers.

CHAIR IN WHICH BURNS WAS NURSED.

FROM PHOTOGRAPH OBLIGINGLY SUPPLIED BY SIR JAMES S. MENTEATH,
BARONET, OF MANSFIELD.



Besides the original inscription above delineated, the Chair at present, on an additional plate, exhibits the following:

“This Chair

came into the possession of SIR JAS. STUART MENTETH in the following manner.

When Gilbert Burns, the brother of the immortal Poet Robert Burns, quitted the farm of Mossgiel, Ayrshire, for that of Dinning on the estate of Closeburn, Dumfriesshire, belonging to Sir Charles Granville Stuart Menteth, his mother went with him. Afterwards, Gilbert became Factor to Lord Blantyre over his estate in East Lothian. His mother also went with him. When Mrs. Burns removed from Mossgiel to Dinning, she took with her this chair, on which she had nursed Robert and all her children. . . . Mrs. Burns, while living at Dinning, became intimate with Christy Flint, the wife of a blacksmith, a native of that parish. Before going to East Lothian, Mrs. Burns gave this chair to Christy Flint, who afterwards presented it to Sir Jas. S. Menteth.”

MEMORANDUM BY SIR JAMES.

Christy Flint was an excellent singer; and had a great memory, stored with all the old songs and ballads of Scotland. These she often sung to Robert Burns; and he applied to her to sing over to him any song he had composed while living at Ellisland and Dumfries. This proves the great care Burns took in the composition of his songs, that they should please the ear, as well as rouse the heart and feelings. It is said that, while testing his songs through the fine voice of Christy Flint, Burns would now and then stop her singing, and substitute a more mellifluous word for any one that was displeasing and grated on his ear.

JAS. STUART MENTEATH.

Oct. 29, 1868.

[Compare Note on Songs—Poetical Works, p. 256.]

carefully attended to by Burns; yet Burns's songs, as we have already said, are in a great measure independent of mere choruses. Choruses to him were but key-notes or finishes, with which, when the current of his own ideas began to flow, he could dispense at discretion. The printing and arrangement of these, therefore, seem to have been left a good deal at first to the judgment of the musical composers to whose hands the harmonising of the airs was intrusted; and we find accordingly considerable variations of method, in the 'Museum' and in 'Thomson,' in this particular. In an edition of the Poet's works where no musical notation appears, the continual reprinting of choruses would be improper; and therefore, although we have had some difficulty in determining how to dispose of them, we have adopted in general a certain compromise of arrangement, which we trust will be satisfactory. (1) Where the chorus is distinct and separate, yet essential, it has been printed in smaller type, at beginning and end of the song; (2) where the chorus forms an integral part of the song, and could not be disunited without injury to the sense, it has been printed as a portion of the song, in uniformity with the text; and (3) where choruses, as once or twice occurs, are different and distinct—as first and second—or absolutely require to be repeated from time to time, as the song progresses, they have been so distinguished and printed in their respective places. Lines quoted by Burns from older songs, as choruses to his own, will be found enclosed in brackets—[thus]; and verses occasionally added by himself, at later dates than the original, are likewise so marked: but the authorship of such verses will be duly distinguished in Notes.

JOHNSON'S SCOTS MUSICAL MUSEUM.*

In assigning to Johnson's Museum the highest place as an authority in the republication of Burns's songs, we have been guided by the following important considerations:—(1) The Poet's undisguised preference for Johnson's work, indicated in many ways, but chiefly by the fact that this celebrated collection, besides numerous valuable contributions in words and music, "begged, borrowed, or stolen," as he says himself, by our Author, to enrich it, contains not fewer than two hundred and twenty-two original or revised pieces, by his own hand, the most beautiful and important of all its contents; being

much more than double the number originally communicated by him to Thomson's undertaking; (2) That Johnson, as an editor, was not only a well-meaning, conscientious man, but scrupulously exact in his adherence to the Author's manuscript before him; (3) That although a few typographical inaccuracies do occur, they are such as may easily be corrected, or have already been corrected by commentators on his work; (4) That where Thomson quotes from Johnson, as he did by the Poet's authority in not fewer than fifty instances at least, he either quotes verbatim from the 'Museum,' or where he quotes otherwise, it is by mistake or presumption in the alteration of the text, and to the manifest injury of the Author's meaning; (5) That since Johnson's day innumerable minor variations have been introduced by Currie and by subsequent editors, for which no sufficient authority can be produced, and which, on comparison with this fine original, it is impossible to justify or sanction; (6) and finally, That five-sixths at least of the entire contents were examined, revised, and corrected by the Poet himself, of which corrections the proofs are still distinctly manifest on the plates themselves, having been made in compliance with the Author's wishes after the original engraving was done; and, from a comparison of his manuscript with the text, there is every reason to believe that the remaining sixth part has been more correctly reproduced on the whole than the majority of such editions are in similar circumstances. There were indeed "two or three things that might have been mended," as the Poet himself acknowledges, if the work had been to begin again: but these things did not lie in the *letter* of the text. They lay in certain verses of doubtful moral tendency, or at least of doubtful meaning, which the Author afterwards regretted; and wherever they could be identified (there are but three or four altogether) they have been, in compliance with this expressed desire of his, omitted in the present edition. On this point, however, it is right to observe that, in comparison with the old offensive rubbish they were originally intended to supersede, even such objectionable words can hardly be called immoral at all.

The truth, in fact, seems to be, that 'Johnson's Museum' is the only standard authority the world now has for above one hundred and fifty of Burns's best songs; that 'Thomson's Collection,' in like manner, is the sole standard authority for sixty or sixty-three; that Dr. Currie in the meantime, and after him Mr. Cromek, steps in to arbitrate between them, incorrectly, perhaps, on either hand; and finally, that in subsequent editions indefinite license in orthography, punctuation, sense, words, and arrangement, has been used in reproducing the text. So far as Johnson is concerned, it is indeed provoking, as well as amusing, to see with what coolness his edition has been *corrected* by gentlemen who ought to have known better, but who manifestly in such instances have scarcely *looked* at his work at all; and who thus not only do damage to the author he there represents, but expose their own casual ignorance or neglect of important literary facts. It is with considerable astonishment we observe one distinguished editorial name connected with this system of misquotation. Upon the whole, we are satisfied that 'Johnson's Museum' is not only a high, but incomparably the highest, authority in this department of Burns's works; and that it

* James Johnson, engraver, musicseller, and copperplate printer, Edinburgh, was the first who attempted to print music from pewter, which effected a great reduction in the price of that article at the time. The 'Museum,' which was his great work, consisted of six volumes, which appeared successively in the years 1787, 1788, 1790, 1792, 1797, and 1803; the two last volumes thus not appearing until after the Poet's death. Burns and Johnson did not originally contemplate more than four volumes; but from the great and unexpected number of contributions by Burns himself, the undertaking was thus enlarged. Each volume contained one hundred songs. Burns was practical editor as well as chief contributor, and revised all proof-sheets from the end of the first up to the middle of the fifth volume, at which date in the progress of the work his death took place. "Your work," says he to Johnson, a few days before that sad event—"Your work is a great one; and now that it is near finished, I see, if we were to begin again, two or three things that might be mended; yet I will venture to prophesy, that to future ages your publication will be the text book and standard of Scottish song and music"—an estimate which time will verify.

Johnson died on the 26th of February, 1811, in circumstances so reduced, that his widow was dependent for subsistence "on the occasional donations of a few of her husband's old friends and acquaintances; and after remaining for some time as an out-pensioner, she at length found shelter as an inmate of the Edinburgh Charity Workhouse." These sad facts we learn, through Stenhouse, from documents published at the time.

occupies, in originality and simplicity, the same position as to the songs, which the Kilmarnock and first Edinburgh Editions hold as to the earlier poetry of our Author. In perusing its old-fashioned pages, the reader perceives at once a simple uniformity of speech and spelling in every passage by Robert Burns, most characteristic of the man; and in innumerable instances, so many distinct as well as delicate transitions of sense and figure, conveyed by a single letter or word, that the passages in which they occur seem to be almost new productions, as compared with the ordinary text. All these peculiarities, to the best of our ability, we have reproduced, as being of incalculable importance to the purity and authenticity of the Poet's authorship.

In contributing these exquisite lyrics, the Poet seems to have acted, either from caprice or from some sufficient reason unknown, as he did also in contributing to 'Thomson's Collection,' partly by open avowal and partly by disguise in his authorship: and in arranging or classifying these contributions, we have, for various reasons (among others, that the Author's own modesty and self-denial, when immense additional fame might have been so easily acquired by another course, may appear), adopted the same sort of principle. The reader, therefore, will find (1) those songs which were publicly acknowledged by the Author, and to which his name or initials were authoritatively attached in the 'Museum'—not always in the order of their composition, but in the order of their publication in that work; (2) those songs which he did *not* thus avow, but which are sufficiently well known, by his own private admission or otherwise, to have been his productions, distinguished in the 'Museum' most frequently by the letter X; (3) those songs which he only altered or enlarged, and which have either no signature at all, or are distinguished in the 'Museum' by letters X or Z; (4) those songs alone being omitted in the present subdivision of our work, which appeared originally in the earlier editions of the Author's poems, and have therefore already been presented to the reader. In this arrangement, we have departed slightly from our original intention as to detail in the order to be adopted, but the reasons now assigned, on which a new classification has been founded, will, we presume, be accepted as sufficient. Of two hundred and twenty-two songs contributed by our Author to the 'Museum,' there seem to be one hundred and eight, including six or eight from previous editions, publicly acknowledged by him; fifty-nine entirely his, but not acknowledged; and fifty-five at least of fragments, revisions, and translations by him, of which no acknowledgment was ever made, or deemed necessary by himself at his hands. When the reader learns, in addition to this fact, that among these hundred and fourteen anonymous works, more than one half of which were absolutely original, some of his own most beautiful compositions are to be found; and that the revisions which he supplied, to purify the public taste and to redeem the reputation of his country, were little less than new productions, being so admirably done on rude and sometimes unreadable materials, that the mere revision in most cases reads like a magical transformation; he will be able not only more fully to appreciate both the genius and the modesty of the man, but to estimate aright the folly and injustice of

the supposition that a soul like this, so indifferent to its own greatest triumphs, could be guilty of appropriating, without acknowledgment, the thoughts or the words of others. The whole of this, indeed, is an additional indisputable proof, if such a thing were required, that anything approaching to *plagiarism* was an offence absolutely foreign to his nature. It is in this view we have adopted the arrangement now detailed, that the reader may have before his eyes, in the most authentic form, the fullest evidence on the subject: which seems to be the more required, in as much as in most recent editions such pieces are either printed indiscriminately, without full explanation of their authorship, or with an intimation that they are only partially the workmanship of Burns, or doubtfully attributed to him; as if he himself had originally *claimed* them, and the falsehood of his claim had been discovered: whereas the fact of the case is the very reverse—that he never claimed, nor cared for claiming them at all; nay, that in many instances he absolutely denied their authorship, and that it has only been by most careful critical inquiries since his death that his real relationship to most of them, as their undoubted author, has been established. These observations, we trust, will be accepted as final; and in any future instance in which a parallel passage may be quoted by us from previous authors, our readers will understand that it is for the sake of illustration only, and in no way whatever either to justify or renew discussion on this exhausted topic.

In proceeding now to review the whole of these wonderful lyrical productions, classified as above, we do not propose minutely to criticise every individual song; but shall content ourselves with affording all the information accessible concerning them, where it seems to be of importance, with such additional remarks as the history or character of the compositions themselves may suggest. It is not an essay, our readers must remember, but only a commentary at discretion, in which we can here indulge on these beautiful productions; but we may observe, once for all, that the more carefully we have studied and the more frequently we have perused them, we are the more convinced that both in variety and beauty, and in artistic perfection, they are incomparably the finest works of their sort that could be imagined emanating, in an uninterrupted series, from the hand of a single author. We have seen nothing finer, and will not easily believe that there can be anything much finer, in the world.

SONGS ORIGINALLY ACKNOWLEDGED.

In the first volume of 'Museum' only two songs avowedly by Burns appear, and these at the very conclusion of that volume. It was not until the work had been considerably advanced that our Author became acquainted with Johnson; and his first contribution to its pages was one of his own earliest and best productions—'Green Grow the Rashers, O'—which, whatever may be thought of its *morale* by some, superseded an old Scottish original unfit for publication, and from that hour to this has banished it—this being only one among innumerable instances in which Burns's genius and exquisite taste combined have rendered incalculable service to the community. The other—

p. 129. **YOUNG PEGGY:** Is a beautiful pastoral chaunt, suggested by the attractions of Miss Peggy K—; to whom it was originally enclosed in a letter by the Poet, in the autumn of 1785. It was the first compliment apparently to that unfortunate lady, whose calamity was afterwards immortalised in the 'Banks o' Doon.' Mr. Chambers, by some oversight (into which he seems to have been betrayed by following Cromek a little too closely, who sometimes printed from duplicate copies, as new, pieces which were already before the world), remarks that "this song was published after the Poet's death, under the title of 'Young Peggy.'" It was, indeed, so published by Cromek in his 'Reliques,' but had already been published by the Poet himself, without any title, in Vol. I., p. 79, of the 'Museum,' May, 1787—having been communicated for that purpose, in November, 1786, or one year exactly after it was written; the date of the song being undoubtedly during Miss K.'s visit to her friends at Mauchline. In the third stanza—

Were Fortune lovely Peggy's foe, &c.—

there is a considerable resemblance to the well-known song by Sheridan—

Had I a heart for falsehood framed, &c.,

which had already been assigned a place in the 'Museum,' and which Burns may possibly ere that have seen; but the song itself, written at Mossiel, being already a twelvemonth in existence, cannot be supposed to have had any relation to it. It is sad enough to reflect, that both prayer and prognostication in 'Lovely Peggy's' case were alike unavailing.

In the second volume, a much larger number of our Author's contributions appears—beginning with the first song in the volume, 'When Guilford good our pilot stood,' already published; and ending with 'Clarinda, mistress of my soul,' the last but two in the volume—including altogether not fewer than thirty-three pieces from our Author's hand, of which, however, only eighteen were publicly acknowledged by him; the remainder being either alterations, additions, or anonymous compositions.

WHEN GUILFORD GOOD: [See p. 73; also Notes to Part I., p. 107.] This song appears in 'Museum' to the tune of 'M. Friececan,' incorrectly so spelt; 'An Friececan Dubh,' or 'The Black Watch,' otherwise more popularly known as 'The 42d Royal Highlanders,' being the true title.

p. 130. **WHISTLE, AND I'LL COME TO YOU, MY LAD:** Originally in two stanzas only, written by Burns in 1787, to an air which was a great favourite of his own, and believed by him to have been the composition of an excellent musician, by name John Bruce—"an honest man, though a *red-wud* Highlander"—in Dumfries. In August, 1793, he composed the second edition of four stanzas, with some verbal alterations on the first—which will be found in its place. In some manuscripts, the two first stanzas are slightly varied, thus—

O whistle, and I'll come to you, my jo,—

Tho' father and mother and a' should say, no, &c.

p. 130. **BONNY LASSIE, WILL YE GO?** This song, beginning 'Now Simmer blinks,' &c., was entirely composed by Burns, the chorus alone, 'Bonny lassie, will ye go?' being ancient. It was written in September, 1787, under the Falls

of Aberfeldy, in Perthshire, during his tour through the Highlands with his friend Nicol of the High School, Edinburgh. The same contempt for Fortune in comparison with Love, and the same admiration of Nature in wood and wild, which characterise all his works, are beautifully indicated here in the simplest but most effective language.

p. 130. **MY JEAN:** One of the many tributes by our Author, in the same strain, to Jean Armour, seems to have been written before their marriage.

— c. 2, s. 1.

Her dear idea round my heart
Should tenderly entwine.

Thus Thomas Moore afterwards, in one of his melodies—

And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Should entwine itself verdantly still.—*The Sunflower.*

p. 131. **STAY, MY CHARMER, CAN YOU LEAVE ME?—** Adapted to an old simple, pathetic Highland air; but whether merely sentimental or real in its application, does not appear. It has some resemblance to other verses addressed, at parting, to Clarinda, and may possibly have been intended for her.

p. 131. **THICKEST NIGHT, SURROUND MY DWELLING!** Adapted to 'Strathallan's Lament.'—Of this song, Burns himself gives the following account in his 'Reliques':—"This air is the composition of one of the worthiest and best men living—Allan Masterton, schoolmaster in Edinburgh. As he and I were both sprouts of Jacobitism, we *agreed* to dedicate the words and air to that cause. But to tell the matter of fact, except when my passions were heated by some accidental cause, my Jacobitism was merely by way of *vive la bagatelle*." It may be noticed in connection with this avowal, and with Allan Masterton's name, that Allan was one of the three whose symposium has been immortalised in the 'Peck o' Maut;' and that the Poet, in a letter to Captain Riddel, on the day on which the drinking for the 'Whistle' took place, requests the favour of a 'frank' in writing to Allan, whom he there also characterises in the same terms of eulogy and friendship. It is just possible, therefore, that the idea of this song may have been suggested over the 'Peck o' Maut'—which might perhaps stimulate the Jacobitism of the company; and if that be so, then we have at least two admirable lyrics planned or written at the very moment, when the Author is supposed by many to have been lost in speechless inebriety. In support of this idea, we have italicised a word in Burns's own account, as quoted above, referring to such an *agreement*.

There seems to be some unexplained misunderstanding about the noble personage here represented. Some, including Mr. Chambers, understand the imaginary speaker to be William, fourth Viscount Strathallan, who fought and fell at Culloden; and that Burns, incorrectly believing him to be an exile or surviving in jeopardy, has put such language of lamentation by mistake into his mouth. Others, to avoid this difficulty, maintain that it was not this William at all, but his son, the disinherited Viscount, who survived him as an exile in France. The facts are these: William, fourth Viscount of Strathallan, fought, and was *reported* slain at Culloden: "I myself," says an eye witness, whose affirmation we recollect somewhere to have read, "saw Viscount Strathallan dead on the field of Culloden, and thrust this spontoon (military halbert) into his body." The fact of his death, however, was good-naturedly

disputed even in London at the time. This dead body was not universally believed to have been Strathallan's body; on the contrary, his reported death was affirmed to be either a mistake or a ruse, invented by his friends to deceive the Government, and to facilitate his escape. Lords Kilmarnock and Balmerino were both taken prisoners, and suffered decapitation; but Strathallan, according to this theory, escaped and fled. It is by no mistake, therefore, but on popular rumour, as being the most romantic supposition of the two then apparently entertained concerning the lost Viscount, that Burns has ascribed this soliloquy to him: a circumstance which renders the soliloquy itself, as his, most affecting and beautiful. He, supposed to be dead, is yet alive; and in obscurest exile, at home or in a foreign land, laments the fate of his brother chiefs-in-arms. Why else should a lament be in *his* mouth at all? With reference to Note in our Text, p. 131, c. 2, we think proper to quote from Mr. Chambers, Edition 1856, Vol. II., p. 214, as follows—

"Variation in MS. in possession of Mr. B. Nightingale, Priory Road, London:

'Thickest night, surround my dwelling!
Howling tempests, o'er me rave!
Turbid torrents, wintry swelling,
Roaring by my lonely cave!"

What Mr. Chambers here calls a *variation*, from a private manuscript in London, is in fact the original edition in 'Johnson's Museum,' printed and published during the Author's own lifetime, and now reproduced by us. Mr. Chambers has adopted Dr. Currie's edition in this instance as a standard, beginning—

Thickest night, o'erhang my dwelling!

and, without adverting to the 'Museum,' seems to have concluded that the manuscript in London was a variation, which in truth is, or at least agrees with, the actual original—Currie's edition being the variation. We are thus explicit as to facts, for this is by no means the only instance in which Johnson has been set aside, and imaginary discoveries to his disadvantage announced; nor the only instance in which various readings (as in Currie's edition), without adequate authority, have found circulation as the genuine text of Burns.

p. 131. THE YOUNG HIGHLAND ROVER: Is one of the three songs written by Burns to his most favourite Highland air of 'Morag'—a plaintive and beautiful, but complicated melody. It was written in 1787, expressly for the 'Museum;' and the hero is understood to be Prince Charles Edward, whose unfortunate destiny gives a degree of pathos to the words, which certainly could not well, in any other case, be attached to them.

p. 132. THE BANKS OF THE DEVON: A much admired song, was written in August, 1787, during one of the Author's northern tours in that year. The verses, he himself informs us, "were composed on a charming girl, Miss Charlotte Hamilton, who is now married to James M'Kittrick Adair, Esq., physician. She is sister to my worthy friend, Gavin Hamilton of Mauchline, and was born on the banks of Ayr; but was, at the time I wrote these lines, residing at Harveyston, in Clackmannanshire, on the romantic banks of the little river Devon. I first heard the air from a lady in Inverness, and got the notes taken down for this work [the Museum]."

He was accompanied during this tour by Dr. Adam, afterwards of Harrowgate; who, in consequence of this introduction, obtained the heroine's sister for his wife. The song itself is slightly Shenstonian in its character, but with intermingled touches of tenderness beyond Shenstone.

p. 132, s. 2, l. 3. And far be thou distant, thou reptile that seizest

sometimes incorrectly printed

seizes

Had the song been entirely Scotch, 'seizes' would have been the proper form; but Burns was most scrupulous in such matters, and the song being almost all English, the second stanza entirely so, the correct English form is employed, and so stands distinctly printed in 'Museum.' Nor does the rhyme in any way suffer by such accuracy, in as much as the final 't' is lost in the first syllable of the succeeding line. A point so minute would be scarcely worth observing, if it were not to illustrate the care with which Burns himself, in such instances, discriminated the varieties, and adhered to the proprieties of language.

p. 132. RAVING WINDS AROUND HER BLOWING: This song, we are informed by the Author, was composed in sympathetic reference to Miss Isabella M'Leod of Raasay, with whose deep afflictions, first in the death of her brother, John M'Leod, Esq. [see p. 124], then in the death of her sister, and subsequently in the still more melancholy death of her sister's husband, the Earl of Loudon, which occurred, 1786, by his own hand, "out of sheer heart-break at some mortifications he suffered, owing to the deranged state of his finances," the Poet seems to have had the profoundest commiseration. In this, and all similar pieces by Burns, the reader will observe a dramatic suggestive pause at the very point where an inferior poet, bent on amplification, would have gone on, adding stanza after stanza, till the theme was exhausted.

p. 132. Musing ON THE ROARING OCEAN: "Composed," says Burns, "out of compliment to a Mrs. M'Lachlan, whose husband is an officer in the East Indies;" and in which, we may observe, the poetical idea of maiden-love, and not of marriage relationship, is made the theme: a fact which explains many other cases, in which ignorant misconception of the Poet's language has led to most injurious imputations on his own morality.

p. 133. BLYTHE WAS SHE: The heroine of this song, as already stated [see Note on 'Scaring Wild-Fowl,' p. 249], was Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose, afterwards Mrs. Smythe of Methven, who had already been designated for her beauty 'The Flower of Strathmore.' Mr. Chambers asserts that the lamb-like expression referred to in the third verse was remarkably characteristic of this lady's countenance. The date of the song was August, 1787, as we have seen; but in the early part of the same year Burns had accomplished his Border tour. Mr. Chambers says, "It is evident that Burns was disappointed of his intended visit to the Vale of Yarrow" on that occasion; and there may be a blank in his diary at that date: but it is manifest, from the very first verse of this song, that 'Yarrow braes' were present to his imagination at the moment, as in vivid contrast with the hills of Oughtertyre. He must either have visited the Yarrow, therefore, or have heard it most exactly described. The former we conclude

to have been the case; for he seems never to have *borrowed* a description. The two first lines of the chorus, we ought to mention, belong to an older ballad.

p. 133. A ROSE-BUD BY MY EARLY WALK: The second compliment thus paid by our Author, with paternal affection, to Miss Jenny Cruickshanks, "a very young lady" [p. 124]. Stanza III., in reference to her voice and musical performance, is a compliment founded on fact; her occupation, during the Poet's residence (end of October, 1787) in her father's house, being to sing or play, for his gratification and assistance, the favourite Scotch airs required by him in adapting his verses for the 'Museum.' Lucky little songstress! unconscious assistant-musician to Apollo; to be repaid for such dutiful childlike service with unlooked-for immortality.

p. 133. BRAVING ANGRY WINTER'S STORMS: Dedicated to the praise of Miss Margaret Chalmers, to whom also another similar tribute of admiration occurs afterwards, entitled 'My Peggy's Face.' This young lady, who together with Miss Charlotte Hamilton—"Banks of the Devon"—seems to have exerted great influence on Burns's imagination, to say the least of it, was honoured with much gallant and respectful admiration by the Poet, founded more upon her moral excellence, however, it would appear, than on any other attractions probably of which she could boast; and was the person to whom a considerable number of his most interesting letters were addressed. [See Special Correspondence.] With reference to this particular song, he says it was composed "on one of the most accomplished of women, Miss Peggy Chalmers that was, now Mrs. Lewis Hay, of Forbes & Co.'s Bank, Edinburgh." Date of song, 1787.

p. 134, c. 1 s. 1. Astonished, doubly marks it beam
With art's most polish'd blaze.

often incorrectly printed . . . marks its beam,
which changes and weakens the sense entirely. In stanza II., it is worthy of remark, also, that we have a double alternate construction, an elegant peculiarity of syntax, common enough in Hebrew psalmody, but rare in Burns or elsewhere:

Blest be the wild sequester'd shade,
And blest the day and hour,
Where Peggy's charms I first survey'd,
When first I felt their pow'r!

In the above quotation from that stanza, the reader will observe that the first and third lines, and the second and fourth, correspond, both in sense and sound.

p. 134. TIBBIE, I HAE SEEN THE DAY: One of Burns's earliest and most spirited youthful productions, originating in a *bona-fide* disappointment at the moment. The date assigned by some is 1776, when the Author would be only about seventeen years old, which is early for a work so perfect; by others, 1785, age twenty-three, more likely perhaps. Be this, however, as it may, the song was the genuine product of a lover's spleen; and connected with the composition of it, we have the following pleasant anecdote from the lips of the heroine's own son, a respectable farmer in the neighbourhood of Tarbolton. Our informant remembered well, when a boy, of asking his mother for "a bawbee to buy a ballat frae a chapman at the door;" which favour was granted, and he "waled out a ballat for a bawbee, to please himsel." On reading over this ballad to his

mother in the evening, "she leugh, and spier'd if he kent wha it was on?" The child, of course, did not know; but was duly informed, with a mixture of pride and laughter, that the Tibbie of the ballad our friend had chosen "was just his ain mither." "Mr. Burns," it appears, "had been a genuine admirer of Tibbie's; but one night when he came to the door, our informant's father had been 'afore him;' and syne Mr. Burns took the huff, and wrote that sang." The heroine's maiden name was Isabella Steven; Scotticè, Tibbie Steen. We have only farther to note, that the concluding verse, within brackets in our edition, does not appear in the 'Museum,' and seems to have been added at some later date by the Author, when revising the song for 'Thomson's Collection,' where that verse is found. It is also printed with a variation in the second line of that verse, thus—

I wad na gie her, under sark,

which is surely a vulgar inaccuracy?

p. 134. CLARINDA: Which is the last song by Burns in volume second of the 'Museum,' seems to be also the first avowed reference by him to his passion for that lady. We have only to observe farther, that it is absolutely Petrarchan both in its style and in its devotion; of which many illustrations might be adduced. We content ourselves by referring the reader at his leisure to the entire sonnet beginning—

Pommi, ove 'l sol occide i fiori e l'erba,
O dove vince lui 'l ghiaccio, e la neve,
Parte Prima; Son. exiii.

where the forms of attestation are no doubt more numerous, and the antitheses more studied; but the extremes of trial, and protestations of constancy, are precisely the same. A more perfect parallel, however, to this beautiful sonnet (of which, hereafter, we shall endeavour to present a translation) is to be found in the song commencing 'O were I on Parnassus Hill,' dedicated to Jean; and as Petrarch was indubitably always in earnest, if there is a greater resemblance between this song and his sonnet, than between the song to 'Clarinda' and the same sonnet, there is a corresponding presumption in favour of Burns's love for Jean, as compared with his devotion to Clarinda: a fact which is incidentally worth noting.

p. 135, c. 1, s. 2. She, the fair sun of all her sex,
Has blest my glorious day;

Compare Campbell—

Without the smile from partial beauty won,
O what were man?—a world without a sun!
Pleasures of Hope: Part II., l. 23.

In volume third of the 'Museum' we find seventeen acknowledged productions of our Author's, and fourteen apparently unacknowledged, besides numerous revisions and fragments. Of the acknowledged pieces, with which alone we have at present to do, the first is at

p. 135. TIBBIE DUNBAR: A little gem of lyric fancy, written expressly for the 'Museum' in 1789, and adapted to a sort of jig, composed by, and named for, one 'Johnny McGill,' at that time a musician in Girvan; where the name, and somewhat of the gift also, among the inhabitants, is still common.

p. 135. BLOOMING NELLY: Which immediately follows, was also one of our Author's special productions; written, it appears, "at the request of Mr. Johnson, in place of a very

indelicate one inserted in 'Ramsay's Tea-Table Miscellany, with the same title and to the same tune.'—*Stenhouse*. The song itself is one of the most magnificent of all Burns's amatory compositions.

p. 135, c. 2, s. 1. When Willie wand'ring thro' the wood,
Who for her favour oft had sued;

seems to be an incomplete sentence. In Stewart of Glasgow's fragmentary edition, 1801, in which the poem, apparently from another manuscript, occurs, the lines are inserted thus—

When Willie, wander'd thro' the wood,
Who for her favour oft had sued;

in which the sense *seems* to be improved by the change of tense, but is in reality destroyed by the punctuation. The truth of the difficulty is, that there should be a slight pause in reading, after 'sued'—expressive of Willie's indecision and bewilderment, before his conflicting feelings will allow him to move. The words which follow, and which constitute, with some exquisite variations, the burden of the succeeding stanzas, are an almost literal translation of Petrarch's burning embarrassment.

Ond' io non pote' mai formar parola,
Ch' altro, che da me stesso fosse intesa;
Così m' ha fatto Amor tremante, e fioco:
E veggi' 'or ben, che caritate accesa
Lega la lingua altrui, gli spirti invola.
Chi può dir com' egli arde, è 'n picciol foco.
Parte Prima: Son. cxxxvii.

