

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Anne MacVicar Grant

Table of Contents

<u>The Highlanders, and Other Poems.</u>	1
<u>Anne MacVicar Grant</u>	2
<u>TO HER GRACE, THE DUCHESS OF GORDON.</u>	4
<u>INTRODUCTORY VERSES.</u>	5
<u>ADDRESSED TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP:</u>	6
<u>ON THE DEATH OF BURNS.</u>	9
<u>THE HIGHLANDERS:</u>	12
<u>PART I.</u>	13
<u>ARGUMENT.</u>	14
<u>PART II.</u>	19
<u>ARGUMENT.</u>	20
<u>PART III.</u>	28
<u>ARGUMENT.</u>	29
<u>PART IV.</u>	35
<u>ARGUMENT.</u>	36
<u>PART V.</u>	47
<u>ARGUMENT.</u>	48
<u>TO SIR JAMES GRANT, BARONET.</u>	65
<u>A BALLAD.</u>	68
<u>SONNET.</u>	75
<u>SONNET.</u>	76
<u>SONNET.</u>	77
<u>A FAMILIAR EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.</u>	78
<u>AN EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.</u>	83
<u>REMARKS ON THE CHARACTER OF BURNS.</u>	86
<u>MOOME.</u>	88
<u>MOOME.</u>	89
<u>THE NYMPH OF THE FOUNTAIN.</u>	92
<u>ANSWER TO A POETICAL EPISTLE FROM AN INTIMATE FRIEND.</u>	95
<u>TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF YORK.</u>	97
<u>SENT TO A YOUNG NOBLEMAN WITH A PAIR OF GARTERS :</u>	99
<u>TO MISS WALLIS.</u>	101
<u>AN ODE.</u>	104
<u>ANSWER TO A POETICAL APOLOGY.</u>	107
<u>HYMN FOR THE SONS OF THE CLERGY.</u>	111
<u>TO THE MEMORY OF A YOUNG LADY, WHO DIED NEAR INVERNESS IN THE 21st</u> <u>YEAR OF HER AGE, AUGUST, 1776.</u>	113
<u>TO A LADY.</u>	115
<u>TO LADY CLAN.</u>	118
<u>ODE TO HYGEIA.</u>	124
<u>TO MISS DUNBAR OF BOATH.</u>	127
<u>INSCRIPTION FOR A GARDEN SEAT.</u>	129
<u>ON READING MANUSCRIPT POEMS BY A YOUNG LADY.</u>	130
<u>WRITTEN IN ONE OF THE DUKE OF ATHOLE'S WALKS AT BLAIR.</u>	131
<u>PEACEFUL SHADES.</u>	133
<u>TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GAELIC.</u>	134
<u>TO ROBERT ARBUTHNOT, ESQ.</u>	135
<u>POSTSCRIPT.</u>	141

Table of Contents

<u>The Highlanders, and Other Poems.</u>	
<u>MORDUTH</u>	142
<u>MORDUTH</u>	143
<u>BOOK I</u>	144
<u>BOOK II</u>	149
<u>THE AGED BARD'S WISH</u>	155

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Anne MacVicar Grant

This page copyright © 2002 Blackmask Online.
<http://www.blackmask.com>

- TO HER GRACE, THE DUCHESS OF GORDON.
- INTRODUCTORY VERSES.
- ADDRESSED TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP:
- ON THE DEATH OF BURNS.
- THE HIGHLANDERS:
- PART I.
- ARGUMENT.
- PART II.
- ARGUMENT.
- PART III.
- ARGUMENT.
- PART IV.
- ARGUMENT.
- PART V.
- ARGUMENT.
- TO SIR JAMES GRANT, BARONET.
- A BALLAD.
- SONNET.
- SONNET.
- SONNET.
- A FAMILIAR EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.
- AN EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.
- REMARKS ON THE CHARACTER OF BURNS.
- MOOME.
- MOOME.
- THE NYMPH OF THE FOUNTAIN
- ANSWER TO A POETICAL EPISTLE FROM AN INTIMATE FRIEND.
- TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF YORK.
- SENT TO A YOUNG NOBLEMAN WITH A PAIR OF GARTERS :
- TO MISS WALLIS.
- AN ODE.
- ANSWER TO A POETICAL APOLOGY
- HYMN FOR THE SONS OF THE CLERGY.
- TO THE MEMORY OF A YOUNG LADY, WHO DIED NEAR INVERNESS IN THE 21st YEAR OF HER AGE, AUGUST, 1776.
- TO A LADY.
- TO LADY CLAN.
- ODE TO HYGEIA.
- TO MISS DUNBAR OF BOATH.
- INSCRIPTION FOR A GARDEN SEAT.
- ON READING MANUSCRIPT POEMS BY A YOUNG LADY.
- WRITTEN IN ONE OF THE DUKE OF ATHOLE'S WALKS AT BLAIR.
- PEACEFUL SHADES.
- TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GAELIC .

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

- TO ROBERT ARBUTHNOT, ESQ.
- POSTSCRIPT.
- MORDUTH.
- MORDUTH.

- BOOK I.
- BOOK II.
- THE AGED BARD'S WISH

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

**TO
HER GRACE,
THE
DUCHESS OF GORDON,**

THESE POEMS
ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY
HER GRACE'S
OBLIGED HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR , A. G.

INTRODUCTORY VERSES.

**Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,
I strive with wakeful melody to cheer
The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel, like thee.
YOUNG.**

GO , artless records of a life obscure,
Memorials dear of loves and friendships past,
Of blameless minds from strife and envy pure;
Go, scatter'd by *Affliction's* bitter blast,
And tell the proud, the busy, and the gay,
How rural peace consumes the quiet day.

Oh ye, whom sad remembrance loves to trace,
Look down complacent from your seats above,
Regard with soft compassion's melting grace
The simple offering of surviving love:
For, while I fondly think ye hover near,
Your whisper'd melody I seem to hear.

Ye dear companions in life's thorny way,
Who see your modest virtues here display'd,
Forgive, for well you know th' unstudied lay
Was only meant to soothe the lonely shade.
But, when the rude thorn wounds the songster's breast,
The lengthen'd strains of woe betray her secret nest.

**ADDRESSED TO
MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP:**

ON READING
BURNS'S LETTERS
TO THAT LADY.

**Thy liberal heart, and judging eye,
The flower unheeded shall descry.**
GRAY.

VALLESIA , whose illustrious blood,
Deriv'd from chiefs of mighty name,
Who long their country's barrier stood,
Still glows with honour's purest flame:

Oh, long may life's declining ray
On thee with mildest radiance shine,
And selfish prayers protract the day
That bears thee hence to joys divine!

For thee, awakes each tuneful lyre,
Each guardian virtue hovers round,
The "voice of Coila" leads the choir,
And Coila's hills return the sound!

Sweet voice, that first awak'd thy ear,
When languor spread its thickest gloom,
Sweet hills, whose echoes lov'd to bear
His wood-notes to VALLESIA 's dome.

Though cold the hand that wak'd the lyre,
And mute the voice that tun'd the lay;
That spark of pure celestial fire,
That warm'd the strain, shall ne'er decay.

While Wealth and Power, with cold regard,
Beheld the Muse's darling Son!
He wak'd that lay:—his best reward,
The smile of nature—and thy own.

'Twas thine, in Fortune's lowest vale
The crush'd, neglected flower to spy,
And bid its fragrant sweets exhale,

ADDRESSED TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP:

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And latent beauties charm the eye.

Nor only to the poet's lay,
Hast deign'd with kind regard to bend,
But through life's short and stormy day,
Consol'd him with the name of *Friend* :

That name, his best and dearest boast,
Whene'er his erring steps would stray,
Rever'd, belov'd, and honour'd most,
Recall'd him back to wisdom's way.

And when the wounds of Anguish bled,
Thy kindness dropt the healing balm;
And when the storm of Passion fled,
Thy counsel breath'd the sacred calm.

And when Misfortune's tempest low'r'd,
Thy kind assisting hand was near;
And when Remorse its sorrows pour'd,
'Twas thine to wipe the bitter tear.

Thou knew'st, well read in wisdom's lore,
What failings with our virtues blend;
Than truth and honour sought no more,
Nor vainly hop'd a faultless friend.

For this, the Muse that sings unknown
Shall strew thy evening path with flowers;
And halcyon Peace her olive crown
Shall hang on thy sequester'd bowers.

For this from *India's* bright domains
Thy sons the blood-stain'd laurel bring,
For this again their native plains,
With loud acclaim triumphant ring!

While in thy kind maternal shade
We see another WALLACE rise,
Whose early steps, to honour led,
His country views with kindling eyes:

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And while his deep indented spears
Protect her thistle's hallow'd stem;
And while her *rampant lion* rears
To guard the British diadem:

And while a Scottish pulse beats high,
Accordant to her hero's name,
And while in Valour's ardent eye
Oppression wakes th' indignant flame:

And while, through all her winding vales
Sad SCOTIA for her poet mourns,
And far as Britain's conquering sails
Extends the deathless name of BURNS :

And while kind Friendship's generous breast
Swells with the tide of sympathy,
Or suns declining gild the west,
VALLESIA'S name shall never die!

When wealth and pride, without a name,
Are swept to drear oblivion's gloom,
The Muse's never-dying flame
Shall kindle odours on thy tomb.

There , Praise shall purest incense breathe,
And Fancy fairest garlands twine,
And CALEDONIA bless the wreath
That decks VALLESIA 's simple shrine.

ON THE
DEATH OF BURNS.

So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destin'd urn;
And as he passes, turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!

MILTON.

WHAT adverse fate awaits the tuneful train!
Has OTWAY died and SPENCER liv'd in vain?
In vain has COLLINS , Fancy's pensive child,
Pour'd his lone plaints by *Arun's* windings wild?
And SAVAGE , on misfortune's bosom bred,
Bar'd to the howling storm his houseless head?
Who gentle SHENSTONE'S fate can hear unmov'd,
By virtue, elegance, and genius lov'd?
Yet, pensive wand'ring o'er his native plain,
His plaints confess'd he lov'd the Muse in vain.
Chill penury invades his favourite bower,
Blasts every scene, and withers every flower;
His warning Muse to Prudence turn'd her strain,
But Prudence sings to thoughtless bards in vain;
Still restless Fancy drives them headlong on

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

With dreams of wealth, and friends, and laurels won—
On Ruin's brink they sleep, and wake undone!
And see where CALEDONIA'S Genius mourns,
And plants the holly round the grave of BURNS !
But late "its polish'd leaves and berries red
"Play'd graceful round the rural Poet's head;"
And while with manly force and native fire
He wak'd the genuine *Caledonian* lyre,
Tweed's severing flood exulting heard her tell,
Not *Roman* wreaths the holly could excel;
Not *Tiber's* stream, along *Campania's* plain,
More pleas'd, convey'd the gay *Horatian* strain,
Than bonny *Doon* , or fairy-haunted *Ayre* ,
That wont his rustic melody to share,
Resound along their banks the pleasing theme,
Sweet as their murmurs, copious as their stream:
And RAMSAY , once the HORACE of the North,
Who charm'd with varied strains the listening *Forth* ,
Bequeath'd to him the shrewd peculiar art
To satire nameless graces to impart,
To wield her weapons with such sportive ease,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

That, while they wound, they dazzle and they please:
But when he sung to the attentive plain
The humble virtues of the Patriarch Swain,
His evening worship, and his social meal,
And all a parent's pious heart can feel;
To genuine worth we bow submissive down,
And wish the Cottar's lowly shed our own:
With fond regard our native land we view,
Its cluster'd hamlets, and its mountains blue,
Our "virtuous populace," a nobler boast
Than all the wealth of either India's coast.
Yet while our hearts with admiration burn,
Too soon we learn that "Man was made to mourn."
The independent wish, the taste refin'd,
Bright energies of the superior mind,
And Feeling's generous pangs, and Fancy's glow,
And all that liberal Nature could bestow,
To him profusely given, yet given in vain;
Misfortune aids and points the stings of pain.

How bless'd, when wand'ring by his native *Ayr* ,
He woo'd "the willing Muse," unknown to care!
But when fond admiration spread his name,
A candidate for fortune and for fame,
In evil hour he left the tranquil shade
Where Youth and Love with Hope and Fancy play'd;
Yet rainbow colours gild the novel scene,
Deceitful fortune sweetly smil'd like *JEAN* ;
Now courted oft by the licentious gay
With them through devious paths behold him stray;
The opening rose conceals the latent thorn,
Convivial hours prolong'd awake the morn,
Even Reason's sacred pow'r is drown'd in wine,
And Genius lays her wreath on Folly's shrine;
Too sure, alas! the world's unfeeling train
Corrupt the simple manners of the swain;
The blushing Muse indignant scorns his lays,
And fortune frowns, and honest fame decays,
Till low on earth he lays his sorrowing head,
And sinks untimely 'midst the vulgar dead!

Yet while for him, belov'd, admir'd in vain,
Thus fond Regret pours forth her plaintive strain,
While Fancy, Feeling, Taste, their griefs rehearse,
And deck with artless tears his mournful hearse,
See Cunning, Dullness, Ignorance, and Pride,
Exulting o'er his grave in triumph ride,
And boast, "though Genius, Humour, Wit agree,"
Cold selfish Prudence far excels the three;
Nor think, while groveling on the earth they go,
How few can mount so high to fall so low.
Thus *Vandals* , *Goths* , and *Huns* , exulting come,
T' insult the ruins of majestic *Rome* .

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

But ye who honour Genius—sacred beam!
From holy light a bright ethereal gleam,
Ye whom his happier verse has taught to glow,
Now to his ashes pay the debt you owe,
Draw Pity's veil o'er his concluding scene,
And let the stream of bounty flow for JEAN !
The mourning matron and her infant train
Will own you did not love the Muse in vain,
While Sympathy with liberal hand appears,
To aid the Orphan's wants, and dry the Widow's tears!

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

**THE
HIGHLANDERS:**

OR

SKETCHES

OF

HIGHLAND SCENERY AND MANNERS: WITH SOME

REFLECTIONS ON EMIGRATION. WRITTEN DURING THE AUTHOR'S RECOVERY FROM A
LONG ILLNESS, IN SPRING 1795.

IN FIVE PARTS.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

PART I.

ARGUMENT.

Complaints of Languor and Solitude, rendered more melancholy by the gloomy season. Return of Spring. Restored Health. Consequent joy and gratulation. Aspect of Nature on the late appearance of Spring in the Northern Climate. Disappointment and concern at the Depopulation of the neighbouring glens. Apostrophe to the Spirit of Malvina. Parallel betwixt the degenerate race succeeding the Fingalian Heroes, and the mechanical and frigid people who replace the Highlanders, driven to emigrate. Contrast betwixt that Life in which the frame is enervated by Sloth and Luxury, and the mind unhinged by visionary systems of Philosophy;—and that wherein the Contemplation of Nature, and early habits of Piety, have produced Patience, Fortitude, and every manly Virtue:—Exemplified in the opposite characters, and illustrated by two correspondent similies, the Swallow and the Lark. The Author solicits the attention of the Reader to a picture of deep and peculiar distress.

Where Winter lingering chills the lap of May.
GOLDSMITH.

FAR to the North the howling tempest drove,
Light od'rous buds perfum'd the birchen grove,
The primrose, iris, and the daisy pied,
With bashful sweets bedeck'd the mountain's side;
And even from bogs with chilly moisture drown'd,
Our hardy myrtle scatter'd fragrance round :
Nature in happier climes look'd fresh and gay,
And sternly smil'd even on the banks of Spey.
Hid from the solar beam and living breeze,
Stretch'd on the languid couch of dire disease,
By turns in listless torpor stretch'd I lay,
Or pin'd the agonizing hours away:
"How long must I in storms and sickness mourn?
"Oh when will health on zephyrs wings return?
"When shall I sit upon yon green hill's brow,
"To view fresh verdure deck the vales below?
"When shall my heart its grateful raptures bring,
"To join the general symphony of spring?
"No more shall selfish cares my soul employ,
"But the kind throb reverb'rate kindred joy:
"Youth's generous fervours kindle in my mind,
"And the wide wish that grasps the human kind.
"How long must I in storms and sickness mourn?
"Oh when will health, and light, and spring return?"
Again, with balmy breath the western gale
Wakes the mild verdure of the shelter'd vale,
While health, and light, and spring, return once more:
But who, alas! can Spring's delights restore?
Since social joys and cheerful toils are dead,
And all the train of mountain virtues fled;
Which, like our native firs, aspiring, bold,
Love the bleak heights, and scorn the fertile mould.
DAUGHTER of TOSCAR ! who by Lutha's streams
Oft met thy warlike spouse in mournful dreams:

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

MALVINA ! come in all thy pensive charms,
Stretch from thy robe of mist thy snowy arms;
Lift thy slow-rolling eyes, whose azure beams
So oft of old were quench'd in sorrow's streams;
When sons of little men, an abject race,
Appear'd in thy departed hero's place:
Tell in what secret cave, or whispering shade,
Thy harp of sadly-pleasing sound is laid,
(Whose plaintive tones, so sweet to OSSIAN'S ear,
The child of sorrow still delights to hear,)
That my bold hand may wake its strings again,
And teach the mountain echoes to complain:
While to each dusky heath, and woody dell,
The Genius of the mountains bids farewell.

Now, where the dappl'd fawns and bounding roes
Were wont their sprightly gambols to disclose,
Slow wand'ring sheep gaze round with vacant eye,
While sullen rocks return their plaintive cry:
Pensive and slow I climb the mountain brow,
To view each social hamlet's mutual plough ;
To see the cluster'd cottages around,
Where tranquil peace and rural joy were found;
Where gentle manners, piety sincere,
"The sympathies of love and friendship dear;"
Fancy and music bless'd each humble cot,
Each heart endearing to the native spot;
While at the frugal meal the blue smokes rise
Like grateful incense to the fav'ring skies;
For, here the beauties of one smiling day,
Whole months of low'ring gloom and storms repay.
While Spring with soft hand scatters fragrance round,
Devotion, gratitude, and joy abound;
And more delight expands th' untutor'd heart,
Than pomp or luxury could e'er impart.
In vain my eyes the length'ning vale explore,
From hillocks green the blue smokes rise no more:
"No more at evening hour the hamlets round,"
The voice of joy and melody resound;
No more the maids with plaintive ditties old,
And warbl'd love-tales soothe the musky fold;
Or guardian-spirits hovering round in air
Attend the village-patriarch's simple pray'r,
Where breathes the native soul devoid of art,
The genuine language of the grateful heart:
No more the pibroch wakes the martial strain,
No more the clan's proud standard waves amain,
No more in pensive mood the gifted seer
Beholds the joyous nuptial train appear;
Or sees the funeral pomp approaching slow,
Or hears through the still air the shrieks of future woe:
No more the bard, whom native genius fires,

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

(Celestial flame, that heaven-ward still aspires,) Bids patriot valour in full glory blaze,
Or consecrates departed worth with praise.