Thus could I not a single word bestow,
Which other better than myself would know;
So love had made me shake and quiver with desire!
Too well, at last, I saw how that sweet glow
Can bind the tongue, and check the vital flow:
Who still can say 'he burns,' hath scarcely felt the fire!

p. 136. THE DAY RETURNS: In a letter to Miss Chalmers, in the autumn of 1788, the Poet says with respect to this exquisite composition, "one of the most tolerable things I have done in that way [Song-writing for 'Museum'] is two stanzas I made to an air a musical gentleman of my acquaintance composed for the anniversary of his wedding day, which happens on the 17th November." The gentleman referred to was Captain Riddel, of Glenriddel; of whom and his accomplished wife, he says elsewhere, "At their fireside I have enjoyed more pleasant evenings, than at all the houses of fashionable people in this country put together—and to their kindness and hospitality I am indebted for many of the happiest hours of my life."—*Reliques*. Such hospitality and kindness were a thousand times repaid by this most beautiful of epithalamiums, in which love and constancy together strive for mastery with music. A parallel, in many respects almost beyond expectation, may be found in Petrarch, although nothing but the transports of disappointment returned with the revolving year for him.

Quando mi viene innanzi il tempo e' l loco,
Ov' io perdei me stesso; e' l caro nodo,
Ond' Amor di sua man m' avvinse in modo,
Che l'amar mi fe dolce, e' l panger gioco:
Solfo ed esca son tutto, e' l cor un foco
Da quei soavi spirti, i quai sempr' odo,
Acceso dentro sì, ch' ardendo godo,
E' di ciò vivo, e d' altro mi cal poco.

Parte Prima: Son. cxlii.

When to my fancy time and place appear,
Where I was all undone; and that dear tie
Wherewith Love's magic-hand had bound me so,
That pain was sweet, and grief perplexing joy;
Brimstone and tinder, I am all a-glow:
My heart a furnace, kindled through me quite
By those sweet sparks of speech which still I hear,
So blazes, that in burning I delight;
And now I live with hope, and now I die with fear!

p. 136. THE LAZY MIST: "This song," says Burns, in his annotations on the 'Museum,' "is mine;" a simple enough recognition. It was written in 1789, towards close of that year. Let the reader compare with stanza II., Thomas Moore's Ode on his own Birthday, more particularly the passage beginning—

Vain was the man, and false as vain,
Who said, "were he ordained to run
His long career of life again,
He would do all that he *had* done—" *—*
Ah, 'tis not thus the voice that dwells
In sober birthdays speaks to me;
Far otherwise—of time it tells,
Lavished unwisely, carelessly;
Of counsel mock'd, &c.

and after quiet perusal of the four last lines of said stanza, let him turn sympathetically to Poet's miniature of 1795, and study the expression of it. One other passage yet, among our Author's effusions of this date, besides that to which he himself refers, where the secret of his vital consciousness escapes him, we shall have occasion to quote, as an illustrative commentary on that portrait.

— s. 2, l. 7. Life is not worth having with all it can give—
sometimes printed thus—

This life's not worth having with all it can give—

which may be a variation in some manuscript, but has no authority either in 'Museum' or in 'Thomson's Collection.'

p. 136. OF A' THE AIRS THE WIND CAN BLOW: This, one of the most beautiful and popular of our Author's songs, was composed "out of compliment to Mrs. Burns. N.B.—It was during the honey-moon:" which he spent, or was spending at the moment, in solitary blessedness at the Isle, preparing a house at Ellisland for the reception of his bride. We have specified in our text that this is the original edition, not that there was ever another true edition, but because very strange liberties have been taken with the original, and because additions by other hands have sometimes been published along with it. The unwarrantable variations to which we allude occur in second four lines of stanza I.

— c. 2, s. 1. There's wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And mony a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

Thus the verse stands verbatim in the 'Museum,' Vol. III. No. 235, where it was first seen by the world, under the Author's own editorship. With respect to variations, we think proper in the first place to quote Mr. Chambers:

"The commencement of this stanza is given in *Johnson's Museum*
There wild woods grow, &c.

as implying the nature of the scenery in the west. In Wood's *Songs of Scotland*, the reading is—

Though wild woods grow, and rivers row,
Wi' monie a hill between,
Baith day and night, &c.,

evidently an alteration designed to improve the logic of the verse. It appears that both readings are wrong, for in the original manuscript of Burns's contribution

to Johnson, in possession of Archibald Hastie, Esq., the line is written 'There's wild woods grow,' &c., as in our text. It is an example of a kind of syllogism occasionally employed by Burns, in which the major proposition seems to be merely expletive. [Another example will serve to bring this peculiarity of composition more distinctly before the mind of the reader :

By Auchtertyre grows the aik,
On Yarrow banks the birken shaw :
But Phemie was a bonnier lass
Than braes o' Yarrow ever saw.]—*Vol. II., p. 270.*

Mr. Chambers further quotes a passage from Homer, *Iliad*, I. l. 156, in which idea of intervening woods and waters occurs, but which does not otherwise bear upon the argument of the text at all. On Mr. Chambers's note we have to remark (1) That in Johnson's Museum the words are printed exactly as they stand in the original manuscript, as quoted by himself from the document in the late Mr. Hastie's possession; from which we conclude that Mr. Chambers, with all his anxiety, cannot have consulted the 'Museum' with sufficient care: but in this, as in a former instance ('Strathallan's Lament'), Johnson's fidelity is confirmed on due examination; (2) That Wood's alteration in his *Songs of Scotland* is a presumptuous interference with the text, founded upon ignorance of its true meaning; (3) That Mr. Chambers's own interpretation of the passage in question, as a "kind of syllogism occasionally employed by Burns, in which the major proposition seems to be merely expletive," is incorrect; the verse being no syllogism at all, but a compound disjunctive proposition, natural and perfect, as far as poetry permits, in both parts. Translated into prose, the lines would stand thus :

There are wild woods growing, and there are rivers rowing, and there is mony a hill between; but day and night, [over all these] my fancy's flight is ever wi' my Jean.

Neither logic, nor grammar, nor poetry in the case, could be more perfect. 'There's,' instead of 'There are,' is most properly employed by the Author here, because it is not the woods, the rivers, or the hills—but the growing of the woods, the rolling of the rivers, and the existence of many a hill, which, successively and separately, are nominatives in turn to one verb 'is,' in the singular. Numerous other instances of similar construction, the only legitimate construction in the circumstances, might be quoted from his songs throughout. (4) In conclusion of this argument, we have only further to remark, that the other verse quoted by Mr. Chambers—'By Auchtertyre grows the aik,' &c., does not exactly illustrate the same sort of construction, and implies a much greater ellipsis than the passage before us.

The woods and the rivers between Ellisland and Mauchline (where Jean still was) were those of the Nith, the Lugar, and the Ayr, with their various tributaries; and the principal hill [see Song following] was the ridge and top of Corsincon, which lay nearly half-way between him and the object of his love and admiration. The verses commonly attached to those of Burns were the production, we believe, of Mr. John Hamilton, musicseller, Edinburgh: they are as follows :

O blaw, ye westlin winds, blaw saft
Amang the leafy trees,
Wi' balmy gale, frae hill and dale
Bring hame the laden bees ;
And bring the lassie back to me,
That's aye sae neat and clean ;
Ae smile o' her wad banish care,
Sae charming is my Jean.

What sighs and vows amang the knowes
Hae passed atween us twa !
How fond to meet, how wae to part,
That night she gae'd awa !
The powers aboon can only ken,
To whom the heart is seen,
That nane can be sae dear to me,
As my sweet lovely Jean !

These stanzas, although by no means of inferior merit, could never have been written by Burns in connection with 'Of a' the airts the wind can blaw,' for several reasons:—(1) The style is not uniform, as the reader will observe by the double rhymes which occur in many of the lines: (2) The ideas and sentiments they embody are not real; are not natural in the circumstances, nor agreeable to the facts of case: for example—Jean did not go away, but was left behind; no gale of wind was required to bring her back, that were preposterous; Burns, on the contrary, "sailed up the wind" over woods, hills, and rivers, in his imagination, to Mauchline, and revelled there; there were neither "sighs nor vows amang the knowes" at their parting, but a hasty marriage ceremony, with a good deal of affectionate domestic concern in anticipation of their settlement at Ellisland—all most artistically veiled and forgotten in Burns's own effusion of love and melody: (3) Such an expression as

That's aye sae neat and clean,

in the same sense in which it here stands, would never have been permitted by Burns to take its place for an instant in such an overture as the original. We have been thus minute in such particulars, in order to show that the writer of the supplementary verses, although a man of poetic gifts, was far from being a perfect artist, and did not even fully understand the original; and that it is difficult, if not indeed impossible, so perfect is our Author's own workmanship, for any artificer to imitate or supplement his finer productions, without the certainty of detection.

The song itself, which appears in the 'Museum' under the title of 'I love my Jean,' was written in the spring, or more probably in the summer, of 1788: and the music was composed in part by Mr. William Marshall, butler to his Grace the Duke of Gordon, the foundation of the air being an old Scotch melody, entitled 'The Lowlands of Holland.'

p. 137. O WERE I ON PARNASSUS HILL: Written shortly after the foregoing, and whilst Jean was still detained at Mauchline; is one of the purest and most passionate effusions ever poured forth at the shrine of conjugal love, and was no less real in its devotion, than exquisitely beautiful in its conception and rich in its inspiration. By a letter hitherto unpublished, but already partially quoted from in our Biography, [p. xxxvi] we can easily demonstrate that the passion of the "day and night, a-field and at hame," of his waking soul, during these very autumnal months and hours (August and September, 1788), was identical with the sentiment of this magnificent song; and it is only necessary to remind the reader, that such letters and such songs as these were devoted to Jean, at the very moment when a half-fictitious love-correspondence was going on with Clarinda, to enable him to judge more justly of the man's moral nature, and to sympathise with him more truly, in this extraordinary unparalleled

distraction. It was all the husband here; it was but the poetical devotee elsewhere; and yet both loves, and both confessions have equally captivated the world. Corsincon, as we have already said, lies half-way between Ellisland and Mauchline, in a direct line to Westward—near New Cumnock, and over-looking Mansefield House, present seat of Sir J. S. Menteath, Bart. On this hill—the only conspicuous intervening object in the distance—the Poet looks as if he should pierce it with his eyes, or strike streams of inspiration from its side with a glance, as from another Helicon. It shall be the Parnassus, at least, of Ayrshire and of Scotland, henceforth, from which he vaults beyond Mauchline—beyond the horizon and the sun. In seeking for parallels to this wonderful lyric, we turn first to himself as a matter of course, and then to Petrarch. In Burns we find the very same devotion, and in very similar language, at least in part, bestowed either on the same object of idolatry direct, or on some other dramatically in her room. 'My Jean' [p. 130], and 'I'll ay ca' in by yon town' [p. 182], two of the sweetest brief love snatches imaginable, are illustrations of this; as if her praise and image, in his lips and heart, were inexhaustible and ineffaceable. O all ye who would be poets, or eloquent, or immortal, learn first what it is to love! To these, that exquisite series of protestations in 'My luve is like a red, red rose' [p. 153] may be added. In Petrarch [see Note on 'Clarinda'], there is at least one grand coincidence to concluding stanza—

By night, by day, a-field, at hame, &c.

of the present song. The sonnet in question, there referred to, we now quote in full:—

Pommi, ove 'l sol occide i fiori e l' erba;
O dove vince lui 'l ghiaccio, e la neve;
Pommi, ov' è 'l carro suo temprato, e leve;
Ed ov' è chi cel rende, o chi cel serba:
Pommi' in umil fortuna, od in superba;
Al dolce aere sereno, al fosco e greve:
Pommi a la notte, al di lungo od al breve;
A la matura etate, od a l' acerba:
Pommi' in cielo, od in terra, od in abisso;
In alto poggio, in valle ima, e palustre;
Libero spirto, od a suoi membri affisso:
Pommi con fama oscura, o con illustre:
Sarò qual fui, vivro com' io son visso;
Continuando il mio sospir trillustre.

Parte Prima: Son. cxlii.

and here venture to subjoin as literal a translation as our own command of the language will allow:—

Set me where Sol the flowers and herbs destroys;
Where ice and snow his melting rage defy:
Where no extreme his temperate course annoys;
Where morning opes, or evening shuts the sky:
Set me in lowly cottage or in court;
In sweet serene, or dull and lifeless air:
Set me in night, in day or long or short;
In ripened age, or yet in green despair:
Set me in heaven, on earth, or in the deep;
On lofty crag, low vale, or marshy mere:
With soul at large, or thro' its limbs asleep;
In fame obscure, or as the noon-tide clear:
I'll live as I have lived; be what I seem;
Without cessation of my life's bright dream!

The foundation of Petrarch's sonnet, as many of our readers are no doubt aware, is to be met with in Horace—

Pone me pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æstiva recreatur aura:
Quod latus mundi nebulae, malusque
Jupiter urget.

Pone sub curru ninium propinqui
Solis, in terra domibus negata:
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem.—*Car. I. Ode. xxii.*

So place me where no sun appears,
Or wrapt in clouds or drowned in tears;
Where woods with whirling tempests tost,
Where no relieving Summer's breeze
Does murmur thro' the trees,
But all lies bound and fixt in frost.

Or place me where the scorching sun,
With beams too near, doth burn the Zone;
Yet fearless there I'll gladly rove,
Let frowning or let smiling fate
Or curse, or bless my state,
Sweet smiling Lalagè I'll always love.—*Creech's Trans.*

For Creech's diffuseness and want of pith we must apologise to Horace, when setting him thus in comparison with Petrarch and Burns. In Petrarch's own case, there may be equal honesty of love, but not a tithe of the same ease and boldness, nor half the concentration of rapturous passion, as in Burns; and whatever credit may be due to him for his eloquent elaboration of Horace's idea, with such multiplicity of antitheses, he was but an imitator after all. Burns, on this common theme, after two such world-famous attempts unknown to him, has the glory of being absolutely original; and outvies all previous or possible subsequent competition, by one superb remove from the harvest field and the cottage door to beyond sea and sun, as if it were his own peculiar privilege so to soar; all other lovers, poets, men and gods themselves, being left behind in mute astonishment. Yet how little Burns really knew or cared for such classic or mythological exemplars is apparent from the fact, that he misemploys the term 'Helicon' in the first verse, or overstrains its signification in a most unusual manner; for Helicon was not the well of the Muses at all—which he seems to understand or imply—but the hill from which it sprung; Hippocrenè being the name of the fountain. Before quitting this topic, we may mention that there is a very singular parallel, in words at least, to the celebrated line—

Beyond the sea, beyond the sun—

to be met with in a second-rate Latin poet of the Empire.

Ibis, quo vagus Hercules et Evan,
Ultra sidera, flammeumque solem,
Et Nili caput et nives Atlantis.

Statius: Sylv. iii. 3. 155.

Great conqueror, thou thy course shalt run,
Where wandering Hercules and Bacchus sped;
Beyond the stars, beyond the flaming sun,
And source of Nile, and Atlas' snowy head.

In these lines, however, which describe the supposed unlimited range of Domitian's conquests, the reader will perceive that the *idea* is entirely different from that of our Author. The sun, in Statius, is simply equivalent to the *tropics*, and is supposed by him to be nearer than the sources of the Nile (which the tropics no doubt included), or than Mount Atlas itself was to Rome. He thus not only localises the centre of the universe, but produces a manifest anti-climax. Burns's flight of love, on the contrary, is first beyond the land, and then beyond the sea, and then beyond the sun—wherever that was—in endless aerial progression, of time and space and steadfastness. It is only further necessary to note, that the

peculiar use of the *present* indefinite instead of the *future* tense, as in concluding line—

Till then—and then I love thee!

is a style of his own, which frequently occurs in his lyrics, with the obvious purpose of intensifying and prolonging the present action of love into futurity: and ought, therefore, to be carefully observed in the reproduction of his text.

Till then—and then I'll love thee!

is not what he says, nor what he means; but otherwise. It is a misprint and an error, wherever passion or devotion is by him so implied.

p. 137. On JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO—which follows, the world has long and lovingly commented enough, in every household and at every hearth, to render any additional comment here unnecessary. It requires only to be stated, that the beautiful stanzas now before us were written by Burns to supersede a gross old immoral rhyme, forgotten since; and that all other variations or additions whatsoever, purporting to be by Burns, are spurious, which we do not think it necessary here to reproduce. Some of these are avowed imitations, one by Mr. Reid (of late Brash and Reid), Glasgow, being of superior merit and of great length, published, it is said, with Burns's consent or knowledge. But the original, pure and simple, as it stands in word and letter, is that which the reader has now before him in the text.

p. 137. A MOTHER'S LAMENT: Was "composed to commemorate the much lamented and premature death of James Ferguson, Esq., younger of Craigdarroch"—November 19th, 1789. It contains, in the compass of sixteen lines, no fewer than five distinct and perfect similes, most truly Homeric in their style, and of the greatest tenderness, pathos, and beauty. From Mr. Chambers we learn, and the information is confirmed to us from other quarters, that a duplicate copy of this beautiful 'Lament' was enclosed by the Poet to Mrs. Stewart of Stair, his early patroness, as a tribute of sympathy with her also, on the death of her only son, Alexander Gordon Stewart, Esq., who died but a few days after young Ferguson; both being students of the highest promise—one, Ferguson, at Glasgow; the other, Stewart, at Strasbourg. These two bereavements so close together, in circumstances so similar, and affecting so nearly two of his most valued friends, seem to have inspired a common elegy for both; and it would not have been possible perhaps, even for Burns, to have written twice with equal beauty and pathos, on such a topic at one and the same moment. To share his sorrow, therefore, so eloquently with both sufferers, implied no impropriety. [See also Note on 'Afton Water,' p. 271.]

p. 138. THE BRAES O' BALLOCHMYLE: "Composed on the amiable and excellent family of Whitefoord's leaving Ballochmyle, when Sir John's misfortunes obliged him to sell the estate." It is dated by Chambers as far back as 1785, but appeared for the first time in the 'Museum,' under date 1788. It may possibly have been retouched for publication then by the Author. It must not, however, be confounded with the 'Lass o' Ballochmyle,' written at another date, and on another heroine. This remark is the more necessary, as even so careful a commentator as Stenhouse, without contradiction by

Kirkpatrick Sharpe, affirms that the one "is a counterpart" to the other—implying that they were both inspired by the same object. Miss Whitefoord in the present case, and Miss Alexander in the other—the one leaving, and the other arriving at, Ballochmyle—are the respective heroines. Catrine, seat of the late Professor Dugald Stewart [see Notes on 'Vision,' p. 97], is in the neighbourhood of Ballochmyle.

p. 138. To MARY IN HEAVEN: With respect to the date of this most sublime of all pathetic lyrics, there has been a good deal of conjecture and discussion. Mr. Lockhart, on Mrs. Burns's own reported authority, states as follows—"He spent that day, though labouring under cold, in the usual work of the harvest, and apparently in excellent spirits. But as the twilight deepened, he appeared to grow 'very sad about something,' and at length wandered out into the barn-yard, to which his wife, in her anxiety, followed him, entreating him to observe that frost had set in, and to return to the fire-side. On being again and again requested to do so, he promised compliance; but still remained where he was, striding up and down slowly, and contemplating the sky, which was singularly clear and starry. At length Mrs. Burns found him stretched on a mass of straw, with his eyes fixed on a beautiful planet 'that shone like another moon,' and prevailed on him to come in. He immediately, on entering the house, called for his desk, and wrote exactly as they now stand, with all the ease of one copying from memory, these sublime and poetic verses." This, according to Mrs. Burns's statement, would be in September, 1789. So far as regards the manuscript, the following confirmatory statement from Stenhouse's Notes on the 'Museum' may be here quoted: "Upon comparing the original manuscript of the ode, now lying before me, in Burns's own hand-writing, with the printed copy in the 'Museum,' I do not observe one word, or even a letter changed. He must, therefore, have conceived the whole of it perfectly in his mind before he put it to paper. It would however appear, from Dr. Currie's 'Life of Burns,' that he afterwards altered the title as it stands in 'Museum,' and called it 'An Address to Mary in Heaven.'" About the year, 1789, and the season of the year, the end of autumn, there can be no doubt: but the month of the year, as above indicated from Mrs. Burns's account, has been seriously disputed by Mr. Chambers; who, with an amount of care and anxiety, by astronomical and barometrical calculations, which endears the learned gentleman to our hearts, has determined that the song was composed and written "on Tuesday, the 20th of October, and that this was consequently the date of the death of the heroine:" and that Mrs. Burns's feeling of "frost setting in" was probably a mistake, if not a womanly device to persuade her husband to return to the house. Burns himself, in one of his notes to another song on the same beloved object, 'Highland Mary,' says distinctly that, "at the close of the autumn following [their engagement], she crossed the sea to meet me at Greenock; where she had scarce landed, when she was seized with a malignant fever, which hurried my dear girl to the grave in a few days, before I could even hear of her illness." This was in 1786, and the sad event referred to must have taken place at the *very close* of the autumn, for the period of her sickness after her arrival in

Greenock must also be taken into account. If the harvest operations of that year in Ayrshire could be ascertained, the date might be more definitely fixed. From 'Halloween,' we learn that a very late harvest was sometimes prolonged into November:

The Simmer had been cauld and wat,
And stuff was unco green:
And ay a rantan kirm we gat,
And just on Halloween
It fell that night:

which, according to our present style, would be on the 10th or 12th of that month; and as a matter of fact, we are also aware that the seasons about Mossiel, during these very years, were unpropitious, cold, and late. Making allowance, however, for an average close of harvest operations, the middle or end of October may be assumed as the date of Mary's return to Greenock, and *near the end* of that month certainly of her death. With the above additional confirmation of Mr. Chambers's theory we content ourselves, although we do not presume by any means to determine the very day. It might have been a little later in the month, perhaps, than he supposes, after all; which would harmonise better with everything: and from the brilliancy of the stars, and of the evening star in particular that night, we incline to accept Mrs. Burns's own statement that "frost *had set*," or was setting in. Nor, on the other hand, do we suppose that any "poetical liberty," as Mr. Chambers seems inclined to think, was used by Burns in converting the 'evening' into the 'morning' star. On the contrary, we believe that, in the utter abstraction of the hour, the Poet imagined the night to be much farther gone than it really was, and that to his eyes the last rays of the evening star were already heralding the dawn—a function which it loved, and was hasting to do, as if its latest long-protracted beams, with fading splendour, could possibly 'greet' the advancing 'morn:' or, that it did actually sometimes shine on until it *became* the morning star, and might then be so shining, was perhaps, without reflection at the moment, imagined by Burns. To him it was all real, this rapid motion of time towards the date of grief; and the morning of the day had already by anticipation dawned, that was so burdened with sorrow for his soul. Not on the night, therefore, of this painful anniversary (whatever day it was), but the night *before*, was this sublime address or hymn to the invisible spirit of the departed written. It is worth while to remark farther, that on the 16th of this very October the contest for the 'Whistle' had occurred, at which our Poet was present, and seemed to be much otherwise occupied morally than now, within so short a period; which has been a subject of surprise to some of his biographers—to ourselves, of none. Burns's true life was always within, his passions and his sympathies deeper than the tide on any convivial table: and notwithstanding his frequent and blameable connection with scenes of convivial excess, he had but to look upward or inward to regain his true home in the universe.

For parallels to this transcendent monologue, in ideas or in words, we need look only to the very highest regions of poetry. True poets have never been without worship of the stars, or their counterparts—the eyes of love in women—from the days of Job and David to those of Dante, Petrarch,

Shakspear, and Burns. In Job's case, the thought of it was sin; in David's, it was the purest religion; in Dante's soul, such stellar worship was akin to revelation; in Petrarch's case, it overflowed on a single object, to painful and fatiguing, if beautiful, excess; and in Burns's, it strayed and rose to varied and incessant adoration: but in every case, by such passionate apostrophes, the singers have associated their religion or identified their loves and longings with the constellations. Above all others has this morning or evening 'Star of Love' attracted and inspired them. Dante not only dates relief of his despair from its appearing in spring, the season of love, as with other stars it did, shouting for joy at the creation—

Temp' era dal principio del mattino;
E'l sol montava 'n su con quelle stelle
Ch' eran con lui, quando l'Amor divino
Mosse da prima quelle cose belle;—*Inferno: Can. i:*

but makes it also one of the habitations of the Blessed, and allows himself to be conducted thither by the spirit of his immortal mistress to witness their happiness—a strange and beautiful correspondence with this association of Mary's invisible life by Burns with the same star.

E da costei, ond' io principio piglio,
Pigliavano 'l vocabol della stella,
Che 'l sol vaheggia, or da coppa or da eiglio.
Io non m' accorsi del salire in ella:
Ma d' esserv' entro mi fece assai fede
La donna mia, eh' io vidi far più bella.

Paradiso: Can. viii.

which we may thus freely render—

And from her whom first I sung,
Borrowed they that star's address
Which courts the sun with longing look,
Before him fades, yet after him doth press.
I wist not I so high had swung:
But that my step the orb did brook
My Lady proved, whose beauty took
From that bright sphere new loveliness.

In Petrarch we find numerous exquisite parallels to various individual lines or sentiments—thus closely in second stanza,

Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods thickening green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twined amorous round the raptured scene:
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray: &c.
Ne l' eta sua più bella e più fiorita,
Quand' aver suol Amor in noi più forza
Lasciando in terra la terrena scorza,

in connection with preceding line—

My Mary from my soul was torn!

almost literally—

È L'aura mia vital da me partita,
E viva, e bella, e nuda al ciel salita!

Parte Seconda: Son. x.

In that sweet spring of her's, so rich in bloom;
When love is wont to sway us all with power,
And slacks on earth the bonds of wintry gloom,
And liberates alike both man and flower;

My vital *E'aura* from my soul was torn,
And living, fair, unclothed to heaven was borne!

Scarcely any accidental conjunction of circumstances and ideas, of words almost, at an interval of four hundred and forty years, on such a topic, could be imagined finer. But as the finest parallel to the whole, with figures and allusions

sufficient to constitute resemblance throughout, though within smaller bounds, we may select the following—the only distinction in this case being that the sonnet refers to Laura yet alive.

Quando 'l sol bagna in mar l'aurato carro,
E l'aer nostro, e la mia mente imbruna;
Col cielo, e con le stelle, e con la luna
Un' angosciosa, e dura notte inarro:
Poi, lasso! a tal, che non m' ascolta, narro
Tutte le mie fatiche ad una ad una;
E col mondo, e con mia cieca fortuna,
Con amor, con madonna, e con meco garro.
Il sonno è in bando; e del riposo è nulla:
Ma sospiri, e lamenti in fin à l' alba,
E lagrime, che l' alma à gliocchi in via.
Vinc poi l' aurora, e l' aura fosca inalba;
Me no; ma' l' sol che 'l cor m' arde, et trastulla;
Quel può solo addolcir la doglia mia.

Parte Prima: Son. clxxvi.

which we endeavour thus to interpret as faithfully as we may:

When Sol in sea his golden car doth steep,
And dims our air and darkens all my soul,
With sky and moon and stars, in grief that roll,
A night of torment and of toil I keep!
Alas to her, who hears me not, I weep
All my distresses over one by one;
And with the world, and my dark lot undone,
With Love, with Laura, and myself I threep!
Sleep is forbid, repose itself is gone;
But sighs and groans till morning light appears,
And sad relief of soul, a flood of tears!
Then comes the dawn, and brightens all the gloom;
To me comes not: that sun alone returns,
Which mocks my soul with light, or fiercely burns;
Which yet alone hath power to mitigate my doom!

No indignity to either were it to say, that such complaint by the one was inimitable till the other, at the distance of centuries, was born. The air to which this sublime address may be sung, and to which it was expressly adapted by Burns's particular request, is a plaintive melody entitled 'Death of Captain Cook.' [See further details in Notes to 'Highland Lassie, O,' and 'Ye banks and braes and streams,' &c.]

p. 139. THE BATTLE OF SHERIFF-MUIR: Is a sort of parody by our Author, on an original poem of much greater length and considerable merit on the subject, by the late Rev. Mr. Barclay, of the Berean Church, Edinburgh, a man of originality and genius; besides which, there were other songs of similar spirit composed on the same topic, which seems to have excited both interest and ridicule among the people. The battle was fought on a sloping moorland-ridge of the Ochils, to the north-east of Dunblane, on the 13th of November, 1715; between John, Duke of Argyll, for the House of Hanover, and the Earl of Mar, for the Chevalier de St. George, the first Pretender. Both sides claimed the victory. Rob Roy was present with some followers, but did not interfere. The poem, as it stands in our text, was written by Burns for the 'Museum,' and appeared in the third volume of that work. Dr. Currie found among the Poet's papers another version with some alterations, which he conjectured to have been written in 1788, and, apparently without consulting the 'Museum,' published it as the true edition. It will be found hereafter among Posthumous Works of our Author.

p. 140. At this point in the 'Museum,' one of the older songs, 'The Gloomy Night,' appears [see Notes to Kilmarnock and Edinburgh Editions, p. 108]; and then FOR A' THAT

AND A' THAT: taken as it would appear, with the addition of a few lines, from the 'Jolly Beggars,' at a time when the Author had forgotten all else about that wonderful composition, and even doubted its existence: from which fact we may infer that the celebrated cantata itself had been originally made up from fragments in the Poet's desk, and the song now before us was a surviving copy of one of these, the others having been destroyed after they were once embodied in the piece. [Compare 'Jolly Beggars' in Posthumous Works.]

p. 140. WILLIE BREWED A PECK O' MAUT: The circumstances by which this wonderful convivial song, the most perfect of its kind ever written, was suggested, are thus briefly narrated by the Poet himself: "This air is Master-ton's; the song is mine. The occasion of it was this: Mr. William Nicol, of the High School, Edinburgh, during the autumn vacation, being at Moffat, honest Allan [Masterton]—who was at that time on a visit to Dalswinton—and I went to pay Nicol a visit. We had such a joyous meeting, that Masterton and I agreed, each in our own way, that we should celebrate the business." Currie makes the scene at a place called Laggan—a moorland farm, subsequently acquired as a property by Nicol, where he by-and-by went to reside—and Cunningham, in his usual style, adds some unauthorised story about Burns carrying his "celebrated punch-bowl" with him! All which Mr. Chambers has demonstrated to be incorrect. The evening was doubtless spent, as the Poet himself declares, at Moffat, and seems to have been about the middle or end of September, 1789, that is, a month or three weeks before the contest for the Whistle; although the song itself, possibly, was not written till a few days after the event to which it refers—say, the beginning of October. On the much disputed moral tendency of this famous lyric we have only further to remark, in addition to what has already been said in our Biography on the subject, that whereas in the celebrated contest for the Whistle, thus closely associated with it, the very terms of the engagement required all the competitors to be helplessly drunk but one, in the case now before us, the very opposite of this was the implied jocular condition—the *first* who fell being victor. This, of course, might imply harder drinking on his part; but we have no reason whatever to believe, or even to suppose, that any one of the three was that night in such a condition. Indeed, from all that appears, the reverse seems to have been the case, for both the music and the song were agreed upon at the conclusion of the revel.