Thus brave MONTROSE was sung, and great ARGYLE :

The gentle Chieftain of the mysty isle,
Snatch'd in the bloom of opening worth away,
Thus lives—the theme of many a plaintive lay ;
Which still his honour'd memory shall prolong;
So young MARCELLUS lives in VIRGIL'S song.
Say, banish'd masters of the tuneful art,
Who sway with latent pow'r the willing heart,
Where are you now? across th' Atlantic's roar
Do your sad eyes your native hills explore?
Or homeward do you strain your aching view,
Where restless waves each other still pursue?
Where angry billows meet with frowning skies,
Till fancy's self recoils, and vision dies:
Or, bending o'er the prow, your mournful strain
Mix with the murmurs of the boundless main,
Where sinking surges equal cadence keep,
While misty showers around you seem to weep;
Or wakes the harp the well-known notes of woe,
That wont along the funeral path to flow,
That, while our vanish'd comforts we deplore,
Repeats emphatic, "They return no more ."
Go, hapless bards, and sing in other lands
Your country's praise to charm her exil'd bands;
And soothe each drooping mind with thoughts of home,
While hopeless through the pathless wilds they roam.
But wherefore exil'd? while afar they rove,
Still glow their filial breasts with patriot love:
The thoughts of home still aching at their heart,
While distance only aggravates the smart.
Did not their hard hands earn with patient toil
Their scanty pittance from the rugged soil?
And did not blameless morals add a grace
To simple manners, in the untaught race?
Uncouth and wild these manners may appear,
And even these virtues savage and austere,
To those vain tribes who, indolently gay,
Know but to dream and trifle life away;
Who on soft Luxury's velvet lap reclin'd,
Shrink from each bold exertion of the mind,
Whose unbrac'd languid frame, dissolv'd in ease,
Recoils and shivers at th' autumnal breeze.
When winter rides terrific on the blast,
They shrink to covert till the storm be past;
Nay, when soft April's wat'ry smile appears,
The gale that from the primrose shakes the tears,
Too rudely breathes for them—although its power
Wounds not the texture of the silken flower:

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Born in the sun's enlivening beams to play,
Like sportive insects of a summer day,
Say, how should they fatigue and danger brave,
Or climb the rocky steep, or mount the wintry wave?

"These tasks befit the rugged sons of toil,"
Cries speculative Pride with scornful smile,
"While they in ignorance and darkness grope,
"And labour on, and talk of faith and hope;
"Far nobler labours aid us to extol
"The task of minds, the labour of the soul.
"To trace French novelists with steady gaze,
"Through sentiment's inexplicable maze;
"Whose evanescent meaning caught meanwhile,
"Shall add new graces to enrich our style;
"New systems of philosophy be shown,
"With happier art in language all our own;
"New modes, new governments, new laws, new light,
"Shall put all superstition's train to flight;
"And revelation's trembling, dubious ray,
"No more its faint, uncertain beams display;
"But knowledge flash with such resplendent blaze,
"That maddening crowds grow giddy while they gaze.
"Such are our triumphs, while at ease reclin'd,
"With active force the comprehensive mind
"Breaks custom's chains and prejudice's ties,
"And wide in sportive curves unbounded flies."

Thus have I seen, in some long shining day,
The *Swallow* kind their sportive gambols play;
They roam'd excursive through the boundless air,
Sporting with wanton wing, now here, now there;
And twittering on with inharmonious mirth,
Each surface skimm'd, yet scorn'd to touch the earth:
Nor heav'n-ward strove on wing sublime to rise,
But chas'd with eager haste the summer flies;
Till the chill blasts of the first wintry day
To darkness drove the flutterers and their prey.
Such be your fate—ye silken sons of ease,
Whom hardships terrify, and trifles please.
Be mine to watch the blush of early dawn,
And thoughtful muse along the dewy lawn,
Where the sweet *Lark* with cheerful ardour springs,
Shakes the cold night-drops from her russet wings;
With music's raptures cheers the vaulted sky,
And wakens all the feather'd minstrelsy;
Then stooping to her dewy nest again,
With grateful joy renews the charming strain.

Thus from his native glen, when forc'd to roam,
Some Alpine peasant joyous hails his home;
Delighted hovering o'er the spot obscure,
Where useful toils are mix'd with pleasures pure;
While his fond eyes explore the low retreat,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

He feels his glowing heart tumultuous beat;
And views with more delight his humble shed,
Than all the scenes where pomp and pleasure tread.

Will you, ye proud and gay, attend a while,
To homely truths rehears'd in homely style;
And hear a rustic Muse those truths impart,
From the full sources of the swelling heart?
No strains of measur'd harmony shall here
With meretricious tinkle soothe your ear;
Nor art ambitious snatch exotic flow'rs
From eastern groves, or soft Italia's bow'rs;
Be mine to raise, without disguise or art,
The British song, and touch the British heart.
To scenes of heartfelt sorrow turn your eye,
Unlock the sacred source of sympathy;
Nor let to Afric's wilds Compassion roam,
While modest Anguish weeps unseen at home.

END OF PART I.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

PART II.

ARGUMENT.

Character of the Mountaineers, with a sketch of the leading causes which produced and still preserve that peculiar Character, in which a manly Simplicity is blended with a degree of Sentiment, and gentleness of Manners, seldom to be found in the lower class of any other country; and which seems so intimately connected with their language and manner of life, that they generally lose it, when incorporated with any other class of people. Rural occupations described as carried on by different members of the same family. The domestic Group assembled in the Evening, rehearse to each other the Toils, Adventures, Visions, and Contemplations of the Day. Enthusiastic feeling excited by the simple pathos of artless narrative or unstudied composition—contrasted with the apathy common among those in whom much intercourse with the world has blunted the finer feelings;—illustrated by a comparison. Evening Worship. Early rising. Devout Aspirations. Respect paid to an old peasant, who generally presides by tacit consent in every hamlet, and holds his power by the double right of superior wisdom and experience, and is called, by way of pre-eminence, n'Dunadh, or the Man. A younger person in the same little circle, generally admired by the rest for some talent, such as Humour, Musical Powers, or a faculty of Rhyming, &c. No hamlet without some Widow, who is in a great measure supported, and saved from the disgrace of a mendicant life, by the little society; she is usually childless, for the Highlanders, eminent for filial piety, always strive to support their aged parents.

**Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.**

SHAKSPEARE.

COME , then, explore with me each winding glen,
Far from the noisy haunts of busy men;
Let us with stedfast eye attentive trace
The local habits of the CELTIC race;
Renown'd even in those old heroic times,
That live in OSSIAN'S songs, and RUNIC rhymes;
When ardent Valour call'd his children forth,
And glory lighten'd through the beaming North:
Whose hardy sons that twilight age adorn,
Like the quick splendours of the Boreal morn,
Fill'd with amaze and awe the world's dread kings,
And bade their eagles stoop with flagging wings.
Come, trace with curious search what secret cause
Each native's heart with strong attraction draws,
Though wealth in happier lands her stores unlock,
To cling with fervour to his native rock:
Why lonely mountains, dark with russet heath
And rushing streams, and narrow vales beneath;
With more delight his wand'ring eye detain,
Than FORTH'S rich banks, or LOTHIAN'S fertile plain:
The many-colour'd herd, his wealth and pride,
Like deer, through wastes extended, wand'ring wide;
And sportive goats, a bold aspiring flock,

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

High on the ridge of yon aerial rock;
More self-importance to his mind impart,
And fill with warmer joys his simple heart,
Than all the flocks the southern shepherd pens,
Or the fat herds that graze the LINCOLN fens.
Dear to his heart, those rocks that oft have rung
With legends which the CELTIC muse has sung;
While all the attentive hamlets round admire
The deeds gigantic of their common sire:
The honest pride those noble deeds impart,
With kind contagion flies from heart to heart.
And while they hang delighted on the sound,
The ties of kindred love are doubly bound;
And lisp'ing children, youths, and grandsires grey,
Enamour'd dwell on the exalting lay:
The long-descended strains their sons inspire,
To wake new raptures from the melting lyre,
Bid every sympathetic bosom glow
With modest triumph, or with virtuous woe:
With fine emotions rudest spirits move,
And teach at once to wonder and to love:
While glowing tenderness and thought refin'd,
Exalt the spirit of the lowly hind.

In other lands, where abject peasants toil,
To gain rich products from the cultur'd soil;
Where grovelling interest draws each sordid plan,
And all things feel improvement's aid but man:
To plod in dull mechanic sort their lot,
And vegetate upon the self-same spot:
Through the dull year's unvarying circle round,
The self-same fields their cares and projects bound.
No common toils have they, nor liberal views,
Alternate ease, nor "rapture for the muse;"
No leisure intervals to soothe their care,
Save the gross pastimes of a village-fair:
Extinct in these the spirit fierce and bold
That blaz'd through all the Scottish ranks of old;
Extinct the vital spark of energy,
That bids the soul claim kindred with the sky.

Far to the North, where Scotia's Alps arise,
And shroud their white heads in the misty skies;
In peopled straths, where winding streams prolong
Their course familiar in the CELTIC song:
Or where the narrow wooded glens display
Their verdant bosoms opening to the day,
And each his tributary torrent pours,
To swell the midland river's copious stores:
While near their confluence stand the mouldering seats
Where ancient *Chieftains* rul'd those green retreats,
And faithful *Clans* delighted to obey
The kind behests of patriarchal sway;

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

The social tribes branch'd out on every side,
The pleasures and the toils of life divide;
And long experienc'd in the ages gone,
Peculiar toils and pleasures all their own.

Here all is open as the ambient sky,
Nor fence, nor wall, obstructs the wandering eye:
Each hamlet's flocks and herds, a mutual charge,
That wander up the mountain's side at large;
Alternate claim the rustic's daily care;
And thus each various rural toil they share.

The lesser *Children* guide the bleating lambs,
When wean'd and forc'd to quit their tim'rous dams;
The more advanc'd the sportive kidlings guide,
Where rocks o'erhang the torrent's dashing pride.
The little *Maiden* , whose unsteady hand
Can scarce the distaff's yielding weight command,
Is by her careful mother taught to cull
From whitest curling fleeces, silky wool;
Her flowing tresses decks with garlands gay,
Then spins beside her playful calves the day.
The *Youth* , whose cheek the manly down o'erspreads
Wide o'er the hills the stronger cattle leads:
While milky mothers lowing o'er the land,
With plaintive cries their absent young demand.

The careful *Father* forms the hamlet's fold,
Or else with patient labour turns the mould;
And watchful leaning o'er the faithful share,
The small domain divides with frugal care;
And free from cautious doubts and selfish fears,
They reap their portion of the ripen'd ears.
Thus, while they sow and reap the *mutual* field,
And each to each by turns is wont to yield;
With one consent they trace the general plan,
And blended interests form the social man:
Hence gradual ties of kind endearment flow,
Hence bland address and courteous actions grow;
And hence th' unstudied manners of the swain,
The graces of a gentler mind explain.

When the declining sun withdraws his fires,
And slowly from the mountain-top retires;
When echoes whisper to the evening gale,
And shadows dim the visionary vale:
When cattle slumber in the peaceful fold,
And clouds in wild fantastic shapes are roll'd;
The scatter'd family delighted meet,
And with complacent smile each other greet.
All day, from deep recesses of the woods,
From shelving rocks, or secret winding floods,
Each individual strives to bring a share
To aid their household wants, or help their frugal fare.
The boastful *Boy* , caught by his feeble hook,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Displays the scaly tenants of the brook:
The *Goat-herds* in their osier baskets bring
The wholesome herbs on airy cliffs that spring;
The alder bark that gives the sable dye,
Or buds of heath that with the saffron vie;
While moss, that wont on aged rocks to grow,
Shall make the various woof with purple glow:
The housewife pleas'd the varied gifts beholds,
While hope anticipates the checker'd folds;
And colours of the home-made drapery,
Pride of her heart, and pleasure of her eye.
The cumbrous burden see the *Father* bear,
Of pliant birch, or smooth-grain'd juniper;
To form the roof that shields the humble dome,
"Where every wand'ring stranger finds a home;"
Or frame the seemly vessels that contain
The milky store which from their flocks they drain;
For here scarce known the sordid arts of trade,
They seek no gross mechanic's frigid aid:
Tho' mean the dwelling thus uncouthly rear'd,
'Tis still by kindly gratitude endear'd:
While each his neighbour aids with cordial smile,
To build, like lab'ring ants, the rustic pile.
The household stuff their simple wants demand,
Is fashion'd by th' ingenious owner's hand:
The knife, the axe, the auger, and the fire,
The only tools that aid th' inventive sire.
From courtly domes on marble columns borne,
Let not the artist view their works with scorn;
Till he another cot produce to view,
By means as simple, and with tools as few.
The wish'd *Repast* the weary inmates cheers,
And kindness now on every face appears;
Well pleas'd to meet in comfort, and display
The mix'd adventures of the various day.
What bounding deer and fluttering game they trac'd,
What hunter met them on the moory waste;
What straying cattle from th' adjacent strath,
They careful turn'd into the homeward path:
Or tell what rude and new-invented lay,
With soothing cadence lull'd their tedious day;
Th' unearthly voice, deep sounding thro' the wood,
Or vision wild of mournful solitude,
That brings the long-lost brother back again
From QUEBEC'S gates, or sad CULLODEN'S plain:
By turns in wonder wrapt, or chill'd with fear,
Or sunk in woe, th' attentive audience hear;
And each impression which their words impart,
Sinks with deep interest on the artless heart:
Not all the magic cunning of the scene,
Though SIDDONS self in sorrow's pomp be seen,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Can wake emotions in the callous mind,
Vers'd in the crooked science of mankind,
So soft, so strong, so warm, as here are known,
Where modest NATURE works, and works alone.
The vivid portion of celestial fire
Which bids the energetic soul aspire,
Like the clear flames that light the frozen zone,
Blown by the fav'ring breath of heaven alone,
More brightly blazes, more intensely glows,
Than where slow art her languid aid bestows.

Now all the household with due reverence kneel,
While in emphatic phrase with fervent zeal,
The *Parent Swain* pours out his ardent pray'r,
For the dear objects of his tend'rest care;
Or else, by humble gratitude inspir'd,
His swelling heart with holy transport fir'd,
Presents his praise—an *Evening Sacrifice* ,
Sincere and welcome to the approving skies.
Thus blessing heaven, and by each other blest,
They drown their toils in sweet oblivious rest.

When, on his eastern throne the Sun appears,
From Nature's mantle green to dry the tears,
With cheerful haste to meet his beams they rise,
And pay again their homage to the skies ;
Then greet the hamlet *Sage* with due esteem,
Whose wise behest an oracle they deem:
Ev'n Nature's artless children thus we find,
A rude unconscious homage pay to mind.
Then, why at Fortune's vain distinctions low'r?
Since *Wisdom* still in every state is *Pow'r* .
When *Probity* and *Wisdom* both combine,
'Tis indefeasible and right divine:
While all beneath the secret influence bow,
And wait suspended the decision slow.

Thus Grecian chiefs with mute attention heard,
When hoary NESTOR spoke, by all rever'd.

In every hamlet some experienc'd *Sire* ,
Whose worth and wisdom all the rest admire,
Known to each track where deer are wont to range,
And vers'd in every planetary change;
Why meteors glare, or wand'ring comets blaze,
And which propitious, which unlucky days;
Directs what time to yoke the mutual plough,
And when to feed the weakly flocks below;
Or when the larger cattle forth to guide,
Where fresher herbage decks the mountain's side;
What dreadful judgments wait on broken vows,
How conscious guilt low'rs on the murderer's brows;
How voices whispering thro' the gloomy wood,
Or groaning caves, make known the man of blood:
How fields are blighted, or how cattle die,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

To punish secret fraud, or perjury:
Or how red lightning scath'd the vassal's head,
Who shew'd the way his outlaw'd chieftain fled;
He tells at large,—while every hearer's sense
Is ravish'd by his copious eloquence:
In each debate he gives the casting vote,
And his wise sayings all repeat by rote.
Much does each hamlet boast its sage's skill,
To draw the severing bounds 'twixt good and ill:
And much indeed his knowledge is extoll'd,
In local history, and tradition old.

Thus, though he holds pre-eminence, as fit,
The circle also boasts its *Bard* or *Wit* .
Some *Genius* , who by Nature taught to sing,
Responsive warbles to the trembling string:
Each theme, by turns, th' attentive audience warms,
The smile of beauty, or the clash of arms;
Or grottos, woods, and shaded vales are shown,
Description, such as THOMPSON'S self might own:
Like him, the bard, without the aid of art,
Awakes the fine emotions of the heart:
Like him, can every "tenderness infuse,"
And teach to love the "humanizing muse:"
Or else some Youth, who smiles and wounds by turns,
With all the poignant humour of a BURNS ,
Bids sportive mirth and pleasantry abound,
And scatters Ridicule's light darts around;
With the shrewd glance of quick inspection keen,
Detects the vain, the selfish, and the mean;
Drags vice and folly to the public eye,
And points them out to grinning obloquy:
Not even the worthy are from fear exempt,
Such is the general horror of contempt.

Besides th' ingenious Youth and sapient Sire;
One darling object all the rest admire:
Some blushing *Maid* , whose sweet, tho' simple charms,
In many an artless bosom wake alarms;
Whom all the young with secret joy behold,
With looks of kind complacence all the old:
See, with dishevell'd locks she moves along,
The theme of many a wildly-warbl'd song:
And many a quaint similitude is sought,
Through all the boundless wilderness of thought,
To paint the graces of th' excelling fair:
The glossy burnish of her shining hair,
Is like the soft harp's many-sounding strings
To which the bard the deeds of heroes sings;
Like stars that shed sweet influence from the skies,
The beamy lustre of her downcast eyes;
The downy *cannach* of the wat'ry moors,
Whose shining tufts the shepherd-boy allures;

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Which, when the Summer's sultry heats prevail,
Sheds its light plumage on th' inconstant gale:
Even such, so silky soft, so dazzling white,
Her modest bosom seems, retir'd from sight.
The tufted berries rich in crimson glow,
That on the mountain-ash conspicuous grow,
Seem a fit image of the deepening red,
With which the conscious fair-one's cheek is spread:
While emulous her neighbour-swains declare
No other virgin can with her compare;
And challenge all the neighbouring hamlets round,
To show a maid with such perfections crown'd.

Where yonder ridgy mountains bound the scene,
The narrow op'ning glens that intervene
Still shelter in some lowly nook obscure,
One poorer than the rest—where all are poor;
Some *widow'd Matron*, hopeless of relief,
Who to her secret breast confines her grief;
Dejected sighs the wint'ry night away,
And lonely muses all the summer day:
Her gallant sons, who smit with honour's charms,
Pursued the phantom Fame thro' war's alarms,
Return no more;—stretch'd on Hindostan's plain,
Or sunk beneath th' unfathomable main;
In vain her eyes the wat'ry waste explore,
For heroes—fated to return no more!
Let others bless the morning's red'ning beam,
Foe to her peace—it breaks th' illusive dream
That, in their prime of manly bloom confest,
Restor'd the long-lost warriors to her breast;
And as they strove, with smiles of filial love,
Their widow'd parent's anguish to remove,
Through her small casement broke th' intrusive day,
And chac'd the pleasing images away!
No time can e'er her banish'd joys restore,
For ah! a heart once broken, heals no more.
The dewy beams that gleam from pity's eye,
The "still small voice" of sacred sympathy,
In vain the mourner's sorrows would beguile,
Or steal from weary woe one languid smile;
Yet what they can they do,—the scanty store,
So often open'd for the wandering poor,
To her each cottager complacent deals,
While the kind glance the melting heart reveals;
And still, when evening streaks the west with gold,
The milky tribute from the lowing fold
With cheerful haste officious children bring,
And every smiling flow'r that decks the Spring:
Ah! little know the fond attentive train,
That spring and flow'rets smile for her in vain:
Yet hence they learn to reverence modest woe,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And of their little all a part bestow.

Let those, to wealth and proud distinction born,
With the cold glance of insolence and scorn
Regard the suppliant wretch,—and harshly grieve
The bleeding heart their bounty would relieve,
Far different these;—while from a bounteous heart
With the poor sufferer they divide a part:
Humbly they own, that all they have is given
A boon precarious from indulgent heaven;
And the next blighted crop, or frosty spring,
Themselves to equal indigence may bring.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

PART III.

ARGUMENT.

The removal to the Mountain Shealings, when the true Pastoral Life commences; and a Scene of vacant leisure, diversified by Music, Poetry, and Rural Sports, is opened to the people. Return from the Shealings. Autumn. Tokens of an early Winter. Wattled Barns. All Saints or Hallow Even. Rural Dancing. Grace and Agility in that exercise native to Highlanders.

**Forms or customs had not shackl'd Man,
But wild in woods the noble Savage ran.**
DRYDEN.

NOW hark! what loud, tumultuous joys resound,
From all the echoing rocks and valleys round;
And hear! the sage oraculous declare,
Tis time the *summer-flitting* to prepare:
The *summer-flitting!* youths delighted cry,
The *summer-flitting!* lispings babes reply .
Now all is haste, and cheerful bustle round,
To reach the wilds, with plenteous herbage crown'd.

Thus when assembled storks prepare to fly,
When NILUS leaves his slimy borders dry,
The prudent leaders first consult with care,
Then all the younger followers mount the air:
Their figur'd flight with due precision steer,
While hope exulting heads the gay career.

When dappl'd grey first streaks the eastern sky,
With quick dispatch the cottage-matrons vie,
Who first shall load the steeds that lead the way,
And wheels and vessels in due order lay.
Then in collected numbers duly rang'd
With lighten'd hearts, to care and fear estrang'd,
The train proceed,—and first the motley herd,
For greater strength, or agile force preferr'd,
Lead on,—the milky mothers following near,
Their sportive young behold with matron fear:
Then come the bleating kind with plaintive cry,
And children overjoy'd, they know not why;
And mothers, smiling on the guiltless race,
Or clasping infants in their fond embrace.

High on the mountain's side, or in the wood,
Where Nature reigns in savage solitude;
Or deep embosom'd in some narrow glen,
Where coy Retirement shuns the haunts of men,
The shelter'd *bothys* rise to shield the train,
Who joy to view their summer-haunts again;
For here again the Sylvan Age returns,
Nor man the curse of ceaseless labour mourns:
Fair Freedom walks abroad, unties her zone,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And joys to see the landscape all her own.

Thrown careless on the slope—see vacant *Ease*
Bask in the sun, or court the cooling breeze;
And musing *Fancy* , by some brook reclin'd,
In language clothe the murmurs of the wind;
Or frame to vocal reeds the native lay,
Or form of mountain flowers the chaplet gay.
See *Sport* , with *Exercise* and *Health* combin'd,
In happy union, fleeter than the wind,
Thro' pathless wastes the sprightly game pursue,
"Oft out of reach, but never out of view:"
While eager *Hope* impetuous grasps the prize,
And *Ardour* lightens in the hunter's eyes.
At length, exulting o'er their trembling spoil,
They see the dun deer fall to crown their toil.

And when calm evening bathes the flow'rs in dew,
And bids the thrush his mellow note renew,
With answering music maidens pour the lay,
And drain the listening kine at close of day:
Delighted Echoes spread the cheerful strains,
And rapt Attention holds the silent swains:
But holds not long—from every thicket round
Young voices mix'd in cheerful chorus sound.
Each lone recess the wand'ring tribes explore,
And now return exulting with their store
Of *berries* , that in rich luxuriance spread,
O'er the dark heath their crimson lustre shed;
Or trailing o'er the rocky fragments side,
The glossy foliage spreads its verdant pride;
While *raspberries* richly flavour'd, climb on high,
And bask in all the radiance of the sky;
Or *brambles* , on the brook's wild margin spread,
With jetty lustre deck their pebbly bed:
Where with coy wing the *Ptarmigan* retires,
And high beyond the rolling mist aspires,
In safest solitude and purest air,
To rear her young with fond maternal care :
And *mountain Hares* , white as the drifted snow,
Ascend, while fear and danger pant below;
Or, where the *Eagle* darts his vigorous flight
From cliffs sublime, to trace the realms of light;
A fruit there grows, to fertile plains unknown,
Whose beauties deck the sterile rock alone ;
The creeping plant, low on the stony ground,
Spreads like some lonely gem its radiance round:
The topaz and the ruby here display
Their blended lustre to the eye of day:
'Twas thus Hesperian gardens bloom'd of old,
Where Dragons watch'd the vegetable gold.

All these, and more beside, of names unknown,
Has Nature o'er the wilds profusely strown:

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And vent'rous children wide the waste explore,
And to the *Arrie* bring the various store .
While bolder youth pursue the feather'd game,
Of various plumage, and as various name:
And adding what the finny tribes afford,
With unbought viands load the simple board;
Where milky draughts refresh the happy train,
And each lives o'er th' excursive day again:
While mirth's loud carol every care beguiles,
And guiltless loves, that play in artless smiles;
And aged swains, that talk of battles old,
And wonders new by ancient seers foretold;
And matrons, who the busy spindle ply,
Till evening's warning star is mounted high;
Thus comes with speed unmark'd the hour of rest,
That hour to peace and innocence so blest;
How sweet to slumber on the bed of heath,
Whose purple blossoms health and vigour breathe!
How sweet to dream of heavenly melody,
And wake to hear it warbling thro' the sky!
While larks ascending tune their matin lays,
And scatter darkness with the notes of praise.

Thus while successive days new pleasures bring,
Gay *Summer* hastes away on blithsome wing:
But now, when equal days and nights draw near,
And pensive *Autumn* mild, of sober cheer;
When clustering nuts are changing into brown,
When from the nest the plover's young is flown,
When nimble moor-powts scatter o'er the heath,
And hear in every blast the *licenc'd death*:
When round the lonely hamlet's green domain,
The grass in fresh luxuriance springs again;
When flowery herbage richly clothes the mead,
And corn shot up, supplies the past'ral reed;
Then from the *Summer-sheals* their course they bend,
And with reluctant leisure slow descend.

How cheap the pleasures of the simple mind!
Unknown to joys that Fashion calls refin'd:
What fine, what slender and unconscious ties,
To hold the kind ingenuous heart, suffice.
The wide, wild haunts, where nature lonely reigns,
Unwilling they forsake, to seek the plains;
Yet when they see the dear familiar spot,
Where each descries his lov'd, his native cot,
Well pleas'd they hail the Genius of the plain,
And joy to meet their household-gods again:
Though penury and ceaseless toil await,
They resolutely brave the storms of fate,
And see fair Hope's eternal lamp display
The gloomy path that leads to endless day.

Now *Autumn* lifts her head, with plenty crown'd,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

The breezes wave her yellow locks around,
The purest azure decks her sky serene,
And mild Dejection marks her pensive mien:
Now lonely Meditation walks abroad,
Through all his bounteous works to trace her GOD :
Now Labour plies his task, with smiling cheer,
To reap the produce of the ripen'd year;
And sportive glee, and talk, and social toil,
The patient reaper's weary task beguile,
And songs, according to the reaper's stroke,
Brisk emulation o'er the field provoke:
The ancient swains attentive wait behind,
With patient care the yellow sheaves to bind;
Or else, with long-liv'd prudence, chide the while,
Where, lur'd by Beauty's soft attractive smile,
Some Youth who plies his task beside the fair,
Whose artless charms his simple heart ensnare,
With stroke unequal reaps; while on the ground
The broken ears are careless scatter'd round:
In vain the fond Enthusiast ye reprove,
For when did Prudence ever dwell with Love?
Triumphant Love, who scorning Wisdom's rules,
Exalting sees the wise become his fools.

Now dark *October* comes, obscur'd with rain,
And low'ring threats the plenty of the plain;
For Winter here, too oft with boisterous form,
Comes early riding on the howling storm;
And oft with rude and chilly hand is found,
To scatter Autumn's heavy locks around.

High on these mountains BOREAS dwells alone,
While icy terrors gird his frozen throne:
When Sister-Seasons dance the graceful round,
Where Harmony appears with order crown'd;
In fury oft he mounts his airy car,
His blustering heralds sound the notes of war;
And while those changing seasons fair advance,
Spreads wild confusion through the mazy dance.
Hence Winter here oft breaks the mystic ring,
And chills the blooms that deck the breast of Spring!
Or rages among unwither'd leaves,
And shakes from Autumn's bounteous lap the sheaves.
Hence aged swains, by slow experience taught,
When heavy clouds appear with moisture fraught,
And bending willows hang their dripping heads,
And turbid rivers rise beyond their beds,
And mountain-cataracts, of dingy brown,
With brawling rage o'er broken rocks come down;
And plenteous fruit, with early ripeness red,
In crimson tufts bedeck the witch-elm's head;
And numerous hips, with ripen'd scarlet glow,
And frosty gales, in ruddy evenings blow;—

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Direct, in haste, to lead the new shorn grain,
From the dank moisture of the wat'ry plain
To rocky heights, where frequent breezes blow,
And sun-beams with redoubled ardour glow.

Now young and old from every quarter come,
To share the cheerful task of *leading home*:
Here, studious of the clime, they form with care
The *wattled barn* that courts th' enlivening air,
Lest the fresh sap their labour render vain,
Fermenting through the scarcely-ripen'd grain:
The sons of *Art*, who art alone esteem,
These, marks of savage indolence may deem;
But sage Experience, Wisdom's eldest child,
When nurs'd by Nature 'midst th' untutor'd wild,
Though small her bounds appear, and short her view,
Yet in these narrow bounds her steps are true:
Nor let rash Speculation's letter'd pride,
O'erturn her modest works with daring stride.

Now comes the day to Superstition dear,
When frosty mists foretel the closing year,
Hallow'd and reverenc'd in the elder time,
Sacred to every saint, of every clime;
When aerial tribes in joyful freedom stray,
Or hover round the church-yard's lonely way;
Or o'er the annual mystic rites preside,
And form of air the visionary bride:
In joyful groups the rustics then appear,
To crown the finish'd labours of the year,
And bid the rural genius come along,
With dance, and sport, and revelry and song:
Then *native* Music wakes in sprightly strains,
Which gay according motion best explains:
Fastidious Elegance, in scornful guise,
Perhaps th' unpolish'd measure may despise;
But here, where infants lisp in tuneful lays,
And Melody her untaught charms displays;
The dancers bound with wild peculiar grace,
And sound thro' all its raptur'd mazes trace;
Nor awkward step, nor rude ungainly mien,
Through all the glad assemblage can be seen:
But with decorous air, and sprightly ease,
Even critic taste the agile dancers please.
Cameleon Fashion's self, whose varying hue,
Assumes the likeness of each object new,
Returns, to copy motion's artless grace,
Even from the wildest of the mountain race,
And with decisive voice her votaries calls,
To ape with air constrain'd the rural balls!
The nymph that wont to trace the source of *Tay*,
Or lead the sprightly dance by rapid *Spey*,
With conscious triumph smiles aside to see,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

This "faint reflection of the rural glee;"
Short pleasure languid imitation feels,
While polish'd courtiers pant in active reels.

END OF PART III.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

PART IV.

ARGUMENT.

Winter. Social Evenings. Little or no work done in that season in the Highlands. Hazardous intercourse with other Straths in search of strayed cattle. Hospitality exercised. Friendship promoted. Courage, Fortitude, and Patience strengthened. A spirit of bold adventure and strong Attachment cherished by their peculiar modes of Life;—Exemplified in the Episode of Farquhar. Singular View from Corryarric. Beauties of Lock–Ness, which, never freezing in Winter, is the haunt of all kinds of Aquatic Birds. Glendoe. Sun–rise on Loch–Ness described. Urquhart Castle. Glenmoriston. Fyers. Return of Farquhar. Devastation of the Country after the year 1745.

**A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,
And airy tongues, that syllable men's names
On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
The virtuous mind that ever walks attended
By a strong siding champion—*Conscience* .**

MILTON.

NOW *Winter* pours his terrors o'er the plain,
And icy barriers close the wild domain,
From the fierce North the sweeping blast descends,
And drifted snow in wild confusion blends;
The Mountain–Cataract, whose thundering sound
Made echoes tremble in their caves around,
Now dashing with diminish'd majesty,
In frozen state suspended seems on high;
While in the midst a small contracted stream
Tinkles like rills that lull the shepherd's dream.
The River crusted o'er, and hid in snow,
Unfaithful tempts the traveller below;
While pools and boiling springs, unsafe beneath,
Betray th' unwary to the snares of death.

How awful now appears Night's silent reign!
Where lofty mountains bound the solemn scene.
While Nature, wrapt in chilly bright disguise,
And sunk in deep repose, unconscious lies ;
And through the pure cerulean vault above,
In lucid order constellations move:
The milky–way, conspicuous glows on high.
Redoubled lustre sparkles through the sky;
And rapid splendours, from the dark–blue North,
In streams of brightness pour incessant forth;
While crusted mountain–snows reflect the light,
And radiance decks the sable brows of night.

Now, though their herds excite their anxious care,
Tir'd Labour slumbers with the shining share:
Short while they ply the flail, the scanty corn,
Dealt out with frugal care, employs the morn:

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

But social glee, around the cheerful hearth,
Lets loose the careless soul of rural mirth:
Bright burns the hearth, th' enlivening torches blaze ,
The pipes awake the notes of former days:
Again they feel their ancient spirit rise,
And courage fires, or pity melts their eyes,
As love or war alternate swells the sound,
And hearts dilate, and bosoms glow around:
Yet even while frost comes bitter on the breeze,
Not all their nights are spent in social ease.
Some bolder spirits of the hardy race,
O'er snow-clad mountains wake the dangerous chase;
And some advent'rous youths, with fearless mind,
All thoughts of ease and safety leave behind,
The pathless wilds for wandering steers explore,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

Climb the steep rock where nestling *Falcons* soar,
And heights by human feet untrod before.
There, danger threats in every hideous form,
There groans the Genius of the gathering storm;
And solitude forlorn, and frantic fear,
And howling blasts, and echoing caves are there.
Yet adamantine souls, and iron forms,
Hard brac'd by toil, and nurst among the storms,
Whom pleasure ne'er could melt, or terror freeze,
Can trace undaunted even such scenes as these;
Amidst the rattling hail erect their head,
And view serene the dwelling of the dead.
Where chiefs, who bore of old a mighty name,
In four grey stones concentre all their fame;
Where sleeps the hunter on the hill of heath,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

By fancy pictur'd in the misty wreath,
Dim hovering o'er the narrow bed of death.
Yet when the wearied storm has spent its wrath,
Patient he still explores th' adjacent *Strath* :
By the pale moon he tracks the famish'd hare,
Who seeks among the cots her scanty fare:
At length, a distant light his steps invites,
To share the wonted hospitable rites;
Where plenteous cheer, and welcome's genial smiles,
In simple guise the wanderer's care beguiles;
The timely aid, the long-remember'd feast,

ARGUMENT.

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

Are deep upon the stranger's mind impress'd,
And hope and gratitude distend his breast.
Deep in a narrow vale, unknown to song,
Where *Maeshy* leads her lucid stream along,
Then turns, as if unwilling to forsake
The peaceful bosom of her parent lake,
While her pure streams the polish'd pebbles show,
That through the native crystal shine below;
Upon her flow'ry banks there dwelt a Swain,
Who liv'd a stranger to the cultur'd plain:
He mov'd with active ease, and artless grace,
And manly spirit brighten'd in his face.
Fair on his cheek appear'd youth's mantling glow,
While lines of stedfast thought had mark'd his brow;
Alone, superior in the sylvan reign,
'Twas his to lead the life that poets feign,
Amidst luxuriant fruits, and crystal springs,
"Where the free soul looks down to pity kings."
Yet while through woods and mountains wont to rove,
The pious youth excell'd in filial love;
For his lov'd parents, and their duteous race,
He search'd the flood, or urg'd the vent'rous chase:
And while o'er distant moors he lov'd to roam,
The fruit of all his toils enrich'd their home:
For them the deer resign'd his ample hide,
For them th' enamell'd roes their beauteous pride,
The otter's costly fur, the dappled fawn,
The leveret wounded in the dewy dawn:
No sylvan game their FARQUHAR'S pow'r withstood,
Who reign'd despotic o'er the pathless wood.

But see! where *Winter* fierce, array'd in storms,
With early fury Nature's face deforms;
And pours his snows with wild unwonted haste,
Ere scatter'd herds are brought from ev'ry waste,
Where they through summer months unheeded rang'd,
Or left the district to their home estrang'd.
Now FARQUHAR ceas'd thro' gloomy woods to roam,
And hastening downwards, sought his peaceful home,
The kindred smile, the dear paternal cot:
But while through new-fall'n snows he hail'd the spot,
His father with unwonted sternness cried,—
"While heedless you traverse the forest wide,
"Our little all, those heifers and those steers,
"Rear'd as a stock for our declining years,
"Your unregarded charge, have wander'd far,
"Where ridgy rocks the dangerous access bar;
"Or in the western Corry's depth profound,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"Where blasts in fatal eddies circle round :
"While sylvan sports your vigorous youth engage,
"Must penury and sorrow cloud our age."
The generous youth heart–chill'd with anguish stood,
The "light forsook his eyes, his cheeks the blood,"
Cold through his breast the new sensation came,
A stranger yet to censure or to shame;
Turning, he cried, "I go, where to the west
"Declining suns in Ocean's bosom rest:
"I go, your wand'ring heifers to explore,
"To find them, or, alas! return no more."
In sorrow thus he spoke, then turning round,
His variegated vest succinctly bound:
Array'd for speed, he westward bends his way,
While low the wintry sun forsakes the day:
His dog, the fleetest of the hunter kind,
Oft with reluctant wonder looks behind:
Then patient mounts the rock, and urges on,
Till the last glimpse of lingering day was gone.
Now wide and wild the dreary prospect shows
Where stars with glimmering light illumine the snows,
Through fleecy clouds a dubious lustre spread,
Where *Corryaric* rears his lofty head:
Deep at his feet the dismal *Corry* lies,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

Where dwells a spirit, hid from human eyes,
Whose magic art the fatal blast unties :
The fatal blast, incessant whirling round,
With horror fills the cavity profound:
The Demon, in the whirling drift disguis'd,
Has oft th' unweeing stranger here surpris'd;
And many a grave is seen with fox–glove crown'd,
When spring appears, with dewy locks unbound;
And many a plaintive ghost sad fancy forms,
And hears their hollow shriek amidst the storms.
Here FARQUHAR paus'd, look'd back, and shuddering saw
His faithful dog first shrink in silent awe,
Then, howling, trembling, fly with quicken'd pace,
To warn his master from the fatal place.
"Shall I too fly, (he cried) or trust the Pow'r
"Who guards us in the dark and silent hour?
"From whom commission'd blasts have leave to fly,
"Or sleep within the curtains of the sky.
"Strong in his strength these horrors I explore,
"By him protected, FARQUHAR fears no more."
His plaid in ample folds around him cast,
The vent'rous youth ascends the steep in haste;

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Loud from the *Corry's* depth arose the wind,
Unmov'd he heard the yelling blast behind,
And flying from the grim pursuit of death,
No backward look retrac'd the dangerous path.
Now high above the rolling clouds he goes,
Where clearer starlight brightens whiter snows;
Sublime on *Corryaric's* height he stood,
And all the wide horizon wond'ring view'd ;
Through the pure air, where vision unconfin'd
Still ranges like the quick creative mind;
Saw where the sun, from ocean's fluid breast,
Begins his radiant progress in the East;
And where with milder majesty he shines,
When in the western wave his light declines:
Saw the long vista, where midst candy'd snows
The mighty depths of *Ness* appear *unfroze* .
Majestic lake! which rocky mountains bound,
Or steepy heights, with yew and holly crown'd;
Fed by thy tepid breath, each bordering tree
Still with reflected verdure shines in thee;
While wide the wintry blast in fury roves,
And strips the graceful foliage from the groves.
And when each neighbouring lake is chill'd to stone,
Warmth, health, and beauty, dwell with thee alone:
There birds disport, bedeck'd with plumage gay,
And snowy swans their stately pride display.
The ruthless tyrant of the frozen year,
Repell'd, retiring, shuns thy bosom clear;
Where downward skies are seen in azure dress'd,
Like heav'n's own image, in the guiltless breast.