On the celebrated line,

Wha first beside his chair shall fa',

Mr. Chambers has the following note—"Evidently a mistake," and prints it accordingly in his own edition, as Cunningham also does—

Wha last beside his chair shall fa', &c.

Mr. Chambers admits that the line stands in 'Johnson's Museum' as we have printed it; but indirectly supports his own version by introducing immediately afterwards a letter from Burns to Captain Riddel, in which part of the song already written (and which seems already to have been known to Riddel) is quoted, and wherein the word in question has been emphasised thus—

Wha *last* beside his chair shall fa', &c.

But such quotation referred to the contest for the Whistle, that very day impending; and unless the original word had been so *changed*, the quotation would have been entirely inapplicable. That very change, therefore, in reference to another subject in some respects similar, but in *that* respect different, is sufficient proof what the original word must have been. 'Johnson's Museum' in this, as in many other respects, is the best and truest, as well as only legitimate authority.

We have only to add, that the interpretation of stanza III.,

It is the moon—I ken her horn, &c.,

to the effect, that it was the *sun* mistaken for the moon by the three bewildered inebriates! founded, we presume, on Cunningham's story that "the sun rose on their carousal," is a pitiable stupidity. Nicol died in 1797; Masterton in or about 1800. They were both teachers, and men of great ability.

p. 141. THE BLUE-EYED LASSIE: The heroine of this beautiful lyric, as we learn partly from Stenhouse, partly from Motherwell, was Miss Jean Jeffrey, daughter of the minister of Lochmaben. The lady, subsequently Mrs. Renwick, after residing some time in Liverpool, ultimately settled with her husband in New York. Riddel of Glenriddel composed the air. [For further interesting particulars concerning this lady, see Appendix—'Heroines of Burns.'] The mysterious connection between love and the light of the eyes has been a theme with poets everywhere, and with others than mere poets, as witness the confessions of Swedenborg—"He can never doubt the mystery of revelation who hath looked into a woman's eyes." "I have made a covenant with mine eyes," saith Job, "wherefore should I look upon a maid?" But of poets, of lyric poets at least, none have been devouter students at that shrine than Burns and Petrarch. With Petrarch the study amounted to desperate and disastrous fascination; of which almost every sonnet contains abundant, painful, and beautiful proof. We can afford to quote but two illustrations, as directly in point, from him—

I begli occhi; ond 'io fui percosso in guisa,
Ch'ì medesmi porrian saldar la piaga; &c.
Parte Prima, Son. iv.

Those lovely eyes, from which I had my wound,
Themselves alone can heal the deadly stound:

and again, with less, however, of bitterness in the complaint:—

Io temo sì de begli occhi l'assalto,
Ne' quali amore, e la mia morte alberga;
Ch' i fuggo lor, come fanciul la verga,
Parte Prima: Son. xxxi.

I dread the assault of those sweet eyes
Where love and death together lurk,
As much as the poor child that flies
The rod that punishes his naughty work.

The ladies, it is said, in both cases, retained this captivating beauty of expression to the end.

p. 141. THE BANKS OF NITH: A homesick song supposed to be dated from London; with two slight variations in the text. The edition we prefer is in the 'Museum,' as our readers are aware; the second stanza commences elsewhere thus:—

How lovely, Nith, thy fruitful vales,
Where spreading hawthorns gaily bloom!
How sweetly wind thy sloping dales,
Where lambskins wanton through the broom!

In present edition, 'bounding hawthorns' is a phrase which indicates the luxuriant hedgerows of thorn, which bound the fruitful vales; and is therefore more strictly appropriate in the circumstances, as characteristic of the scene described.

p. 141. TAM GLEN: Of which we present here a faithful edition, is one of the finest of our Author's humorous effusions—finest, in the sense of most delicate and true; in which feminine love and logic are so admirably—never were they more admirably—combined, and the moral elevated for ever above the base commercial idea of matrimony. The reader may compare 'Country Lassie' [p. 147], and at his leisure, with reference to the peculiar sentiment of both, consider the fine parallel of "*La Mère aveugle*," of Béranger.

— c. 2, s. 3. There's Lowrie the laird o' Dumeller,
"Gude day to you, brute!" he comes ben:

printed faithfully from 'Museum,' although there are variations, on what authority we know not, elsewhere. Whether 'brute!' in the salutation is to be included among the very words of the laird, or is an epithet only added by the imagination of the lady, as a *sotto voce* accompaniment of her own, most characteristic of the boorish suitor, and sometimes perhaps employed by him, we do not presume to determine: but it stands within the inverted commas of quotation, as his own address, in the original; and we prefer, by all means, to let it so stand.

p. 142. CRAIGIE-BURN WOOD: First sketch of this beautiful song; for finished edition, see 'Thomson's Collection.' It was intended to represent the unavailing passion of the Poet's particular friend, Mr. Gillespie, for Miss Lorimer of Kingshall, afterwards Mrs. Whelpdale, one of the most beautiful and unfortunate of all his heroines. Craigie-burn Wood, where the lady was born, was a scene of much sylvan beauty in the neighbourhood of Moffat, and a favourite resort of the Poet's. [See Appendix—'Heroines of Burns:' 'Chloris.'] In the 'Museum' a single chorus is introduced, which belongs to an old, and apparently second-rate ballad: but according to Mr. Clarke, "there is no need to mention the chorus. The man that would attempt to sing a chorus to this beautiful air, should have his throat cut to prevent him doing it again." According to Mr. Chambers, the lady at the date of this song, presumably summer of 1792, was only sixteen years of age.

p. 142. MY TOCHER'S THE JEWEL: Another admirable piece of humorous feminine banter. "This song," says the Author in a note, "is to be sung to the air called 'Lord Elcho's Favourite';" but do not put the name '*Lord Elcho's Favourite*' above it: let it just pass for the tune of the song, and a beautiful tune it is"—a pardonable enough desire on his part, to associate the words and the air together in all time coming.

p. 143. GUIDWIFE COUNT THE LAWIN: Both words and air of this song were furnished by Burns. The chorus is part of an older song, from which the poet himself, as a specimen, quotes the following—

Every day my wife tells me
That ale and brandy will ruin me:
But if gude liquor will be my dead,
This shall be written on my head—
O guidewife, count the lawin, &c.

The present is not to be confounded with another song of

similar character, beginning 'Landlady, count the lawin' [p. 188]. At this point in progress of the 'Museum' the celebrated song of 'The Whistle' was introduced at full length, with music; said to have been composed by Riddel of Glenriddel, one of the competitors, and a man of great musical taste and abilities.

p. 143. WHAT CAN A YOUNG LASSIE? Another piece of womanly perplexity, and safe policy, perhaps, on which further comment is unnecessary. It was written in 1790, and had the following note by the Author attached—"Set the tune to these words. Dr. B[lacklock]'s set of the tune is bad; I here enclose a better. You may put Dr. B.'s song after these verses, or you may leave it out, as you please. It has some merit, but it is miserably long." The worthy Doctor's song was accordingly omitted. The reader will observe with what authority Burns here speaks as practical editor of the 'Museum;' and as this occurs in the fourth volume of that work, we can have little hesitation about its claims to be received as a standard edition of his writings, so far as they appear in its pages. English title of the song is 'What shall a young woman do with an old man?'—1703.

p. 144. SENSIBILITY HOW CHARMING: "This song," it is expressly stated, was written by Burns for the 'Museum' in 1790: and, as it there stands, has unquestionable reference to the trials and sufferings of Mrs. M'Lehose—the unfortunate 'Clarinda.' But at a later date we find it slightly altered in the second line—

Thou, my friend, canst truly tell;

dedicated 'To my dear and much honoured friend, Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop:' to whom, in her then circumstances, it might be equally applicable; but the transference affords one among several other proofs to the same effect, that the Poet did occasionally renew and re-dedicate some of his best effusions, when the feelings of the hour required it. As dedicated to Mrs. Dunlop, the song appeared afterwards in 'Thomson's Collection.'

p. 144. IT IS NA, JEAN, THY BONIE FACE: Acknowledged by Burns to have been a song remodelled by him from the English of an older edition: yet we can hardly help believing that it had, in his own mind, a retrospective reference to the days of his alienation from Jean at Mauchline, and the sad circumstances of that painful separation.

— c. 2, s. 2. And as wi' thee I'd wish to live,
For thee I'd bear to die:

may be traced, most probably through the English edition, as far back as Horace; where, however, it occurs in the mouth not of a man, but of a woman:

Tecum vivere amem, tecum obeam libens.—*Car.* III., ix.

Still with thyself I'd wish to live;
With thee I'd gladly die.

p. 144. WHA IS THAT AT MY BOWER DOOR? A piece of highly characteristic repartee, suggested, according to Gilbert Burns, by the 'Auld Man's Address to the Widow' in 'Ramsay's Tea-Table Miscellany;' but which his brother first heard sung by Jean Wilson, an old widow woman resident in Tarbolton in those early days, and remarkable for her singing of old Scotch songs with energy and effect. If so, the idea

of the song must have been long in the Author's mind; but it was expressly written, or finished and adapted, for the 'Museum,' somewhere about 1790.

p. 145. THE BONIE WEE THING: One of our Author's most exquisite compliments to "his little idol, the charming, lovely Davies."

p. 145. AE FOND KISS: A devotional, passionate outburst of a very different kind, and differing also most distinctly from the quiet transports of his apostrophes to Jean, and the deep melodious sorrow of his hymns to Mary. Clarinda stirred always some fountain of turbulence and madness in his soul, from which the waters of love flowed, mingled with rage or anguish! About the strange dramatic, almost tragic, beauty of these lines, there is no occasion for a word by us. Lord Byron, by his deliberate selection of a motto from them for his 'Bride of Abydos,' has settled their place in the canon of lyrics; and Scott declares that the same lines—

Had we never loved sae kindly
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted;

"contain the essence of a thousand love tales." Other competent critics, male and female, say the same. The song, although prepared for the 'Museum,' was no doubt in reality a farewell to Clarinda; although Burns, writing to Clarinda (December 27, 1794) in prospect of her departure to the West Indies, and enclosing this very song among others, finished and unfinished, expressly dedicated to her and containing her name, does not any further declare his sentiments. It needed not. Compare 'O May, thy morn' [p. 158], with reference to same separation.

For the concentrated passion of this song, we seek no exact parallel; although similar devotion, to an unattainable object, is everywhere to be met with in Petrarch. The only near approach, though with more studied formality of iteration, appears in a very exquisite sonnet of his, beginning

O passi sparsi; o pensier vaghi, e pronte;
O tenace memoria; o fero ardore;
O possente desirè; o debil core;
O occhi miei; occhi non già, ma fonti; &c.,
Parte Prima: Son. exxviii.

than which, we suspect, nothing much finer could have been written by any one but Burns. As to the peculiar moral sentiments of secret self-reproach, with which this passion in both cases was equally attended, the following singular coincidence must also be noted—

— c. 1, s. 2. I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy:
But to see her, was to love her;
Love but her, and love for ever.

as if it had been literally embodied by way of confession from Petrarch—

I' mi soglio accusare; ed or mi scuso;
Anzi mi pregio, e tengo assai piu caro
De l' honesta prigion, del dolce amaro
Colpo, ch' io portai già molt' anni chiuso.

Parte Seconda: Son. xxviii.

Long have I blamed, I'll blame myself no more;
But prize me ever dearer for my woe,
At honour's price, and that sweet bitter blow
Which year on year my patient soul hath bore.

Not unimportant surely is it, that avowals so much alike

should have come spontaneously from men themselves so much alike, and so similarly situated, on the same subject. We cannot, therefore, yet take farewell of Clarinda, whose influence on our Author's moral nature, in pain and passion, has so manifestly asserted and inwrought itself in much of his finest workmanship.

Here is interposed in 'Museum' another of the old songs, 'Now Westlin Winds, and Slaught'ring Guns.'

On the two which immediately follow,

p. 145. I HAE A WIFE O' MY AIN: Written shortly after his own marriage, although commencing with two lines of an old song; and,

p. 146. O FOR ANE-AND-TWENTY, TAM! Founded on a matter of fact within the Poet's knowledge, scarcely any commentary is required, after what has already been said on similar subjects. But in connection with the sweet little idyl, so rich in natural grace, which succeeds—

p. 146. BESS AND HER SPINNING-WHEEL: We must be allowed once more to insist here on our Author's absolute sympathy with, and appreciation of, such scenes of moral tranquillity, purity, and peace. It reminds us, but with an enlarged and more genial catholic sense, of Cowper's much-admired picture of a similar scene and character, although manifestly independent of his suggestion—

Yon cottager who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little store;
Content, tho' mean; and cheerful, if not gay:
Shuffling her threads about the live-long day,
Just earns a scanty pittance; and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light:

Just knows and knows no more, her Bible true—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew:
And in that charter reads, with sparkling eyes,
Her title to a treasure in the skies!

Oh, happy peasant! Oh, unhappy bard! &c.—*Truth:*

It is with satisfaction also we here remind our readers, that Cowper himself, to whom the Edinburgh Edition of Burns's Poems had been presented in 1787, was an enthusiastic admirer of our Author's; placing him, notwithstanding the 'barbarism' of his northern language, second only to Shakspeare and Prior of all poets who had appeared in the lower ranks of the people. The letters referring to this subject we shall quote at large, hereafter. Although Cowper survived Burns for a few years, it is by no means at all likely that a volume of the 'Scots Musical Museum' ever reached his hands. Otherwise, with so sweet a picture as 'Bess and her spinning-wheel' before him, he might have changed his ideas even about the 'barbarism' of the Scottish language, without losing any admiration for the genius or the moral sentiment of his illustrious contemporary.

p. 146. NITHSDALE'S WELCOME HAME: With its broad orthography, in honour of Lady Winifred Maxwell, representative of the forfeited Earl of Nithsdale, on her return to Scotland, and rebuilding of the hereditary seat of the family, Teregles House, Kirkcudbright, is an affectionate tribute of respect for an ancient family in whose fortunes the Poet had a natural sympathetic interest. The concluding stanza—

The weary night o' care and grief
May hae a joyfu' morrow;
So dawning day has brought relief,
Fareweel our night o' sorrow!

reminds us very distinctly of the same figure elsewhere employed, on a similar but much higher occasion—The Dedication of the House of David:—

"For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.—*Psalms*, xxx:

nor does the present application of the words seem to us a whit more inappropriate than it would have done in the mouth of the devoutest chaplain in a patron's household; with this difference in favour of the Poet, that it was spontaneous and unbeneficed. It may be proper here to inform the English reader, that the word 'so,' at beginning of third line in above stanza, has the signification of 'since.'

p. 147. COUNTRY LASSIE: [See Note on 'Tam Glen,' &c.]

p. 147. FAIR ELIZA: On this exquisite expostulation, the Author himself, in writing to Johnson in reference to the air and original title, 'Fair Rabina,' says, "So much for your Rabina. How do you like the verses? I assure you I have tasked my muse to the top of her performing. However, the song will not sing to your tune; but there is a Perthshire tune in M'Donald's Collection of Highland Airs, which is much admired in this country. I intend the verses to be sung to that air." In consequence of the above considerations, the title was changed to 'Fair Eliza;' but the lady herself was a *bona fide* heroine, to whom Mr. Hunter [of Barjarg, we presume], a friend of the Poet's, was much attached. This gentleman, it appears, went subsequently to Jamaica, where he, shortly after his arrival, died.—*Stenhouse*. The verses themselves suggest another, in addition to the numerous parallels already quoted from Petrarch, to which we may at least refer—

Dolei ire, dolei sdegni, e dolei paci,
Dolce mal, dolce affanno, e dolce peso; &c.

Parte Prima: Son. clxxii.

whilst the concluding lines, if not suggested by, remind us at least not remotely of

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Midsummer Night's Dream, V., 1.

although they are spoken undoubtedly by Burns, dramatically, of his own very self.

p. 148. THE POSIE: Is a genuine love-compliment to Jean Armour; designed, if we mistake not, as a peace-offering after some lover's-feud; although perhaps revised and adapted for the 'Museum' afterwards, "the music having been taken down from Mrs. Burns's own voice." [See Thomson Correspondence.] Although truly enough Scottish in both language and style, it reminds one a little here and there of Shenstone:

— c. 2, s. 5. The hawthorn I will pu' wi' its locks o' siller gray,
Where, like an aged man, it stands at break o' day;
But the songster's nest within the bush I winna tak away—
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

I have found out a gift for my fair;
I have found where the wood-pigeons breed:
But let me the plunder forbear;
She will say 'twas a barbarous deed.

Shenstone: Pastoral Ballad: Part II., v.

p. 149. THE BANKS O' DOON: This most beautiful and popular pathetic song, one of the most popular of our Author's writings not specially connected with himself or the people, commemorates the sad issue of the lady's love, whose beauty and innocence, and happier prospects had already been cele-

brated in 'Young Peggy' [p. 129]. The details connected with this melancholy affair, as well as the names of the distinguished parties immediately concerned, were sufficiently well known at the time, and may be found in the records of the Court of Session, where a plea, originating in the event, was at last decided against the lady—but with some compensation to her child. Burns, who at first judged severely in the matter, came at last, as we see, to sympathise affectionately; and has thrown such a bloom of sorrow and pathos over the painful facts, that it would be a sort of sacrilege here to unveil them. The present, which is the first authorised, and now universally accepted edition of the song, was not, however, the first draft of the poem; which, in another and simpler form, was originally communicated to Mr. Balantyne, of Ayr, supposed of date 1787; but was confined to private circulation. [See Posthumous Works.] To the music of the song, which is extremely beautiful and plaintive, and characteristically Scotch, there is a curious history attached, which will be found narrated by Burns himself, in one of his letters to Thomson, November, 1794; and which is confirmed, as to the principle it involves of adhering to the black keys of the harpsichord or piano, by Mr. Ritson in his Essay on Scottish Song, p. 102; who elaborately examines and supports the theory in question.

p. 149. *SIC A WIFE AS WILLIE HAD*: Written expressly for the 'Museum;' and,

p. 149. *THE CARL OF KELLYBURN BRAES*: Being the revision of an older and ruder song, with sufficient pith and freedom certainly, and no unnecessary squeamishness on our Author's own part, but with infinite humour, requires scarcely any comment. According to Cunningham, Mrs. Burns, in turning over her husband's papers, and in reference to the 'Carl,' said "Robert gae this ane an unco brushing up." Brushing up, no doubt, it required: but the exuberant mirth, with which our Author invariably handles the topic of unpleasant matrimonial relationship, is perhaps the best proof we can have of his own personal happiness and satisfaction in the married state.

p. 150. *SONG OF DEATH*: With reference to this magnificent martial hymn, in which a union of pathos with courage, and of self-devotion with ambition, is so rarely and wonderfully accomplished as to have extorted admiration from every critic, we content ourselves with quoting the Author's own words. In a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, dated Ellisland, 17th December, 1791, he says—"I have just finished the following song, which to a lady the descendant of Wallace, and many heroes of his truly illustrious line, and herself the mother of several soldiers, needs neither preface nor apology:

"*Scene*—A field of battle—Time of the day, evening—the wounded and dying of the victorious army are supposed to join in the following 'Song of Death,'" &c.

"The circumstance that gave rise to the foregoing verses was—looking over, with a musical friend, M'Donald's Collection of Highland Airs, I was struck with one, an Isle of Skye tune, entitled 'Oran an Aoig,' or 'The Song of Death,' to the measure of which I have adapted my stanzas." We have only to observe further, that in writing to Mrs. Dunlop the verses appear to have been set down separately, as they are most frequently also printed; in the 'Museum' they are

arranged in stanzas of two, as the air itself requires; and the 'SCENE,' which is slightly theatrical, is entirely omitted—which, having been done by the Author, or by his authority, has been adhered to by us.

p. 151. *AFTON WATER*: The beautiful scene to which this song undoubtedly refers, we have had the gratification of visiting under a most agreeable escort, and receiving on the spot many interesting details of history associated with it from a most accomplished guide. The vale of Afton, which stretches from the broader valley of the Nith, southward, among lofty but picturesque and verdant hills, at a remoter date almost covered with wood, is in the neighbourhood of New Cumnock, and not far distant from Mansefield House, the residence of Sir James S. Menteth; to whom, and to his accomplished lady, for their courteous and valuable assistance, in exploring many interesting scenes in that and other localities, our most respectful acknowledgments are due. Afton Lodge, with its surrounding estate—the chief, or rather the only mansion in this vale or glen, was the patrimonial inheritance of Mrs. Stewart, of Stair, the Poet's earliest patron; to whom he presented not only this, but many other pieces in manuscript, which have since proved, in a certain sense, of priceless value to her representatives; and the common persuasion, since Dr. Currie's day, has been, that it was in honour of Mrs. Stewart herself the song was written. Gilbert Burns, however, in communicating to Thomson certain memoranda of the subjects of his brother's songs, thus annotates on 'Afton Water,' "the Poet's Highland Mary." Mr. Chambers, on this evidence, concludes that "Dr. Currie had undoubtedly been misinformed;" and further supports Gilbert's statement by quoting an assertion of Mrs. Dunlop's daughter, "who affirms that she remembers hearing Burns say it was written upon the Coilsfield dairy-maid." As between these conflicting claims we have simply to observe, (1) That although there is an Afton Lodge, there is no Glen Afton in the neighbourhood of Coilsfield, nor any glen or stream at all to which the description in this song can possibly apply; (2) That there is a Glen Afton, or Vale of Afton as above described, and a Water of Afton, in Nithsdale, to which it does apply most accurately; of which, indeed, it is a manifest poetical picture, true to nature both in outline and in detail; (3) That this was not only the personal property, but occasional residence of the lady in question; and (4) That Burns himself, during his own residence in the district, had frequent opportunities, if not immediate cause, to visit and explore it, and must have been familiar with all its traditions—one of which at least, Queen Mary's halt there on her flight to England—would have a deep poetical interest for him. But how he should have transferred a song from Mary Campbell, with alterations, to Mrs. Stewart of Stair and Glen Afton, remains still to be accounted for; which may be done, however, as we believe, on the simplest principle imaginable. On looking a second time, at the distance then of some years, on the original manuscript (if such were really in existence), his own moral instinct must have informed Burns at once that it wanted all the characteristic elements—passion, pathos, and rapture—of a true tribute to Mary Campbell; with whose name, therefore, in the painful circumstances of her case, he could no longer allow, if he ever

intended it to be associated. But with a very slight revision and adaptation to scenery in the neighbourhood of Mrs. Stewart's occasional residence, it might be most appropriate as a poetical compliment to her; and accordingly might be so transferred, without any moral inconsistency on his part at all. To which considerations the reader, if he chooses, may add the by-no-means improbable conjecture, that the Poet had also in view the interesting tradition of Queen Mary's flight from the battle of Langside through this very glen, and her brief repose in fear and sorrow, for portion of a night, by the margin of its murmuring waters. The name of Mary at least, in this view, is as applicable to the Queen as to either of the others, and gives a new significance to what at best is but a doubtful reference. That the song could ever permanently remain dedicated to Mary Campbell, we do not, from its mere pastoral Shenstonian character, believe; and that the Poet did occasionally so transfer effusions of his from one individual to another, we already know to have been the case, from his correspondence with this very lady. [See Note on 'A Mother's Lament,' p. 265.] Dr. Currie, therefore, we cannot help concluding, in this instance at least, has the most feasible version of the story.

p. 151. BONIE BELL: Both words and air, in this as in many other cases, were supplied by Burns. From whom the music in this instance—whether Kirsty Flint or some other local authority—was obtained by him, we know not. Compare 'Let not woman e'er complain' [p. 206].

p. 152. THE GALLANT WEAVER: This song, in 'Thomson's Collection,' is dedicated to the 'Gallant Sailor;' which may seem to sound a little more poetical: but those who know the locality to which it refers—Paisley, to wit—will require no argument to assure them that some gallant master of the shuttle—in those days, a man of as much importance as any sailor—was the original hero.

— c. 1, s. 2. While corn grows green in simmer showers,
I love my gallant weaver:

This instance of what we designate the present-future, denoting intensity and continuance of affection, is a form of expression peculiar to Burns. [See Note on song 'O Were I on Parnassus Hill:' p. 265.]

p. 152. THE DEUKS DANG O'ER MY DADDIE: Written by Burns, to supersede an old indecent ditty; of which a few words still remain, notwithstanding his revision—for the intrusion of which, in the circumstances, he is therefore scarcely to be held responsible.

p. 152. SHE'S FAIR AND FAUSE: The air to which this beautiful oburgatory chant was written, was another of those fine old melodies which our Poet here and there picked up, as he journeyed in his rounds about the country. No complaint, in which music, love, and vexation were to be combined, was ever more successfully indited: yet strange as it may seem, of all places in the world, we find a very exact parallel to it in Petrarch—almost word for word with concluding stanza:

Femina è cosa mobil per natura:
Ond' io so ben, ch' un' amoroso stato
In cor di donna picciol tempo dura!—*Parte Prima: Son. cl.*

Woman by nature is a fickle thing!
As I well know—love's constant throe
Not long a woman's heart will wring!

p. 152, c. 2, s. 2. O woman, lovely woman fair!

We have heard a proposal to print this line otherwise—thus:

O woman lovely, woman fair!

for which, however, there is no authority in the text; nor would any real poetical advantage be gained by the alteration. The line, as we have it, is undoubtedly as the Author intended it; and the double epithets of 'lovely' and 'fair,' together in a breath, are entirely in conformity with himself, and with the passage where they occur.

p. 153. THE DEIL'S AWA WI' TH' EXCISEMAN: Is a piece of humour most expressive of national feeling on the subject of inland revenue, and the by-no-means doubtful estimation in which its collectors were held. According to Stenhouse—"The original is written on a slip of excise paper, ruled on the back with red lines. It is said that at a meeting of his brother excisemen in Dumfries, our Poet, on being called on for a song, handed these verses extempore to the president upon the back of a letter." According to Lockhart—they were composed on the shore of the Solway, in a fit of impatience at the delay which had occurred, by the slowness of his friend Lewars, in procuring assistance to board an armed smuggling ship; of which he (Burns) in the meantime, with a very inadequate force, had been left in observation. The accounts are quite reconcilable, and most likely are both quite true; except only that, in copying out the verses on the back of a letter, the work was not entirely extemporaneous—although gentlemen in the company might suppose so. [See Appendix:—Burns as an Exciseman.]

We reach at this point, in review of Acknowledged Songs, the fifth volume of 'Museum'—the first song in which is at

p. 153. THE LOVELY LASS O' INVERNESS: A piece of exquisite pathos. The two first lines are old—and seem to have served as a key-note to our Author; the rest is his own, and in his finest style of brief dramatic imagery.

p. 153. A RED, RED ROSE: The foundation of this beautiful song was an old street-ballad, with much simplicity and tenderness; but the style in which Burns has treated it renders it an entirely new thing. The air itself also, to which it is written, had two 'sets' or forms—an old and new—to which our Author adapted his words by adding or subtracting, where required, a single syllable.

— c. 2, s. 3. Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
O I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

Life and love, according to this exquisite rendering of the doctrine of immortality, shall outlast both sea and land.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"—2 Peter, iii. 10, 11.

Thus Petrarch also, in the same vein of passionate devotion, but with the sense of hopeless pain superadded, exclaims—

Senz' acqua il mare, e senza stelle il cielo
Fia innanzi, ch' io non sempre tema e brami
La sua bell' ombra; e ch' io non odi ed ami,
L'a ta piaga amorosa che mal celo.

Esser può in prima ogn' impossibil cosa,
 Ch' altri che morte od ella sanì 'l colpo,
 Ch' Amor co' suoi begli occhi al cor m' impresse.
Parte Prima, Son. clxii.

Sooner the sea shall without water bide,
 Sooner the sky all starless shall appear;
 Than I shall cease to wish for and yet fear
 Her lovely shade; than I shall cease to hear
 And cherish Love's deep wound I scarce can hide.

Beyond all things impossible it is,
 That ought but Death or She that wound can heal,
 Which Love through her sweet eyes hath made my bosom feel.

'The Lament of Mary, Queen of Scots,' which we have already seen and commented on, is here introduced in 'Museum,' to an ancient air of the same name communicated by Burns.

p. 154. A LASSIE ALL ALONE: Is the original edition of what was subsequently altered and enlarged under another title. It will be found as 'A Vision' among our Author's Posthumous Works—where we prefer to place it, rather than introduce it a second time as a song; although it does so appear, but not with a very good arrangement, as it seems to us, in 'Thomson's Collection.' There are few songs by Burns on this dangerous topic of liberty, so offensive at the time, in which finer imagery, more pathos and vehemence are combined. Let the reader compare with this the well-known beautiful verses by Thomas Moore—

The harp that once through Tara's Halls
 The soul of music shed, &c.,

on the same subject of repressed national aspirations, at a later date, under the same political influences, and he will immediately become sensible with what an incarnation of passion, as well as of sympathy, he has here to do.

— s. 1. As I stood by yon roofless tower, &c.

The ruins of Lincluden Abbey, a favourite haunt of the Poet's, are intended here; from which much of the landscape seawards, beyond Dumfries, would be visible; and to this extended view the lines in

— s. 5. Now looking over firth and fauld,
 Her horn the pale-faced Cynthia rear'd,

are expressly dedicated. Our readers, however, must beware of imagining that 'firth' applies to the Solway. 'Firth and fauld' mean respectively—the open field or forest, and the enclosed field or fold. [See Glossary.] The expression sometimes varies thus—

Over firth and fell:

but the identical phrase, employed by our Author here, may be found in Gavin Douglas's description of Winter, in his translation of the *Æneid*—in which Burns, who seems to have been in possession of the book at this date, may have seen it:

Quhen frostis dois overflete baith firth and fauld.
Prologue, B. vii.

We think it the more necessary to observe this coincidence now, for in the same Prologue are certain most admirable descriptive touches, such as—

Ryveris ran rede on spate with wattir broun,
 And burnis harlis all thare bankis down, &c.

which may be compared with corresponding description in 'Brigs of Ay' [p. 20]. More closely still the following—

Small birdis flockand thro' ilk ronny's thrang, [bramble bushes]
 In chirmyng and with cheping changit thare sang,
 Sekand hidlis and hirnys thame to hyde, [hiding places and corners]
 Fra fearfull thuddis of the tempestuous tyde: &c.