And now the moon in cloudless splendour rose,
Where lofty Alps their snowy tops disclose:
And the wild *Garrie* , midst his ridgy zone,
To her pale beams an icy mirror shone:
There *Moidart's* hills in clustering groups appear,
And *Aonich's* slow ascent and piny summit here;
Knoidart's wild rocks in shapeless forms were seen,
And *Oich* with softer beauties deck'd the scene:
A while entranc'd, in solemn awe he gaz'd,
Then to the skies his raptur'd eyes he rais'd:
"And why (said he) should coward fears control,
"Or doubts desponding, sink the guiltless soul?
"The hand which bade those lofty summits rise,
"And with those living splendours deck'd the skies,
"Which move obedient to his dread command,—
"I dwell beneath the shadow of that hand."
Then downwards to the sheltering glen he hies,
And close beneath the tangling thicket lies,
Which o'er the rocky cavity was spread,
Where wither'd leaves collected form'd his bed:
Exhausted nature sunk in sleep profound,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And peaceful visions lightly hover'd round.

Now bleak and dim the chilly morn arose,
And keen the North wind swept the glossy snows,
The blast loud rushing through the wither'd oak,
Arous'd his dog, and FARQUHAR starting woke:
Forlorn and sad, he cast his eyes around,
But in his view no living object found;
Nor track, save to a gloomy cavern near,
Where the false fox's bloody steps appear:
Resolv'd, he turns, intent to trace the way
From whence the nightly robber bore his prey;
For well he knew, at this inclement hour
No wand'ring flocks were subject to his pow'r;
But from some cot perhaps not far away,
He slunk insidious with his helpless prey.
Forward with eager speed again he goes,
And traces up th' ascent th' ensanguin'd snows;
Eastward he bends, till weak, and spent with toil,
He sees the new-fall'n snow his steps beguile;
The buried track no longer leads him on,
And strength, and fortitude, and hope, are gone.
The flaky torrent now conceals the sun,
And hunger faint to dim his sight begun;
Cheerless he turns, to seek the friendly shade
Where verdant hollies rose, amidst a glade;
But wond'ring starts, to see a lovely form
Who in the self-same shelter shunn'd the storm;
In youth's first bloom, and deck'd with matchless grace,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

The morning's orient hues adorn'd her face:
He gaz'd, nor thought the maid of mortal race.
The snow-clad stranger gentle MORAIG saw,
And blushing turn'd, and shrunk with timid awe.
The beauteous vision FARQUHAR still survey'd,
And softly thus in suppliant accents said:
"Fair wanderer of the wood, if deck'd in light
"An airy spirit only cheats my sight;
"Or if a sister of the earth you come,
"No longer let me here bewilder'd roam;
"But to some peaceful harbour guide my path,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

"Weary and faint, beneath the tempest's wrath
"I sink unpitied in the grasp of death."

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

'Stranger! in evil hour you come,' she cries,
And lifts with soft concern her modest eyes:
'A helpless maid, unaided and alone,
'Perplex'd I wander here through paths unknown:
'An ewe last evening from our sheep-cot stray'd,
'In search of her I trace the lonely glade.'
"Vain search! (cries FARQUHAR) for along the wood
"I track'd the guileful fox by marks of blood;
"But what are they, who leave those toils severe
"To female softness, and to maiden fear?
"Daughter of Beauty, say, what heart of stone
"Could bid thee trace those frozen wilds alone?"
'Hast thou not heard,' she faintly said, through sighs,
The big tears trembling in her lovely eyes,
'How, to assert the STUART'S ancient claim,
'To *Moidart's* wilds a youthful HERO came ?
'To join his cause, in arms my kindred rose,
'And while they pour fierce vengeance on his foes,
'Forlorn and sad we tend their wonted care,
'And manly toils and dangers learn to bear:
'With me our mother anxious tends the flocks,
'My grandsire pensive shakes his silvery locks;
'While gloomy presages his mind engage,
'The trance of foresight, or the dream of age:
'But come, however fate decides our lot,
'And banish cold and hunger in our cot.'
The pitying maid, impatient, hastes before,
Again with wonder FARQUHAR views her o'er;
Her auburn locks with azure fillet bound,
Her snowy neck luxuriant shaded round;
Like some fair huntress of the times of old,
Whom, rapt in vision, gifted seers behold:
So FARQUHAR wond'ring sees the lovely form
Smooth gliding, light him through the thickening storm.
Glendoe , in high *Schicuman's* breast repos'd,
With streaming birch and hazel shades inclos'd ,
Receiv'd the pair; where pendent o'er the lake
The aspin trembles, and the osiers shake.
While evening wraps the hills in shadows pale,
The careful matron spreads her frugal meal;
The younger children crowding round the fire,
Sadly their absent father's fate inquire:
The grandsire, narrative, recounts the wars,
Talks o'er the fatal pass, and shews his scars,
When sudden, like two wandering beams of light,
The youthful pair came full upon their sight.
The fire burns clear, the kindling torches blaze,
All eyes with new delight impatient gaze;
"Sweet MORAIG , sister dear!" with fondness wild,
The children cry, through tears the mother smil'd;
"Why lonely wandering through the drifted snow,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"Where gloomy *Tarfe's* enchanted waters flow ?
"She cries, does MORAIG tempt the haunted path,
"Where lurking witchcraft spreads the snares of death?
"And who is this young wanderer of the chace,
"Whose looks bespeak some high-descended race;
"Who o'er these pathless wilds, unus'd to roam,
"With kindly care thus deigns to guide thee home?"
With downcast eyes the modest youth replied,
"An humble swain, to no high race allied,
"In hopeless search of wandering steers I come,
"By pity thus conducted to your home,—
"In my dim view imperfect objects swim,
"An icy torpor chills each weary limb:
"Too late, alas! my rashness I deplore,
"Doom'd to behold my pleasant home no more!"
Unfinish'd accents falter'd on his tongue,
And through his ears delusive murmurs rung;
The aged peasant saw youth's roses fade,
And propt the fainting swain with kindly aid:
With patient care the matron chafes him o'er,
While gradual warmth she labours to restore,
To bring the needful cordials MORAIG flies,
With soft compassion melting in her eyes .
By due attention now the youth restor'd,
Sees plenty deck and welcome cheer the board:
The hoary sire retraces former times,
Or valiant deeds recounts in rustic rhymes:
The matron, willing to amuse her guest,
Tells in what distant glen the cheese she press'd,
And how the monarch salmon's sportive young,
Snar'd in the brook, within the roof she hung:
How frugal care had made the viands last,
And how they still remain to finish the repast:
Fair MORAIG softly moves with silent care,
And pours the draught that crowns their simple fare.
Now social talk and song deceive their woes,
Till wearied Nature lulls them in repose.

The Genius of the storm his wrath forbore,
And rav'd among the leafless woods no more:
Calm silence brooded o'er the long dark night,
Till from the East arose the wish'd for light;
Now FARQUHAR , starting from his downy trance,
Beheld with joy the new-born day advance;
And bless'd with ardent gratitude the Pow'r
Who led him through that dark and dreadful hour;
And pray'd unnumber'd blessings on the fair
Who sav'd him from the wanderings of despair.
Wrapt in his manly garb of various hue,
He sallies forth the novel scene to view.
Thy waters, *Ness!* all hush'd to tranquil rest,
Reflected graces deck'd thy halcyon breast ;

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

There URQUHART'S ruin'd castle gleam'd afar,
Disastrous relic of unhallow'd war!
The last sad shelter of unconquer'd worth,
When EDWARD'S iron sceptre bruise'd the North .
The shaded *Inver* , haunt of social peace,
Here bids his streams thy wat'ry stores increase,
And proudly boasts of his excelling Fair,
Their simple manners, and ingenuous air:
There *Fyers* with plaintive murmurs soothes his dells,
Where wild romantic Melancholy dwells ;
And *Tarfe* , long wandering, hid in copses green,
To pour his tributary wave is seen.

Now strict inquiring from the swains around,
His wandering cattle's haunt young FARQUHAR found,
Deep in the shelter of a gloomy grove,
By rocks defended from the storm above,
They shunn'd, sequester'd in the narrow vale,
The blast tempestuous, and the rattling hail.
Clear was the freezing air, and bright the sky,
Short was the day, and now the sun grew high;
The cattle found,—no lingering can avail,
Yet still he feels his wonted spirits fail.
'Tis wrong to stay, but doubly hard to go,
A while he pauses—lost in tender woe:
"And shall I, helpless, friendless, leave the maid
"Whose pitying care my feeble steps convey'd?
"Whose gentle aid my fainting heart restor'd,
"Oh, were I of this lake's fair borders lord;
"Had I the joys of wealth, without its care,
"Those joys, that wealth, my lovely maid should share."
The new sensation swelling in his heart,
Inspir'd the untaught swain with sudden art;
And thus in cautious Wisdom's solemn guise,
To veil his latent purpose FARQUHAR tries:
First to the courteous matron bending low,—
"You, to whose care my rescu'd life I owe,
"Whose tender fears your absent friends deplore,
"May heaven triumphant soon those friends restore!
"Yet while their standard flies on Southern plains,
"To till your fields no manly hand remains;
"The coming Spring will soon your cares engage,
"With toils unfit for childhood or for age:
"So short the freezing day, so deep the snow,
"No cattle o'er the mountain path can go.
"Warm shelter'd in yon busy glen behind,
"My steers repose, and food and safety find;
"But when relenting Spring shall smile a—new,
"Again your hospitable hearth I'll view;
"And faithful, like a brother or a son,
"Will till your fields till May's bright days come on;
"And while warm life her vital pow'r retains,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"And truth, and sense, and memory remains:
"Should penury, or sad mischance betide
"My friendly hostess, or my gentle guide,
"My kindred, mindful of the generous deed,
"Shall yield them shelter in the hour of need."
The matron, pleas'd, accepts the promis'd aid,
In silence meek assents the grateful maid.
Serene and peaceful smil'd the shortening day,
And FARQUHAR now unwilling hastes away:
Yet oft he turn'd, as inly loth to go,
And bless'd the gentle inmates of *Glendoe* .

Now doubly welcome to his native vale,
Of war's alarms he tells th' awakening tale,
And keen recounts what all his kindred owe
For hospitable rites in fair *Glendoe* .

Now all the North grew bright with hostile arms,
From every hill resound the loud alarms ,
And rumour tells, in shrill discordant tones,
Of vanquish'd monarchs, and of tottering thrones.
But FARQUHAR reckless of the fatal strife,
Still pass'd in tranquil shades his blameless life;
And chid the hours, and thought the sun too slow
That rose to light him to his lov'd *Glendoe* .

Sweet *April* deck'd with primrose wreath appears,
And smiles, like harmless infancy, through tears;
When, through the pathless hills, th' advent'rous swain
His MORAIG'S peaceful dwelling sought again.

In vain he casts around his searching eyes,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

From every side the smoky columns rise,
And savage shouts are heard, and doleful cries!
While from the mountain's top he views a—far
The barbarous traces of unsparing war,
Irresolute he stands, to turn, or go,
Urg'd by despair to meet the ruthless foe;
Resolv'd at last, he seeks the dark retreat
Where lovely MORAIG first he chanc'd to meet,
In hopes some victim of disastrous fate,
Hid in those shades, might aught of her relate.
Her grandsire there, deep sorrowing on the ground,
With haggard looks, in silent woe he found.
"Oh tell, good father, tell what wretched lot
"Befel the blameless inmates of thy cot;
"Have they obey'd the victor's stern command,
"Or fled for succour to some happier land ?"
'Say where, my son, should helpless females go?
'A happier land than this they ne'er can know.

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

'They make their bed beneath th' inclement sky,
'And meet with sorrow wheresoe'er they fly:
'Deep in yon secret glen, within those shades,
'Whose privacy no hostile step invades,
'Where your lost steers avoid the wintry blast,
'They rest conceal'd, till this dread hour be past:
'My sons, with blood deform'd, and faint with wounds,
'Last night came from *Culloden's* fatal bounds,
'And shelter in a neighbouring cave, while I
'Th' approach of danger here attend to spy.'

Now FARQUHAR'S glowing cheek and heaving breast
The strong emotions of his soul confess'd:

"Come, father, haste to quit this scene of woe,
"First to the cave to seek the warriors go;
"Then let us fly to MORAIG'S secret glen,
"And shun the blood-stain'd haunts of impious men;
"Through dark *Glenmarky's* woods I know a way,
"Impervious to the searching eye of day:
"Through that lone path your secret steps I'll guide,
"Where plenty dwells on *Maeshie's* grassy side.
"Beneath my father's roof my only love
"Shall to the aged pair a daughter prove:
"Their ancient home, though destin'd thus to leave,
"Let not my gentle MORAIG'S kindred grieve:
"Endear'd by ties of sympathy divine,
"Henceforth be gentle MORAIG'S kindred mine."

The wounded warriors, and the sorrowing sage,
Now sought the darling comforts of their age:
Through tears the matron views her long-lost mate,
And all their various tales of woe relate.
To go is danger—but 'tis death to stay,
Beneath the moon's wan beams they take their way;
With Heaven their trust, and FARQUHAR for their guide,
They reach the winding *Maeshie's* peaceful side;
There cheer'd by welcome, sooth'd by grateful love,
They built their humble dwelling in the grove.

END OF PART IV.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

PART V.

ARGUMENT.

Loyalty, Fidelity, and inflexible perseverance of the Highlanders, as exercised towards the unhappy Adventurer, Prince Charles Edward, in 1746. His Wanderings and Escapes. Episode of Captain M'Kenzie. Of the Banditti in the Cove of Glenmoriston. Cruelty of the licenced Soldiery. Patient sufferance of the inhabitants. Wanderings of the Chevalier through Morar and Arisaig, among the Western Isles. Soliloquy. Attempt to land on Raasay. Narrow escape from a Frigate off South Uist. Concealment in a Cavern there. Episode of Flora Macdonald: She conveys the adventurer in disguise to Sky: She is carried Prisoner to England: Her Conversation with the Sovereign: Dismissal, and return to Sky. Marriage, and Emigration. Reflections on the Character of the Highlanders, as it appears in this Narrative. On the corrupting influence which Wealth, Luxury, extensive Commerce, and False Refinement, produce in Society, aided by that species of Learning which exhausts itself in exploring what is for ever concealed, and building systems that fall of themselves, before they are finished. The importance and necessity, in a country thus enervated by luxury, thus lost in frivolous pursuits and vain speculations,—to cherish, in whatever remote obscurity they exist, a hardy manly Race, inured to Suffering, fearless of Danger, and careless of Poverty, to invigorate Society by their Spirit, to defend it by their Courage, and to adorn it with those Virtues that bloom in the shade, but are ready to wither away in the sunshine of Prosperity.

..... 'Tis wonderful,
That an invisible instinct should frame them
To *Loyalty* unlearn'd; Honour untaught;
Civility not seen from other; Valour,
That wildly grows in them, but yields a crop
As if it had been sow'd!

SHAKSPEARE.

THE vanquish'd PRINCE , for safety forc'd to fly,
Amidst those mountains shunn'd each searching eye;
No threat of terror, or no splendid bribe,
Could warp to treachery the generous tribe:
For pleas'd with little, and in hardships try'd,
Their wants were all by simple means supplied;
Exertion bold, and feeling strong combin'd,
Here nurse the noble independent mind.
None here fair loyalty or honour sold,
To purchase pleasure with unhallow'd gold;
Fearless of pain, yet dreading sore disgrace,
Whose sable blot might sully all their race:
When CHARLES an outlaw shrunk in wilds unknown,
Where long his fathers fill'd an awful throne;
Though wealth and pow'r combin'd their forces led,
To point the axe at his devoted head,
Safe in the truth of his devoted train,
See! wealth and pow'r combine their force in vain:
Unhurt he slumbers in his sea-beat cave,
While round his bed the guiltless billows rave .
Though gloomy guards protect the Monarch's gate,
Distrust and fear around his table wait:
And anxious doubts disturb his secret soul,

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Of hidden daggers, or the poison'd bowl.
But far from courts, and their delusive arts,
How bless'd the PRINCE who rules o'er honest hearts!
Unblasted he by treachery's poisonous breath,
And safely smiling midst the snares of death.

Oh! say, what gentle heart, what pitying muse,
Can the sad tribute of a tear refuse,
To that brave YOUTH, who in life's early bloom
Hid all his opening virtues in the tomb;
Forsook the region of tumultuous strife,
And clos'd with pious fraud a blameless life?
Could mildest worth and gentlest graces save,
No weeping muses had adorn'd his grave:
But noble force and dignity of mind,
Despis'd a life in honour's cause resign'd;
Let traitor's ashes sleep in sculptur'd urns,
While thee, bless'd Youth! thy country's Genius mourns .

Forgive, ye valiant dead! ye kindred shades!
That glide with heroes through Elysian glades,
The muse whose trembling hands entwine the wreath,
Whose mournful eyes retrace the paths of death:
So fast ye crowd upon her dazzled view,
Like sun-beams on a cypress wet with dew:
She sinks, o'ercome, unequal to relate
Your loyal zeal, or your disastrous fate.
Yet ere oblivion's leaden gates be clos'd
On humble worth, in life's low vale repos'd,
She'd touch the callous mind, unus'd to feel,
With savage virtue, and the lawless zeal
Of the bold *Brothers* in their darksome grove,
Whose steps licentious wont at ease to rove;
Who live like Nature's commoners at large,
Obey no master, and attend no charge,
But wander through the grassy glens at will,
Nor ask what owner rear'd the beeves they kill,
Then drag their prey home to their ample cave,
O'er whose dark entrance trembling aspens wave;
And in whose deep recess to soothe repose,
A weeping rill, with tinkling murmur flows:
Returning from the chase or prosp'rous spoil,
'Twas here they hid the fruits of all their toil;
Yet aw'd by jealous fear, no stranger guest
E'er view'd their secret haunt, or shar'd their feast.

On every side the deathful ambush lay,
When fate propitious led the PRINCE that way;
His guide,—a native of the mountains near,
Who often with those Outlaws chas'd the deer,
And knew their minds, by avarice unstain'd,
The price of treachery and blood disdain'd,—
Now forc'd o'er trackless mountains to explore
The way by which his Lord should gain the shore;

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Once more adventures through the snares of death,
And trusts his precious charge to savage hunters' faith.
Oh faith unstain'd! and truth beyond compare!
With him the produce of the chase they share,
With furry spoils they deck'd their cave around,
With wholesome cups their liberal board they crown'd,
The hostile camp through danger's paths they sought,
And to their Royal Guest unwonted dainties brought :
For him the sanguine paths of death they tread,
And scorn the mighty price that buys the Wand'rer's head.
One brother daily ranges through the woods,
Or snares the finny tenants of the floods;
And one with watchful care attends to spy
The hostile troops, with scrutinizing eye;
The third with prompt obedience mark'd his look,
And from his eyes commands in silence took.

Now twenty summer morns beheld renew'd
The rage of rapine, and the waste of blood;
The moon as oft, with want and anguish pale,
Saw hopeless wanderers trace each dreary vale;
The plaints of orphan woe, and infants' cries,
With doleful clamour pierce the pitying skies:
The slaughter'd herds bespread th' ensanguin'd ground,
And smoking hamlets lay in ruins round:
In dreary wilds, from human dwelling far,
The wretched remnants of unsparing war
Precarious life with gather'd herbs sustain,
Or chase the deer and tim'rous fawns in vain;
For none dare now the levell'd tube let fly,
Whose thund'ring sound might wake some danger nigh;
No voice of joy is heard, no smile is seen,
No rural pastime sports along the green;
But sad solicitude, and shuddering fear,
And patient sufferance dwell in silence there;
No hopes of mercy to th' offending train,—
Thy worth and wisdom, FORBES , plead in vain !
The royal EXILE hears the tale of woe,
And tears unwonted now begin to flow:
On his fresh cheek youth's rose untimely fades,
And livid grief his hollow eye invades;
The cheerful spirit, that still upward soar'd,
Nor vanish'd hope, nor regal state deplor'd,
Now drooping o'er his wretched followers' woes,
Abandons light and food, and shuns repose.

While thus the PRINCE in silent sorrow mourns,
With cautious steps his faithful guide returns;
His fear and anguish hides in feeble smiles,
And leads the Wanderer to the Western Isles.
Ah! what avails to trace each darksome maze,
While watchful centinels beset the ways;
To tell, how high upon some cliffy brow,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Whole days he patient view'd the coast below;
Where bands victorious spread the snares of death,
Or count the price of his high valu'd breath.
In vain each night he strove to reach his bark,
While answering watch-fires glimmer'd thro' the dark;
With many a meal of uncouth viands fed,
With many a bleak blast whistling round his head,
Beset with threatening perils, every hour
His life in many a savage native's power:
Yet through the vigilance of Avarice past,
He reach'd secure the destin'd bark at last.

Now soft and slow they raise the cautious oar,
And quit with silent care the dang'rous shore:
Low in their hollow caves the loud winds sleep,
And rest and darkness brooded o'er the deep:
Far out to sea they steer'd to shun their foes,
Till deck'd with orient red the morn arose;
Then thus the PRINCE : "Thou radiant Orb of Light,
"At whose first smile recede the shades of night!
"When from the sacred East thy beams arise,
"A flood of glory brightens all the skies:
"The constellations fade before thy sight,
"And ocean rolls his thousand waves in light:
"Yet shall not even *thy* greatness still remain,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

"Even thou shalt sink beneath the western main,
"And leave the darken'd earth to mourn thy beams in vain!
"Like thee in beauty, pow'r, and splendour drest,
"Our royal lineage sway'd supreme the west;
"With awful trident rul'd the circling sea,
"And quench'd the light of lesser stars, like thee:
"Like thee, in dim eclipse conceal'd from sight,
"We sink or vanish in the shades of night:
"The circling hours shall thy bright beams restore,
"And bid fresh morn her roses strew once more;
"But we, alas! inglorious from our skies
"Are hurl'd to depths profound, no more to rise;
"In vain our vanish'd glories we deplore,
"For Fate imperious cries,—*return no more!* "
Then calmly to the will supreme resign'd,
In stern composure he collects his mind;
His sorrows sooth'd with retrospective view,
And comfort from the woes of exil'd monarchs drew.
He thought how CHARLES from *Wor'ster's* bloody fight
Retreating, shunn'd in gloomy groves the light,
And bred in soft luxurious ease erewhile,
Assum'd the weighty axe, and shar'd the woodman's toil:

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

How great GUSTAVUS , deep in mines immur'd,
Laborious tasks and wretched want endur'd;
While distant glimmering like the polar star,
The diadem allures their steps afar:
Hope, softly whispering, smooths the brow of care,
For who, alas! can labour and despair?

The winds tempestuous now began to roar,
And danger darkly frown'd along the shore;
Who mustering thunders threaten in the skies,
And livid lightning glaring dims their eyes;
Fear, while the boatmen ply the busy oar,
Shakes those firm nerves that never shook before.
Serene, the Royal Wanderer view'd the scene,
And read his peril in their haggard mien:
One spent with toil, his stedfast eyes explore,
When from the breathless youth he snatch'd the oar,
With patient toil the task unwearied plies,
Till the mild evening star arose in calmer skies .
Now slept the winds on Ocean's breast serene,
Reflected stars bedeck'd her mantle green:
A safer coast they vainly hop'd to view,
And near high *Rasay's* rocky border drew :
Pale rose the moon upon the placid wave,
That wont along the rugged bank to rave;
And pale, upon a promontory's brow,
With eyes that anxious search'd the deep below,
The island Chief in silent sorrow sate,
Alarm'd and watchful for th' EXILE'S fate.
Suspended on their wearied oars they lie,
And hope to read their welcome in his eye:
"Belov'd, lamented, fly this fatal place,
"Though ever faithful to thy honour'd race!
"Death in dark ambush waits with treach'rous wile,
"The victor's barks surround this narrow isle:
"Thy near approach, unhappy PRINCE , is known,
"And watchful thousands seek thy blood alone."

Now to the distant isle, whose swains obey
In plenteous peace CLANRONALD'S gentle sway;
Grown weak with want, with ceaseless labour spent,
To shun the foe the weary wanderers went:
Yet, ere they safely reach the destin'd shore,
They see a bark the self-same port explore;
Whose gallant trim and hostile colours shew
The proud defiance of a haughty foe:
With swelling sails she speeds before the wind,
And near, and nearer still, she presses on behind.
With steady eye the PRINCE the danger saw,
And round a rocky point he bids them draw:
Then lightly springing on the sandy shore,
He cries, "Adieu, my generous friends, no more
"For me in pain you draw precarious breath,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"And struggle through the bloody toils of death:
"Here in those hollow cliffs will I abide,
"My trust in Heaven, and Providence my guide;
"Ye try'd in perils, faithful to your charge,
"Now wander safely o'er your seas at large."

He said, and silent sought the dark recess,
His parting steps his weeping followers bless.

In the green centre of the sea-girt isle
The Chieftain's dwelling rose,—an ancient pile;
The sylvan virtues lov'd the peaceful dome,
There blameless truth and pity found a home:
The Chief's fair Consort, and her gentle guest,
'Midst war's rude clamours here in safety rest;
In female tasks consume the lingering hours,
And wake the plaintive lute, or form unwithering flow'rs.
Now from the shore with speed a stranger came,
And thus in secret guise bespoke the dame:
"Oh thou, in virtue's gentlest graces drest,
"If ever soft compassion touch'd thy breast,
"Let not a royal SUFFERER plead in vain;
"Hard by a rock that juts into the main,
"Hid in a darksome grot, he pines away
"In want and solitude the tedious day:
"The sad retreat his followers dare not trace,
"The hostile pinnace anchors near the place:
"With hostile troops each neighbouring island swarms,
"And all th' adjacent plain is bright with arms."
With soft concern the gentle dame returns,—
'Your Master's fate each generous bosom mourns,
'Even those who justly blam'd the rash design,
'And bade his daring hand the sword resign,
'Lament the rigour of the Victor's hate,
'And deprecate the youthful HERO'S fate.
'Your secret safely lodg'd within my breast,
'Suspend your fears, and leave to Heav'n the rest.'

Then turning sad, her lovely friend she sought,
In whom she safe confided every thought;
Who mildly wise, and firm in artless truth
With prudent mind, mature in early youth,
Pois'd with reflection calm the dubious scale
And felt compassion's sinking weight prevail,
With fix'd resolve she said, "My friend, forbear,
"Nor thus perplex thy mind with fruitless care;
"Thy Lord in peace obeys the ruling pow'rs,
"Then, while this storm of fate impending lours,
"From base imputed treason keep him free,
"Who hopes his peace and honour safe with thee,
"Nor dread of guiltless blood the sanguine stain;
"I'll seek the EXILE'S cavern by the main,—
"If in his cause I should my life resign,
"The guilt or danger shall be only mine."

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Fair FLORA then, with fortitude serene,
And tranquil courage in her modest mien,
The viands and the generous wine conveys,
And o'er the rocks, as heedless wandering, strays,
Bids her attendant maid the shells explore
The lessening tide had scatter'd on the shore.
Then to the cavern'd rock unseen she steals,
And to the hapless PRINCE obsequious kneels:
"Receive, indulgent, from thy suppliant's hand,
"The humble aid thy urgent wants demand,
"And grant my boon, and trust thy life to me,
"From danger's thickening toils to set thee free:
"No leisure serves thy perils to relate,
"But dark approach the hours with hovering fate."
With silent wonder, long the PRINCE survey'd
The beauteous guest, then thus:—'Heroic maid,
'That com'st in pity to this secret cave,
'Unvisited, save by the rolling wave,
'To thy fair faith my wanderings I resign,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

'Fraud never harbour'd in a form like thine,
'Nor dark suspicion in a breast like mine.'
Now turning, homewards she her steps address,
With peace and conscious honour in her breast;
But when the morn's first beams began to shine,
And glittering danc'd upon the wrestless brine,
In female garb the hapless youth array'd,
She leads disguis'd in semblance of a maid:
And from the English chief, with specious wile,
Permission seeks to view her native isle:
To ask with her was quickly to obtain,
For when did suppliant beauty plead in vain?
The gazing troops th' intrepid maid admire,
Nor less her bold attendant's strange attire;
The haughty measur'd step, the lofty grace,
And air unsuited to a female face:
For in-born dignity but stoops with pain,
And veils the proud superior soul in vain.

Now in the pinnace plac'd the western gales
Obsequious crowd, to fill the Wonderer's sails:
Across the waves with winged speed they flew,
And soon the misty isle appears to view.
Hail! favour'd isle, where bards inspir'd prolong
To ages yet unborn th' undying song ,
And ancient faith, and unstain'd loyalty,
And truth sincere, and friendship dwell in thee;
Here, when dark midnight lull'd the world to rest,

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Safe, in her kindly home, she lodg'd her guest;
Her pious mother, with a matron's care,
Attends the due refection to prepare:
While studious of each hospitable rite,
Her Lord with cheerful converse cheats the night:
And when grey morning rose, the royal guest
Finds on a downy couch unwonted rest;
Now first at ease his weary limbs repos'd,
Since sad CULLODEN'S bloody evening clos'd!
But who can tell what farther perils wait,
Or who his future wanderings can relate?
Or who shall the exalted meed assign
To worth, above such humble praise as mine?
Ambition, sordid interest, servile fear,
That rule the world, could find no vot'ry here:
Then how shall any claim superior praise,
When all alike deserve th' immortal bays?
When pride first threw the rebel angels down,
One stedfast ABDIEL kept his faith alone:
But when the STUART line resign'd to fate,
One only traitor bore his country's hate.

Yet ere the pitying Muse shall sadly close
The weary tale of wanderings and of woes;
Where virtue shines through dark misfortune bright,
Like dim-seen stars in a tempestuous night,
Let not kind sympathy suspended wait
The sequel of th' intrepid maiden's fate.

By kindred virtues led, a generous Youth
To FLORA long had vow'd his plighted truth :
In childhood's paths together they had stray'd,
Together life's gay morning views survey'd,
Together that plain path of duty trod,
That leads through Nature's love to love of God;
And now but waited till the stormy blast
Of civil rage and noisy tumult past,
To sanctify those vows, long seal'd above,
And tie the sacred bond of nuptial love.
But see! what toils ungentle minds prepare,
The innocent and lovely to ensnare:
When the stern Chief that led the British host,
Learnt how the PRINCE escap'd the fatal coast,
How female stratagem, and female truth,
With guiltless art had sav'd the hapless youth,
Enrag'd he cries, "A ready victim led,
"Low on the scaffold let her guilty head
"Atone the forfeit life her arts have sav'd,
"And pacify the pow'r her crime has brav'd."
Stern and unfeeling guards the fair—one bore
All unprotected to the sea-beat shore;
No unavailing plaints, no female cries
Are heard,—she silent lifts her streaming eyes,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And inly to the guardian pow'rs above
Commends her spotless fame, her hapless Love.
Through inland moors, *he* roam'd with careless aim,
And seem'd all day to chase the flying game;
But oft he turn'd his sorrowing eyes with pain,
When loud along the border of the main,
Where ruthless foes on board their pris'ners bear,
Resound the direful yellings of despair.
The victims bore their fate with steady mind,
The cries arose from those they left behind.

Ah! when the lofty vessel left the shore,
And o'er the seas his heart's rich treasure bore,
How little did the wretched Lover know
How great his portion of the general woe!
But when mild eve in glowing purple drest,
Smil'd on the lingering twilight of the west,
He went to tell his FLORA all his grief,
And find in social sympathy relief.
But why should words endeavour to explain
What eloquence herself would speak in vain,—
The pangs that rent the hopeless Lover's breast,
When all the fatal truth appear'd confest.

High on a rock, where from the cavern'd shore,
Hoarse echoes murmur, while the billows roar,
The live-long night he trac'd the parting sail,
Or pour'd his sorrows to the midnight gale,
Till morning rose in wonted beauty bright,
And the lone mourner sicken'd at the sight.

Now fav'ring breezes blow along the shore,
The sailors hail the English coast once more;
In summer radiance drest, majestic *Thames* ,
The haunt of commerce and the pride of streams,
Receives the vessel, while her banks around,
And cultur'd plains, with stately villas crown'd,
And *London's* glories rising thick to view,
To FLORA'S eyes present a prospect new:
The novel pomp undazzl'd she surveys,
While to her native isle sad fancy strays;
And sees, where misty mountains prop the skies,
The wild magnificence of Nature rise;
And feels no novel scenes a charm impart,
To soothe the anguish that consumes the heart.
Yet, while the canker wastes the bud unseen,
In pensive peace she drest her placid mien;
The dignity of conscious honour wears,
And slanderous taunts with patient sufferance bears.
The ancient Judge, by long experience wise,
With wonder hears her modest firm replies;
And partial, to the Sovereign's ear convey'd
The just applause due to the dauntless MAID .
The Monarch, still to honour's dictates true,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Nor mean revenge nor cruel purpose knew;
But, long misled by faction's treacherous art,
As yet he reign'd not in the general heart;
To fury's gripe resign'd th' imperial sword,
Nor heard when pity's feeble voice implor'd;
Nor knew, exalted on a distant throne,
How delegated pow'r made mis'ry groan:
He bids his messengers the captive bring,—
Submissive in the presence of the king,
With downcast eyes the blushing captive stands,
And waits in silence for his dread commands.
"Presumptuous damsel, say, what secret cause
"Has made thee dare the rigour of our laws?
"When thus an outlaw'd traitor sought the shore,
"To stain our peaceful realm with native gore;
"Did frantic love, or rash ambition, say,
"To treason's paths delude thee thus away?
"That forfeit life thy folly bade thee save,
"For thee now opens an untimely grave."
'Dread Sir,' the maid replied in humble guise,
With truth's pure spirit brightening in her eyes,
'No motive base my fearless mind could move,
'Nor mad ambition, nor presumptuous love;
'My kindred, peaceful subjects to your reign,
'Against your pow'r have drawn no sword in vain:
'Yet through the years our country's records trace,
'Our ancestors obey'd the exil'd race;
'And when they yielded to the frown of fate,
'We mourn'd their hopeless fall from regal state.
'To loyalty by pious precepts led,
'We ever sacred held th' anointed head;
'And thought each branch of that long-hallow'd line
'A partial sharer of the "right divine."
'But, if the mighty hand that rules the ball,
'And bids the heirs of empires rise or fall,
'To *you*, dread Sire, the bitter cup had given,
'From regal pomp to wretched exile driven;
'If cast a suppliant on my native plain,
'You never should have sought my aid in vain;
'Nor should a STUART prince have ever said
'That treacherous FLORA royal blood betray'd.'

The thoughtful Monarch, pausing, view'd the fair,
Her chasten'd graces, and ingenuous air,
And sigh'd to think, how often civil strife
Drags blameless victims from the shades of life,
And with blind rage, unknowing to relent,
Involves the guilty and the innocent:
He bids the judge the guileless maid release,
And let her seek her native isle in peace.

Now rumour talks of FLORA'S charms around,
Those artless charms, with matchless virtues crown'd,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Whose native force subdu'd the rage of pow'r,—
And FLORA reigns the fashion of the hour;
The gaze of wonder now, at FLORA'S gate
Attendants see, and glittering chariots wait;
While noble dames, with costly gay attire,
Would deck the graceful form which all admire:
In vain! from those she scorns to borrow aid,
But veils her beauties in the highland plaid;
And drest in garb of homely tartan, wears
The livery of the tribe whose name she bears;
And mindful of her absent faithful swain,
Preserves the simple manners of the plain .

Her future consort now to *Thule's* shore
Sees pitying Heaven his faithful bride restore,
With every opening grace of artless youth,
With every charm of tenderness and truth,
With meek simplicity's unpractis'd look,
And eyes that Nature's genuine language spoke:
Her noble mind superior in distress,
No rigour e'er could move or fear depress;
Nor could prosperity's vain smiles elate
The soul that bore serene the frowns of fate:
The generous Youth, with sacred transport fir'd,
No higher bliss, nor happier state desir'd;
On wealth and splendour look'd with pity down,
And blest his fate when FLORA was his own.

Now many a happy year had slid away,
Since HYMEN smil'd upon their bridal day.
Alike, as mother, mistress, friend, or wife,
Fair FLORA shone the grace of private life:
With latent wisdom and endearing art,
She stretch'd her blameless empire o'er the heart;
Her happy household rul'd with gentle sway,
And made it their first pleasure to obey.
Belov'd and reverenc'd in his native place,
Obey'd and honour'd by a duteous race,
Blest in his FLORA , by his neighbours blest,
The worthiest of his generous tribe confest,—
Her consort long in peaceful plenty dwelt,
And oft to want his liberal bounty dealt .

Their blooming Chief, whom in life's smiling morn,
All nature's wealth, and learning's stores adorn;
With worth's fair promise fed their raptur'd eyes,
But ah! too early sought his native skies!
Belov'd in vain,—for him in doleful strains
The Genius of the misty isle complains;
For him his Clan with ceaseless sorrow mourn,
And wreath with purple heath his Roman urn .

Another Lord arose, whose early youth
Was wasted in the soft luxurious South,
Whence prudent lore and maxims sage he drew,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And frigid notions, and opinions new:
He scorn'd the rustic grandeur of the plain,
The hospitable hall, the vassal train,
And distant kindred widely branching round,
Still to the parent tree by fond attachment bound.
'Tis thus the stranger, who astonish'd roves
Among the lofty shades of Indian groves,
Deep in the centre sees with dumb surprise
The native *Fig* in solemn grandeur rise;
Its mighty head, in leafy pomp display'd,
Appears th' acknowledged monarch of the shade;
Its verdant arms, that wide extend around,
Low bending downward seek their native ground:
There, in the kindly soil again they root,
And up once more the vig'rous saplings shoot;
Their parent plant they both adorn and aid,
Protect its stem, and send abroad its shade,
Till spread in massy pyramidal form,
Itself a grove, it scorns th' assaulting storm;
However far the lessening branches spread,
They conscious draw their support from the head:
However high the tow'ring head may grow,
Well pleas'd he sees his offspring thrive below.
Thus Clans around their kindred Chief were spread,
And liv'd and flourish'd in their common head.