And

The cilly schepe, and thare little hird-gromes,
 Lurkis under lye of bankis, woddis, and bromes; &c.

correspond, even in detail, with the very finest passages in 'A Winter Night' [p. 47]. But it is certain that Gavin Douglas's work was not at that date in Burns's possession; and, from its mere commercial value, was far beyond the reach of his neighbours. There is to be found, however, in a Note to 'Croma' of Ossian, which Burns may have seen, a five-fold description of Night—an October night—in which a still greater resemblance to Douglas's description appears. It is a curious fact, also, that M'Pherson attributes this five-fold description to five Celtic Bards about a thousand years later than Ossian; that is, just as nearly as possible at Gavin Douglas's own time. Are we to suppose, then, that the gifted translator of Ossian, accused of so many forgeries, made an additional forgery in this very Note, and manufactured the five-fold description in question from the pages of Douglas? and that thus, through him, the description of a winter night has travelled on to Burns? Or are we to give credit to each and all of these various authors—to Douglas, to the Five Bards respectively, or in their name to M'Pherson, and finally to Burns—for the various independent descriptions which are associated with their respective names? We see no good argument against this conclusion. It is certain that there is in Robert Burns's, at least, a minuteness, and variety of detail, a dramatic interpellation more akin to Shakspear's, and a pathetic tenderness not to be found in any of the others—to which, indeed, even

Pity, like a naked new-born babe
 Striding the blast,

is not superior.

In some editions—Thomson's, Currie's, and others quoting from them—the beautiful stanza on which we are now commenting is spoken of as a 'variation.' It is in fact the very original, and must speak for itself with authority to any one who ever looked at the scene, or can comprehend the adaptation of words to the features of a landscape.

In wonderful contrast to this patriotic passion half expressed comes the exquisite contemptuous love-snatch, in which Kings, and all that appertain to them, are dismissed from his imagination, as not worth a moment's care.

p. 154. LOUIS, WHAT RECK I BY THEE!

Or Geordie on his ocean!

— s. 2. Kings and Nations—swith, awa!
 Reif Randies, I disown ye!

as if the scorn, which dared not all be otherwise expressed, found vent with comparative safety in a love song. This seems to have been written on the eve of the French Revolution, and was a strange enough prophecy of its kind, incidentally spoken, so far as one King at least, and one Nation at the time, were concerned.

p. 155. COMIN THRO' THE RYE: Of this quaint ditty there are two sets: the first and original by Burns, as in present edition, and "which was published as a single sheet song,

before it was copied into the 'Museum;' the second, with a few additional lines, and altered music, was a parody on the first. Some recent annotator, we observe, is of opinion that 'the rye' is here the name of a river. The details of the song are completely at variance with such an idea; and the simple fact that the word, in original, is invariably printed without a capital letter—which Burns never omitted where it was required—is conclusive on the subject.

p. 155. *SOMEBODY*: Of this most beautiful and suggestive song, two lines—the third and fourth of the first stanza—were adopted from Ramsay; the rest is by Burns.

p. 155. *SHE SAYS SHE LO'ES ME BEST OF A'*: This song, in honour of one of the Author's most favourite and unfortunate heroines, is an instance, among many others, in which his love of music and of the higher moralities were united. The music was beautiful, but the original words were indecent: his genius and his moral delicacy rectified that.

p. 156. *THE BONIE LASS MADE THE BED TO ME*: Is a ballad which may seem scarcely entitled to the same praise, so far as moral character is concerned; and its extreme warmth and richness are undoubtedly of questionable effect. The Author himself subsequently remodelled and reduced it: we retain it, however, in its full original form, for two reasons—first, because he actually did so write and publish it; second, because in this form it is incomparably the finest ballad of its kind ever written. It does, indeed, after the Oriental fashion, verge on impropriety; but redeems itself at the close by one of those inimitable turns, which none but the truest heart could dictate, and no other than the hand of the most accomplished artist would dare to introduce. The song itself is founded on an older ballad, recounting an amour of Charles II. with a young lady of respectable family in the north; of which a corrupted version of great indelicacy may still be found. The second version, in a subdued tone, by Burns himself, will be found elsewhere.

p. 157. *SAE FAR AWA*: Was printed by Johnson with a slight typographical inaccuracy in one of the lines—which destroyed the sense; this has, however, been rectified in reproducing it.

p. 157. *O WAT YE WHA'S IN YON TOWN?* The first edition of this well-known beautiful song, and dedicated manifestly to the honour of Mrs. Burns. It was subsequently slightly modified, and by the introduction of another name transferred to another heroine; in whom the Author, however, had no more than the interest common to all who could appreciate the greatest beauty and goodness combined in the same person. This second edition will be found in 'Thomson's Collection.' The original edition here given was accompanied by another song to the same air, in praise also of Mrs. Burns—'I'll ay ca' in by yon town;' but strange to say, although they appear together on the same page, the one is acknowledged, and the other not. The unacknowledged song, one of the most perfect of all our Author's lyrical compositions, will be found in its own department.

p. 158. *O MAY, THY MORN*: The nameless heroine of this song, the reader needs scarcely to be informed, was Clarinda. If we had no other evidence in his correspondence with that lady, a simple comparison of the song now before us with

'Ance mair I hail thee, thou gloomy December!' [p. 160] and 'Behold the hour, the boat arrive!' [p. 223] would make the whole apparent mystery very plain. But the mystery itself, affected in the one case, and unconsciously explained in the other, affords a curious indication of the state of the Author's mind—distracted and painful undoubtedly—on this subject at the time; passionate, sympathetic, regretful, and full of self-reproach alternately, perhaps together and at once.

p. 158. *WILT THOU BE MY DEARIE?* A gem of purest lyrical litany, that requires no commentary. It was set by the Author's special request to the 'first part only' of the tune to which it was nominally written.

p. 158. *LOVELY POLLY STEWART*: A slight performance, which replaced some old Jacobite verses to the same air; with which, however, we need not trouble the reader.

p. 159. *THE WINTER OF LIFE*: In a different tone, and in figurative outline, is nevertheless all too true and sad an illustration of the Poet's own experience in these concluding years; and not the less true, that age in him was premature as well as painful. The last four lines, indeed, we can never read, without recalling that look of latent anguish which is traceable in the likeness recently discovered, and which has already been conspicuously referred to in the conclusion of our Biography. Let the reader compare the lines and the picture. The air to which this song is set was communicated by the Poet himself, and is a plaintive melody; so that both music, words, and shadow correspond. The reader may compare, also, with same lines, the well-known complaint of Job—

But man forsakes this earthly scene,
Ah! never to return:
Shall any following spring revive
The ashes of the urn?—*Par. viii. 9.*

p. 159. *COULD AUGHT OF SONG*: In perfect English style, was written by our Author (as we learn from Stenhouse) to an English air, composed originally by Dr. Samuel Howard, for one of Ramsay's songs in the 'Gentle Shepherd,' and which through that medium became very popular.

p. 159. *HERE'S TO THY HEALTH, MY BONIE LASS*: A piece of pleasant banter, slightly careless, perhaps, or indifferent, as the theme implied. The last stanza is sometimes otherwise, but erroneously, punctuated in first four lines, to the destruction of the sense.

p. 160. *GLOOMY DECEMBER*: Compare 'O May, thy Morn,' [p. 158]; also *Letters to Clarinda*: The song, in short, is an eloquent pathetic commemoration of his parting farewell with that lady, on her departure for the West Indies: the two first verses were, in fact, communicated to herself, along with other songs, in a letter dated Dumfries, 27th December, 1791. It was afterwards completed for the 'Museum,' and is the last song by him in Volume V. of that collection. The song which follows in that volume, 'Evan Banks,' was erroneously attributed to him at the time, and has since been discovered to be the work of Helen Maria Williams, a native of the north of England, for whose poetical effusions our Author entertained, as was natural for him, a gallant admiration.

p. 160. *MY PEGGY'S FACE*: Accompanied by the following note:—

DEAR MR. PUBLISHER,

I hope against I return, you will be able to tell from Mr. Clarke if these words will suit the tune. If they don't suit, I must think on some other air; as I have a very strong private reason for wishing them in the 2d volume—Don't forget to transcribe me the list of the Antiquarian Musie. Farewell!

R. BURNS.

The song, it appears, had been accidentally mislaid, and therefore did not find a place in the 'Museum' till the sixth volume was in preparation. It is the second song in that division. The heroine was Miss Chalmers, to whom at the same time (November, 1787) he dedicated another effusion, already before the reader [*p.* 133], 'Where Braving Angry Winter's Storms.' The present song was reprinted in 'Thomson's Collection,' with another name—'Mary' for 'Peggy'—and with different, perhaps not so appropriate, music.

p. 161. O STEER HER UP: Written to supersede an indecent song of Ramsay's; the first four lines of which, in brackets, are however retained. Of the great moral service rendered by Burns in these revisions, something has already been said; more will be said hereafter.

p. 161. AE DAY A BRAW WOOR: Of this fine ballad there are two distinct editions—one in the 'Museum,' the other in 'Thomson's Collection.' The first, which is now before the reader, is incomparably the best. It was written in 1787, and should have appeared in the second volume of the 'Museum;' but Mr. Johnson, who had some scruples about the propriety of certain expressions in it, declined at the moment to insert it. Our Author afterwards revised and altered it, and in its altered form transmitted it to Thomson (1795); in whose second volume it ultimately appeared (1799). Johnson could then easily see that the very alterations he had desired were no improvements; and accordingly produced the original edition, still in his own hands, in the sixth volume of his work (1803): too late, of course, for the Author himself to know anything about its appearance. This little incident has its own moral import. Who but a man of the utmost generosity, and childlike indifference to his own rights, would so have altered for one what he had originally written for another, and still allow the rejected original to lie tossing unclaimed for the remainder of his life in the hands of the friend who had rejected it? This admirable ballad, although thus kindly, almost humbly, rewritten to oblige fastidious editors, lay in one case four, and in the other sixteen years, before it was able to see the light; its Author's ear, in either case, being long insensible to either compliment or criticism.

p. 162. O AY MY WIFE SHE DANG ME: A jocular refrain, very often incorrectly printed. We have adhered accurately to the original.

p. 162. O GUDE ALE COMES: The chorus of this song is old; the song itself is by Burns, and has probably some indirect significance beyond its external purport as a song. Being partly but a revision, no very high place can be claimed for it. In all circumstances of the case, indeed, it is a little strange that Burns should have cared to acknowledge it at all, having capriciously declined to acknowledge so many other songs that were infinitely more beautiful. But so it is. To say the least, it does not look as if he were guilty. The burden reminds us of an English ditty, which we cannot at the moment lay our hands upon; but which, under a similar

title—'Jolly Good Ale and Old'—rehearses similar effects of indulgence in the following style:—

Both head and foot go bare;
Both back and side go cold;
But the man, he needs never better fare,
Who hath jolly good ale and old, &c.

p. 162. THE DUMFRIES VOLUNTEERS: The regiment to which this song is inscribed was embodied during the political excitement of 1795; and was under command of the venerable Colonel de Peyster, a gentleman of Canadian extract, but connected with and long resident at Dumfries. The staff included other gentlemen of local name and influence. As a supplementary contingent, its object at that crisis was patriotic enough, and the song dedicated to its honour was a genuine enough national war song; and besides appearing as such in the local papers, it was also published in a single sheet, and distributed in considerable numbers among the Author's compatriots in the corps. It was nevertheless written at a period (1795) when his own political sentiments were suspected; and, for that reason alone, might not receive in all quarters the credit to which it was entitled as a patriotic effusion. That Burns could hope for any promotion in consequence, need not be imagined; his very admission to the ranks of the regiment, according to Cunningham, was objected to from political prejudice—and whatever he might say or do at that date, would have been simple loss of labour, if he had any personal advantage in view.

p. 163. MY LADY'S GOWN, THERE'S GAIRS UPON'T: Written in 1788, but objected to by Johnson for moral reasons. It appeared at last in his sixth volume (1803) when questions about the Author's morality were beginning to be postponed to the universal admiration of his genius. The reader will find a similar relationship in connection with the same family, or one at least in the same neighbourhood, assigned an important place by Sir Walter Scott in his tragedy of 'Auchendrane,' where no immorality was dreamt of, and where not impossibly he had this very ballad in view.

p. 163. JOCKEY'S TAEN THE PARTING KISS: A truly exquisite lyric, in which the antithesis of a single line—

Jockey's heart is still at hame—

balances a whole accumulation of prayers, of anxieties, and of love.

p. 163. O LEAVE NOVELS: The reader will easily perceive, is of an older date. It was written at Mossgiel in 1785, before the Poet had yet appeared as an author, but when local gossip had attached unfavourable rumours to his name; and when the style of novel-writing then most popular was not by any means most conducive to morality.

p. 164. O LAY THY LOOF IN MINE, LASS: Needs no further commentary, than that it is Burns's, and most characteristic both of his moral and passionate poetical nature.

At this point, in volume sixth of the 'Museum,' should have appeared the original edition of 'Scots wha hae.' Strange to say, however, the tune to which the Author wrote it—'Hey now the day dawis,' or 'Hey tuttie taitie'—had already been published with other words in Volume II., and could not with propriety be reintroduced. In these circumstances, "Johnson requested Mr. William Clarke, the organist,

to set Burns's song to a simple ballad tune which he sent him." This was a wrong tune, however, and necessitated the same lengthening of certain lines as in Thomson's altered edition; and so it happened that, in both cases, this sublime national chaunt was at first impaired—in the one case by accident, in the other by caprice; and never appeared at all, nor had the prospect of appearing, during his own life, as the Author himself desired it—a trial of patience which few but himself could endure. He had not even the most distant assurance given him that it would ever appear perfect. In this also, as in a former case, the invaluable original documents seem to have been left to their fate, without reclaim, in the hands of both parties. The two editions will be found, side by side, in our extracts from Thomson [p. 213], with additional notes on their history.

p. 164. *THERE WAS A BONIE LASS*: A pretty little fragment, containing an idea elaborated more perfectly elsewhere, in 'My Bonie Mary' [p. 172]; and,

p. 164. *O MALLY'S MEEK, MALLY'S SWEET*: Which immediately follows, conclude the list of acknowledged contributions to the 'Museum'—that is, of contributions acknowledged by the Author when they originally appeared in that collection, in addition to those which had already been published in former editions of his poems. Two of these old songs—'My Nanie, O,' and 'No Churchman am I'—are inserted among others at this point. 'O Mally's Meek' is one of the innumerable illustrations of Burns's exquisite taste in relating or suggesting the oft-told tale, of temptation or of actual misfortune, which in almost any other hands would become offensive vulgarity. What were likely to be sweet Mally's fate in certain circumstances we are left to conjecture, or to fear; what it actually was in Béranger's hands, as poet of the demi-monde and of the empire, in which political immorality had its counterpart in prevailing social degradation, we are not left to conjecture at all, but are distinctly informed. Let the reader at his leisure compare the history of 'Lisette,' in her successful career of selfish and unblushing profligacy, as he will find it detailed and moralised upon by Béranger [Vol. I., p. 196, 1851] under above title, with this mere glance of prophetic apprehension and sympathy by Burns for some possible victim of temptation, and he will fully appreciate the difference. The mere terms, in some respects, are so exactly alike, we can hardly refrain from quoting a few verses:—

Ce n'est plus Lisette.

Vos pieds dans le satin
N' osent fouler l' herbette.
De fleurs de votre teint
Où faites-vous emplette ?

Dans un lieu décoré
De tout ce qui s' achète,
L' opulence a doré
Jusqu' à votre couchette.

Maîtresse d' un Seigneur
Qui paya sa défaite,
De l' ombre du bonheur
Vous êtes satisfaites.

Si l' Amour est un dieu,
C' est près d' une fillette.
Adieu, madame, adieu :
En Duchesse on vous traite.

Those who complain of Burns as lacking moral taste in such matters should by all means look beyond him; and if they can point out anything in the most polished compositions of the most polished authors, of previous or of subsequent dates, and of any nation, superior in delicacy or tenderness, in suggestiveness or in truth, to his own simple handling of such doubtful themes, we shall cease any longer to claim for

him the palm of absolute perfection in that difficult and dangerous field.

SONGS NOT ORIGINALLY ACKNOWLEDGED.

We come now to this strange and interesting class of compositions, including some of the very finest works of our Author, including also a few that cannot perhaps be so highly classed, which he did not choose on their first appearance in the world to acknowledge for his own; and very few, if any, of which he was spared ever to acknowledge publicly at all. The reason for this public reticence, when the fact of his authorship must have been well enough known to friends, it is difficult to conjecture. That some of the pieces included were partially revisions, is not a sufficient reason; for several other revisions were frankly acknowledged as such by him, and so published by his authority. Nor is there anything in the morality of these particular lyrics of which he had more reason to be ashamed, than in that of others which he never hesitated to avow. If we may venture a theory on the subject at all, it would be this—that as the 'Museum' was supplied almost entirely by himself in one way or another, both with words and music, including a great proportion of his own original writings, he modestly avoided too frequent a repetition of his own name, in connection even with the very productions that were most certainly his own; and the pieces to be acknowledged, or not acknowledged, would be selected, in a great measure, either by caprice at the moment, or according to their accidental position in the volumes—that too many might not appear together, and that the world might have no reason to say that the work was entirely his. That he retained his own rights as an author, however, is manifest from the fact, that in subsequently annotating an interleaved copy of the 'Museum,' as far as it had gone during his lifetime [see hereafter], he specified his connection with some of these pieces, by which, and by other evidence, we are able to determine their authorship. That such annotations, made at the request of his friend Captain Riddel, were made also with the prospect of future publicity, is by no means improbable; which, together with his dying hint of faith in coming fame—"that a hundred years afterwards he would be more thought of"—affords some glimpse into the inner life and consciousness of the man. Such prospects of immortality realised it was not allowed him to enjoy. "I have caused thee," said the Lord, "to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither." What the prophetic instincts of his nature were, we may thus conclude; and what the self-denial, the modest lifelong reticence, the childlike humility, and exalted patience of his spirit were—the best of us may profitably consider. Not less instructive seems this, than the meek resignation of Milton in his blindness—

They also serve who only stand and wait.

In both cases the inheritance was sure. "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." That this should be the destiny of a song-writer, as well as of a prophet, who shall complain—if the soul of the song-writer was imbued, as it was, with the spirit of love and prophecy?

Of these unacknowledged songs—fifty-nine in all—only one,

p. 165. O WHAR DID YE GET? Appeared in first volume of 'Museum.' The first four lines of this song are old, and are accordingly enclosed in brackets; the remaining verses are by Burns—and most exquisite verses they are on a painful subject. There was an English travesty of the old ballad (London, 1703—see Stenhouse), too weak to be here quoted. Our English friends, from the time of Shakspear himself downwards, do not seem to be aware that mere imitations of the Scottish language are not necessarily Scots. It is not in broad syllables only, or in mis-spelt words, the peculiarities of that language are to be found: an imitation consisting of these is no more like Scots, than schoolboy Latin would be like the text of Cæsar. Burns accompanied the first draft of this song with a very characteristic letter, which, as it is also brief, we may here quote.

DEAR CLEGHORN,—You will see by the above that I have added a stanza to 'Bonnie Dundee.' If you think it will do, you may set it agoing

Upon a ten-string'd instrument,
And on a psaltery.

R. B.

To Mr. Cleghorn, Farmer. God bless the trade.

Whether the Poet had any special instance of misfortune and desertion in view, we cannot affirm; but the dramatic pathos of the last stanza leaves always on our mind the idea of distinct personal sorrow, mixed with lofty love, in connection with some painful misadventure in the highest ranks of life. The third line of the first—the old verse—

I gat it frae a young, brisk sodger laddie,

is often vulgarly misprinted

I gat it frae a brisk young sodger laddie,

which is but a sort of slang in comparison.

p. 165. TO THE WEAVER'S GIN YE GO: Another theme of the same character, but with a different moral aspect on the speaker's part. In reference to this song, the Author afterwards apologises for what he calls its 'silliness,' on the ground that many pretty airs in the 'Museum' wanted words, which he supplied on the instant as they were needed. For our own part, we do not think any such apology was required. The chorus is old; and the title is often strangely misprinted

To the Weavers gin ye go;

as if to many. 'To the Weaver's' means simply to the house of one person, the 'customary' or 'customer weaver' of the district; who wrought always in his own dwelling the webs which were brought in to him from the neighbourhood, long before working in loomshops or in factories was thought of. This circumstance, when considered, gives an entirely different aspect to the conduct or situation of the speaker.

p. 166. I AM MY MAMMY'S AE BAIEN: Title and chorus, old; the song itself by Burns.

p. 166. MACPHERSON'S FAREWELL: Written entirely by Burns, to a celebrated air said to have been composed by a noted freebooter about Inverness, where he was condemned and executed. Mr. Cromeck narrates a tradition that, "when at the fatal tree, he played this air upon a favourite violin, and holding up the instrument, offered it to any one of his clan who would undertake to play the tune over his body at his lykewake. As no one answered, he dashed it to pieces on the executioner's head, and flung himself from the ladder."

On this tradition a much older ballad than Burns's was founded, "but it is too long for insertion, as well as greatly inferior." Burns's own ballad is indeed a masterpiece of lyrical fury, and the only one that will ever more be thought of in connection with the gloomy subject. To say, on his own authority, that it has at once transported and soothed the spirit of Thomas Carlyle, is enough.

p. 167. THE HIGHLAND LASSIE, O: Composed, according to the Author's own declaration, at a very early period of his life. It could not, however, be any earlier than his betrothal to Mary Campbell, to which it manifestly refers, and his own projected exile to the West Indies, which give the earliest possible as in spring or summer of 1786. The song implies the devoutest attachment to this beloved object of his affection. In second line of concluding stanza—

By sacred truth and honor's band!—

which we print in conformity with majority of editions, believing it to be the correct reading; there is, notwithstanding, a deviation from the text of the 'Museum,' where the line stands thus—

By secret truth and honor's band!

In this line there is no doubt as clear, if not a clearer reference to the private betrothal of the parties; but there is a mistake in the language. Our conjecture on the subject is—that the words might be originally 'secret troth,' for which 'sacred truth' were finally substituted; and on looking very narrowly at the 'Museum,' this supposition we seem to find confirmed—for below the word 'truth' there is evidently an erasure on the plate, where the letters 'tro' are faintly discernible. The engraver has, however, allowed the word 'secret' to remain untouched, either because he did not see that it was incongruous, or because he could not so easily accomplish an erasure on it. This curious accident is extremely interesting and instructive in our eyes; inasmuch as it seems to indicate distinctly two separate and yet associated sentiments in the Poet's mind with reference to this solemn interview. The 'secret troth' and the 'sacred truth' are both involved, although which of them should be made public was uncertain—in which pause of uncertainty, they got accidentally blended in the original text. It is a further curious coincidence, that this song entitled 'The Highland Lassie,' and the beautiful verses of a corresponding date to 'Jean' [p. 130], entitled in 'Museum,' 'The Northern Lass,' should stand facing each other, being Nos. 117 and 118 respectively; and it is yet more curious and suggestive, that the verses to Jean should have been publicly acknowledged, and the verses to Mary *not*. Burns, in fact, seems to have affected a good deal of mystery on this delicate and painful subject, by carrying dates and other references indefinitely far back. In the present instance, domestic considerations afford an obvious and sufficient apology for silence or obscurity.

Chorus—Within the glen sae bushy, O,
Aboon the plain sae rashy, O, &c.,

corresponds very truly to the actual scene of betrothal, at the junction of the rivers Fail and Ayr, more particularly described in other songs on this interesting topic. There is a

very beautiful and not unworthy parallel to this song of early devotion, in its sentiment of accumulating wealth and fame to enrich or glorify the object of love, which we may partially quote from Béranger:—

Beaucoup D'Amour.

Malgré la voix de la sagesse,
Je voudrais amasser de l'or,
Soudain aux pieds de ma maîtresse
J'irais déposer mon trésor.

.....
Pour immortaliser Adèle,
Si des chants m'étaient inspirés,
Mes vers, où je ne prendrais qu'elle,
A jamais seraient admirés.

(Ed. 1851), Vol. 1., p. 101.

p. 167. MY HOGGIE: Composed in a quaint humour, both as to versification and style, to suit a fine old air rescued from oblivion by Mr. Stephen Clark, Organist, Edinburgh, who took it down from the singing of an old woman in Liddesdale. [See Author's Annotations on 'Museum.']

p. 168. UP IN THE MORNING EARLY: By Burns, to a very old air, which "had even been a favourite in England for several generations, some of their old songs being adapted to it."—*Stenhouse*. On the same authority we learn that, under another name—'Cold and Raw'—it was a mighty favourite with Mary of Orange; and was adopted by Purcel, in order to please Her Majesty, but without her knowledge, as bass to her birth-day song, 1692. Burns, in such complaint of winter, cannot forget the birds.

p. 168. I DREAM'D I LAY: Declared to have been written by our Author at the age of seventeen, and is certainly one of his earliest compositions. The contrasts are extremely characteristic of his moral and constitutional temperament at that age. In a similar strain, but with the use of other figures, and with somewhat less elasticity, Thomas Moore concludes one of his beautiful songs thus—

Give me back, give me back the wild freshness of morning:
Her clouds and her tears are worth evening's best light!

Not always, however, did Burns retain his own youthful elasticity, as witness the 'Winter of Life;' where the concluding stanza corresponds much more to this complaint of Moore's, with the addition of melancholy earnest.

p. 168. DUNCAN DAVISON: This song, in which more humour, dramatic force, tenderness, and beauty are combined than in almost any other composition of the same character and extent, is one of those which, strange to say, was never acknowledged by the Author. Such caprice is altogether unaccountable. That it was his own, however, there can be no doubt. *Stenhouse*, who recovered the original manuscript, declares that it corresponds exactly to edition in 'Museum,' and intimates that it had been written to supersede "an old but very inferior song, both in wit and delicacy."

p. 169. THIENIEL MENZIES' BONIE MARY: and on same page, LADY ONLIE: Are dated by *Stenhouse* about end of the year 1787, and seem to bring traces with them of our Author's tours in the north.

p. 169. WEARY FA' YOU, DUNCAN GRAY: A distinct song, and with a different sentiment, from that which was afterwards adapted by our Author to same well-known air; and which, for various reasons, has become more popular. The

topic of the present song is one very frequently treated by Burns, and was too frequently suggested, not only by the old songs which (as in this case) he remodelled, but by the morals of the people themselves at the time. To embody such a topic so frequently in song, with alternate humour and pathos, but always with admirable taste and often with inimitable delicacy, is, as we have already said, an achievement of which no other poet but himself was capable, and implies both the finest taste, and the truest masculine sympathy.

p. 169, c. 2, s. 2. I tint my eurch and baith my shoon;
And, Duncan, &c.,

incorrectly printed in most editions—

Ah, Duncan, &c.,

which completely destroys both the underlying sense and spirit of the original. The music is said to have been the composition of a Glasgow carter, whose name it still bears. The title and some of the words are old.

p. 170. HOW LONG AND DREARY IS THE NIGHT: Written in 1787, on what theme is not said; was remodelled in 1794 for 'Thomson's Collection,' on which occasion the serious illness of Jean Lorimer—the 'Chloris' of his later songs—suggested the repetition and adaptation of it. The two compositions, therefore, may be considered entirely distinct. A fine parallel from Petrarch may be quoted hereafter.

p. 170. THE BLUDE RED ROSE AT YULE: Another piece of feminine banter, was written in 1787. A line or two in chorus may be old; the rest wholly by Burns.

p. 170. BONY PEGGY ALISON: Is another of the songs never acknowledged by its Author. It consisted originally of two—the two last—stanzas. At what date the first was added, or whether in original manuscript, although not printed in 'Museum,' we are not aware. It is among the many gems of our Author's purest and most impassioned fancies. Compare with this tender and rapturous effusion, the licentious heathenism of Catullus:—

Quæris quot mihi basiationes
Tuae, Lesbia, sint satis superque?
.....
Tam te basia multa basiare
Vesano satis, et super Catullo est;
Quæ nec pernumerare curiosi
Possint, nec mala fascinare lingua!

imitated, as far as circumstances would allow, by Byron:—

Oh! might I kiss those eyes of fire,
A million scarce would quench desire:
Still would I steep my lips in bliss,
And dwell an age on every kiss:
Nor then my soul would sated be;
Still would I kiss and cling to thee:
Nought should my kiss from thine dis sever,
Still should we kiss and kiss for ever:
E'en 'though the numbers should exceed
The yellow harvest's countless seed:
To part would be a vain endeavour—
Could I desist? Oh never, never!

We leave Burns in his simplicity, without much fear, between two such competitors.

p. 171. BEWARE O' BONIE ANN: We enter now on third volume of the 'Museum,' in the history of these unacknowledged contributions. The present song, written in 1788, was a compliment to Miss Masterton, daughter of the Poet's musical friend, the author of more than one beautiful air, by

agreement, as a vehicle of melody for the Poet's words. The air, in the present case, was of his composition; and the song itself is remarkable for a strange interweaving of unfinished sentences, with an ellipsis or two in almost every verse (the two first verses, in fact, are full of them), yet so linked together in a fashion peculiar to himself, that, in chanting, the syntactical imperfection is scarcely perceptible.

p. 171. THE GARDENER WI' HIS PAIDLE: "Written purposely for the 'Museum,'" but remodelled for, and afterwards reproduced under another title—'Dainty Davie'—in 'Thomson's Collection.'

p. 171. MY LOVE, SHE'S BUT A LASSIE YET: This brief, beautiful, and exquisite burst—so entirely Scottish, and so admirably adapted to the music that every syllable seems to be inspired by its corresponding note, contains the three first acts of a whole pastoral drama—the untimely asking, the mortifying refusal, the independent, consolatory, *drouthy* resolve, ending with an old refrain—all in two stanzas of eight lines each! The two last lines of

— s. 2. The minister kiss't the fiddler's wife—
 He couldna preach for thinkin' o't!

so full of quiet, elliptical humour, have been often spoiled by incorrect typography. There should be no connecting 'And,' but a mere *blank* of speechless astonishment between them. We have printed the whole song with much care, and it stands in the present edition perfect. The title, and last half stanza—that now commented upon—are old.

p. 172. JAMIE, COME TRY ME: A sweet little lyrical love-challenge, which none more gracefully than Burns could put into a woman's mouth; written for the 'Museum' in 1789.

p. 172. MY BONIE MARY: "The first half stanza of this song is old; the rest mine," says the Author. In Hogg and Motherwell's edition, the supposed original, "as preserved by Mr. Peter Buchan; who farther communicates that the ballad was composed, in 1636, by Alexander Lesly, of Edinburgh, on Doveranside, grandfather to the celebrated Archbishop Sharp," is reproduced; from which the verse in question is quoted by Mr. Chambers, and after him by Kirkpatrick Sharpe. It is as follows:—

Ye'll bring me here a pint of wine,
A server, and a silver tassie;
That I may drink, before I gang,
A health to my ain bonie lassie.