But other views and systems now arose,
Their honour's friends became their int'rest's foes;
The fine-spun kindred ties no longer draw,
Even local habits yield to rig'rous law .
The active youth by manly spirit led,
Who wont to range the wastes with heath o'erspread,
And send death's message with unerring aim,
To reach the flying or the bounding game;
No longer arm'd the sylvan haunts explore,
And thunder from the fatal tube no more:
No missile weapons, bright with silver, grace
The long-descended sons of generous race;
The broad-sword glittering with a twofold blade,
With apt device, and costly work inlaid:
The dirk, in sheath adorn'd with curious art,
And worn suspended near the owner's heart:
The bossy buckler, rich in studied pride,
That turn'd of old the jav'lin's point aside;
No longer now, when war has ceas'd to storm,
With gallant grace bedeck the warrior's form;
While his firm step, bold chest, and martial air,
The daring of a dauntless mind declare:
These, when no manly feats their lords employ,
Were wont to glitter in the hall of joy:
Still prompt for use, and ready at their call,
In gleaming pride suspended on the wall;

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

While the loud pibroch fir'd the generous breast
With deeds of heroes sung at every feast:
Now silent, cloth'd with dust, the pibroch sleeps,
Forlorn the hoary bard in silence weeps;
And dark with rust, the arms from sight exil'd,
Are in some lone recess unheeded pil'd;
Lest memory, still to thoughtful sorrow true,
Revive their sleeping anguish at the view.
Thus, when the mother in life's smiling morn,
From her fond arms beholds her darling torn,
The sad attendants hide its fav'rite toys,
That wake remembrance of departed joys.

The home-spun garb, that, bright with various dyes,
Was wont to please the simple native's eyes;
Checker'd with dusky hues, and changing green,
To steal upon the watchful deer unseen:
Or form in folds, with easy grace display'd
In simple drapery, the belted plaid;
By the long lapse of years habitual grown,
Endur'd the rigid law's forbidding frown .

Despoil'd of arms; in foreign habits clad,
Listless the drooping natives wander'd sad:
The savage fox now left his gloomy den,
And fearless rush'd into the haunts of men;
No tie to love the alter'd land remain'd,
Where beasts were free, and free-born men restrain'd ;
And sordid chiefs, with cold averted eye,
Regard the claims of hoar antiquity,
And drive the followers whom their fathers fed
To seek in distant realms precarious bread:
Unus'd to imposts new, or customs strange,
Now through the mourning island all is change.

Thus, when upon some promontory's height,
Where sheltering rocks and cavities invite,
The nestling sea-fowl find a peaceful home,
No happier land can tempt their flight to roam;
Though with tempestuous fury arm'd, the storm
The rocks assail, or circling seas deform,
For ages on the self-same cliff they rest,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

Yet if some eye profane, or foot unblest,
With bold intrusion should disturb their nest,
Wild with impetuous wing they wheel, they fly,
In screaming circles, scatter through the sky;
Borne on the winds, explore the distant main,
Nor ever view their native rock again.

Thus from their dear-lov'd isle the natives fly,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Their loud laments thus fill the pitying sky;
And FLORA , gentlest of a generous kind,
Scorns to remain in selfish ease behind,
While her lov'd followers and friends explore
Some lone retreat beyond th' Atlantic shore:
Her lord approving, favours the design,
Their long-lov'd haunts reluctant they resign.

When first they felt the swelling billows roll,
'Twas like the pang that frees the parting soul;
And when the dusky isle was lost to view,
Thick answering sobs forbade the faint adieu.
The world of waters mingles with the skies,
And SCOTIA hides for ever from their eyes .

And shall they on that far Lethean shore
Oblivious rest, to memory dear no more?
Shall none with social sympathy lament
Unblemish'd worth, to hopeless exile sent?
When vain pursuits the polish'd mind engage,
Gay fashion's caprice, or false pleasure's rage;
While sunk in thoughtless ease, supine they loll,
And luxury enfeebles all the soul;
When minds high destin'd for celestial aims,
Waste all their useless strength on studious games;
Or weave the cob-web veil of sophistry,
To cheat with flimsy art the mental eye:
Or scheme the visionary system fair,
Trick'd out in rain-bow hues, and built on air,
Which, when the fabric is to use assign'd,
Melts from the touch, and leaves no trace behind;
Or when her venal sons low interest draws
To any party, and to every cause;
When false refinements endless wants create,
And each aspires at some superior state:
When honour, conscience, truth are cheaply sold,
And none deny th' omnipotence of gold,
Impiety to wild disorder leads,
And through the mass fermenting frenzy spreads:—
Say, when such pleasures and pursuits engage
Th' enervate sons of a degenerate age;
Is it a time to banish from our coast
The few who uncorrupted manners boast?
Though strangers they to wisdom's fair pretence,
Wrapt in the tissued robe of eloquence;
Abstracted reasoning, subtilties refin'd,
That through a trackless maze delude the mind:
A few fix'd principles alone they boast,
To steer their way along life's dangerous coast;
But drawn from sacred truth's unerring source,
Those still maintain their unabated force;
And while their pow'r unshaken they retain,
Gold shines, and pow'r allures, and pleasure smiles in vain.

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

When Nature's children, by simplicity
Are nurst and taught, oh Truth divine, by thee:
To Fortitude through early hardships bred,
And at Frugality's plain table fed;
And tutor'd by the humanising muse,
To purer pleasures, and to nobler views;
Not fashion can pervert, or fears control
The settled purpose of the stedfast soul;
While the fair prospect of immortal joys
To shining baubles sinks earth's brightest toys.
Will such as these break through superior ties,
For ease they slight, or splendour they despise?
Or haply in their childhood, often led
To watch their flock on some high mountain's head,
In patient solitude the live-long day,
The wild majestic scenes around survey,
Such scenes as wont to nourish thought sublime,
And lift the soul beyond the reign of time;
O'er all the mind a holy calm diffuse,
Exalt the fancy, and inspire the muse:—
Will they in lucre's paths ignobly bend,
And for the dross they do not need, contend?
Or, taught so soon to feed on serious thought,
With light amusement's specious snares be caught?
Or can voluptuous indolence beguile
The youth with sinews early strung by toil?
Who often, lighted by the morning star,
Before the dawn awake the sylvan war;
Or with amphibious courage leave the shore,
And over hidden rocks the finny tribes explore.
To those, so us'd to suffer and to dare,
No terrors threaten in the front of war;
The very worst the sons of ease can feel,
The toilsome march, hard bed, or scanty meal;
Calmly they they view with an unalter'd eye,
And should the battle rage—they can but die;
An often hazarded unvalued life
They can but nobly lose in martial strife.

When ATHENS , by the arts she nurst adorn'd,
The plain stern virtues of LACONIA scorn'd,
When wealth, of endless woes the guilty cause,
Her state corrupted, and relax'd her laws,
And freedom to unbounded licence grown,
Had ancient rights and due restraints o'erthrown;
When softening arts and luxury's increase
Made valour droop even in her native GREECE ;
Th' intrepid sons of fearless poverty
Made PERSIAN kings in wild amazement fly;
Bade ATHENS , sunk in conscious shame, behold
Their SPARTAN iron conquer PERSIAN gold;
And, faithful to each dear and hallow'd lie,

ARGUMENT.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Preserve the sacred flame of liberty.

Now, Chiefs and Senators—ye patriot band!
Born to illumine, protect, and bless the land;
While the loose furies rage in other climes,
And Nature sickens at her children's crimes;
While GALLIA pours profuse the purple flood,
And stains her lilies with her Monarch's blood;
Encircle like an adamant zone
The hallow'd altar and the honour'd throne;
And let your banners, rais'd aloft, reveal
The blended interests of the general weal:
Draw close those ties, so fine and yet so strong,
That gently lead the willing soul along,
Nor crush beneath oppression's iron rod
The kindred image of the parent GOD ;
Nor think that rigour's galling chains can bind
The native force of the superior mind.
'Twas not from such the glowing ardour rose
That followers drew to WALLACE and MONTROSE .
Brethren in martial toils—affection fond,
Kind twisting round each heart the lasting bond;
Like that wide chain, which, when creation rose,
Did all the mighty Maker's works inclose,
Whose closing ties celestial voices sung,
While all the answering constellations rung,
Which joins the worlds below to those above
With golden links, and angels call it—LOVE!

END OF THE HIGHLANDERS.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

TO
SIR JAMES GRANT, BARONET.

The man of bounties, loving and belov'd.
HOMER'S ODYSSEY.

WHILE on the meadowy banks of *Spey* ,
Slow steals along the rural muse,
And sees the bordering flowers display
Their native sweets and vernal hues:

And while she casts her pensive view
Where bold *Craigillachy* aspires,
Now deck'd with heath-bells fresh with dew,
Where blaz'd of old the warning fires :

With glowing heart and trembling hand
She strives to wake the plausive lay;
And wide o'er all her native land
The voice of grateful truth convey.

And while she consecrates the strain,
To worth beyond her humble praise,
The genius of thy native plain
Will smile indulgent on her lays.

Oh, form'd to prove each feeling dear
That heightens joy and sweetens care,—
The tender Parent, Friend sincere,
The Consort bless'd beyond compare:

The Patriot Chief, who dwells belov'd
Among the race his fathers sway'd;
Who, long his country's friend approv'd,
Retires in peace to bless the shade.

Who when the dreadful blast of war
With horror fill'd the regions round,
His willing people call'd from far,
With wakening pipe of martial sound:

TO SIR JAMES GRANT, BARONET.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

The valiant clan, on every side,
With sudden, warlike ardour burns;
And views those long-lov'd homes with pride,
Whose loss no exil'd native mourns.

From every mountain, strath, and glen,
The rustic warriors crowded round;
The Chief who rules the hearts of men
In safety dwells, with honour crown'd.

"For thee (they cried) dear native earth,
"We gladly dare the battle's roar;
"Our kindred ties, our sacred hearth,
"Returning peace will soon restore.

"No ruthless, mercenary swains
"Shall ever quench our social fires;
"Our labour on our narrow plains
"Shall feed our babes and hoary sires .

"And when each tender pledge we leave,
"Our parent Chief, with guardian care,
"Shall soothe their woes, their wants relieve,
And save the mourners from despair."

Beneath his mild paternal sway,
The power of cultivation smiles,
And swelling, proud, impetuous *Spey*
Rejoices, while the peasant toils:

To see his banks on every side
With crowding population teem,
And cultur'd fields their yellow pride
Reflecting in his copious stream.

Well pleas'd he wanders near the dome
Where every milder virtue dwells;
Where all the gentler graces bloom,
And Painting speaks and Music swells.

When frosts untimely check'd the spring,
And blasting mildews hover'd o'er,

TO SIR JAMES GRANT, BARONET.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And cheerful Labour ceas'd to sing,
And Plenty deck'd the plains no more:

To Grant she gave her teeming horn ,
Well pleas'd he pour'd the bounteous store,
And Want no longer wept forlorn,
And fruitless Labour mourn'd no more.

To Woe, while Pity yields relief,
While Truth adorns the plausible lay,
Our vows shall bless the Patriarch Chief
Who rules the grateful banks of *Spey* .

**A
BALLAD,**

FOUNDED ON FACT .

*Gentle lady, may thy grave
Peace and quiet ever have;
After this thy travel sore,
Sweet rest seize thee evermore.*

MILTON.

OH , soft and sweet the evening sun
Was gleaming o'er the meadows green,
The ploughman's weary task was done,
And peaceful was the scene.

I musing wander'd o'er yon height
"Where broom bloom'd fair to view;"
Whose yellow blossoms gaily show'd
O'er violets darkly blue.

A little higher up I spy'd
A roofless castle grey,
Where rooks and daws in clam'rous crowds
Retir'd at close of day .

A fenceless garden's sad remains,
All ruin'd and decay'd,
And trees, whose branches scorch'd by fire
Refus'd both fruit and shade.

Two shrubs in vernal pride remain'd,
Fenc'd by their native thorn,
And bore the fragrant milk-white rose
By YORK'S proud faction borne.

There, seated by a ruin'd tow'r,
An ancient dame I view'd,
Who with a pensive, tranquil sigh
Survey'd the fragments rude .

'And why, untouch'd by wasting time,
'Did that fair pile give way?

A BALLAD,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

'And who are you that lonely mourn
'The stately tow'r's decay?

'And why does still that cherish'd rose
'Midst desolation bloom?
'And in this lonely waste forlorn,
'Diffuse its soft perfume?'

"Oh, long must I unpitied mourn,
"Where mouldering tow'rs decay;
"Fierce were the flames that scorch'd their walls,
"And fatal was the day.

"And long must tears in silence shed,
"Bedew that rose so fair;
" 'Twas planted in the dawn of hope,
"For royal brows to wear.

"My master was a Chief renown'd
"In manhood's active prime;
"My lady was for ev'ry worth
"Unequall'd in her time.

"Her father was a wily lord,
"Well skill'd in dangerous art,
"(But truth, and love, and goodness filled
"His daughter's gentle heart.)

"With crafty lore he led our Chief
"A hopeless cause to join;
"To seat on Britain's throne a Prince
"Of STUART'S hapless line.

"See where the vollying bolt of heaven
"Yon blasted oak has torn;
"Shall weeping dews, or genial springs,
"Those boughs with leaves adorn?

"Or have you seen the lofty flow'r,
"That turns to meet the sun;
"And did it spread its yellow leaves
"When his bright course was run?

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"*They* strove to plant the wither'd oak,
"And water'd it with gore:
"They spread the tender leaves of hope
"When fortune smil'd no more.

"How short, how gay, how bright the smile,
"That cheer'd their morning ray!
"How dark, how cold, how loud the storm,
"That raging clos'd their day.

"On *Gladsmuir's* heath a comet's blaze
"Deceiv'd their dazzled sight;
"On bleak *Culloden's* bloody moor,
"It sunk in endless night.

"Why should I tell what noble blood
"The sable scaffold stain'd?
"Why should I tell what generous hearts
"Ignoble fate disdain'd?

"I see thy dim and dewy eyes,
"And spare thy aching heart;
"For in my various tale of woe
"Thy kindred bore a part.

"When to the forest's deep retreats
"My outlaw'd master fled;
"While vengeance took a deadly aim
"At his devoted head:

"The ruthless Duke's fell mandate came,
"And ruin spread around:
"Our Chieftain's halls were wrapt in flames,
"With flames the turrets crown'd.

"High on yon rock, that to the North
"Erects its aged head,
"Hard by the screaming goshawk's nest
"He made his pendent bed.

"'Twas from yon trembling aspin's boughs
"That wave so high in air,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"He saw the wasting flames ascend,
"In silent stern despair.

"But fury shook his manly frame,
"And sorrow wrung his heart,
"When from the crashing roof he saw
"The burning rafters part.

"On yon bleak hill that fronts the North,
"My lady sat forlorn;
"In fear she left her home, to shun
"The lawless soldier's scorn.

"With meek and silent awe she sat,
"And piously resign'd;
"Fierce blaz'd her castle through the gloom,
"Loud blew the eastern wind.

"Oh lady, shun the chilling blasts
"That pierce thy tender form:
"Oh shun this dreary sight of woe,
"And shun the midnight storm. ."

"The lady wip'd her streaming eyes,
"And rais'd her drooping head;"
"Ah! where can I a shelter find?"
"In broken words she said;"

"The owl that 'plains from yonder wood
"May slumber in her nest;
"The fox that howls from yonder hill,
"Within his cave may rest;

"But I, alas! without a home,
"Must brave the chilling air:
"My friends are fall'n beneath the sword
"That never knew to spare.

"The fire devour'd my father's halls,
"Stern vengeance drank his blood;
"And loudly on my consort calls
"To swell the purple flood.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"And can I seek a sheltering roof,
"Or social comfort taste,
"While he a lonely alien shrinks,
"Hid in the dreary waste?"

"Blow higher winds, blaze fiercer flames,
"Rise o'er thy limits *Spey* ;
"No stronger pang my heart can feel
"At nature's last decay."

"Successive summer suns beheld
"My lady's withering prime;
"But on her lord no sun e'er shone
"In his cold native clime.

"In gloomy caves he past the day,
"And by the taper's light
"Consum'd the lonely studious hours,
"And hop'd the coming night:

"Then, when the world in slumber lay,
"Through midnight darkness stole,
"And in my lady's faithful breast
"Repos'd his sorrowing soul:

"Or, fondly gazing while he slept,
"Hung o'er his infant son;
"And lingering, blest th' unconscious babe
"Till glimmering dawn begun:

"Or, when the live-long winter night
"Had lull'd the spies of pow'r,
"Midst faithful friends a gleam of joy
"Shone on the social hour.

"With eager search the watchful bands
"His secret haunts explor'd;
"And many a faithful vassal knew
"The caves that hid their lord .

"At last, with sad reluctant sighs,
"He left the British strand:

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"And sore my lady wept to leave
"Her darling son on land.

"Upon the sea-beat coast of France
"We dwelt in mournful guise;
"And saw afar, like hovering clouds,
"Our native land arise.

"Not long upon that alien shore
"My banish'd master pin'd;
"With silent grief we saw his corpse
"To common earth consign'd.

"No *pibroch* led the loud lament,
"No funeral train appear'd;
"No bards, with songs of mighty deeds
"The hopeless mourners cheer'd .

"When midnight wore her sable robe,
"We dug his humble grave;
"Where fair Narcissus droops its head,
And darkest poppies wave.

"We strew'd the tomb with rosemary,
"We water'd it with tears;
"And bade the Scottish thistle round
"Erect his warlike spears.

"And soon we left the fatal spot,
"And sought our native shore;
"And soon my lady blest her son,
"And clasp'd her o'er and o'er."

"On thee, my son, (she fondly cried)
"May happier planets shine;
"And may'st thou never live to brook
"A fate so hard as mine:

"And may'st thou heir thy father's worth,
"But not his hapless doom;
"To honour and thy country true,
"May'st thou his rights resume.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"And when my weary eyes shall close,
"By death's long slumber blest,
"Beside my dear-lov'd, long-lost home,
"For ever let me rest."

"She spoke, and died—in yonder grave
"Her dear remains are laid:
"Let never impious murmur rise
"To grieve her hovering shade!"

SONNET.

AWFUL and stern the rugged entrance low'rs
That leads to Caledonia's last retreats,
Where oft in days of yore, contending pow'rs
On the dark threshold shone in dreadful feats:
Where deep and dark the *Garrie* foams below,
Erewhile with hostile gore her sanguine course
Distain'd, hoarse thund'ring bore the tale of woe
To lands far distant from her gloomy source:
Here oft contending chiefs, in ireful mood,
Bade civil discord rage, like pent up fire:
Here gallant clans, profuse of generous blood,
Indignant, slow, from *Nassau's* troops retire:
Here, oft at eve, their shadowy forms are seen
Like mist slow gliding o'er the mountains green.

SONNET.

ALL hail! ye frowning terrors of my way,
Rude *Grampian* mountains! crown'd with lasting snow,
No flow'ry vales, or plains with verdure gay,
Could bid my soul with purer joy o'erflow.
Barriers of holy freedom! your stern brow
With guardian frown o'erlooks her last retreat,
When tyrant rapine roam'd the plains below,
Among your winding glens she found a seat
Beyond those dark defiles, thy narrow vale,
Green *Laggan!* soon shall cheer my weary sight .
Young voices sounding on the mountain gale,
Shall fill this anxious bosom with delight,
While ruddy innocence with raptur'd smile
Shall cling to this fond heart, by absence torn erewhile!

SONNET.

DEAR , peaceful cottage! o'er whose humble thatch
The dewy moss has velvet verdure spread;
Once more, with trem'lous hands thy ready latch
I lift, and to thy lintel bow my head.
Dear are thy inmates! beauty's roseate smile ,
And eye soft melting hail my wish'd return,—
Loud clamours infant joy: around meanwhile
Maturer breasts with silent rapture burn.
Within these narrow bounds I reign secure,
And duteous love and prompt obedience find:
Nor sigh to view my destiny obscure,
(Where all is lowly, but each owner's mind
Content), if pilgrims passing by our cell,
Say, "with her sister Peace *there* Virtue loves to dwell!"

A
FAMILIAR EPISTLE
TO
A FRIEND.

WRITTEN IN 1795.

*The hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us.*

SHAKSPEARE.

DEAR BEATRICE , with pleasure I read your kind letter;
On the subject, methinks, there could scarce be a better:
How vivid the scenes it recall'd to my view,
And how lively it waken'd remembrance anew!
Yet our souls are so crusted with housewifely moss,
That Fancy's bright furnace yields nothing but dross:
Surrounded with balling, and squalling, and prattle,
With handmaids unhandy, and gossipping tattle,
Cut fingers to bandage, and stockings to darn,
And labyrinths endless of ill-manag'd yarn,
Through whose windings *Daedalean* bewilder'd we wander,
Like drabble-tail'd nymphs of the mazy *Meander* ,
Till at length, like the *Hero* of *Macedon* , tir'd
Of the slow perseverance untwisting required,
We brandish our scissars, resolved on the spot,
Since we cannot unravel, to cut through the knot.

Blest vicars of England! how happy your wives!
Though devoted to pudding and plain work their lives,
Though quotations and homilies forced to endure,
While fumes of tobacco their graces obscure;
Though their quiet be disturb'd with the nursery's noise,
Though their girls should be hoydens, or dunces their boys,
With the tangling of yarn they are never perplex'd,
More difficult to clear than his Reverence's text.
While with labour incessant our toils we renew,
To furnish fine linen, and purple and blue,
Such a series of self-same minute occupation
Yields nothing, you'll own, to enliven narration;
And as for the friend of all poets, *Invention* ,
'Tis a thing, of late years, I scarce think of or mention:
Or of useful inventions alone make my boast,
Such as saving potatoes and turnips from frost;
Or repulsing whole armies of mice from my cheese;
Or plucking the quills without painning the geese.

What a change on the scene and the actors appears,
'Tis now but a dozen and odd of short years,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Since when we, and the season, and fancy were young,
On *Tarfe's* flowery banks our gay whimsies we sung,
Regardless of profit, and hopeless of fame,
Yet heedless of censure, and fearless of blame,
We travers'd the vale, or we haunted the grove,
As free as the birds that were chanting above;
Where the fair face of Nature was bright with a smile,
Enraptur'd in silence we gaz'd for a while;
Then as clear and as artless resounded our lays,
As the sky or the stream we endeavour'd to praise;
While strains of delight the pure pleasures impart
That thrill'd through each bosom, and glow'd in each heart;
But when from the east, with dun vapours o'ercast,
Came horrors bestriding the bleak howling blast;
When rude echoing rocks with brown cataracts foam'd,
And bewilder'd in mist the sad traveller roam'd;
When to part us, loud storms and deep gullies conspir'd,
And sublime meditation to garrats retir'd;
To the workings of fancy to give a relief,
We sat ourselves down to imagine some grief,
Till we conjur'd up phantoms so solemn and sad,
As, if they had lasted, would make us half mad;
Then in strains so affecting we pour'd the soft ditty,
As mov'd both the rocks and their echoes to pity:
And to prove it, each note of the soul-moving strain
In more sonorous sounds was return'd back again;
And we, silly souls, were so proud of our parts,
When we thought that our pathos had reach'd their hard hearts!
But when grave looking HYMEN had kindl'd his torch,
With a pure lambent flame that would glow but not scorch,
The Muses, who plain humble virtues revere,
Were affrighted to look on his brow so austere;
The cottage so humble, or sanctified dome,
For the revels of fancy afforded no room;
And the lyre and the garland, were forc'd to give place
To duties domestic, and records of grace:
Then farewell *Illysus*, adieu *Hippocrene*,
The vales of *Arcadia* and *Tempe* so green;
To the hills of *Judea* we now must draw near,
King LEMUEL'S good mother's wise maxims to hear,
And strive to leave none of the duties undone
Which the matron prescrib'd for the spouse of her son;
For my own part, I labour'd and strove with my might
To do all that the proverbs applauded as right:
Fine coverings I made that with tapestry vied,
And with heather and madder my fleeces I dy'd,
While the sun shone I still made the most of his light,
And my candle most faithfully burnt through the night;
And while that and large fires through the winter did glow,
Not a farthing my household would care for the snow:
Their plaids, hose, and garters, with scarlet adorn'd,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Chill December they braved, and its rigours they scorn'd;
Yet these were not all my pretensions to claim
Of a matron industrious and virtuous the name;
My mate (can you doubt it?) was known in the gates,
Among seniors, and elders, and men of estates:
I made him a coat of a grave solemn hue,
Two threads they were black, and the other two blue;
So warm, and so clerical, comely and cheap,
'Twas a proof both of thrift and contrivance so deep;
His cravats of muslin were spun by my hands,
I knit all his stockings and stitch'd all his bands;
Till the neighbours all swore by St. BRIDGET herself,
Such a wife was worth titles, and beauty, and pelf.
Quite dead and extinct all poetical fire,
At the foot of the cradle conceal'd lay my lyre;
What witchcraft had alter'd its form I ne'er knew,
But by some means or other a whistle it grew;
The brats in succession all jingled its bells,
While its music to them the piano excels:
But when slowly and surely the cold hand of time
Had stole my complexion, and wither'd my prime,
Resolv'd for a while to respire at my ease,
In *Clydesdale* I courted the soft western breeze;
Whose fresh breathing whispers my languor could soothe,
With visions of fancy, and dreams of my youth.
While slowly retracing my dear native *Clyde* ,
And reviewing my visage, so chang'd, in its tide,
As sad and reluctant I strove to retire,
To my grasp was presented my trusty old lyre,—
I snatch'd it, I strumm'd it, and thrumm'd it again,
But strove to awaken its music in vain;
So rusty the wire, so enfeebled my hand,
A while in suspence and dumb wonder I stand:
Thus it happen'd they say, to ULYSSES of old,
When twenty long years of sad absence had roll'd,
To his ITHACA forc'd in disguise to resort,
When the suitors with uproar were filling his court;
He set his foot forward, and bending his brow,
With a dignified air he demanded his bow;
With joy—mingled sorrow review'd his old friend,
And three times essay'd the tough crescent to bend,
Till the string to his efforts resounded so sharp,
Some thought it a swallow and some an old harp.—
Thus awkward and faint were my efforts at first,
But I rais'd the note higher whenever I durst:
To Friendship and Truth I exalted the lay,
And homewards with music beguil'd the long way;
And now since beyond any doubt it appears,
From duties discharg'd through a series of years,
That nor peace nor industry are banish'd the cell
Where in ease and retirement the Muse loves to dwell;

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Once more let us try to awaken the strain,
So friendly to sorrow, so sothing to pain!
The blessings we've tasted let's carefully rate,
And be just to kind Nature, and grateful to Fate;
Thus wisely employing the last closing strain,
We shall not have liv'd or have warbled in vain.
Were the foot-path of life to be travell'd anew,
When we calmly look back with a serious review,
For noisy applause or for tinsel parade,
Would we part with sweet Peace that delights in the shade?
Or blame the kind harbour, remote and obscure,
Where our minds were kept tranquil, our hearts were kept pure?
While with streamers all flying, and wide-swelling sails,
Toss'd high on the billows, the sport of the gales,
The Muse's fair daughters triumphant were borne
Till the public applause was converted to scorn;
For by vanity guided, so wildly they steer'd,
Or by caprice directed, so frequently veer'd;
Creation's proud Masters observ'd with a sneer,
That like comets eccentric forsaking their sphere,
Their brightness so gaz'd at, would never produce,
Or pleasure, or profit, or comfort, or use.
***** and ***** thus shone for a day,
How prais'd was each period! how flatter'd each lay!
Till a crop so luxuriant arising of pride,
Affectation, and fifty new follies beside,
The duties and joys of the mother and wife,
The nameless soft comforts of calm private life,
Fell victims together at Vanity's shrine,
For who could endure to exist and not shine!

MACAULAY, of STUARTS had tore up the graves,
To prove half of them fools, and the other half knaves,
And sully'd the mitre and spatter'd the gown,
And flatter'd the mob and insulted the Crown;
Then insensibly shrunk to a faction's blind tool,
And discover'd too late they had made her their fool.

With virtues, and graces, and beauties beside,
The delight of her friends, of her country the pride,
Say, who could to ***** their suffrage refuse,
Or who not be charm'd with her chaste classic Muse?
To the passion for liberty giving loose rein,
At length she flew off to carouse on the *Seine* ;
And growing inebriate while quaffing the draught,
Equality's new-fangled doctrines she taught;
And murder and sacrilege calmly survey'd;
In the new *Pandemonium* those demons had made;
Seine's blood-crimson'd waters with apathy ey'd,
While the glories of old father *Thames* she decried.
Now with equals in misery hid in some hole,
Her body a prison confining her soul,
From the freedom of *Gallia* how fain would she fly,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

To the freedom which genius shall taste in the sky!
No longer pursue those fond lovers of fame,
Nor envy the honours and trophies they claim;
No further excursive to speculate roam,
But fix our attention and pleasure at home:
Why regret, when celebrity proves such a curse,
The cares of the mother and toils of the nurse:
While the nurse finds delight in sweet infancy's smiles,
And hope the fond mother's long trouble beguiles.
"But why these quick feelings, or why this nice ear,
"Or musical accents, if no one must hear?
"Why blossoms of fancy all scatter'd to waste,
"The glow sympathetic, or pleasures of taste?—"
Ask why in the mountains the flow'ret should blow,
Which none but the hermit is destin'd to know?
Why the wild woods re-echo with melody clear,
Which none but the hunter is destin'd to hear?
When often enjoyed and but seldom they're shewn,
Our riches and pleasures are truly our own:
The milk-maid that carols her wild native airs
To solace her labours, and lighten her cares,
Feels a pleasure more genuine and free from alloy,
Than CATLEY or MARA could ever enjoy:
Who, while their divisions they warbled aloud,
Depended for joy on the praise of the crowd;
Then blest be the lyre, ever sacred its strain,
In the regions of bliss let it waken again:
When the kind hand of Nature has fitted its strings,
And the dictates of truth and of virtue it sings,
As softly and sweetly it touches the mind,
As ÆOLUS ' harp when 'tis mov'd by the wind;
Untainted by art were the notes it has sung,
It has cheer'd our decline, and has charm'd us when young;
And when useful employments demanded our prime,
Our leisure it soothed without wasting our time:
And when all our sorrows and toils shall be o'er,
Its music perhaps may delight us once more;
When swelling to concords more rich and sublime,
It may rise beyond earth, and may live beyond time.
The blossoms I once so admir'd and caress'd,
That cheer'd my fond heart till they dy'd on my breast,
Which my tears that fell frequent, like soft silent rain,
Could not waken to life and new fragrance again:
There, again, in new sweetness and beauty shall bloom,
And the evergreen plain with fresh odours perfume;
Perhaps while exalted their graces shall rise,
Again their dear verdure shall gladden my eyes!
When the season of fear and of sorrow is o'er,
And our tears and our songs are remember'd no more!

AN
EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.

A FRAGMENT .

*Here youth's free spirit, innocently gay,
Enjoy'd the most that innocence can give;
Those wholesome sweets that border Virtue's way,
Those cooling fruits, that we may taste and live!*

SHENSTONE.

The Family whose modest but genuine worth is here celebrated, were remarkable for firmness of principle, simplicity of manners, and very great delicacy, both of sentiment and feeling. The tender harmony in which they lived, and high veneration for their parents, were also among their distinguishing features.

THOUGH long by fate's austere decree remov'd
From scenes still pleasing, and from friends still lov'd,
I see low shelter'd in my humble shed
The stormy gloom invest the mountain's head,
Shake solid rocks, with snows eternal crown'd,
Or bid a hundred torrents dash around;
Inur'd by habit, and a length of time,
To look well pleas'd on Nature's dread sublime;
Though smiling comfort warms her in my cot,
Still pilgrim fancy seeks my native spot;
The fond attachments of my early youth,
Blest season of ingenuous warmth and truth;
Affections void of interest or of art,
Still twist their silken ties around my heart;
Nor shall that heart forego those tender ties
Till death's long slumber close my weary eyes.

Still fancy hovering on unwearied wing,
On *Cart's* green banks sees native flow'rets spring;
Or from the hazel copse the blackbird hears,
Whose mellow notes his brooding consort cheers;
Or hears the hollow'd rock resound the din,
Where *Cart* descends on WILLY WILKIE'S linn ;
Or stops where WILLY WILKIE went to rave,
When in his lowly dwelling in the cave,
Imperious death, deaf to his pray'rs and vows,
Laid his cold hands on WILLY WILKIE'S spouse;
While WILLY , wild with frantic sorrow, swore,
Ne'er to review his habitation more;
But through the world with pilgrim steps to rove,
And like a turtle mourn his parted love!
While TOM and I with gaping sorrow stood,
And with compassion's tears increas'd the flood!
Yet ere the moon had three times fill'd her horn,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

The sun shone bright on WILLY'S bridal morn!

Dear recollection! trace those early days,
Ere known the toils of life's perplexing maze,
When friendship led to *Bogtown's* tranquil grove,
Where every milder virtue wont to rove;
Where Innocence and Joy together play'd,
Like sister cherubs in the peaceful shade:
There meek simplicity, with artless mien,
Loose-robed in snowy vestments walk'd the green;
There sportive humour, Nature's harmless Child,
With stingless mirth the languid hours beguil'd;
And soft humanity, and worth sincere,
With glowing heart and melting eyes were there;
Thou too wert there, my kind, my guardian friend,
In whose pure mind those kindred graces blend,
Though early sorrow, like an envious shade,
Obscur'd thy spirit, and thy bloom decay'd :
Yet stern affliction, with more soften'd grace,
And stronger meaning mark'd thy pensive face,
And taught each speaking feature how to move
The secret springs of pity and of love.
Thus wet with Morning's tears the dewy rose,
With head declin'd, in modest beauty glows:
Admiring thus we view some flow'ret bloom,
That sheds its fragrance o'er the silent tomb:
Pleas'd I retrac'd lov'd *Bogtown's* opening glades,
Oh! that my Muse could consecrate these shades!
Blest be their memory, who in happier days
"Oft made them vocal with their Maker's praise;"
From the strong heavings of his ardent breast,
By zeal and tender sorrow half suppress'd,
Oft have I heard thy pious father's prayer
The meltings of his fervent soul declare;
Oft seen his eyes with grateful transports shine,
Fir'd by the blest records of love divine,
When the mild lustre of their azure beams
Was quench'd by sacred Pity's silent streams,
Benignant Sanctity appear'd to view
In fairer form than RAPHAEL ever drew.
His was the placid brow, the vivid smile
That spoke the open heart, devoid of guile:
The worthy partner of his blameless life,
In tender union, void of anxious strife,
Saw years elapse amidst a duteous race,
Who strove their parent's spotless paths to trace,
And still those years, that stole away their youth,
Increas'd their store of tenderness and truth.—
May blessings crown, and memory mark the day
That saw them now retrace their pleasing way ,
Where tottering tow'rs o'erlook the cultur'd plain,
To *Bogtown's* venerable haunts again!

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Well-pleas'd my CHARLOTTE told the welcome tale,
Well-pleas'd I heard it in my distant vale—
Methought I saw the Genius of the place,
Array'd in rustic robes with decent grace,
Smiling through tears, his aged arms extend
To bless and welcome every well-known Friend;
The pleasing scene while glowing fancy drew,
Reviving images rush'd thick to view—
The mouldering castle lifts its ivy'd brow,
Reflected in the wandering *Cart* below;
Near its gray walls, again, methinks I see,
Clipp'd into formal shape, that ancient tree
Whence royal MARY , with affrighted eye,
Beheld her banners drop, her forces fly,
And headlong fled to hide her fatal charms
In a false, treacherous rival's cruel arms!
Fair Forms, in virtue's paths that early trode,
Who sleep long since beneath the grassy sod,
The strong creative power restores to view
In youth's first prime, with beauty ever new,—
And AGNES , whose large heart has never known
One wish that center'd in herself alone:—
MAXWELL , with open mind, from art as free
As the sweet smiles of guiltless infancy—
And MARY MAXWELL , who amid these bowers
Oft tended with delight her opening flowers;
And oft with me in tuneless concert sung
Till through the shades discordant echoes rung.
Nor yet are JOHN MACUTCHEON'S psalms forgot,
That filled with sacred melody his cot;
And faithful memory still retains the names
Of ANDERSON the laird, and uncle JAMES ;
And often pleas'd recalls the uncouth phrase
Of JAMIE DICK and valiant JOHNNY STRAES ,
Or at her wheel hears JENNY sing aloud,
Resolv'd to wed whene'er she *spun her shroud* .

REMARKS
ON THE CHARACTER OF
BURNS .

THE AUTHOR , at the request of some friends, shall here insert extracts from two of her letters, one to a lady who desired her opinion of *BURNS* , and wished for a poetical tribute to his memory; the other to a friend, who some years after sent the Author *BURNS'S* life, letters, &c., and earnestly requested to know her ideas of his character and abilities, as they appear in those familiar effusions.

"I *HAVE* truly felt for poor *BURNS* a degree of regret, by reflecting on the circumstances attending his *exit* , which may appear incredible, considering that I only knew him in the pictures of his mind exhibited to the public. What I felt upon his death it would look like gross affectation to describe. I cannot however resist the secret impulse which prompts me to lay my little offering on the shrine of departed Genius. Though in his prophetic and pathetic 'Epitaph on a Bard,' he has touched the lines of his own character, and anticipated his hapless fate so emphatically, that no one can produce any thing comparable to it;

The poor inhabitant below
'Was quick to learn and wise to know,
'And keenly felt the social glow
'And softer flame,
'But thoughtless follies laid him
'And stain'd his name.'

"Alas, for the verity of the prediction!—I have invariably tried to divest myself of an idolatrous veneration for Genius, and to consider virtue and probity as the only fit objects of unlimited love and veneration. The instances in which intellectual superiority has been debased by vice, or degraded by absurdity of conduct, are so frequent, as not only to discourage and depress those whom the enthusiasm of fancy leads to worship and admire their Maker in 'that larger portion of celestial fire,' which he communicates to some of his creatures; but also to afford envy and dulness no small cause of exultation. How do the tasteless, the selfish, and the stupid, triumph over the splendid ruins of ill-fated Genius! Though one worthy and virtuous person be worth a thousand unprincipled and licentious wits, yet it is hard for those who have never tasted the full cup of public admiration to judge of its intoxicating qualities, and doubly hard for those, who make their way through life, wrapt up in selfish caution, and wholly occupied by the wants and cares of the little individual, to comprehend the dangers that environ the children of Genius; who pass through a deceitful world with open arms stretched out to embrace all that solicit compassion, and offer gratification; and whose naked hearts, overflowing with kindness and goodwill, are unprotected from treachery and temptation.