These lines have no doubt been the key note for Burns; but the lines themselves, as the reader will observe, have been altered and improved by him, before beginning; so that the whole song may really be called his own, and as such, we have printed it without brackets. Notwithstanding this, the man's own modesty induced him originally to deny it. He enclosed it in a letter to Mrs. Dunlop (17th December, 1788), as two old stanzas, and it was so introduced by Dr. Currie, in his edition of the Poet's works. Let the critic, at his leisure, examine this song by the severest rules of his art, and say whether he finds a flaw in it. We pronounce it, in the meantime, a perfect lyrical drama. Although the first verse had been quoted entire, without any improvement by our Author, it may be safely affirmed that no other man but himself could have written what follows.

p. 172. WHISTLE O'ER THE LAVE O'T: "Written by Burns, in 1789, as a substitute for the old verses."—*Stenhouse*. It is like several others, a piece of genuine Scotch, in which not only an act or two, but an entire drama of domestic life—past, present, and prospective—is included; shrouded throughout in suggestive obscurity, the most laughable and provoking, which may be interpreted in a thousand ways, as the imagination or experience of the reader inclines him.

p. 173. THE CAPTIVE RIBBAND: On the distinct authority of *Stenhouse*, to whose statement Mr. Kirkpatrick Sharpe makes no objection, this song obtains a place in our text, as "another unclaimed production of Burns." We do not find it in the ordinary editions of his works, nor any reason assigned for its omission. We shall be glad to receive information on the subject. The song has all the internal marks of his authorship in one of his peculiar courtly moods; and we should almost regret to learn that it was not his in reality, for it affords another perfect parallel to Petrarch, in a sort of region where it might be supposed they had no affinity.

Candido, leggiadretto, e caro guatto,
Che copria netto avorio, e fresche rose,
Chi vide al mondo mai sì dolci spoglie?
Così avevo io del bel velo altrettanto.
O inconstancia de l'humane cose!
Pur questo è furto; e vien chi me ne spoglie?

Parte Prima: Son. clxvi.

O thou bright, beautiful, and dearest glove,
Fit shield for ivory and freshest rose!
When saw the world so sweet a spoil of love?
Had I but ransom for this scrap of gauze!
Ah! sad inconstant lot of human thrall—
The prize was theft; he comes who claims it all!

In Burns there is more natural levity than in the above, the occasion, in his case, being most probably of a more transient, or altogether of an imaginary character; but the correspondence otherwise, on so similar and curious a topic, seems worthy of commemoration.

p. 173. THERE'S A YOUTH IN THIS CITY: Founded by our Author on four lines of an old ballad, with which the song begins—is a humorous satire on the self-conceit and selfish gallantry of some money-hunting buck; of whom let Nancy beware, if she looks for happiness in matrimony.

p. 173. MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS: Founded, as the above, on four lines of an older ballad, which the Author, before adopting, has retouched. There is no other resemblance whatever between the two pieces. In this, as in many other similar cases, the characteristic excellence of Burns's revisions or reproductions lies in their condensation and dramatic force. In two verses, sometimes in a few lines, he reproduces, in its most perfect form, all the essential poetry that had been weakly or profusely scattered over a whole song. After this process of transformation, the original is forgotten, and like an empty husk may be buried without delay. Our readers need hardly be reminded that this ballad was a great favourite of Sir Walter Scott's, who introduces another version of it in 'Waverley.'

p. 174. MERRY HAE I BEEN TEETHIN A HECKLE: One of our Author's earliest compositions, and supposed by some to contain an allusion to his own unfortunate experience as a flax-dresser at Irvine. There seems to be no ground for this

idea. The song itself, most perfectly dramatic, is entirely of a piece with the 'Jolly Beggars,' and was not improbably omitted by oversight in making up that celebrated cantata, and laid aside like the duplicate copy of 'For a' that and a' that,' till accident again restored it to the Author's hands. On these two suppositions, the history of that wonderful performance may be said to be complete. [See Note on 'Jolly Beggars.']

p. 174. THE RANTIN DOG, THE DADDIE O'T: "I composed this song," says our Author, "pretty early in life, and sent it to a young girl, a very particular acquaintance of mine, who was at that time under a cloud"—to which farther reference is now unnecessary. It is the most perfect specimen of the Scots tongue ever written by Burns, and details the circumstances of such a painful situation with absolute pictorial fidelity. The language and sentiments, although bold and plain, yet, dramatically and by substitution, are entirely feminine. Thus almost exactly, so far as language is concerned, but not dramatically, and with infinitely less taste as addressing the woman; and with no idea of marriage to repair the wrong, but of licence and immorality only, and 'superfluity of naughtiness,' Catullus says—

Quis nunc te adibit? quoi videberis bella?
Quem nunc amabis? cujus esse dicebis?
Quem basiabis? quoi labella mordebis?
At tu Catulle destinatus obdura!—viii.

p. 174. EPPIE ADAIR: Sweet words to a pretty air, for which we do *not* find a parallel in Catullus, and of which his licentious Roman nature was incapable.

p. 175. YOUNG JOCKEY: A perfect picture of rural life, of rural love; of simplicity, of ecstasy, of constancy—at once lyric and idyllic, in a single breath. A line or two of it may be old; but in all true sense of authorship, the song is entirely Robert Burns's.

p. 175. WHARE HAE YE BEEN SAE BRAW, LAD? A slight historico-political revision, of less moment, but with our Author's humour infused: and, on the same theme, but in a more mournful strain,

p. 175. THERE'LL NEVER BE PEACE: Written probably about the same date, 1789; although the one appears at close of the third, and the other at beginning of the fourth volume.

p. 176. THE BONIE LAD THAT'S FAR AWA: Never acknowledged by our Author, although manifestly embodying a minute dramatic reference to the circumstances of his future wife during his own absence—for that very reason most probably, not acknowledged. The 'gloves' and 'silken snoods,' referred to in stanza iv., were actual gifts to her at that date; and his own northern tour, dramatically adapted, the occasion of her despondency or suffering. The song seems to have been suggested by an older ballad, of which he has adopted a single line; but he has given life and pathos to the composition itself, by interweaving the recollections of his own earlier lifetime.

p. 176. YON WILD MOSSY MOUNTAINS: Our Author states in his annotations to 'Museum,' that this song alludes to part of his "private history, which it is of no consequence to the world to know"—on which Stenhouse founds the unauthorised conclusion, that it must refer to 'Highland Mary.'

'Highland Mary' had no connection with the region here specified. This is one of the few songs,—the only song, indeed, so far as we can remember—in which any distinct allusion is made to the river Clyde; and more particularly, the 'youth of the Clyde' is here indicated. On his first visit to Edinburgh, Burns passed through this identical region, and sojourned for a night and part of a day at Covington Mains, in the neighbourhood of Tinto. Death had by this time dissolved the bond between him and Mary, and circumstances for the moment had alienated his affections from Jean. Some country beauty in the moors of Tinto must have attracted his attention for the moment when he rested there, and he has immortalised the nameless heroine accordingly. He could travel in no part of the world without finding some such occasion of inspiration, and he seems to have been compelled, by the requirements of the great work in which he was now engaged, to recall, and to chronicle in music, every one of them. The circumstance in his 'private history,' in which the world had no interest, seems to be made thus sufficiently clear, without further mystery or conjecture.

p. 177. EPPIE M'NAB: Has its own unpleasant, but instructive moral. It was written by our Author expressly to supersede a piece of vulgar indecency under the title of 'Appie M'Nab:' and it has superseded it accordingly.

p. 177. LOVELY DAVIES: This seems to have been the first poetical effusion dedicated by our Author to this lady—and was enclosed by him in a letter (October, 1791) full of the most gorgeous gallantry, addressed to herself. 'The bonie wee thing' was written shortly after, although preceding the present song, in 'Museum'—the one being No. 341, the other No. 349, of same volume—the former publicly acknowledged, the latter not. Stenhouse (who had the advantage of consulting all the original manuscripts in connection with 'Museum,' and to whom subsequent editors, ourselves included, have been much indebted in this respect) informs us that "the 9th line began

Ilk eye she chears, &c.

which he [the Author] afterwards altered to

Each eye it chears, &c.

and in the twenty-second line, the word *humble* is struck out, and *willing* is substituted." We remark these corrections more particularly, because they are both attended to in 'Museum;' which proves at once the fidelity of Johnson's care as a printer, and the supervision which Burns himself exercised as editor, in conducting the 'Museum'—these alterations being both so far forward as Volume IV.

p. 178. THE WEARY PUND O' TOW: Perhaps the only song by Burns in which a chorus in conclusion does not harmonise with the sense of the stanza to which it is attached. The final chorus in this song implies that the wife is still living; but the stanza, in a most unmistakable manner, affirms that she is dead. A laughable correspondence to the theme of this song occurs in 'Don Quixote' (Part II., chap. xxv.) where Sancho, having desired information respecting his affairs at home, receives from fortune-telling showman the following shrewd guess at the facts of the case:—

"Thy good spouse, Teresa, is a good housewife, and is at this instant dressing a pound of flax; by the same token, she has standing by her, on her left hand, a large broken-mouthed jug, which holds a pretty scantling of wine, to cheer up her spirits.' 'By yea and by nay,' quoth Sancho [who seems to have had no ungenerous misgivings on the subject], 'that's likely enough; for she's a true soul, and a jolly soul.'"

p. 178, c. 2, s. 4. At last her feet—I sang to see't—

Gaed foremost o'er the knowe;

alludes to invariable practice of carrying the dead feet foremost to sepulture.

p. 178. YE JACOBITES BY NAME: A significant allusion to state of political parties in reference to exiled dynasty; not acknowledged by our Author. The only remark here required is, that the words 'Right' and 'Wrang' should be invariably printed with a capital initial letter to note their specific sense; which does not imply right or wrong, as just or unjust; but Title, or the Want of it, in relation to the Throne.

p. 179. LADY MARY ANN: Nominally a revision, but in reality an original production of our Author's. His model was "the fragment of an ancient ballad entitled 'Craigton's grow-ing'—still preserved in manuscript Collection of Ancient Scottish Ballads, in possession of Rev. Robert Scott, minister of the Parish of Glenbucket."—*Stenhouse*. The ballad itself has since been reproduced in various editions. It appears, however, that Burns himself noted down both the words and music of the original from the recitation of a lady in the north, during his tour there in 1787. The lady, we must presume, did not recite the whole of it. We cannot occupy space by quoting the ballad; but if any one is desirous to know how far, in mere delicacy and taste, the hand of Robert Burns excels that of the ordinary ballad writer, let him take an opportunity of comparing the respective pieces. If, after such comparison, the reader shall retain any serious doubt as to the high inherent moral sense of beauty and propriety in Burns, when handling the most difficult and painful themes, we shall despair by any argument or farther illustration to convince him. We believe simply that no man but Robert Burns himself, out of the original tradition, could have constructed a song so beautiful as this, or a story so inoffensive.

p. 179. SUCH A PARCEL OF ROGUES IN A NATION: Reflecting, apparently, on the history of the political arrangements on which the Union had been effected, and on the principles of selfish interest on which the affairs of Scotland were still attended to, or rather betrayed; needs scarcely further comment than that it breathes the same patriotic spirit by which our Author's earliest political effusions were distinguished, as our readers may find illustrated in the 'Earnest Cry and Prayer,' &c.

p. 180. AULD LANG SYNE: Printed by us here from *Stenhouse's* revised edition—which is distinguished from the final edition in 'Thomson's Collection' by the arrangement of the verses only; but differs in more important respects from the actual original edition as it stands in 'Museum,' and which our readers will find carefully reproduced among 'Various Readings' [p. 240]. On this most interesting unacknowledged production of our Author's, we abstain from all critical commentary until we have before us the final edition in Thomson; when we hope to be able, by comparison of the three editions, to determine exactly the extent of our Author's interest in relation to it.

p. 180. HAD I THE WYTE: Is a revision by Burns of a licentious old song, to render it capable of "admission into the 'Museum.'" In this revision he has removed as far as possible the actual license, and has otherwise atoned for improprieties by the infusion of natural pathos. In his hands, in short, it contains, on a painful and disgraceful topic, a defence or exculpation of sin or error, by a narrative of facts not worse than we see recorded and minutely detailed every day in the public proceedings of the Divorce Court. More need not be said on such a subject.

p. 181. YOUNG JAMIE, PRIDE OF A' THE PLAIN: This beautiful song, which vies in perfection of dramatic retribution with the richest alternations of fate under the despotic sway of love in Shakspear, and to have written which alone would have made a reputation, was never acknowledged by its Author!

p. 181. OUT OVER THE FORTH: Seems to have manifest reference, by dramatic substitution, to Jean's distress during her first separation from her husband, and his projected exile to West Indies. In second stanza,

The man that is dear to my babie and me.

is sometimes (incorrectly) printed

The lad that is dear, &c.

which is neither so dignified nor so true. On a 'lad' she could have no claim without dishonour; but on 'the man,' who was still her husband, she might still have such claim, notwithstanding the attempt of her friends to disown him.

p. 181. WANTONNESS FOR EVER MAIR: Written simply to supply words for music at the moment, and left, as it was better perhaps to leave it, unfinished.

p. 181. THE LASS OF ECCLEFECHAN: On the contrary, although not of the highest order, is dramatically perfect, both in style and humour. The majority of readers, however, we are inclined to believe, do not quite appreciate the dialogue. In the first stanza, 'Lucky Laing,' who boasts to her husband scornfully of her wealth and personal attractions, is the speaker. In the second stanza, the disconsolate husband replies, and intimates that her desired demise would enable him to marry again more according to his own inclination.

p. 182. THE COOPER O' CUDDIE: Another theme of scandal, in which contempt and not pity, as in 'Had I the Wyte,' is the principle of treatment. It reminds one forcibly of the 'Merry Wives of Windsor'—with this difference, of course, that the husband in the present instance had just cause of complaint, which the scorn of his neighbours did not assist him to avenge; whereas Master Ford, of the Royal Burgh of Windsor, had none.

p. 182. THE CARDIN O'T: On a very different theme, illustrates—after the fashion of 'John Anderson, my Jo'—the tenderness and enduring vitality of pure conjugal love.

p. 182. I'LL AY CA' IN BY YON TOWN: Dedicated to Jean, yet, most strangely, not acknowledged. One of the most perfectly beautiful love lyrics anywhere extant. It does not rise to the highest tones of passion or devotion; but, as indicating the circumstances and growing warmth of forbidden love, with the new kindling of the flame at every stolen interview, the most careful and elaborate combination

of language could not surpass it. The tune must have been a great favourite with our Author, for this is one of three compositions to the same sweet melody.

p. 183. WHEREFORE SIGHING ART THOU, PHILLIS? A love-warning to scornful beauties, was specially written; and

p. 183. MARY: otherwise entitled POWERS CELESTIAL: was communicated to supply the place of old words for the song of 'Blue Bonnets,' which could not be found. The song to MARY, here under notice, seems to have had originally reference to that lost object of his love, Mary Campbell, on the eve of his own intended exile to the West Indies. Mr. Chambers speaks of it as having been "found amongst the Poet's manuscripts after his death," and as "entitled by himself, 'A Prayer for Mary:,'" which is very likely to have been the case; for such duplicates, in their first forms, were often discovered in his repositories. But the song, nevertheless, had been already forwarded by him to Johnson, for publication in the 'Museum,' where it appears in the fifth volume, No. 460, without any title at all. As a matter of more importance, however, it suggests to ourselves another opportunity of illustrating the parallel which we have so much pleasure in pursuing, and which it seems to us of great moral consequence to establish, between our Author and Petrarch.

L' alma, eh' é sol da Dio fatta gentile;
Che già d' altrui non pò venir tal gratia;
Simile al suo fattor stato ritene.

Parte Prima: Canzon, xxi.

That soul, by God alone so finely framed;
For from no other could such beauty flow;
Like its own perfect source appears below.

p. 183. BANNOCKS O' BARLEY: A Jacobite war-catch, written by Burns expressly to supply words for a fine old air which had hitherto been encumbered with songs too indecent or wearisome for admission. The only remark it is necessary to add is, that the chorus, in some editions of our Author's works, is printed with a variation, thus—

Bannocks o' bear meal,
Bannocks o' barley;
Here's to the lads wi'
The bannocks o' barley.

p. 183. WAE IS MY HEART: The air, Stenhouse informs us, as well as the words of this fine song, was communicated by Burns. The words, of course, although never acknowledged, are his own: the air he had picked up, and noted for preservation, at the mouth of some local musician—of Kirsty Flint, most probably. The sentiment of the song is perfect.

p. 184. HERE'S HIS HEALTH IN WATER: Supposed dramatic monologue by Jean, in the same spirit of reliance on her betrothed husband, and confidence in her power to regain him, as is illustrated elsewhere in 'Out over the Forth' [p. 181].

p. 184. THE TAYLOR: A passing effusion of its own class, written to suit some music, and occupy the page.

p. 184. THERE GROWS A BONIE BRIER BUSH: Suggested by an older ballad, which seems to have had an underlying political sense, and from which a single line or two have been retained by our Author, who by his own workmanship has rendered it entirely new. In his hands it is, in fact, a

beautiful little drama. The scene, the love, the discovery, the retreat, the quarrel, the vexation, the pride, and the hope of a better future—these all speak for themselves in that clear, compact, suggestive lyric perfection, for which every word of Burns is remarkable.

p. 185, c. 1, s. 1. He's a bonie, bonie laddie, and yon be he.

incorrectly printed in most editions

. and you be he:

which is foolish, being impertinent.

. and yon be he.

So, distinctly in 'Museum;' but 'and,' as it often does, seems here to signify what 'an' would signify—that is, *if*:—

He's a bonie, bonie laddie, *if* yon be he.

p. 185. THE FAREWELL: The authorship, or at least the originality, of this most beautiful ballad has been much disputed. It is one of those to which Burns himself makes no claim, and lies among the many unaffiliated productions of his muse. There is, indeed, an older ballad on the same or a similar subject, in which one verse occurs that has some resemblance to stanza III.—and it is possible this may have been the key-note of our Author's composition. The old ballad is quoted by Kirkpatrick Sharpe, in his additions to Stenhouse, at full length, fortunately, so that collation can be made. We have collated the pieces: but we can see no other relation whatever between them, than that already hinted; and are quite at a loss to imagine on what grounds any doubt could be suggested to invalidate the ascription of the song now before us to Burns.

p. 185. THE HIGHLAND WIDOW'S LAMENT: "This pathetic ballad," says Stenhouse, "was wholly composed by Burns for the 'Museum,' unless we except the exclamation, 'Och-on, och-on, och-rie!'" which appears in the old song on the 'Massacre of Glencoe.'" The same authority further adds, that "the present ballad, like many others of our great bard, has had the misfortune to be disfigured since its first publication by three additional verses of a modern poetaster,"

. which "are no more to be compared with the fine verses of Burns, than the daubings of a sign painter with the pictures of Raphael." The "fabricated stanzas," which first appeared in Cromeke, we need not quote. We have only further to add, that our Author's own words, in this most beautiful ballad, are commonly misprinted, even in the best editions of his works—by which comparatively as much injury is done to the original as by interpolation. In most editions, for example, besides other variations, the last verse is but a repetition of the first—which reduces it to tameness itself. As it stands in the 'Museum,' and as we have reproduced it, there is a change in the last verse, which makes it entirely distinct, and infuses into it a passionate bitterness of grief, which marks at once the lyrical perfection of the original.

p. 186. HANDSOME NELL: One of the earliest of our Author's productions, dating from spring of 1775. This was one of the pieces contained in the Stewart (Stair) Manuscript; of which we possess, by courtesy of its present proprietors, an accurate certified copy. [See Notes on Various Readings.] With reference to certain portions of that manuscript, the

Author says "The following songs were all done at a very early period of life, and consequently are incorrect." The songs here referred to are 'My Nanie, O,' 'Handsome Nell,' and 'Ruined Farmer.' Of 'Handsome Nell'—which in manuscript has no title, he farther remarks "The following song is only valuable to those who would wish to see the Author's first productions in verse. It was composed when he was a few months more than his sixteenth year." In manuscript copy, verse IV. reads thus—

But Nelly's looks are blythe and sweet,
Good-humor'd, frank and free;
And still the more I view them o'er,
The more they captive me.

Verse v., in original copy, seems to be awanting. The Author subsequently [see Annotations] himself characterises this song as "very puerile and silly"—but he recalled it, nevertheless, with enough of interest for the heroine's sake, to brush it up for the 'Museum'—which closes the list of his original Unacknowledged Contributions to its pages.

FRAGMENTS, REVISIONS, ETC.

Besides those unacknowledged productions of our Author which we have just now reviewed, there was a very considerable number of another class, not so important, but still deserving of notice, included among his contributions to the 'Museum.' These consisted of *Fragments* in one or two verses to eke out old imperfect songs, of *Revisions* or *Renewals* by him of songs not imperfect but inferior, and lastly, of what may be called *Corrections*, or pieces merely retouched—that is, examined, and here and there renewed by a word or two, where such alterations were by himself thought necessary. Of these three classes in all, we find no fewer than sixty different compositions—fragments, revisions, or corrections—by the hand of Burns in the 'Museum,' a few acknowledged by himself, the majority not. In examining this large additional mass of authorship, we found it necessary (1) to omit from the present edition almost all the mere Corrected Pieces, because they were not in reality our Author's own, and it was impossible to determine exactly the very corrections which had been made by him; (2) to omit also several of the Revised Pieces, both because the revisions, in some instances, did not sufficiently remove the grossness of the original songs, and because his own dying request to this effect was earnest and imperative; and (3) among the Fragmentary Pieces, to distinguish as carefully as we could, by interposing brackets, the words of the original old songs from the words or verses added by our Author. After this process there remain, worthy of preservation, either because they are the Author's own, or so much his own by renovation as really to belong to no one else, thirty-four songs or snatches recognisable in the 'Museum.' These we have accordingly transferred to our pages, under a distinct designation, and as a separate class. In the opinion of some of our readers, we might perhaps have omitted a few even of the number we have retained; but we were scrupulous in this selection, because wherever Burns's hand was distinctly traceable, it became a question of editorial fidelity to preserve it; and also, because, although these revisions were by no means always so worthy of himself as

his own original work would be, they constitute still an important part of the great hitherto unprecedented enterprise, so lovingly and bravely undertaken by him, to revise, rewrite, and purify the whole SONG LITERATURE of Scotland, or to substitute new in its place. When the extent of labour implied in this work, the difficulty and delicacy of the work itself, the taste, the discrimination, and the genius required to accomplish it with anything like success, are all taken into account, it would appear little less than a miracle that it should have been done so perfectly by a single hand in so short a time. When the immense moral benefit accruing from it to the world is farther considered, the few moral defects observable in the process itself can be accounted little more than the inevitable inequalities or specks on the surface of some magnificent landscape, or air-spots in the largest solid mass of many-tinted echoing crystal. To know, finally, that the grand, unequalled labour was performed in the midst of pain and poverty—rewarded in one case with the sum of five pounds, forced on the Author's acceptance, and in the other case by two copies of the 'Museum,' one for himself, and the other for a friend—is enough surely, in these days of golden literary enterprise and author-worship, when mechanical inventions or the competition of trade have carried knowledge and amusement to the homes of millions, and identified it with the richest commercial capital, to awaken thoughts of wonder and love, of veneration almost, towards the man, for his heroism and self-denial, in the breasts of the most successful and indifferent.

Such remarks, at this point in the progress of our review, we consider the more appropriate, in as much as the Fragments and Revisions themselves, although a necessary part of the whole, do not otherwise demand so careful a commentary as the original and more perfect productions of our Author. There are, however, several which require some annotation, and the most important of these we shall accordingly illustrate.

p. 188. LANDLADY, COUNT THE LAWIN: Founded on an old Jacobite fragment, to the air of 'Hey tuttie, taitie,' is remarkable chiefly from the accident that it preoccupied the very air to which the original edition of 'Scots wha hae' was composed, and so prevented the appearance of that magnificent national hymn in its proper form at a later date; in as much as the publisher could not, or did not think himself at liberty to introduce the air a second time, even with such a wonderful accompaniment.

p. 188. RATTLIN, ROARIN WILLIE: The last stanza alone of this admirable song is by our Author, and was added in compliment to William Dunbar, Esq., Colonel of the 'Crochallan corps,' Edinburgh. Hence the reference. [See Author's Annotations on 'Museum.']

p. 189. I LOVE MY LOVE IN SECRET: A revision and exquisite remodelling of an old worthless original, from which indecency has been banished by purity, and vulgarity by tenderness and truth.

p. 189. AY WAUKIN, O: A beautiful, brief plaint, partly original, the first verse being by our Author, the two last verses revised by him.

p. 190. THE CAPTAIN'S LADY: On sufficient evidence, ascribed wholly to Burns.

p. 190. CA' THE EWES: A revision, containing also new verses by our Author, which speak for themselves by their own inimitable tenderness. The Author himself gives an account in letter to Thomson, September, 1794, of the circumstances in which he first heard and secured the air, 1787.

p. 191. FRAE THE FRIENDS AND LAND I LOVE: Supposed to be wholly by Burns, although he acknowledges only "the last four lines, by way of giving a turn to the theme of the poem, such as it is."

p. 191. JOHN, COME KISS ME NOW: Altered by our Author to make it passable for 'Museum,' from a strange original godly 'sang or ballat' in Wedderburne's Collection of 1549, for spiritual purposes in the Reformation days of our forefathers, to which the Revival Hymns of our own afford the closest counterpart. The spiritual adaptation of the godless original was in the following style:—

John, come kiss me now,
John, come kiss me now;
John, come kiss me by and by,
And mak nae mair ado.

My prophets call, my preachers cry,
John, come kiss me now;
John, come kiss me by and by,
And mak nae mair ado, &c.

Which is, in fact, but a rhythmical and devout enough invocation to the people to turn from the idolatrous practices of the Roman Catholic Church to the simpler worship of the true God; and was doubtless not only well-meant, but a vast improvement, by way of adaptation, on the profane and perhaps blasphemous original. But how little such psalmody as this could permanently affect the morals or religion of the people for good, must be evident; and how much one great genius has done for the nation, first by purifying, and then by restoring to their native themes, the songs of the people, must be plain enough, on reflection, we should think, to the most prejudiced understanding.

p. 192. I DO CONFESS THOU ART SAE FAIR: Remodelled and much improved lyrically from an old piece by Sir Robert Ayton, which consists of four stanzas with a good deal of elaboration. [See Author's Annotations on 'Museum.']

p. 192. THE TITHER MORN: A sweet little idyllic sketch, reasonably ascribed wholly to Burns, both words and music having been sent by him to the publisher, with neither avowal nor denial on the subject of authorship.

p. 193. AS I WAS A WAND'RING: "Said to be correct Scottish metrical version of the Gaelic song, from an English translation communicated to Burns with the original air."—*Stenhouse*. Our readers, perhaps, scarcely require to be reminded, that the "bleeding of the wounds" afresh at sight of the lady's false lover, is a reference to the universal superstition among our forefathers, that the approach of a murderer caused the wounds of his victim to bleed. [For special illustration of this, see Sir Walter Scott's tragedy of 'Auchendrane.']

p. 193. WHEN SHE CAM BEN SHE BOBBED: A revision, but confessedly a very great improvement on the original; which, indeed, without such 'burnishing,' as Mr. *Stenhouse* calls it, could not have been admitted to the 'Museum' at all.

p. 193. KENMURE'S ON AND AWA: In celebration of Viscount Kenmure's rising on behalf of the Chevalier de

St. George, in 1715. Kenmure was commander-in-chief of the rebel forces in the south-west of Scotland during that insurrection. He surrendered at Preston; was subsequently committed, with much popular indignity, to the Tower in London; was tried and condemned for high treason, and executed on Tower Hill, February 24th, 1716. The song is entirely our Author's, and was transmitted by him in his own handwriting for publication. Some spurious verses were afterwards connected with it by Cromeke, in his 'Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song;' but the original, as it stands before us here, requires no further attestation than its own spirit-stirring rhythm, which sounds in every syllable like the clang of arms, and from first to last is like the tread of horses, and the trill of clarions.

p. 194. MY COLLIER LADDIE: Supposed to be entirely our Author's, although he does not acknowledge it at all; perhaps that he might say more freely what he thought about it—that it was one of the blithest old songs he knew.

p. 194. THE POOR THRESHER: Ought not strictly to have been included in this division of our Author's works, for as much as it is neither a Fragment nor a Revision, but a perfect, original production. But as it is not properly a song, although set to music, and as there has been a good deal of doubt about its authorship, we judged it better to place it where it appears. Burns himself admired it, but did not avow its composition. In a note accompanying it to Johnson, our Author says, "*It is rather too long, but it is very pretty, and never, that I know of, was printed before.*"—The simple fact, indeed, that it has never elsewhere been found, is morally conclusive on the subject. It may be objected, indeed, that although the sentiment is fine, the workmanship is inferior, which cannot be denied; but the inferiority is of a peculiar kind and manifestly intentional, to give the air of rude simplicity to the whole. On the other hand, the resemblance of the narrative, and the moral sense pervading it, to the descriptions and moral teaching of the 'Twa Dogs' and the 'Cotter's Saturday Night' is so obvious; nay, the very repetition of certain phrases and ideas, as if quoted from them, is so plain, as to render it beyond all doubt certain that the author of them all must have been the same man.

p. 195. THE SLAVE'S LAMENT: "Both words and music of this song were communicated by Burns for the 'Museum.' The air, it is said, is an original African melody."—*Stenhouse*. More concerning its authorship is not distinctly known. Kirkpatrick Sharpe believes "that Burns took the idea of his verses from *The Betrayed Maid*, a ballad formerly much hawked about in Scotland." Chambers would hesitate "to assign this song to Burns," but for its "resemblance to another song of his, entitled *The Ruined Farmer's Lament*. We have no great doubt that it was written by Robert Burns, although it is by no means in his usual style: and we venture to hint, that it might just as easily have been suggested to him by his correspondence with Helen Maria Williams, with whose poem of the 'Slave Trade' he was acquainted (and of which, as we know, he wrote a very handsome critique), as by any other circumstance.

p. 196. THE CARLS OF DYSART: Has much the appearance of being a revision; but, according to *Stenhouse*, has never

been seen in any other collection. Both words and music were communicated by our Author. Whether a revision or original, it is at least a most characteristic sketch of fisherman life on the coast of Fife; where the Scotch is highly impregnated with the reckless old Dutch and Norwegian seafaring element.

p. 196. O GIN YE WERE DEAD, GUDFMAN: Is a revision, with omissions, and eight lines original in their place, by our Author. In 'Museum,' and possibly elsewhere, last chorus is strangely misprinted—

Sing round about the fire, &c.,

which has no relation to the circumstances;

Syne round about the fire, &c.,

being manifestly the correct reading.

p. 196. THE AULD MAN: "The words and music of this song were communicated by Burns, as an ancient fragment, for the 'Museum.'"—*Stenhouse*. It appears, however, on examination, according to same authority, that it is in reality a parody on the old song, from which the title is retained for the music. We must observe, for the information of the reader, that the concluding line—

Wi' his auld beard newlin shaven,

is the correct edition. The word *newlin* or *newlins*, like *stounlin* or *stounlins*, is accurate Scotch, and should never be replaced with the English adverb *newly*. It is a descriptive as well as an adverbial word, and implies a certain state of matters in appearance as well as in time.

p. 197. WILL YE GO AND MARRY, KATIE? This pretty little pastoral, in which sagacious, half-humorous warnings are mingled with the usual love-entreaties or addresses, was communicated by our Author for publication in 'Museum,' and no other author is known. The title of the music, which is identical, may have suggested the words; further we have no key to the composition, and are, therefore, justified in accepting it as entirely original.

p. 198, 199. Of the various short pieces which appear on these pages, enough is already indicated in the text to inform the reader of their character, as revisions, compilations, or translations. We have simply, as on many former occasions, to remind the reader that any slight impropriety which may appear in some of them, is truly as nothing in comparison with the original old indecency, which our Author, in such instances, by a touch of his pen, wiped away.

p. 200. Of the Fragments which remain, SWEETEST MAY is but a pleasant little parody; and O THAT I HAD NE'ER BEEN MARRIED, of which only the concluding verse is by Burns, has a melancholy interest from the fact that it expresses too truly the occasional sad forebodings which overclouded his later years; and was so quoted by him in a letter to his friend Mrs. Dunlop, as the reader will hereafter find. The swift, but terribly expressive glance of 'Want and Hunger *glowrin* by the hallan en,' is such as no one perhaps but himself, in actual apprehension of poverty, could have embodied in a word.

Besides the Revisions thus authoritatively communicated by our Author for publication in the 'Museum,' there were two others, of which he desired no public mention to be made.

These were not revisions of any old originals that required amendment or purification, but friendly re-readings and embellishments of more favoured documents. 'Clarinda,' it appears, who enjoyed the poetic gift far enough to attract his admiration, had more than once submitted compositions of her own to his partial and indulgent criticism. Two of these, retouched by him, were admitted, at his request, to the 'Museum;' and these, although we did not consider them entitled to a place among his own works proper, we think it right to introduce here.

TALK NOT OF LOVE, IT GIVES ME PAIN.

TALK not of love, it gives me pain,

For love has been my foe;

He bound me with an iron chain,

And plung'd me deep in woe.

But friendship's pure and lasting joys,

My heart was form'd to prove;

There, welcome, win and wear the prize,

But never talk of love.

Your friendship much can make me blest,

O, why that bliss destroy!

Why urge the only, one request

You know I will deny!

Your thought, if love must harbour there,

Conceal it in that thought;

Nor cause me from my bosom tear

The very friend I sought.

TO A BLACKBIRD.

Go on, sweet bird, and soothe my care,

Thy tuneful notes will hush despair;

Thy plaintive warblings, void of art,

Thrill sweetly through my aching heart.

Now chuse thy mate, and fondly love,

And all the charming transport prove;

While I a lovelorn exile live,

Nor transport, or receive, or give.

For thee is laughing nature gay;

For thee she pours the vernal day:

For me in vain is nature drest,

While joy's a stranger to my breast!

These sweet emotions all, enjoy;

Let love and joy thy hours employ!

Go on, sweet bird, and soothe my care;

Thy tuneful notes will hush despair.

Finally, we may add, under the same category, four lines prefixed by him to a beautiful song by Miss Cranstoun, afterwards Mrs. Dugald Stewart, that all the stanzas of the original piece might suit the music:—

The tears I shed must ever fall,

I mourn not for an absent swain:

For thought may past delights recall,

And parted lovers meet again.

[I weep not for the silent dead, &c.

This concludes our Author's connection with the celebrated 'Scots Musical Museum,' whether by editorial assistance or by original contribution. And when we consider, as already intimated, the extent and variety of that work—in the amount of music and ancient song recovered and transmitted by himself alone, of which we have not told the half; the number of extant inferior pieces revised and remodelled, or purified by him; the number of imperfect pieces restored to far more than their own native beauty; and above all, the mass of pure and perfect original compositions superadded by his unwearied hand; and remember how this was done, in the midst of overwhelming care and multitudinous irksome avocations, and that the sole reward of all his pains was to be a copy of the Work itself when finished—we may well affirm that, either in a moral or artistic point of view, it has scarcely a parallel in the HISTORY OF LETTERS.

THOMSON'S COLLECTION.

BUT his labour in this department of National Literature was not thus concluded. Whilst the 'Museum' was still in progress, as we are already aware, he was contributing also, with the devotest profusion of gratuitous literary service, to the delight of the public, and the enrichment of another similar national enterprise—the celebrated 'Collection' of George Thomson.*

In reproducing the contents of 'Thomson's Collection,' at which we have now arrived, we have had a much more difficult task than in editing from the 'Museum,' which was an authority simple and sufficient in itself. We have confined ourselves, in the present case, as the reader is already aware, to the first four volumes of the 'Collection,' which constituted the original work, and for which actual preparation was made by our Author. For the two additional volumes, materials might possibly also be in store from his hands; but as these did not appear until a much later date (after many editions of the Poet, in fact, were already in circulation), what may be

* George Thomson, Esq., for many years Principal Clerk to the Honourable Board of Trustees, Edinburgh, was born at Limekilns, Fifeshire, about the year 1759. His father was a teacher there. After several removals, and the usual hardships of poverty attending the profession, the young man at last obtained a situation as writer's clerk in Edinburgh; from which he was promoted, by interest of John Home, author of 'Douglas,' to the comparatively affluent and easy post which he occupied, with a good deal of leisure for literary and musical pursuits, till the time of his death; which took place at Leith Links, February 18th, 1851. He was a proficient on the violin, and devoutly attached to the study and collection of the native melodies of Scotland; and ultimately, with the assistance of the highest musical and literary talent of the day, began, as an amateur, preparations for the celebrated work with which his name is now identified. Although personally unacquainted with Burns, he naturally first applied to him, as the unquestioned living master of his art, to undertake song-writing where required for the 'Collection;' a request which was complied with, as our readers are aware, in that style of self-sacrificing *abandon*, which characterised our Author in all such transactions. The correspondence which ensued will be found in its own place. "The series of the original letters and songs addressed by Burns to Thomson, arranged and bound in one volume, were exposed to sale, by auction, in November, 1852, at the upset price of £210, and fetched Two Hundred and Sixty Guineas."—*Stenhouse*. Some particulars connected with the ultimate disposal of this correspondence, known to us, are extremely interesting, although we do not feel at liberty to disclose them.

Only the first half volume of the 'Collection' appeared during our Author's lifetime. It was published in 1793. The remaining portions appeared afterwards at the following intervals:—Second half, first volume, 1798; second volume, 1799; third, 1802; fourth, 1805, fifth, 1818—1826; sixth, 1841. This edition was in handsome folio; other editions, one in royal octavo, have since been published.

found in them will appear more naturally among his posthumous writings. Ground for the Editor was therefore, to this extent, easily restricted. When the various pieces contained in the 'Collection,' which had already appeared in the 'Museum,' or former editions of our Author's works, and were quoted from the 'Museum' or elsewhere, by his own authority, into the 'Collection,' had been deducted and placed as they have been to Johnson's or to Burns's own account, the remaining songs provided by our Author for Thomson's original work were reduced to eighty in all. Three or four of these are but variations, or second editions of certain pieces which had already appeared in the 'Museum,' and have been so specified; the rest are original, and appertained exclusively to Thomson, as Editor. The limits of this division of our work, by this process of elimination and redistribution, are therefore thus, and have been, clearly defined. But the condition of the text was a most important and difficult subject; where so many conflicting authorities interfered, that discrimination became perplexing. At so late a date as this, when the original documents have been scattered through so many individual hands, or are otherwise inaccessible, all hope of actual examination by ourselves was abandoned; but this loss we did not so much deplore, having several competing editions, each purporting to be the genuine one, before us: and on this competition of authorities, we cannot refrain from making at least one remark:—

Thomson, as an editor, has been much applauded by some, and much condemned by others; yet we do not know a single instance in which Thomson's own edition has been faithfully consulted, or at least adhered to, throughout. The very titles of the songs, as he has produced them, have been changed; Currie, Cromek, or some fugitive MS. authority in private hands, has been always substituted for him—who had the first right to be heard; and endless corruptions by succeeding editors have been added, till what was originally Thomson's edition is not now recognisable, except in himself. He has both the credit of versions which he did not produce, and the discredit of alterations of which he was never guilty; and what was really Burns's in his hands cannot, without the minutest scrutiny of the original documents, be determined. That Thomson sometimes made mistakes, typographical or editorial, in his reading of Burns, is obvious; that he sometimes took liberties with the orthography—reducing it everywhere as much as he could to the English standard; and that he sometimes even intermeddled with the text, cannot be denied. That he occasionally, with or without permission, and by Erskine's advice, interpolated a line to accommodate the music, he publicly avows; but such lines being always printed in *italics*, with particular specification as his own, and for the purpose avowed, no injury whatever is thereby done to Burns. And in conclusion, it is manifest that Thomson's estimate of his own editorial privileges and abilities was sufficiently high; but for all these privileges, he had the Poet's express authority: who disputed with him in earnest, only when he presumed too far, and in cases which are now distinctly ascertained for the world. On the whole, his 'Collection' is entitled to much respect, in so far as its editorship of Burns is concerned; and with all its imper-

fections, there can be no doubt that the editions of many songs therein contained are preferable to other editions of the same songs elsewhere. *Palnam, qui meruit, ferat.*

But it is with Robert Burns, and not with George Thomson, we have now to do: and the questions of importance in any disputed instance are, Which was the version actually communicated by Burns for publication? How far did he acquiesce in any suggestions made to him with that view? or, of his own accord, or in other manuscripts, subsequently alter the text? So far as the general public is interested, and except in a few instances, so far as we ourselves are aware, Dr. Currie's edition is the great counter-authority to Thomson's in these respects. Both editors had the fullest access to Author's manuscripts, so far as the compositions immediately in question are concerned; for, besides the papers in the Author's own repositories, which were open to Dr. Currie, the whole correspondence in Thomson's hands was generously surrendered by him to Currie's use, for a posthumous edition of the Poet's writings. In these circumstances, therefore, they must both be heard: and, as between two such privileged authorities, the difference, without at all or much affecting the Author's sense, is curious in detail; and to the outside world, where the mysteries of editorship are less known, instructive also. Where we have had opportunity of comparing originals, and taking 'Johnson's Museum' in evidence as a neutral document in the case, the difference seems to be decidedly in Thomson's favour. On the other hand, Currie edits with discrimination, and there are several instances in which his reading may even be preferred. On either side, the most important variations are such as no editor would be justified, or could be suspected of making, without *some* authority; and that Thomson should have adhered to his *own* version after Currie's edition appeared, in which these very variations were found, is presumptive evidence that he had sufficient authority. The fact seems to be, that there was actual authority on both sides. The documents generously surrendered by Thomson to Currie would be collated by Currie with others in his own possession: where these agreed, the text of course would be uniform; where they did not agree, the respective editors would exercise their discretion in making a choice—which, in judging between them, we also are entitled now to do. In some special instances, by collation, we have united them; in others, where a preference has been made, the rejected readings will be found reproduced in the Notes; and where obvious errors occur in either, which is frequently the case in both, they have been carefully corrected.

Our readers are, then, so far in possession of all that appertains to ourselves of special information on this subject, and of the principles on which our editorship in this department has been conducted. We have only further to add, that the Notes which follow are more strictly critical and moral, or analytical, than historical: the historical details, in connection with the various individual songs, being chiefly embodied in the Author's own correspondence with Thomson himself—the first, and most highly favoured, of all his numerous editors.

p. 201. WANDERING WILLIE: On the original copy of

this exquisite song, Mr. Erskine and Mr. Thomson, who had been 'conning' it over, suggested some improvements. Such suggestions, although they were received with patience and civility by Burns, were always painful to him: yet, in the present instance, it cannot be denied that some of the suggestions were improvements, which his own correct taste immediately discovered and confirmed; the rest were, without remark, rejected. As the correspondence on this subject occupies more than one letter, we refer the reader to the documents themselves. [Literary Correspondence: Burns to Thomson, March, 1793, *et seq.*]

As to the song itself—

p. 201, c. 1, s. 4. But oh, if he's faithless, and minds na his Nanie,
Flow still between us thou wide-roaring main!
May I never see it, may I never trow it;
But, dying, believe that my Willie's my ain!

has been sometimes objected to by female critics, who should be judges, as conveying a sentiment of false satisfaction at variance with their own consciousness. How far this may be true, we know not; but so great a judge of human, and of feminine human nature, as Sir Walter Scott, has confirmed the very sentiment here confessed. In one of the grandest and most elaborate of all his romances, 'Kenilworth,' sweet Amy Robsart's death is identified with this faith; is actually planned and executed on the supposition that she clings, beyond the very evidence of her senses, to the idea of her perjured husband's fidelity to the last. She dies believing, and *because* she believes, that Leicester "is the same."

It is worth remarking also, that almost the identical words (applied however to a woman, and with slightly different sense in application) occur in Petrarch:

Ma io nol eredo nè 'l conoso in vista
Di quella dolce mia nemica e donna:
Nè di ciò lei, ma mia ventura, incolpo.
Parte Prima: Son. clxix.

I'll not believe, I will not see in her,
That sweet fair foe of mine, the slightest wrong:
And not to her, but to my own sad lot,
The blame of all my suffering else belong!

p. 201. BRAW LADS ON YARROW BRAES: In this, as in many other songs in the 'Collection,' there are considerable verbal variations as compared with Currie's edition, and with duplicate copies in Author's manuscript; the most of which, at the moment, gave rise to friendly discussion between himself and his publisher. In present instance, the first verse, according to Currie, should read—

There's braw braw lads on Yarrow braes,
That wander through the blooming heather.

to which we prefer Thomson's edition; the second line in above variation, in comparison with the other, being decidedly weak.

p. 202. THERE'S AULD ROB MORRIS: Two first lines old; and in first stanza a variation. Currie reads—

He has gowd in his coffers, he has owsen and kine, &c.

Stanza iv. reminds us very strongly of more than one passage in Petrarch, but the subject of the song, as compared with his abiding grief, is so different as to render collation unnecessary. Stanza v. may also be compared with the concluding stanza of the 'Lass o' Ballochmyle,' where a much greater similarity of circumstances obtains. Mr. Chambers, on the authority of the lady's own son, informs us that the heroine of this song

was Charlotte Hamilton. This secret was communicated by Burns to Mrs. Dunlop.

p. 202. OPEN THE DOOR TO ME, OH: Is but a revision, with alterations by our Author, of which he modestly says—"I do not know whether this song be really mended." As between Currie and Thomson, there are considerable minor variations in this song, and it is difficult to know on whose side the authority lies. The second line originally stood—

If love it may na be! Oh!

But it is in second verse, where Thomson adopts English orthography, the chief distinction appears. In his 'Collection,' that verse reads—

Oh, cold is the blast upon my pale cheek,
But colder thy love for me, Oh!
The frost that freezes the life at my breast,
Is nought to my pains from thee, Oh!

p. 202. WHEN WILD WAR'S DEADLY BLAST: This beautiful ballad was one of the Author's most favourite compositions. Strange to say, both Erskine and Thomson, men otherwise of good taste, insisted on altering the third and fourth lines of the first stanza. Burns objected, and for some time, whether for this or other reasons, remained silent. In the meantime, the variation proposed by these gentlemen had been sent to the press, and appeared accordingly without his sanction, and not a little to his displeasure. This, however, Dr. Currie assures us, "is the only alteration adopted by Mr. Thomson which Burns did not approve, or at least assent to." If this be correct, and Dr. Currie himself had the best means of ascertaining the facts, having all the manuscripts in his own hands; we may rely with more confidence on the accuracy of Thomson's edition in general, even where it differs from the Doctor's. The alteration by Erskine and Thomson now in question, and which had *not* the Poet's sanction, was as follows:—

And eyes again with pleasure beam'd
That had been blea'd with mourning,

instead of—

Wi' mony a sweet babe fatherless,
And mony a widow mourning.

About the superiority of Burns's own lines there can be no hesitation. It is not, however, so much to their mere artistic superiority we now draw attention, as to their authenticity; and that for two special reasons. First, The lines as they originally stood, and now universally stand, are not only best, but essentially the Author's—in words, in sentiment, in sympathy. Love of children ruled paramount as the highest law of God in his soul; and sympathy for all, especially for women in distress, as the second. He knew nothing of phrenology—which, in his case, abundantly explains the fact. It was with him simply the irresistible impulse of nature. The second reason justifying special attention to the original lines is of quite another nature—affecting his own integrity as an Author. The discussion about these two lines, and their proposed amendment, which occurred between him and his publisher, and which in fact offended him, with his pertinacious adherence to the original lines, and refusal to acquiesce in any change, are simple facts in his literary history of much importance. If the Poet had been conscious of any unworthy imitation on his own part, he would never

have so stoutly resisted, or lamented as he did, till the day of his death, the change proposed and, without his authority, effected; nor would his critics, if they had seen a resemblance elsewhere, have dared to make such change on his authorship without respectfully drawing his own attention to the fact. The sole reason alleged by them seems, as in the case of 'Wandering Willie,' to have had reference to the music. But in reality, a counterpart to the lines, and to one of them almost verbatim, occurs in the 'Battle of Harlaw':—

There was not sen King Kenneth's days
Sic strange, intestine, crewel stryfe
In Scotland sene, as ilk man says,
Quhair mony liklie lost their lyfe;
Quilk maid divorce tween man and wyfe,
And mony children fatherless, &c.

Stan. xxx.

unknown apparently to all the three concerned; and which seems to be absolutely conclusive in Burns's favour, in his alleged imitation of older authors. As for the rest of the poem, it requires not a single word of comment from any one. The scene introduced is on the water of Coil, in the neighbourhood of Coilton, Ayrshire; but the scene of its composition was a small roadside inn at a place called Errickstane Brae; where Burns was commissioned to wait for an hour, or requested permission so to wait, whilst Mr. Findlater, his Supervisor, rode on to survey at Auchenscheoch, on road from New Cumnock to Dumfries: and the circumstance which suggested the poem was their meeting a poor soldier a few miles before, footsore and shabbily clad, on his return to native Ayrshire. For these details, we are indebted to Mr. Cuthbert of Ochiltree.

p. 203. O STAY, SWEET WARBLING WOOD-LARK: The ecstatic, almost ineffable, passion and tenderness of this effusion are beyond criticism; and as a work of mere lyric beauty, in every line and syllable, it is absolute perfection. The circumstances and the appeal, however, have a certain beautiful counterpart in King James (of Scotland) I.:—

An othir quhile the lytill nyghtingale,
That sat upon the twiggis, wold I chide,
And say rycht thus, quhare are thy notis smale,
That thou of love has sung this morrowe tyde?
Seis thou not hir that sittis thee besyde?
For Venus' sake, the blissful goddesse clere,
Sing on again, and mak my lady chere.

Quair: Stan. xxxv.

p. 204. HERE IS THE GLEN: A complimentary song, it would appear, in honour of Lady Elizabeth Heron. [See Thomson Correspondence, May, 1794.]

The village bell has told the hour,
not toll'd the hour,

which is a different word, and wants the poetical significance of the other.

p. 204. HOW LANG AND DREARY IS THE NIGHT: also SWEET FA'S THE EVE ON CRAIGIE-BURN: Both beautiful songs, but second editions only of his own originals, which appeared in the 'Museum.' [See Notes, p. 268.] This second edition of Craigie-Burn, although very sweet and musical, has not the glowing passion of the original.

p. 205. O SAW YE BONIE LESLEY? For whole history of this pretty little chaunt, let the reader refer to Author's own

letter to Mrs. Dunlop, August 22nd, 1792; also letter to Mr. Cunningham, September 10th, of same year. In the verses themselves, he unwillingly permitted Mr. Thomson to make choice of a different reading in one of the lines—of which that gentleman unwisely availed himself, preferring—

— s. 1.

And ne'er made sic anither!

to

And never made anither!

as it stood in the original. In concluding stanza—

The powers aboon will tent thee;
Misfortune sha' na steer thee:
Thou'rt like themsel's sae lovely,
That ill they'll ne'er let near thee.

the reader will recognise, without farther note, a strong resemblance to sentiment in 'Powers Celestial,' or 'Prayer for Mary' [p. 183]. This idea of human female loveliness indicating goodness, and resembling the divine nature, or celestial powers; and by its resemblance propitiating their favour, occurs thus at least *twice* distinctly in Burns, and is traceable throughout as a fundamental principle in what may be called the Religion of his Poetry. It grows naturally out of his profound devotion to beauty, and enables him to interpret, after a most instructive and characteristic fashion, this attribute of love for loveliness in the Divine Nature. He accepted this as a supreme law in the universe, and could believe in no sort of doctrine, moral or theological, that was opposed to it. The very same religious reference of all beauty to the Divine Being, and of His supreme love and care for what was thus beautiful, is a distinct moral feature in the poetry of Petrarch, as we have already taken occasion to show [see Note on 'Mary,' p. 282]; and constitutes a distinctive difference, both in his own case and in our Author's, between their amatory devotion on the one hand, and the mere sensuality of licentious writers on the other.

p. 205. O MIRK, MIRK IS THIS MIDNIGHT HOUR: [See Thomson Correspondence, January 26th, 1793.] In Currie's edition, last stanza contains two Scottish words—*fause* for false, and *wrangs* for wrongs; in Thomson's it stands as printed in our text, entirely English, and the change from the one language to the other at the close, where the climax transports the speaker out of self, is pre-eminently characteristic of Burns. [See 'Epistle to Davie,' prayer for 'Jean.'] For this reason, therefore, we adhere to Thomson's edition.

p. 205. TRUE-HEARTED WAS HE: Commences undoubtedly with a reference to 'The Dowie Dens of Yarrow'—that, by including lovers, maidens, and romantic streams; east, west, and south; the compliment in the present case might be complete. The lady referred to is understood to have been Miss J. Staig, a daughter of Mr. Staig's, then Provost of Dumfries, whose name occurs elsewhere in our Author's writings. The lady died at a very early age, as wife of Major Miller, of the Dalswinton family—of whom personally, in some respects, the Poet seems to have had no very exalted opinion.

p. 206. DUNCAN GRAY CAM HERE TO WOO: Is any commentary on this incomparable medley of love, drink, pride, repentance, remorse, pity like a tearful flood, forgiveness, matrimony, and philosophy, in the bewildering atmosphere of a New-Year's morning, required? Criticism, begone! There is no picture like it in the whole range of literature. But the

attentive reader will observe a curious, sly parallel between Maggie's airs and the vagaries of the 'Auld Farmer's Mare' of the same name, on market days, in her youth; and that the Author too, by this time, had slightly altered—in *bieghs* and *skieghs*—his vernacular orthography.

p. 206, c. 2, s. 1.

Shall I, like a fool, quoth he,
For a haughty hizzie die?

reminds us somewhat of the English ditty—

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?
If she be not fair for me—
What care I how fair she be!

Whether any other connection between the two than that of mere coincidence exists, we cannot affirm.

p. 206. LET NOT WOMAN E'ER COMPLAIN: One of our Author's English songs, both in style and language, which he characterises, in his own impatient fashion, as 'deplorably stupid.' Not deplorably stupid, but not altogether like him.

p. 207. O POORTITH CAULD: How different! in every way—in sentiment, in style, and language; yet objected to by Thomson, as 'cold and uneasy'—at least for the air. The Poet declined to alter it, because the subject, or *stuff*, as he called it, would not bear *mending*. Heroine stated by Gilbert Burns to have been "A Miss Jane Blackstock, afterwards Mrs. Whiter, of Liverpool."

p. 207. LAST MAY A BRAW WOORER: [See Note on same song as originally in 'Museum,' p. 275.] In Thomson's own edition there are also variations—

— s. 4.

He up the lang loan to my black cousin Bess:

in original manuscript, this line runs—

He up the Gateslack to my black cousin Bess:

Mr. Thomson objected to this word, as well as to the word Dalgarnock in the next verse. "Mr. Burns replies as follows:

Gateslack is the name of a particular place, a kind of passage up among the Lawther hills, on the confines of this county. Dalgarnock is also the name of a romantic spot near the Nith, where are still a ruined church and a burial-ground. However, let the first line run, 'He up the lang loan,' &c.

It is always a pity to throw out anything that gives locality to our Poet's verses."—Currie. There is, however, in both Currie and Thomson, what seems to be a mistake, and which has generally been corrected as such. The third line of stanza VII. appears in both editions thus—

And how her new shoon fit her auld shauchl't feet;

which is undoubtedly an error, most probably an oversight in the manuscript, as it appears in both, and Author did not survive to correct the press. According to 'Museum,' and the well-known Scotch proverb which the line itself embodies, it should be

And how my auld shoon fitted her shauchl't feet:

'auld shoon' being the contemptuous vernacular designation for a discarded lover. It may be noted in conclusion, that the expression to which Johnson objected as improper, and which prevented earlier insertion in 'Museum,' was

Gude safe us, how he fell a-swearin, &c.

To prevent a similar objection on Thomson's part, the Author in the meantime had changed that form of exclamation to

But, heavens! &c.

at which, we presume, as an amendment, even the strictest precisian among us can hardly help smiling.

p. 208. O WAT YE WHA'S IN YON TOWN? In Thomson's edition the first line of this song, probably to accommodate the music, is printed

O wat ye wha's in yonder town,

The song itself is but a second edition of the original in 'Museum' dedicated to 'Jean.' In present instance the heroine is Mrs. Richard Oswald of Anchencruive, *née* Lucy Johnston of Hilton, a lady remarkable for combining in her person every attribute of grace and beauty. To the inexpressible sorrow of all admiring friends she died prematurely of decline, having been removed to Lisbon for her health in vain. Encomiums upon her beauty and her accomplishments are everywhere to be found. [See Heroines of Burns—Appendix.] On the song before us, Kirkpatrick Sharpe remarks—"Burns has celebrated her in a song of less merit than usual," and then quotes a formal encomium from Dryden, as if it were nearer the truth. O Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe! where was your discrimination then? But Burns may more easily survive the slight, inasmuch as Petrarch himself in Laura's honour could do nothing superior—has in fact anticipated but the very words.

Lieti fiori e felici, e ben nati erbe
Che madonna passando premer suole,
Piaggia che ascolti sui dolci parole,
E del bel piede alcun vestigio serbe.

Parte Prima: Son. cxxix.

"Now haply down yon gay green shaw
She wanders by yon spreading tree;
How blest ye flow'rs that round her blow,
Ye catch the glances o' her e'e!"
[Ye plains that hear her dulest speech,
Her footsteps you both guard and see!]

We cannot help remarking that Thomson's arrangement of this song in stanzas of three verses each, both to suit the music and to give prominence to the idea of the setting sun with which every stanza begins, is decidedly superior to the arrangement of single verses adopted in the 'Museum.'

p. 208. THIS IS NO MY AIN LASSIE: Another indirect beautiful compliment to 'Jean,' and the quiet fascination of her looks. Mrs. Burns's eyes were decidedly beautiful, but the mouth was not a handsome feature in her face; and it is remarkable that, with all his partiality as a lover, the Poet himself never refers to it.

p. 209. BLYTHE HAE I BEEN ON YON HILL: A pretty pastoral idyl, "not in my worst manner," according to his own judgment. If it did not please Thomson—"I will put it in 'Johnson's Museum'"—a remark (to which many similar occur) worth noting, as indicating the editorial authority exercised by the Poet, as regarded management of 'Museum.'

p. 209. HUSBAND, HUSBAND: A piece of admirable humour in his best style, on the favourite topic of matrimonial 'incompatibility.'

p. 210. CONTENTED WI' LITTLE: Memorable as being the song with which our Author wished an engraving of his own portrait, 1795 ("the most remarkable likeness of what I am at this moment, that I think ever was taken of anybody"), to be associated; "in order the portrait of my face, and the picture of my mind may go down the stream of time

together." A very faithful engraving of that portrait, on the whole (although no engraving will ever give the strange deep fire of the original), is already before our readers—as 'Kerry Miniature:' which hereafter [see Appendix] we shall be able, by satisfactory evidence, to identify as the picture in question; and are contented, in the meantime, to leave it without farther commentary, requesting only that readers will carefully compare for themselves every line and word of the song now before us, with every feature and the whole expression of that wonderful, and at first, perhaps, rather painfully impressive portrait. Its own general fidelity, as a truthful representation of the most extraordinary man of modern ages—in grief, in passion, in self-sufficing strength, and in moral triumph—will gradually appear. It is something to be able thus to look at the very man, and at no mere imaginary 'counterfeit presentment' of him, as one now reads his works—and very words themselves—

Come ease or come *travail*, come pleasure or *pain*;

My warst word is—"WELCOME, and WELCOME again!"

not in idle, half jocular, *pococurante* style, which we are too much accustomed to believe in with respect to him; but in solemn, high-souled, even sorrowful earnest. The more we learn to look at him in this light, as a man who had made his peace with God by suffering, and was prepared at the age of thirty-six to meet the solemnest behest of his Creator's hand with resignation and repentance—the better it will be for ourselves in the study of his works, and the better for his own reputation from beginning to end of his unparalleled career. In face of such a portrait, dark-shaded a little as it is, it will be impossible for man or woman any longer to amuse or to deceive themselves at the expense of Robert Burns.

p. 210. A DOWN WINDING NITH: A pretty enough pastoral compliment, in honour of Miss Philadelphia (that is, Phillis) M'Murdo. [See Thomson Correspondence: also Heroines of Burns—Appendix.]

p. 211. O WHA IS SHE THAT LO'ES ME? The first line of which was altered, whether with permission or otherwise we do not know, by Thomson; in whose edition it reads—

O wat ye wha that lo'es me?

The song itself is the third by our Author to same air; the exact date of composition not ascertained. The songs formerly written to this difficult air, which was so great a favourite of his, do not seem to have satisfied Burns ('The Young Highland Rover' being one of them): but the present song is one of the most perfect pieces of lyrical composition in any language. We make this brief comment with much deliberation. Let it be tried by all the rules of criticism in such cases, and we will risk judgment for it against anything of the same class that ever was written. In such compositions, the supreme difficulty is to preserve the passion and the poetry and the music together, without artifice on the one hand, or imperfect workmanship on the other. Nothing, in the first place, could be more difficult than to write without artifice to such a complicated air—but no artifice can be seen; or, in the second place, to preserve and intensify the passion with every succeeding stanza—but passion is preserved and intensified, to a climax of distraction; or finally, to interweave

one stream of language, where so many involutions are implied, without confusion or jeopardy to sense—but the language from beginning to end is so perfectly interwoven that a syllable cannot be wanted, and could not be otherwise placed. In one stanza, indeed, the expression is so abbreviated that an additional word is really required to complete the sense; but the dexterity with which the want of that word is hidden is so fine, that not one reader in a thousand, unless critically disposed, would be likely to detect it. The omission occurs in stanza III., at end of second line:

If thou hast heard her talking,
And thy attention's plighted, [so]

where adverb is manifestly required to connect the sentence. The verse, on account of this ellipsis, is often incorrectly printed, so as to render it unintelligible. We have presented the whole song with as much attention to accuracy, in all details of punctuation and typography, as possible. We have reason to believe, as our readers will hereafter find [see Note —'Mark yonder pomp of costly Fashion], that the nameless heroine of this beautiful song was either the Miss M'Murdo above referred to, or Miss Jean Lorimer.

p. 211. SHOULD AULD ACQUAINTANCE BE FORGOT? We come now to one of the most important critical problems in our Poet's authorship—his connection with this wonderful song: a song which he never publicly avowed, which, on the contrary, he indirectly ascribed to some unknown author; but which has never hitherto been traced to anyone, beyond or before himself. Our own investigation shall be brief, and we hope conclusive. "One song more," says our Author [to Thomson, September, 1793], "and I have done: *Auld Lang Syne*. The air is but *mediocre*, but the following song, the old song of the olden time, and which has never been in print, nor even in manuscript, until I took it down from an old man's singing, is enough to recommend any air." In writing on same subject to Mrs. Dunlop he uses similar language. He had also said something like this already about 'The Poor Thresher;' but having once said anything even half so strong about his own workmanship in either case, he could never again unsay it. His own testimony, therefore, except in limited reference to some old groundwork of a chorus which he may have heard, may be set aside, and all claims of authorship beyond that must be determined by internal evidence. We have been very careful to produce this. Our readers will find three distinct versions of the song in present edition: (1) Stenhouse's revised edition from 'Museum,' where only order of verses is different; (2) present edition from Thomson, which may be called the final edition; (3) in Various Readings, the original edition of first verse and chorus from 'Museum,' in which there is considerable difference of words. On comparison of these three editions, it appears (1) that no verbal alteration whatever occurs in the song, except on first verse and chorus; (2) that in original order of verses, it seems as if the Author would have concluded the whole song in three, with repetition of chorus to each, but in the very act of writing paused, and added two more; (3) that on subsequent revision, he changed the order of these verses to produce greater harmony, and to hide the pause; (4) and finally, that from beginning to end, there is not a line which has the

appearance of rude antiquity, except the last line of the first verse and the chorus, as they originally appeared in the 'Museum,' and are reproduced in our Various Readings—which are the very lines, and the only lines, that have been altered by our Author in subsequent editions. If there be any real fragment of an older date in the song, therefore, it must be among these lines; but these lines having been so far remodelled by our Author, the entire song, as it now stands, may be ascribed wholly to himself. Never surely did any master, through sheer modesty or indecision, put such a triumph, with all its honours, so strangely away from him! That there was, however, some old chorus in reality, with perhaps a line or an expression or two—such as 'trusty feirc,' or 'willie-waught,' which are simple German, or the very oldest Scotch—floating among the unrecorded minstrelsy of the people, is quite probable; for under the same, or a similar title, we have an older song than Burns's; which, however, has nothing else in common with his, and in point of style is not to be compared with it at all. It appears, without author's name, in Part III., Watson's Collection, 1711; it is divided into two parts—First Part containing six stanzas, Second Part four stanzas, of eight lines each; and is devoted to a sort of expostulation on 'The Flames of Love Extinguished' between two old friends—a bachelor, apparently, and an old maid, in altered circumstances. The title of the piece is *Old-long-syne*; the first line of the whole is *Should old Acquaintance be forgot*; and the last line of every stanza is a mere repetition or adaptation of the title. There is no chorus. A stanza or two at this point may be sufficient to illustrate the whole.

Old-long-syne. First Part.

Should old Acquaintance be forgot,
And never thought upon,
The flames of Love extinguished,
And freely past and gone!
Is thy kind heart now grown so cold
In that loving breast of thine,
That thou canst never more reflect
On Old-long-syne?

Second Part.

My soul is ravished with delight
When you I think upon;
All griefs and sorrows take the flight,
And hastily are gone;
The fair remembrance of your face
So fills this breast of mine,
No fate nor force can it displace,
For Old-long-syne.

The only trace of antiquity, as the reader will observe, is in the first line and in the title; the latter ridiculously and painfully misspelt, but containing exactly the same number of words as in the original edition in 'Museum'—where, as in present case, it constitutes a line. Ramsay, in due time, metamorphosed this old song after his own fashion, but pretty much in the same strain—conveying the assurance of unabated friendship and unaltered love, to say nothing of present hospitality, from an old sweetheart to a former lover, whose fortunes may have changed for the worse. It extends to five stanzas. But there is no glimpse in either of the characteristic fragment said to have been recovered by Burns,

and which, if it had ever existed, would most certainly have appeared in both. The 'cup, or kiss, of kindness,' the mutual 'pint-stowp,' and the implied mutual poverty, the 'trusty feire,' the right 'hand' of fellowship, and the 'right gude willie-waught' of unexpected reunion, are all awaiting in these, the only two extant editions of the song known; and may be safely affirmed never to have existed together in any song, till the sympathetic inspiration of our Author introduced them, and so made a new song.*

p. 212. NOW ROSY MAY COMES IN WI' FLOWERS: Second edition of 'The Gardener wi' his Paidle' [p. 171], with an old title adopted, and made ground-work of chorus.

p. 212. IT WAS THE CHARMING MONTH OF MAY: Remodelled from an old English song, which Burns, who disparages his own work also, speaks of as "the bombast original." What the original might have to boast of in the way of elegance, we do not happen to know; but for the song itself, as it now stands, after his remodelling, we venture to affirm that a more charming piece of word-painting—with the freshness, beauty, music, and animation of the dawn—to be left unfinished, (for what becomes of Chloe?) was certainly never executed by poet's pen.

p. 212. CANST THOU LEAVE ME THUS, MY KATY? Supposed to be of date November 17th, 1794; and is remarkable chiefly as being, according to one theory, the first indication of returning friendship on Burns's part towards Mrs. Walter Riddel—with whom, since the unfortunate error at Woodley Park, some ten months previous, he had been at public feud. Notwithstanding all that was painful in the meantime, he seems to have had sufficient reliance on himself and on the value attached by her to his friendship, to send that lady a copy of this song—such, at least, is Mr. Chambers's theory; which she reciprocated in a corresponding strain, as was befitting the circumstances of the case. Dr. Currie, on the other hand, by whom the lady's verses were first discovered among the Poet's papers and published, seems not to have been fully aware of the facts, or to have had a different theory on the subject. By him Mrs. Riddel's verses, apparently in reply to Burns, are identified with certain verses referred to by our Author, as "superior to any edition of the song ('Roy's Wife') which the public has yet seen." The date of this reference being September, 1793, carries the composition alluded to beyond the period of the quarrel altogether; which did not occur till early in the following year. It seems to us, on careful examination of all the facts, and of certain others which have been overlooked, that both theories are so far correct; but that the true theory, involving some delicate moral phenomena in this interesting case, lies beyond them both. (1) It seems almost certain that the verses referred to by Burns in 1793 are the very verses which afterwards appeared in Currie's edition: (2) It is perhaps equally reasonable to suppose that the same verses were, or *could have been*, a reply on the lady's part to the Author's song now before us: (3) It is certain that Burns's song was written on the 20th of November, 1794; and it is almost certain, or at least highly

probable, that it was a direct poetical appeal to Mrs. Riddel for forgiveness and reconciliation. But how came Burns, in the circumstances of the case, to forward that appeal to the lady without encouragement? On this point, Mr. Chambers's theory seems to be only an assumption. In the earlier part of this year, however, as our readers will find, Mrs. Riddel had written to Burns in the midst of their alienation, demanding the return of some song (manifestly her own) then in his hands. This song, it appears, he had lent to Syme, who seems to have blundered it with some criticisms of his own; but having recovered it, the Poet does return it, with apologies to the lady for this accident to the manuscript. The song thus in question, we have no doubt, was the very song referred to by our Author in September of 1793, as having been composed to the tune of 'Roy's Wife,' and better than anything on the same topic that had yet been seen. The recall of this song, therefore, in the circumstances, would seem to him, in his then unhappy frame of mind, an indication of confirmed hostility on the lady's part; and so the lampoons of '*Esopus*' would begin, with all their accompanying ungallant bitterness. A few months, however, elapse, and he is himself called upon to write another song to 'Roy's Wife,' which naturally revives in his mind the recollection of Mrs. Riddel's original words to that very air. Poetical instinct, with a twinge of remorse, suggests all that is then required in the altered circumstances. He writes a new song altogether, in anticipation, as it were, of Mrs. Riddel's own reply already in his mind, and founded on the very style of that reply already known to him as a mere imaginary expostulation, and boldly transmits a copy forthwith to the lady; who is neither slow now to perceive, nor unwilling any longer to do what is ladylike—that is, womanly and generous—at the proper moment. She accordingly copies out her own song once more, possibly with improvements, and so returns it to the repentant Poet in token of her forgiveness and reconciliation; which final copy it must have been that remained undisturbed in his possession till the day of his death. By this explanation, not only is the bitterness of the quarrel now to some extent accounted for, but a key to its *éclaircissement* afforded; and in addition, which is of some importance also in its own place, an adjustment of conflicting dates is accomplished. The scandal connected with this alienation was distressing at the time, and has been a cause of regret ever since to all affectionate admirers of the Poet; but if our investigation be at all correct, there seems to have been secret pain enough too on both sides where it was very little likely to be confessed. The minute, electric, invisible points of irritation which conspired to inflame the quarrel, and the soothing medium of poetry by which they were neutralised, and in which they finally disappeared, are now, however, for the first time perhaps, analytically exposed; and it is not without considerable personal satisfaction we record these conclusions, as affording something like a truthful glimpse into a subject that will always be painful, and has hitherto been perplexing. Of this, more hereafter.

The verses which have suggested this inquiry, and which thus receive additional importance as a moral index to the state of mind of the parties principally concerned, are as under:—

* As objects of curiosity, in comparison with text, we shall endeavour to find room for both songs above referred to, hereafter.

Stay, my Willie—yet believe me;
 Stay, my Willie—yet believe me;
 For Ah! thou know'st na' every pang,
 Wad wring my bosom should'st thou leave me.

Tell me that thou yet art true,
 And a' my wrangs shall be forgiven;
 And when this heart proves fause to thee,
 Yon sun shall cease its course in heaven.

But to think I was betrayed,
 That falsehood e'er our loves should sunder!
 To take the flow'ret to my breast,
 And find the guilefu' serpent under.

Could I hope thou'dst ne'er deceive,
 Celestial pleasures, might I choose 'em,
 I'd slight, nor seek in other spheres,
 That heaven I'd find within thy bosom.

Stay, my Willie—yet believe me;
 Stay, my Willie—yet believe me;
 For Ah! thou know'st na' every pang,
 Wad wring my bosom should'st thou leave me.

p. 213. BRUCE TO HIS MEN AT BANNOCKBURN: The literary delays and accidents connected with the appearance of this world-renowned song, or battle-hymn, have already been explained in our Notes on 'Museum' [p. 275, c. 2]. Commentary on the song itself is unnecessary, but a few remarks as to the date and circumstances of its composition are still required. These, however, may be very brief. Syme's narrative about its composition during a storm among the wilds of Glenken in Galloway, which Currie adopts, although he must have seen a certain apparent inaccuracy in it, has been most ingeniously criticised by Mr. Chambers; who convicts Dr. Currie, in this instance at least, of having altered the text of a letter in order to get rid of the difficulty referred to. According to Chambers, the song must have been written on the thirty-first of August, or first of September, 1793, after an evening's walk by the Poet, without any immediate circumstances of romance, such as those detailed by Dr. Currie, connected with it at all. This conclusion by Mr. Chambers is founded entirely on the terms of the Poet's own letter to Thomson of the above date, which certainly cannot be disputed, and with which Syme's narrative cannot be reconciled. Mr. Chambers, however, has overlooked the fact that Johnson was already in possession of another copy of the same song, in its original form, in connection with Syme's letter; and purporting, or rather therein distinctly stated to have been written on the first of August, "on our ride home [after the thunderstorm] from St. Mary's Isle." The music which Burns had chosen for this original edition having already appeared in the 'Museum,' its publication was postponed; but the manuscript was not recalled. A month later exactly, the Poet, anxious for its appearance, seems to have been ruminating on the subject during an evening walk, and transcribing the words again in their original form, dispatched them to Thomson, with no better success. Whatever additional interest, therefore, this magnificent hymn may derive from having been composed on horseback in a savage wild, during a thunderstorm, in Galloway, according to tradition, remains unshaken by any investigation that has yet been applied to it. The Author seems to have been fully aware of the intrinsic value of this composition, and though he speaks of it in terms of modest depreciation, he did not fail to distribute several copies of it among his friends—the Earl of Buchan included.

p. 214. HERE'S A HEALTH TO ANE I LO'E DEAR: One of the most exquisite pieces of lyrical dramatic love-writing ever published, and composed when the Author himself was already the victim of agonising pain, and other still sadder presages of approaching death. Our readers need hardly be informed that the heroine of this passionate effusion was Jessy Lewars, the friend of his wife, and the affectionate, tender nurse of his own last earthly moments.

p. 214. BY ALLAN STREAM: A song that pleased the Author, on which he makes the two following notes:—

—s. 2. While Phœbus sank beyond Benledi.*

* A mountain west of Strath-Allan, 3009 feet high.—R. B.

O dearly do I love thee, Annie.†

† Or, 'O my love Annie's very bonie.'—R. B.

p. 214. YE BANKS, AND BRAES, AND STREAMS AROUND: One of our Author's highest-class lyrical and passionate outpourings, mingled with grief and pain, as all his songs on this heart-rending topic were. The scene here described incidentally by mere apostrophe, is as accurately described as it could be in any words. For the benefit of the general, and more especially of the English reader, we may here explain that—'bank' is the level ground on the margin of a river, corresponding to 'bink' or 'bench'—*Italice*, 'banco'; and 'brae' is the rising ground above and beyond that, corresponding to 'brow' or 'brie.' [See Glossary.] The scene is characterised by an endless and beautiful variety of these. The 'streams' here spoken of may either mean the two principal streams of the Fail and Ayr, which form a junction in the neighbourhood; or the minor artificial streams into which the Fail itself has been thrown in its circuit round the Castle. It was at the junction of the two principal streams, as we have already stated elsewhere, that the parting scene occurred, in a sheltered nook overhung with trees and strewed with wild flowers. For a description so exactly similar, in circumstance and style, that it seems almost to have been reproduced by Burns, who certainly never saw it, we must refer once more to Petrarch:—

Chiare, fresche e dolci acque,
 Ove le belle membra
 Pose colei, che sola a me par donna;
 Gentil ramo, ove piacque
 (Con sospir mi rimembra)
 A lei di fare al bel fianco colonna!
 Erba e fior che la gonna
 Leggiadra ricoverse
 Con l' angelico seno;
 Aer sacro sereno,
 Ov' Amor co' begli occhi il cor m' aperse;
 Date udienza insieme
 A le dolenti mie parole estreme!

Parte Seconda: Can. xiv.

Ye streams so bright, so fresh, and pure,
 Where her fair form my goddess set;
 Thou gentle spray she loved to train—
 (Alas! with sighs I see it yet),
 Like pillar'd grot to screen her beauteous side;
 Each herb and flower her flowing robe
 O'ershadowed with its heavenly swell;
 Thou air all holy, still, and calm,
 Whence Love, through those bright eyes as well,
 Unfolded all his soul to mine;
 Harken together to my last sad plaint!

p. 215. NOW SPRING HAS CLAD THE GROVE IN GREEN: Remarkable as containing stanzas which the Author, in a

letter to Mrs. W. Riddel (date unknown), speaks of as about to be interwoven by him "in some disastrous tale of a shepherd—

Despairing beside a clear stream," &c.,

a plan which he seems to have abandoned. The letter will be found among hitherto unpublished documents in Correspondence. The verses themselves, for want of this connecting link, have in previous editions been sometimes referred to doubtfully as unknown, or unpublished. In manuscript here alluded to, of which a correct fac-simile from original in possession of Dr. Thomas Charles S. Corry, Belfast, is now before us, some slight variations from the text occur.

p. 216. *HAD I A CAVE*: The second, and perhaps the only successful attempt of our Author's to adapt words, with a suitable sentiment, to the fine, but as he calls it, "crinkumcrankum tune, 'Robin Adair.'" His first composition, entitled 'Phillis the Fair,' to the same tune, does not appear in the 'Collection,' but will be found hereafter among Posthumous Works. It is by no means equal to present song.

p. 216. *COME, LET ME TAKE THEE*: The result of what our Poet beautifully calls "a gloamin-shot at the Muses;" the ideas of last stanza, however, are but a repetition of himself, as the reader will find, on comparing 'Bonie Peggy Alison' [p. 170]. In Currie's edition, that stanza begins—

Thus in my arms, wi' all thy charms, &c.,

which is certainly inferior to Thomson's.

p. 216. *O WHISTLE, AND I'LL COME TO YOU*: Second and enlarged edition of the original song, which first appeared in 'Johnson's Museum.' In present edition there are a few variations of text; that which we have adopted is Author's own, which, also, after some discussion, was finally accepted by Mr. Thomson. [See Correspondence, May, 1795.]

p. 217. *THEIR GROVES OF SWEET MYRTLE*: If it did not suggest, could hardly fail to occur to Lord Byron in his composition of 'Lochnagar.'

p. 217. *THE CHEVALIER'S LAMENT*: To a tune which was one of the Author's great favourites, and written at a much earlier date than the 'Thomson Correspondence.' The original draft differs considerably from the text ultimately adopted; and will be found, as it first stood, in letter to Mr. Cleghorn, March 31st, 1788. [General Correspondence.]

p. 218. *MY NANIE'S AWA*: Another exquisite reference (in which there is more than mere dramatic passion) to Mrs. MacLehose's—'Clarinda'—departure to West Indies.

p. 218. *AWA WI' YOUR WITCHCRAFT*: In quite another strain, must be accepted in its own place. It may be worth observing, as a thing that so rarely or almost never occurs in our Author, that the grammatical syntax in two last lines of stanza II. is imperfect.

p. 218. *WHERE ARE THE JOYS I HAVE MET?* Is, on the other hand, a truly beautiful pastoral ditty, combining more of the merely pastoral with more of the purely love-pathetic than are generally found united in such compositions. It may be accepted as a moral certainty, that in such cases, Burns never allows the fictitious to eclipse the natural, nor the genuine feelings of the heart to be smothered in mere garlands of poetical roses.

p. 219. *THE LASS O' BALLOCHMYLE*: This celebrated song in honour of a lady, whose beauty through its instrumentality has become celebrated—it may be said, immortal—also, was first communicated by the Poet in a letter addressed to herself. [See Heroines of Burns.] As no recognition of this compliment was ever vouchsafed, although anxiously expected, the song was laid aside for the time, but again revised, and with a few verbal variations at editor's discretion, appeared finally in the 'Collection.' Thomson preferred the manuscript as it originally stood in lines referred to, which are:—

— — s. 2. The lily's hue, the rose's dye
 Bespoke the lass o' Ballochmyle.

The same form occurs in the copy which was included by the Poet in the manuscript collection of some of his earlier compositions, presented as a token of gratitude by him to Mrs. Stewart of Stair; so that although a variation was finally adopted by him, he seems to have adhered to the first idea long. The poem dates from midsummer—'bean-blossoming time'—of 1786; and it is obvious from the concluding stanza, that the young Poet, then busy preparing for the press, had been glancing—perhaps with anxious forebodings of his own—at Beattie's opening complaint in the 'Minstrel'—

Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep, where Fame's proud temple shines afar;

which he chivalrously for the moment, although on the very verge of authorship and immortality together, would be ready to relinquish all hope of attaining, for Miss Alexander's sake. Nor is the idea of her father's fortune, won by enterprise in the East, forgotten at the time, although with equal indifference to be resigned also in comparison with her, &c.; himself on the very eve of flying in despair from poverty and shame, to the other horizon of the world. O Robert!

Then pride might climb the slipp'ry steep,
Where fame and honours lofty shine;
And thirst of gold might tempt the deep,
Or downward seek the Indian mine:
Give me the cot below the pine, &c.

p. 220. *THOU HAST LEFT ME EVER, JAMIE*: Compare *THOU HAST LEFT ME EVER, TAM* [p. 215]. In present edition, we have collated with Currie's—where a variation occurs—although, upon second thoughts, we are more than half disposed to prefer Thomson's, which reads in concluding stanzas, without contraction, thus—

— — s. 1. I must see thee never, Jamie,
 I will see thee never!
— — s. 2. Never more to waken, Jamie,
 Never more to waken!

The English form, which, in Thomson's edition of this song, prevails throughout, alone disinclined us to adopt it.

p. 220. *LONG, LONG THE NIGHT*: An exquisite effusion of mingled prayer and terror, dictated unquestionably by the purest affection, and entirely original, as we have already said; although founded on the idea, and adapted to the beautiful old air of 'Ay Waukin, O.' The 'Lassie wi' the Lint-white Locks,' as our readers are no doubt aware, then in dangerous illness, was subject of this earnest supplication.

— — s. 2. Ev'ry hope is fled,
 Ev'ry fear is terror;
 Slumber ev'n I dread,
 Ev'ry dream is horror.

Thus, almost literally alike, Petrarch :

I non hebbi giammai tranquilla notte;
Ma sospirando andai mattino, e sera;
Poi ch' amor femmi un cittadin de bosc'h.
Parte Prima: Son. clxxxviii.

One tranquil night I never spend,
But sighing, wander morn and eve;
For Love hath driven me forth to dwell
Where pathless woods my steps receive.

Thus also, to similar effect—

Tutto 'l di piango; e poi la notte, quando
Prendon riposo i miseri mortali,
Trovom' in pianto, e raddoppiansi i mali;
Così spendo 'l mio tempo lagrimando.
In tristo umor vo gli occhi consumando,
E' l cor in doglia, &c.
Parte Prima: Son. clxxx.

All day I weep, and then the night,
When wretched mortals snatch repose,
Finds me in tears, redoubling all my woes;
Thus time in tears is wasted quite,
My eyes with weeping, and my heart with grief,
Are both consumed without an hour's relief, &c.

In this latter quotation, however, the resemblance is perhaps more striking to the other version of song, with which the reader may compare it [p. 170]; as also with concluding stanza of that exquisite lament, 'The Farewell' [p. 183]—

When day is gane, and night is come,
And a' folk boun to sleep;
I think on him that's far awa,
The lee-lang night, and weep,
My dear,
The lee-lang night, and weep!

p. 220. O BONIE WAS YON ROSY BRIER: Sadly enough for poor 'Chloris,' the devotion here attributed to her lover was but ill realised. In some manuscripts, we believe, there is a variation in fifth line of last stanza; thus—

The flowery wild, and prattling burn:

which was well exchanged by

The pathless wild, and wimpling burn:

In letter containing this song was a copy of verses, addressed in terms of friendship to same lady, which will be found elsewhere. [Posthumous Works.]

p. 221. O LOGAN, SWEETLY DIDST THOU GLIDE: A very beautiful plea in woman's mouth, against the cruelty and horrors of war—whatever diplomatic reasons may be assigned for its continuance.

p. 221. LASSIE WI' THE LINT-WHITE LOCKS: Another, and one of the sweetest, of the many dramatic lyrical compliments to Jean Lorimer. The description of that beautiful but unfortunate girl, here given, is confirmed by Mrs. Burns's testimony, as our readers will find hereafter [M'Diarmid Memoranda, in Appendix]. Her artlessness was conspicuous, and her virtue at that date unimpeachable. The song itself reminds us forcibly of our Author's earlier Ayrshire compositions, in its simplicity and adherence to nature.

p. 222. FAIREST MAID ON DEVON BANKS: Is a more studied composition, to a more difficult melody; and has a good deal of artificial elegance infused into it. It is most painfully remarkable from having been written, with all this polish, during the Poet's last illness, when he was racked with pain and in terror of bankruptcy. It was enclosed in a letter from Brow, 12th July, 1796: which begins with the well-

known melancholy application for five pounds, to save him from the distress of a summons. It seems to have been the very last poetical effusion of his pen, and may well be read again and again for that reason alone. The heroine is manifestly Miss Charlotte Hamilton, to whose cherished friendship, and the bright interval of her society he enjoyed on the banks of the Devon scarcely ten years before, he recurs now with imaginative fondness, when the dim shadows of death and "the horrors of a jail" are crowding the horizon.

p. 222. THERE WAS A LASS, AND SHE WAS FAIR: Transports us again, in the order of publication, to another and a brighter scene, where the courtship at Mauchline seems to be dramatically renewed, although we are expressly informed by the Author that it was to Miss M'Murdo of Drumlanrig this song also referred.

— s. 5. The sun was sinking in the west,
The birds sang sweet in ilka grove;
His cheek to hers he fondly laid,
And whisper'd thus his tale o' love.

Third line in most editions stands otherwise—

His cheek to hers he fondly prest,

which we suspect has been suggested for the sake of a chance rhyme, which does not elsewhere occur between the first and third lines throughout the whole piece.

p. 223. BEHOLD THE HOUR, THE BOAT ARRIVE: Another reference to 'Clarinda,' and originally enclosed in a letter to that lady, December 27th, 1791, in anticipation of her intended visit to West Indies. [Compare 'Ance mair I hail thee, thou gloomy December.']

p. 223. O LASSIE, ART THOU SLEEPING YET? and O TELL NA ME O' WIND AND RAIN: A dangerous love-appeal and most commendable reply, which need no further commentary. The reader may compare verse III. of reply with 'Mountain Daisy.' Circumstances precisely reversed in Shakspear's song of the 'Valentine' by Ophelia:—

Good morrow, 'tis St. Valentine's day,
All in the morning by time,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.

Then up he rose and don'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.—*Hamlet: Act iv.*

p. 223. SLEEP'ST THOU, OR WAK'ST THOU? As this song, which is somewhat complicated in its construction, presents the greatest variation of text, as between Thomson and Currie, we have presented both editions together, for reader's satisfaction.

p. 224. FORLORN, MY LOVE, NO COMFORT NEAR: In this song also there is considerable variation, as between above-named editors. In Thomson's edition, verse III. is wanting, which from Currie's we have introduced within brackets. In Currie's edition, the words throughout appear in the mouth of a lady—the celebrated 'Chloris' of the Author's songs—whose marriage is well known to have been very unfortunate; but as the cause of that misfortune was her worthless husband's conduct, who abandoned her, and was justly liable to the most serious reprobation, it seems more natural to suppose that, as it stands in Thomson's edition, the song was

originally intended for his mouth, as a sort of plea in extenuation of his cruel conduct, and some apology for his heartless desertion. This view of the matter receives confirmation from the style of the foregoing song—'Sleep'st thou, or Wak'st thou, fairest Creature?' in which the speaker complains of being parted from his 'Jeany'—which was 'Chloris's' proper name. In looking a little farther back, to the second edition of 'O Whistle, and I'll come to you, my Lad' [p. 216], in which the lines—

Tho' father, and mither, and a' should gae mad,
Thy Jeanie will venture wi' ye, my lad :

the latter of which the Author insisted should be retained in publication, we seem to have something like a direct reference to that lady's marriage; which took place clandestinely at Gretna Green, much to the distress of her family, in the spring of the year (1793) in which that song was written. The line containing her name, it is true, was not introduced till a later date, but it was so introduced in express compliance with her request. On such evidence, although only presumptive, we have not much doubt that all the songs now immediately under review have some relation, direct or indirect, to Mrs. Whelpdale's marriage. [See Heroines of Burns—Appendix.]

p. 225. MARK YONDER POMP OF COSTLY FASHION: Dedicated again, as our readers will perceive, to Miss M'Murdo's praise; and from the terms most conspicuous in stanza II.—

O then, the heart alarming,
And all resistless charming, &c.,

we are rather disposed to believe that this lady, so much and so often celebrated, must have been the heroine of that most perfect lyric already commented on—'O wha is she that lo'es me?' [p. 211.] On the other hand, in Currie's edition, the name of 'Phillis' is superseded by that of 'Chloris,' a circumstance which again leaves us in doubt on the subject, and which indicates not improbably that the Poet himself was a little undecided in his own choice.

— s. 1. But never, never can come near the heart,
compare with

There's sic parade, sic pomp, an' art,
The joy can scarcely reach the heart.—*The Two Dogs.*

p. 225. O PHELY, HAPPY BE THAT DAY: A pretty little pastoral dialogue, in similar strain to 'There was a Lass, and she was fair,' and most probably in honour of the same lady—Miss P. M'Murdo. Our scholarly readers may compare at their leisure, and with no disadvantage, as they will find, to the credit of Burns, this simple-hearted, affectionate colloquy by him with Horace's love-repartees with Lydia.

p. 226. HOW CAN MY POOR HEART BE GLAD? Another womanly protest against war. In Thomson's edition, stanza II. is wanting. We introduce it in brackets from Currie's, but cannot help thinking that, poetically, the piece, as it originally stood without it in 'Collection,' was better.

p. 227. A MAN'S A MAN, FOR A' THAT: Next to 'Scots wha hae,' and 'Auld Lang Syne,' the best known, and most important national song of our Author's—that is, of the language—was written, as he tells us himself, more in the spirit of *vive la bagatelle!* than in proper earnest. It has, notwithstanding, proved to be the finest earnest in the world, and in moral influence has superseded all social and political philosophies of

the age. It seems to have been composed on or about NEW-YEAR'S-DAY, 1795; and next to its own intrinsic merits as a grand moral manifesto, we think the most remarkable circumstance connected with it is this very fact—that it was so written and at such a time, as a mere *jeu d'esprit* or bagatelle of scorn, ending in prophecy at the moment. It was no mere studied, elaborate, overdone effort of composition or philosophy, to satisfy demand; but thrown off, or rather given out of the man's own breast, in easy rhythmical *bravura* style, with the freshness and pith of independent feeling. Beginning like a careless chant, and rising and swelling as the verses and the topics multiply, it comes to be in the end one of the most effective, sublime, and genial utterances of FAITH IN OUR COMMON MANHOOD, and one of the most contagious outpourings of natural sympathy, on record among men. It is an essentially *Manly* song, and, although intended possibly for a Freemason Lodge at first, has become a prophecy of freedom for the world. It would be impossible for that song any longer to be sung if the people for whom it was originally indited should ever become slaves: its music would be gall and wormwood to them then; its immortal vaticinations in their name and for their sakes an everlasting rebuke. But the fact that it was written by one of themselves—a son of the soil, untutored, unfettered, and unrestrained by fear or fashion; unpurchased, and unpurchasable, by bribes or favour, at the most dangerous crisis—is the best security we can have for our own perpetual freedom. It is our cradle-song, and will be our death-song, if we ever, as a nation, die.

Suppose it had been written 'to order,' as so much now is written, to please a publisher and to 'take' with the trade, it could not possibly have been better written, it would very likely not have been so well; but better or not, its moral value as a prophecy would have been entirely lost: it would no longer have been like life-breath, or a draught of inspiration for the people. Why are so many songs purporting to be national (and some of them very excellent songs, as of Dibdin and other writers) of the last generation, so powerless and ineffectual now? Chiefly because they were written to order—perhaps for a meal of meat, perhaps for government pay—to swell the list of volunteers, or reconcile the victims of the press-gang to the sorrows and shame of the service. Such writers were employed, or found it to be their interest, to sing down the horrors of the lash and cheat men out of their senses who had been kidnapped for slaughter, at the command and by the emissaries of an exclusive junto; and they have ceased to have any permanent interest or value, when the miserable occasion has passed. Burns's song, on the other hand, unpurchased, unpremeditated; above all, unfavourable to the prejudices and principles of the time, being a natural outburst of humanity in music; poured forth in careless, self-reliant, almost scornful geniality of soul—in contempt of rank, privilege, power, fashion, distinction, every accident of time and place, of birth and fortune; and recognising solely the right of man to respect and honour in virtue of his manhood,—has become a sermon in verse for all time, and will realise its own predictions at last, by the very intensity, geniality, and truthfulness of its utterance.

One might say without offence, from a higher point of view,

that the two last stanzas resemble petitions in the Lord's Prayer, or most important principles in our Lord's public teaching.

But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you, &c.—*Mat., Mar., Luke.*

Does any one seriously doubt it? To make such comparison, notwithstanding, may savour slightly of impiety in certain ears. Do we mean to affirm that Robert Burns, in a song *pour la bagatelle*, has ever enunciated anything like the Gospel?—anything for a moment to be compared with divine inspiration? In such questions, it seems to be forgotten that Burns was baptized and educated in the faith of Christianity; that he was not a heathen; that he was not even an infidel. Such illiberality is indeed amazing—in the nineteenth century, almost incredible. The very essence of 'A Man's a Man for a' that' will be found in St. James's Epistle, and in the Lord's Prayer; yet the doctrinaires and religionists of our day seem not to know where it comes from, and are seriously offended if a fellow-christian should hint that it resembles Christ. Do they imagine then that this man never saw a Bible? never read the Gospel? or did not approve its divine teaching? The truth, on the contrary, seems to be, that he read it more distinctly, believed it more sincerely, and applied it more profoundly than most of ourselves. His own heart was his grand interpreter; and the plainest and simplest precepts, which we can only torture into dogmas or make the groundwork of persecution, when looked at in the light of his benevolence and humanity, swelled out into volumes of love or rose up into musical prophecies.

After such comparisons, it may seem almost out of place to refer to any other parallel; yet we may inform our readers that there is a resemblance to certain ideas in this song—although faint and localised—in Béranger's *Les Gueux*.

p. 227, c. 1, s. 2. What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin gray, and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that.

seems almost to have been adopted by Béranger:

D'un palais l' éclat vous frappe,
Mais l' ennui vient y gémir;
On peut bien manger sans nappe;
Sur le paille on peut dormir:

whilst the concluding stanza receives a sort of Pensioner's echo from the following—if the French does not more exactly remind us, perhaps, of the reunion in 'Auld Lang Syne'—

L' amitié que l'on regrette,
N'a point quitté nos climats:
Elle trinque à la guinguette,
Assise entre deux soldats.—*Béranger: Vol. I., 42.*

We are reminded by Mr. Chambers that a similar thought to

The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

occurs in Wycherley's 'Plain Dealer.' "I weigh the man, not his title; 'tis not the king's stamp can make the metal better or heavier. Your lord is a leaden shilling, which you bend every way, and debases the stamp he bears." Mr. Chambers, however, is frankly of opinion, in which we concur, that Burns probably never saw these words.

— c. 2, s. 4. A prince can make a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;

printed in some editions—

A king can mak a belted knight, &c.,

which, however, is not found either in Thomson or Currie.

Apropos of this reference to the royal prerogative, we may mention that there was a curious plea in Parliament in 1782, respecting His Majesty's right of creating Peers of Scotland Peers of Great Britain. It arose in connection with Douglas, Duke of Hamilton's claim, and was decided in favour of His Majesty. This right acknowledged in the Crown, after so singular a challenge, might easily be known to Burns, and seems most probably to have suggested the allusion.

p. 227. WHEN O'ER THE HILL THE EASTERN STAR: One of those pure and beautiful love-roveries in which our Author delighted, and which reminds us forcibly of the old Ayrshire days of simplicity and ecstatic tenderness. There are some variations in text of this song, but not of much importance:—

— s. 1. Down by the burn, where scented birks,

is otherwise written— birken buds,

and in original copy in

p. 228, c. 1, s. 1. Altho' the night were ne'er sae wild,
stood were ne'er sae wet,

in conformity with ancient chorus, on which the song was probably founded [see Author's Annotations on Museum], to which Thomson, however, wisely objected. In same stanza, the first line stands inverted in Currie's edition, thus—

In mirkest glen, at midnight hour,

in which Thomson's edition—

At midnight hour, in mirkest glen,

as being more directly connected with succeeding line, seems very much preferable.

p. 228. O WERE MY LOVE YON LILAC FAIR: Is but a fragment by our Author, who was so much affected by the beauty of the old stanza—'O gin my Love were yon Red Rose,' &c.—that he prefixed the lines now before us, as a mere complement to the original idea.

These conclude our Author's contributions to the first four volumes of Thomson's Collection: the few remaining pieces, which appeared at a much later date in supplementary volumes, will be found among his Posthumous Works. As a postscript to these remarks, however, we think it right to observe that an old edition of the BRAW LADS OF GALLA WATER, which appeared in 'Johnson's Museum' [Vol. II., No. 125], and which has been attributed to Burns both in Blackie's edition and in Chambers's, as a revision at least, if not as an original, is a song with which, so far as we can now trace, Burns had nothing whatever to do. It is a piece of patchwork from two older songs—one referring to a lad, the other to a lass of Galla Water—in so confused a style as to be hardly intelligible. In the 'Museum' it has not even the mark of a revision, X or Z, upon it, and is certainly not the work of our Author in any other way. We attach it for examination.

Braw, Braw Lads of Galla Water.

Braw, braw lads of Galla Water;
O! braw lads of Galla Water:
I'll kilt my coats aboon my kneec,
And follow my love thro' the water.

Sae fair her hair, sae brent her brow,
Sae bonny blue her een, my dearie;
Sae white her teeth, sae sweet her mou',
The mair I kiss, she's ay my dearie.

O'er yon bank, and o'er yon brae,
O'er yon moss among the heather;
I'll kilt my coat aboon my knee,
And follow my love thro' the water.

Down among the broom, the broom,
Down among the broom, my dearie,
The lassie lost a silken snood,
That cost her mony a blirt and bleary.

Referring to Note on AULD LANG SYNE, our readers have here afforded them an opportunity of consulting the only two extant editions of the song previous to Burns, known to us, and commented on in the Note now specified [*p.* 291].

[From WATSON'S CHOICE COLLECTION—1711.]

Old Long Syne.—First Part.

SHOULD old Acquaintance be forgot,
And never thought upon,
The Flames of Love extinguished,
And freely past and gone?
Is thy kind Heart now grown so cold
In that loving Breast of thine,
That thou canst never once reflect
On Old-long-syne?

Where are thy Protestations,
Thy Vows and Oaths, my Dear,
Thou made to me, and I to thee,
In Register yet clear?
Is Faith and Truth so violate
To the Immortal Gods Divine,
That thou canst never once reflect
On Old-long-syne?

Is't Cupid's fears, or frosty Cares,
That makes thy Sp'rits decay?
Or is't some Object of more worth,
That's stol'n thy Heart away?
Or some Desert makes thee neglect
Him, so much once was thine,
That thou canst never once reflect
On Old-long-syne?

Is't worldly Cares so desperate,
That makes thee to despair?
Is't that makes thee exasperate
And makes thee to forbear?
If thou of that were free as I,
Thou surely should be Mine:
If this were true, we should renew
Kind Old-long-syne.

But since that nothing can prevail,
And all Hope is in vain,
From these rejected Eyes of mine,
Still Showers of Tears shall rain:
And though thou hast me now forgot,
Yet I'll continue Thine,
And ne'er forget for to reflect
On Old-long-syne.

If e'er I have a House, my Dear,
That truly is call'd mine,
And can afford but Country Cheer,
Or ought that's good therein;
Tho' thou were Rebel to the King,
And beat with Wind and Rain,
Assure thyself of welcome Love,
For Old-long-syne.

Second Part.

My Soul is ravished with Delight
When you I think upon;
All Griefs and Sorrows take the flight,
And hastily are gone;
The fair Resemblance of your Face
So fills this Breast of mine,
No Fate nor Force can it displace,
For Old-long-syne.

Since Thoughts of you doth banish Grief,
When I'm from you removed;
And if in them I find Relief,
When with sad Cares I'm moved;
How doth your Presence me affect,
With Ecstasies Divine,
Especially when I reflect
On Old-long-syne.

Since thou has rob'd me of my Heart
By those resistless Powers,
Which Madam *Nature* doth impart
To those fair Eyes of yours;
With Honour it doth not consist
To hold a Slave in Pyne,
Pray let your Rigour then desist,
For Old-long-syne.

'Tis not my Freedom I do crave,
By deprecating Pains;
Sure Liberty he would not have
Who glories in his chains:
But this I wish, the Gods would move
That noble Soul of thine
To pity, since thou cannot love
For Old-long-syne.

THE KIND RECEPTION.

To the Tune of Auld Lang Syne.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
Tho' they return with scars?
These are the noblest heroes' lot,
Obtain'd in glorious wars:
Welcome, my Varo, to my breast,
Thy arms about me twine,
And make me once again as blest,
As I was lang syne.

Methinks around us on each bough,
A thousand Cupids play;
Whilst thro' the groves I walk with you,
Each object makes me gay:
Since your return the Sun and Moon
With brighter beams do shine;
Streams murmur soft notes as they run,
As they did lang syne.

Despise the Court and din of State,
Let that to their share fall,
Who can esteem such slav'ry great,
While bounded like a ball!
But sunk in love, upon my arms
Let your brave head recline,
We'll please ourselves with mutual charms
As we did lang syne.

O'er moor and dale with your gay friend
You may pursue the chace;
And after a blyth bottle end
All cares in my embrace:
And in a vacant rainy day
You shall be wholly mine;
We'll make the hours run smooth away,
And laugh at lang syne.

The heroe, pleased with the sweet air
 And signs of gen'rous love,
 Which had been utter'd by the fair,
 Bow'd to the Pow'rs above:
 Next day with glad consent and haste
 Th' approach'd the sacred shrine,
 Where the good priest the couple blest,
 And put them out of pine.

Having read such specimens, our readers, we presume, will require no further evidence of the originality and authenticity of Robert Burns's own song of AULD LANG SYNE.

VARIOUS READINGS.

NEW NOTES.

To alter his own text much was a thing to which Robert Burns, during the whole earlier period of his authorship, was rather averse, believing as he did, and as no man ever had better right to do, in the comparative perfection of his first inspirations; to make alterations at the request of others was a thing positively painful to him, although, for various imperative reasons, he did acquiesce in such suggestions from critical advisers in the latter part of his career; but considering the immense amount and variety of his writings, such alterations, whether spontaneous or suggested, are remarkably few in number and of no very great importance as affecting the original character or beauty of the text. It cannot, perhaps, be said that Burns had written "no line, which, dying, he could wish to blot;" but very few, indeed, even of his most questionable lines, would or could be much improved by alteration. Of this he had a strong, just, instinctive conviction, and resisted all efforts at serious alterations on his finished works, even by the most accomplished critics and would-be most serviceable friends. One correspondent (Mr. Ramsay of Oughtertyre) writing to Dr. Currie on this subject, observes—"When I asked him whether the Edinburgh Literati had mended his poems by their criticisms—'Sir,' said he, 'these gentlemen remind me of some spinsters in my country, who spin their thread so fine that it is neither fit for weft nor woof.' He said he had not changed a word, except one, to please Dr. Blair."* On which Dr. Currie remarks, "This incorrigibility of Burns extended, however, only to his poems printed before he arrived in Edinburgh; for in regard to his unpublished poems he was amenable to criticism, of which many proofs might be given." Not very many, we suspect. Among the various readings which do occur, only comparatively few are to be regarded as corrections or alterations; these being for the most part slightly different readings from *duplicate* copies drawn out by him in haste "from memory," as he expressly informs us; by which errors of the text, to himself imperceptible at the moment, have slipped in: and for the various alterations which were proposed by Thomson or others, and which he did accept, we know distinctly that most of them were acquiesced in with a protest or a grudge, and in due time have been rejected by the world to make way for his own original indisputable readings. These critical emendations, on the part of publishers and their friends, were all the more unnecessary,

inasmuch as the Author himself, in the composition of the very songs referred to, was exercising, perhaps unknown to them, the utmost care, and allowed no production to leave his hands, until it had been more than once written over, or was otherwise entirely satisfactory, and beyond improvement, either by himself or others.

The variations of original text illustrated by us in this department of our work, are such as were either made by the Author himself with a view to publication during his own life; or such as have been found in his own hand of early dates, referring to subjects already before the world in slightly different forms. Most of these variations have been exhibited or explained in previous Notes; but we have tabulated them in their place, uniform with text, that the order, number, and whole extent of these changes, where they were of sufficient importance, might be visible at once to the reader. Two of the subjects we have presented in their final form entire, for several reasons: (1) because both 'The Holy Fair' and 'Death and Doctor Hornbook' are poems of much intrinsic importance, and contain variations which could not be appreciated otherwise than in relation to the whole; (2) because 'The Holy Fair' affords the best illustration of the difference in *orthography*, as between the earlier and later editions, already referred to; and 'Death and Doctor Hornbook,' even in its final form, exhibits the same difficulties in *punctuation* by which the first edition of that poem was characterised, and which we humbly endeavoured in our own text of the first edition to rectify; (3) because the poems themselves require a little further elucidation in some points of an interesting or curious nature, for which their reproduction thus affords us an opportunity.

p. 229. THE HOLY FAIR: The reader will observe in the final edition of the poem before us, and also of 'Death and Doctor Hornbook,' the free use of Capital Letters, *italics*, asterisks, and blanks. This mode of printing, so far as style of letters is concerned, was not confined to one edition, but was adopted by our Author from the first. It was common, indeed, in most works of that date; but seems to have been a very favourite style of typography with Burns. His own original early manuscripts, so far as we have seen them, were all written out with a view to this style, which he seems to have rigorously insisted on at the hands of his printer, and in Kilmarnock Edition to the uttermost. In recent times the fashion of a simpler uniform type, except in very rare cases of emphasis, has been more approved; and as so many different kinds as appear in the earlier editions throughout would only have disfigured our pages, without adding anything to his sense, we considered ourselves bound, in this mere external respect, to conform to the fashion of the day. No author, indeed, it may be truly said, was ever more independent of any form of type; for no man's words who ever wrote indicated more clearly than his do, by their mere position, the exact amount of emphasis that should be bestowed on each—of which, by and by, both publishers and readers became fully aware. He seems himself at last to have been entirely satisfied on this subject, and allowed printers or engravers to employ whatever sort of types they pleased. In 'Johnson's Museum' and in 'Thomson's Col-

* Word occurs, as our readers are aware, in 'The Holy Fair.'

lection' such diversities (required only by weakness, or by the 'forcible feebles,' as D'Israeli the Elder, or De Quincey somewhere says) are scarcely in comparison to be found. On the other hand, so far as the use of blanks or asterisks, instead of proper names or questionable terms, is concerned, he adhered to that system invariably as long as he lived. Where an individual is unpleasantly referred to, or some idea in relation to religion or morality that might give offence to the scrupulous is introduced, asterisks or blanks are always substituted; and such blanks, even where the words or names are quite obvious, should never be filled up without the use of brackets in an edition of Robert Burns, inasmuch as plain printing in such cases—being without his authority—would convey an entirely false impression of the man; who never compromised himself, but never wantonly or unnecessarily offended others. This topic receives fuller illustration and confirmation from 'The Holy Fair' than from any other poem.

p. 229, c. 1, s. 1. I walked forth to view the corn,
An' snuff the caller air,

although it stands thus in final edition, and has been adopted by Currie and some others, contains a manifest error in punctuation—which we regret to find has been repeated by typographical oversight in several copies of our own edition. The line, as in the Edinburgh Edition, should finish of course with a full stop—

An' snuff the caller air.

In the Kilmarnock Edition it reads—

An' snuff the caller air.

which, on second thoughts, we much lament we did not retain in its original, beautiful, broad simplicity—distending the very nostrils, as it were, and opening the mouth wider, by the fulness of its pronunciation.

p. 232, c. 2, s. 2. The auld Guidmen, about the grace,
Frae side to side they bother,

'bother'—so in all editions. In our own edition, we have printed this word as 'bather,' believing that to be the correct orthography. The word occurs only (this) once, so far as we remember, in the whole course of our Author's writings, and is spelt by him with an o. Jamieson refers to the word so spelt as of doubtful origin; in which we concur [see Glossary]. Sir Walter Scott and other authorities spell the word with an a, as in our text. In any future edition, however, Burns's own orthography in this disputed instance shall be restored. [In connection with Burns's doubtful repute for religion, as Author of this poem, see pleasant anecdote in M'Diarmid Memoranda—Appendix.]

p. 233. DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOK: Our readers will find, in the final edition of this celebrated poem, the line so much admired by many, which was introduced latterly by our Author into the first stanza. The earliest trace of its appearance we can observe, is in edition of 1794; but as this was but a reprint from the edition of 1793, it is very probable the line may be found in that also. The line itself has a certain sly humorous point which has commended it to most general approval; but in other respects, it presents a slight interruption to the original climax, which rather detracts than

otherwise from the perfect unity of the stanza. [See Note on passage—p. 92.] 'A rousing whid'—which means a startling exaggeration, a sort of sudden half-conscious lie—we ought here perhaps to explain, is not intended so much to denote the boldness of the lie itself, as the special purpose of rousing the attention of the people, which otherwise might be flagging under the discourse.

In this final edition, however, the reader will find in another well-known stanza, where contemptuous reference to an important process of medical diagnosis in certain dangerous cases occurs, a mere ——— where in the first edition no such decided blank at least is found. To this change in the Author's text, readers must therefore reconcile themselves. The responsibility does not lie with us. The edition which contains the favourite line at the expense of the clergy in one stanza, presents a distinct blank in favour of the medical profession in another; and no edition of this poem containing both the line and even a trace of the word in question has any claim, so far as we know, to editorial honesty.

Again: as regards punctuation (that most important element in conveying the sense of every work), we have already observed that, with two exceptions, the poem now before us is more imperfectly printed than perhaps any other in the whole compass of our Author's writings. In one important particular, we have endeavoured to rectify the inaccuracy which seems to be apparent on the surface. [See Note on stanza x. (c. 2, s. 6), p. 92.] After its first issue, the punctuation of this poem seems never to have been revised; and it stands now before the reader in its final form, precisely as it purports, through London publishers under editorship of Lord Woodhouselee, to have been left by the Author. On this subject we have only further to observe, that the most perfect elocutionist in the world will fail to read this most remarkable poem with satisfaction or success, if he conscientiously adheres to the punctuation. To produce the desired effect, he must study the stanzas for himself, and either traverse or ignore the punctuation, as it here stands, altogether.

Since our original annotations on the various references which occur in 'Death and Doctor Hornbook' to local events or characters, our attention has been directed to a different interpretation of some of these which we consider worthy of notice. In *Glasgow Weekly Herald*, July 10th, 1867, an ingenious annotator presented anonymously the remarks referred to, under the title of 'New Readings of an Old Poet.' Commenting on stanza IV.—

p. 233, c. 1, s. 4. The rising Moon began to glow'r
The distant Cumnock hills out-owre:
To count her horns, wi' a' my pow'r,
I set mysel;
But whether she had three or four,
I cou'd na tell.

he explains that 'counting the moon's horns' here alluded to was a practice then common in the country, of observing "the serratures and protuberances in the concavity of her disk—the number of which indicated her age, or the number of days since new moon. As the concavity filled up, these indentations and ridges became so close that it was impossible to distinguish them." He further illustrates this practice of 'counting' by describing the process of looking at the moon

"through the medium of a silk handkerchief" on a harvest night; of which he himself had been a participant in his youth, and had been often a witness. We have to thank this unknown annotator for recalling these facts to our mind. We can ourselves, from very distant recollection when thus awakened, bear testimony to the curious experiment here described, as having been tried in our own presence, by natives not of Ayrshire but of Stirlingshire; from which it appears that the custom had been pretty general throughout the Lowlands of Scotland. We can scarcely doubt, therefore, that this is the true point of allusion. On the other hand, it must be observed that this is the only instance in which the 'horns' of the moon are so referred to by Burns. In many other instances—and there are four or five—'her horn,' 'her trembling horn,' indicates distinctly the cusp of the bright new, or of the very old waning moon; and it must further be remembered that one of those instances, in 'Willie Brewed a Peck o' Maut,' corresponds pretty much to the situation now before us. Turning to our previous note on this subject [p. 92], the reader will also find that the moon, on the night of this ghostly encounter, could not be new moon at all—but full, or nearly full. No new moon 'glow'rs' over a mountain. To this, however, it may be very justly replied on our own principle, that where no counting at all was necessary or possible, the very idea of counting 'wi' a' his power' was so much the more characteristic and ridiculous.

On stanza xxiii.—

p. 234, c. 2, s. 6. 'Waes me for Johnny Ged's Hole* now,'
Quoth I, 'if that thae news be true!
His braw calf-ward whare gowans grew,' &c.

* The gravedigger.—R. B.

the annotator in *Glasgow Herald* remarks, that the name of the functionary here referred to "should have been printed John o' Ged's hole. He lived in a small cottage, built on the margin of a pool in the water of Fail, much frequented by pike, the Scotch name of which is *ged*. Hence the name of John o' Ged's hole." This little bit of tradition with respect to Johnny's residence and consequent *sobriquet*, is entirely new to us, but we have no doubt is accurate enough. We can only inform our readers that there is no authority whatever for the alteration in spelling proposed—*Johnny Ged's hole* being invariable under the Author's own hand, and the note attached by him, precisely as now printed. That note, we confess, in connection with the name, has always seemed to us a little obscure. In absence of other information, however, we were disposed [p. 92] to explain the reference as having a double sense—(1) to *Johnny Ged* as gravedigger, or representative of Death—the *pike*, or devouring monster: (2) to *Johnny Ged's hole*, or the grave itself prepared by him; to both of which annihilation was threatened under the new administration of Doctor Hornbook. Our readers need hardly, perhaps, be reminded that 'the braw calf-ward, whare gowans grew,' was the graveyard: where the sexton had the privilege of grazing his cow, and where possibly any stray beast might be enclosed for a day until its owner was discovered. As to the spelling, it has only further to be observed, in support of the annotator's theory in the *Herald*, that our Author spelled 'John o' Groats'—'Johnny Groats,' and might therefore very

naturally write down '*Johnny Ged's hole*,' although he possibly intended 'John o' Ged's.'

p. 235. SPECIAL VARIATIONS TABULATED: We presume, will sufficiently explain themselves. The chief authorities for these being already indicated in the text, require little further mention by us. They are to be found all either in the Author's different editions, or in duplicate manuscript copies of his own, specified and quoted. For some details respecting these variations we refer our readers to Gilbert Burns's Memoranda on his brother's poems [Appendix]. The other documents, which are not public property, we have been privileged by the courtesy of their proprietors or guardians personally to inspect, or have been favoured with certified copies of their contents. The 'Crichton Manuscript' we have already described in Note upon 'The Whistle' [p. 252]. Of that which we have denominated the 'Gladstone (Fasque) Manuscript,' a document of great interest, which has been most politely forwarded for inspection, we shall have more to say hereafter. Of the 'Stewart (Stair) Manuscript,' in which so many interesting variations occur, the history is somewhat curious, and may be here briefly detailed. In prospect of leaving Scotland (1786) our Author, in acknowledgment of his obligations to Mrs Stewart of Stair for her early patronage of his muse, enclosed "a parcel of songs, &c.," in an affectionate valedictory letter to that lady. [See Special Correspondence.] That parcel of manuscript consisted of ten leaves, containing a copy of 'The Vision' with a considerable number of additional stanzas not originally published, a copy of the 'Stanzas in Prospect of Death'—entitled by him 'Misgivings of Despondency on the approach of the gloomy Monarch of the Grave;' and several songs—including 'Lass o' Ballochmyle,' 'My Nanie, O,' 'Handsome Nell,' 'Tho' Cruel Fate,' and 'Ruined Farmer.' This interesting document came by inheritance to the lady's grandson, Allason Cunningham, Esq., of Logan; from whom it was obtained by purchase on behalf of five devout and equally enthusiastic admirers of the Poet, in Ayr or its neighbourhood. These gentlemen, who were represented in the purchase by the late Mr. Dick, bookseller in Ayr, did not know how to relinquish with peace of mind each his own share of the coveted treasure to any neutral party, or to one of their own number for the rest. "I doubt you will think we did a very foolish thing" says one of these gentlemen, "when, instead of keeping the manuscript intact we resolved to have two leaves each. Our enthusiasm must be our excuse." The repentant adviser of this distribution, whose courtesy and kindness seem to equal his enthusiasm, has enabled us, by his own most friendly exertions, to obtain certified copies of the various portions in possession of friends—with the minutest variations specified in each. These are chiefly found in the special fragments which now belong to G. Gemmell, Esq., banker, and W. M. Dick, Esq., bookseller, Ayr; and Maxwell Dick, Esq. (the trustee or depositary of many other most valuable manuscripts of our Author), bookseller, Irvine. From these documents we have selected whatever was most important in the way of original variations. A very considerable number of minor differences, in the spelling of a word, &c., are discoverable also, but not of sufficient moment to justify their formal reproduction. In those which

have been selected there are several peculiarities worth noting. For example, in 'Stanzas in Prospect of Death'—

p. 238, c. 2. Thy rod can make the tempest cease to blow,

implies a very manifest reference to the exercise of divine power by delegation through Moses:

But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it, &c.—*Exod.* xiv. 16, 26, 27.

a circumstance by no means to be forgotten, as indicating the Author's state of mind, as well as range of reading, at this early period. Again, as to mere accuracy of diction, we find that he had still a little to learn for absolute clearness of distinction in the construction of compound sentences. Thus, in 'Vision,' Duan Second:

p. 237, c. 2. And when the Bard or hoary Sage
Instruct or charm the future age,

implies an incorrect distribution of relative terms—'instruct' and 'charm' being misplaced relatively to their nominatives; a confusion carefully rectified by the Author before publication. The same principle of attentive revision as to the position of words is illustrated in 'The Gloomy Night'—

p. 239, c. 2. Those bleed afresh, these ties I tear;
My love with these, my peace with those:

where 'these' and 'those' in one instance, and 'peace' and 'love' in the other, were thus originally misplaced. Besides

these and other indications of self-culture in composition, we have one or two small notes or prefaces, intended for Mrs. Stewart's own eye, as apologetic for the then imperfect condition of his workmanship; which we have already quoted. [See Note—'Handsome Nell,' p. 282.] The reader has already seen all that requires to be specially noted in the 'Lines in Friars-Carse Hermitage,' 'The Whistle,' and 'Auld Lang Syne.' We have only farther now to add, that in the 'Lines in Friars-Carse Hermitage,' the reading in our text from Author's own edition, as opposed to Currie's edition in

p. 239, c. 2. That foolish, selfish, faithless ways,
Lead to the wretched, vile, and base.

is undoubtedly superior.

Lead to be wretched, vile, and base.

has a natural as well as a grammatical relation to the two lines immediately preceding the couplet in which it occurs: but

Lead to the wretched, vile, and base.

has no natural, and scarcely a grammatical, relation to anything preceding at all. Of this poem, a short original draft was discovered by Cunningham, which differs very considerably—it may be said almost entirely—from the others; which will be found hereafter in its place among Author's Posthumous Works.

ADDENDA AND ERRATA IN NOTES.

p. 93, c. 1. Note on THE BRIGS OF AYR: Add parallel from Ovid—

Inque fretum credas totum descendere cælum,
Inque plagas cæli tumefactum ascendere pontum!
Metamor: Lib. xi., Fab. x.

Then down ye'll hurl, (deil nor ye never rise!)
And dash the gumlie jaups up to the pouring skies!

Two lines almost literally translated in *one*.

BESIDES a few slight typographical blemishes, which, notwithstanding the utmost care, have escaped us, the two following imperfect or incorrect quotations must be rectified in the meantime, thus:—

p. 102, c. 2. Note on WINTER NIGHT: Abbreviated quotation from Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner' should have been more accurately, in full—

He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast:
He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the great God who loveth us,
He made and loves them all.

p. 285, c. 2. Note on Song beginning—
The tears I shed must ever fall:

For—Finally, we may add, under the same category, four lines prefixed by him to a beautiful song, &c.,

p. 246, c. 2. TAM O' SHANTER:

Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,
Been snaw-white seventeen-hunder linnen!

To Cromek's note on 'seventeen-hunder linnen,' we may add, on practical authority, that such linen is woven in a reed of 1700 divisions to a width of 36 inches—*two threads* in each division. Wider cloth, in same proportions, would still retain the same denomination.

Read—Finally, we may add, under the same category, four lines prefixed by him to last stanza of a beautiful song, &c., said lines beginning—

No cold approach, no alter'd mien, &c.

[See Author's Annotations following.]

P.S.—POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY: Referring to last stanza in our own text [p. 27], we are disposed to believe, after due consideration, that the two last lines, as in Author's own edition, should be read separate, thus—

His heart will never get aboon!
His Mailie's dead!

and shall take first opportunity of restoring them so in text.