"Indeed, the snares that vanity and pleasure spread in the way of these who join exquisite sensibility and a glowing imagination with artless simplicity and a high relish for all that flatters the senses, are so numerous and fatal, that the obscurity of retirement, especially in the early period of life, is perhaps their only chance for safety. We are often tempted to accuse Providence for allowing merit to pine unknown to the world: but we see but in part, and know but in part. Perhaps the blooms of Genius are too delicate to bear the unhallowed breath of the world, and can only bud safely in the deep shelter of retirement, and expand to full perfection in the sunshine of divine complacency. As *MILTON* says of

'Immortal amaranth, a flow'r which once
'In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
'Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
'To heav'n remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,
'And flow'rs aloft shading the fount of life.'

"I do not mean so far to give up the cause of Genius, as to say that poets are necessarily less virtuous than

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

others: I only mean that they are less prudent, less firm, more susceptible, more simple."

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO MRS. BROWN, GLASGOW.

"I do not know whether most to pity or admire *BURNS*. Why were such people made?

"What a fatal delusion, to lean for happiness on the bosom of the gay and fortunate, because they make us the companions of their pleasures! though ready to rejoice with us, if we possess talents to heighten their festive hours, alas! when the day of affliction comes, we are left to pine neglected, or perhaps have our sorrows embittered by the sneer of wanton insult. Ask me of his Genius!—I have not power to do justice to its vigour, extent, and versatility. His poetry shews him in a walk of superior excellence, while his correspondence proves him equal to any thing. It is nauseous to hear people say, what he would have been if he had received a more thorough education: in that case he would not have been *BURNS* — that daring, original, and unfettered genius, whose 'wood notes wild' silence the whole chorus of modern tame correctness, as one of our mountain blackbirds would a parcel of canaries.

"He did know his own strength, as such a superior intelligence necessarily must; but then he also knew his own weakness.

"This *best knowledge* however did not answer the purpose of self-defence. O that he had but learned and habitually practised self-command, and self-denial, without which the highest attainments cannot lead to happiness:—but this theme is endless. Yet one word more:—how different are his letters to Mrs. *DUNLOP*, where his heart truly opens, from his effusions to his gay companions,—that unaffected scorn of the world and its vain pursuits,—that sublime melancholy,—that aspiration (though struggling through doubts and darkness) after what the world does not afford—that sensibility,—that manly sincerity,—every thing, in short, that characterises genius, and exalts humanity!"

MOOME.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO MR. THOMSON OF EDINBURGH,
ACCOMPANYING THE FOLLOWING POEM.

"*DOMESTIC MUSE* ! if such a Muse there be, or whatever power presides over pathetic simplicity, over the tender, endearing intercourse of humble life, over those virtues that bloom unseen, and wither unlamented,—enable me, in appropriate terms, to convey some idea of that worth to which I have endeavoured to hang up a votive tablet in the temple of Memory!

"The person who is the subject of the following verses, was Highland to extravagance, and possessed all the characteristic virtues of that enthusiastic race, without their debasing mixtures. She was hospitable without ostentation;—she bore hardships and poverty without a malignant jealousy of the wealthy;—she adored her own Clan and Chief without disliking or undervaluing any other,—and her family—pride merely served as an outguard to her innate dignity of mind;—she was all I have described,

'And still it was her dearest charm,

'She said she lo'ed me best of a!'

She was our neighbour, had been married to an old gentleman, who left her a widow, slenderly provided, with one son, now doing well in the West Indies. By romantic generosity she reduced her circumstances, but with amazing spirit struggled to support, and did support, not only a decent appearance, but a liberality to the distressed that was astonishing. She never visited the sick poor without carrying something to them, and was an excellent sick nurse, to which charitable office she gave much of her time. She was my constant gossip, loved my children with maternal affection, and was so much beloved by them, that they always called her *Moome*, an endearing appellation in the Gaelic language, signifying a person, who, without being actually a mother, performs the duties of one. In the year 1795, I had a long alarming illness, during which she took care of an infant I then had, and watched me for above a month, without ever sleeping except in an easy chair, after sunrise. Mr. G. grateful for this affectionate exertion, ordered a present of a mantle for her; but *CHARLOTTE*, to whom the poem is addressed, having neglected to forward it immediately, the good Lady did not live to see it, being soon after carried off by a sudden violent illness. The morning after her death I poured forth, *extempore* I may say, this tribute to her memory, which flowed indeed

'Warm from the heart, and faithful to its fires.'

MOOME.

IN vain my eye-lids seek repose
While midnight spreads her thickest gloom,
My heart, a stranger to repose,
Still bleeds o'er poor departed MOOME !

No gossip in my faithful heart
Shall ever occupy her room;
They live by flattery and by art,
But Truth and Nature dwelt with MOOME .

Her fate awakes my former woes,
And bids them all their force resume,
Those griefs which once I could repose
Upon the faithful breast of MOOME .

She clos'd my darling PETER'S eyes,
When low I sunk, with grief o'ercome
And sweet PETRINA'S latest sighs
Were breath'd upon the knees of MOOME !

Could earnest vows, and pious cares,
The fading light of life relume,
True tears of love, and fervent prayers,
Had lengthen'd out the years of MOOME .

The mean abodes of Want and Pain,
Where none but Mercy loves to come,
Shunn'd by the haughty, rich, and vain,
Were still the chosen haunts of MOOME .

Where sickness pin'd with languid eye,
And poverty increas'd the gloom,
Disease and cheerless want would fly
Before the kindly aid of MOOME .

Her prayers, and alms, and deeds of love,
Arose to heaven like sweet perfume,
And balmy comfort from above
Distill'd upon the heart of MOOME .

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Whate'er she had she freely gave,
And nought in secret would consume;
No hermit in his lonely cave
Was e'er so self-deny'd as MOOME .

Though rude her phrase, and harsh her style,
Unus'd in learning's paths to roam,
Compassion's kind benignant smile
Was native eloquence to MOOME .

And probity, and useful toil,
And independence found a home,
Congenial in the hallow'd soil,
Beneath the humble roof of MOOME .

Though elegance and arts refin'd
Were strangers to her lowly dome,
The ardour of a noble mind
Gave power and dignity to MOOME .

Her dignity was worth and truth,
Whose power could proudest minds o'ercome,
And hopeless age and helpless youth
Took shelter in the shade of MOOME .

And well in decent garb she lov'd
To visit oft the sacred dome;
And thoughtless CHARLOTTE well approv'd
The destin'd mantle wrought for MOOME .

Though CHARLOTTE still forgetful prove,
The Muse in Fancy's airy loom
Has, thus her simple texture wove,
To deck the cold remains of MOOME .

And when the mighty Angel's voice
Shall wake the dreadful trump of doom,
Bless'd infant spirits shall rejoice
To meet the generous soul of MOOME !

Kind Charity, with open hand,
Shall some angelic form assume,

MOOME.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And like her guardian Genius stand
To watch the long repose of MOOME .

Be mine, to bid around her grave
The ivy twine and roses bloom,
And from oblivion's gulf to save
The name of much-lamented MOOME .

And while my humble wreath I hang
With reverence on her lowly tomb,
My heart still vibrates with the pang
That burst the liberal heart of MOOME !

**EPITAPH
INTENDED FOR
MOOME .
SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
HELEN MACKINTOSH,
RELICT OF JAMES MACPHERSON:
WHOSE INTEGRITY WAS UNSULLIED,
WHOSE BENEFICENCE WAS UNBOUNDED,
AND
WHOSE FORTITUDE WAS UNEQUALLED.**

**THE
NYMPH OF THE FOUNTAIN**

TO
CHARLOTTE .

**O fountain Arehuse, and thou honour'd flood,
Smooth sliding Mincia, crown'd with crisped reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood,
..... but now my oat proceeds.**

MILTON.

FAIR daughter of that fleeting race
Who fade like Autumn's leafy store,
Welcome, my rocky haunts to trace,
And all my secret cells explore.

Full many an oak, whose lofty head
With sacred mistletoe was crown'd,
Since first I own'd that stony bed,
Sunk dodder'd to its native ground.

And many a towering grove of pine,
Whose gloom shut out the noon-day sun,
In shatter'd ruin lies supine,
Since first my wat'ry course begun.

And many a toiling race of man
Has joy'd in youth, and mourn'd in age,
Since first my pensive view began
To trace their weary pilgrimage.

And many a nymph with sounding bow,
Slow-rolling eyes, and heavy locks,
As young, as fair, as soft as thou,
Has chas'd the deer o'er yonder rocks.

And when the sun's meridian heat
With fervid splendour fir'd the heath,
Oft have they sought my cool retreat,
With glowing breast and panting breath.

Yet, never did I pour my stream
To bathe a breast more pure than thine,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Or visit eyes in whose mild beam
So clear the gentler virtues shine.

When with light step thy naked feet
Move quick my primrose banks along,
I bid my streams with murmur sweet
Their liquid melody prolong.

When Echo to thy voice replies
From yonder arch of rugged stone,
Well pleas'd I lift my humid eyes,
As blue and languid as thy own:

When from yon hazle's pendent shade
Sweet spring awakes the blackbird's strain,
Come to my bosom, gentle maid,
And lave thy streaming locks again.

Pluck from my brink the flow'ry store
That blushing decks the infant year,
And to increase their beauty more,
Deign round thy brow the wreath to wear.

And when the summer's ardent glow
Shrinks every brook in yonder plain,
Come where my lucid waters flow,
And bathe thy graceful form again.

Nor yet, when wintry tempests howl,
To haunt my lonely margin cease:
Through life's dark storms the virtuous soul
Finds Reason's steady light increase.

Hard ice, that crusts my current clear,
Renews more pure my sparkling stream;
Thus may Affliction's hand severe
Add lustre to the mental gem.

Where'er you rove, where'er you rest,
May Peace your pensive steps attend,
And halcyon Innocence your breast
From each contagious blast defend!

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

**ANSWER
TO
A POETICAL EPISTLE
FROM AN
INTIMATE FRIEND.**

**I do not think my sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in virtue's book
And that sweet peace which goodness bosoms ever.**

MILTON.

YES , even amid these wilds forlorn,
Where, shivering on the naked spray,
The drooping songsters seem to mourn
The languid sun's declining ray;
While Nature faints in Winter's icy arms,
My DELIA'S tender strain my pensive bosom warms.

Ah! why does still that well-known strain
In sadly-plaintive numbers flow?
Must time and friendship mix in vain
Their lenient balm to soothe thy woe?
Ye Powers, who piety and truth reward,
Why could not these your spotless votary guard!

While round thy cradle Pity's doves
Fond hovering pour'd their tender moan,
And all the pure and guiltless loves
Exulting, hail'd thee for their own:
They fled, repell'd by Wisdom's frown severe,
While Patience hush'd the babe and wip'd its tender tear.

Cease, then, dear partner of my breast,
Whose every joy and grief are mine;
And hush each gloomy care to rest,
For virtue's purest rays are thine:
Her cheering beams should gild thy languid hours,
As flow'rets shine, refresh'd by morning showers.

Oh! why with selfish sorrow mourn,
And frequent pour the lonely tear;
While beams of heavenly light adorn
The parted soul, so justly dear.
Enough to Nature's weakness now is given,
Let faith take wing, and seek her native heaven.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Nor mourn thy banish'd EDWIN'S fate,
Though far remov'd from hope and thee;
Nor pining view with vain regret
Unerring Wisdom's stern decree.
Though filial love thy tenderest sorrows claim,
And every virtue brighten EDWIN'S name.

While Wisdom sways thy EDWIN'S breast,
And Fancy strews his path with flowers,
Although by hopeless love depress'd,
The pensive pleasures haunt his bowers:
And where the myrtle and the willow twine,
He rears a mossy seat, and fondly calls it thine.

When filial duty sway'd thy heart,
And bade thee EDWIN'S vows decline,
With sad reluctance see him part,
And every tender wish resign:
With weeping admiration I beheld,
And sadly triumph'd while my friend excell'd.

Let *Grecia* boast the duteous dame
Whose breast sustain'd her captive sire;
The Muses consecrate her name,
And crowds her pictur'd form admire:
With conscious pride, heroic maid, I see
The Grecian daughter far outshone by thee!

The milky stream spontaneous flow'd,
No warring passions were at strife,
Her being to her sire she ow'd,
And Nature cry'd—Preserve his life!
But sure a more exalted meed is thine,
Whose struggling heart has bled at beauty's shrine!

**TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE DUKE OF YORK,**

WITH AN
INVALID SOLDIER'S PETITION.

By a concurrence of odd circumstances, partly owing to his ignorance of the English language, the poor man, who is the subject of this address, missed getting his certificate for the Chelsea pension when his regiment was disbanded; but being in pretty easy circumstances, he married, took a farm, and put up quietly with the privation. Growing into years, however, and finding his cattle diminish in proportion as his family increased, he was advised to set earnestly about obtaining the object here solicited. Two officers were yet living who happened to be beside him when he fell, in consequence of his wound, on the heights of Abram. They signed his Petition, and the Muse seconded it, just thirty years after that event took place, by the following poem sent inclosed to Her Royal Highness the DUCHESS OF YORK. The humane reader will be pleased to hear, that the application proved successful.

FROM the recesses of this wild domain,
Where artless truth and simple manners reign,
The blushing Muse conveys the humble plea
Of modest merit, Royal YORK, to thee:
Nor seeks by flattery base, or sordid art,
To soothe thy princely ear, or reach thy heart.
Though oft that Muse with kindling transport view'd
Thy laurels sprouting in the field of blood,
And joy'd to see, when glory's day begun,
The youthful eagle soar so near the sun.
By the slow *Scheldt*, or deep majestic *Rhine*,
The martial spirit of the BRUNSWICK line,
In ages past, as in the present days,
Has left rich trophies of undying bays:
Yet though they oft made hostile squadrons yield,
The heroes never view'd a brighter field,
Than where our wounded veteran press'd the plain,
And Honour wept o'er WOLFE untimely slain!
When roughest warriors, all unus'd to melt,
Through every rank the soft contagion felt:
And Britain's Genius saw with cheerless eye
O'er *Abram's* heights victorious standards fly:
Nor deem'd the dear-won glories of the day
Could her young Hero's matchless loss repay.
While Britain decks with martial wreaths thy brow,
What her lamented WOLFE was once—be thou!
The olive with the laurel garland blend,
The brave man's patron, and the good man's friend!
Such GRANBY was, whose name, to glory dear,
Still sweetly vibrates on the soldier's ear.
The Prince who made contending monarchs yield,
And Gallia's lilies cropt on *Cressy's* field,
Though his bold arm laid countless warriors low,
Shed pity's balm o'er every human woe;
And when he saw the hostile tumult cease,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Each milder virtue exercis'd in peace:
Hence his fair fame with clear and radiant blaze
"Spreads and grows brighter with the length of days."

Think not the veteran, who with, humble pray'r
Yields his just cause to your indulgent care,
Would hope to touch with sacrilegious hand
The valued treasure of his native land;
Since his hard lot no earlier was discern'd,
He claims not all the meed so dearly earn'd;
But now by years and indigence oppress'd,
With modest patience forms this small request,
That he his aged limbs at peace may lay,
And calmly waste his fast declining day;
And when his soul aspires where WOLFE is fled,
He'll leave a soldier's blessing on your head.
See at your feet no common object bend,
A tender parent, and a generous friend:
To independence once he could aspire,
And cherish'd Want sat smiling by his fire;
But anxious care and sad dejections now
Lurk in the furrows of his manly brow;
While Poverty appears with haggard mien
To blast the peace of life's concluding scene:
His humble worth, mark'd by the Muse alone,
That Muse who lives unseen, and sings unknown,
Shall to brave YORK'S indulgent ear convey,
While truth and pity consecrate the lay.

**SENT TO
A YOUNG NOBLEMAN
WITH
A PAIR OF GARTERS ;**

WROUGHT BY A HIGHLAND WOMAN IN THE 101st YEAR
OF HER AGE.

**We the reins to slaughter give,
Ours to kill and ours to spare.
GRAY.**

HEAR , princely youth, th' unletter'd rustic Muse,
Nor the poor widow's proffer'd gift refuse;
Though mean the gift, yet, form'd with matchless art,
That Muse its secret virtues shall impart:

When dark eclipse obscur'd the lab'ring moon,
The fleece was shorn that form'd the wondrous boon;
Spun by a Sybil of the former age,
By Nature wise, by long experience sage;
Whose eyes first open'd on the circling sun,
When *Namur* was by thund'ring NASSAU won.
The bone that for a distaff serv'd the dame,
Was *Clessamor's* , of old *Fingalian* fame;
The sanguine stream that dyed the crimson part,
Once warm'd a Highland Hero's generous heart:
Gaunt Death and giant Danger stood aloof,
While grim Volkyriæ, form'd the dusky woof;
As o'er their looms in vision rapt they hung,
Thus in prophetic strains the virgins sung:—

"Safe in every bloody field,
Whom with mystic art we shield,
While our zones enclasp each limb,
Danger vainly frowns on him.
Not the force of frantic Gaul
E'er can work our hero's fall,
While his free and towering mind
No ties but those of honour bind,
And mystic bands knit fast below,
Strike with terror every foe;
Throw the shuttle, strain the warp,
Fiery missive weapons sharp
Ne'er the favour'd Chief can wound,
Whose limbs our wondrous gifts have bound."
Thus sung the Sisters, who with joy behold
You choose the path your fathers trod of old.
Go on, brave Youth, but shun the syren bowers

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

By Vice and Folly deck'd with tawdry flowers;
The toilsome path with stedfast ardour climb,
Where Fame's imperial dome aspires sublime;
There join the brave, the worthy, and the wise,
And the low sons of little men despise.
Fair THETIS ' son, arm'd in celestial steel,
Had still, they say, a vulnerable heel:
Thus you, protected by the Sybil's art,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

Perhaps have still a vulnerable heart,
Where Beauty's eyes a deadly glance may dart.
Yet can those charmed bands your breast secure
From the slight arts that youthful minds allure,
The practis'd artifice, the purchas'd smile,
The glance ambiguous, and insidious wile.
Thrice happy they who gloriously expire,
Touch'd by the beam of pure celestial fire.
Such be thy fate,—be thou the envied prize
Of brightest virtues beam'd through brightest eyes!
Dash from thee CIRCE'S cup, and nobly own

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

That truth and constancy deserve alone
The blessings of the Sybil's hallow'd zone.
Thus sings the mountain Muse to you alone,
Nor must her song to vulgar eyes be shown;
Nor will she deign to pour her mystic strain
In the gross aperture of ears profane.
Observe her caution, and conceal her verse,
So shall her future lays your future deeds rehearse:
The mountain echoes, pleas'd, shall hear the sound,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

Old heroes ghosts shall lean from clouds around,
To hail the blooming Chief, with early laurels, crown'd!

**TO
MISS WALLIS,**

WITH A SPRIG OF CRIMSON HEATH WHICH GREW ON THE
SUMMIT OF A MOUNTAIN.

**Those looks demure that deeply touch the soul,
Where, with the light of thoughtful Reason join'd,
Shine lively fancy, and the feeling heart.**

THOMSON.

MUSE that lov'st the lonely mountain,
Cliff abrupt, and rocky glen,
Rushy dell, and mossy fountain,
Free from strife, and far from men:

Muse that lov'st to worship Nature
In her haunts sublimely wild,
Hail the maid whose every feature
Speaks her Nature's darling child.

Nurs'd on Inspiration's bosom,
Dress'd by meek Simplicity,
She in youth's luxuriant blossom
Truth and Nature loves like thee.

Deck'd with chaste and artless graces,
While her form adorns the stage,
Fancy pleas'd recalls the traces
Of a former, better age;

When the virgin's sweet suffusion,
Timid look, and modest air,
Gentle fears, and soft confusion,
Shrunk before the public stare.

'Tis not that thy tragic sister
Wraps her in her crimson stole,
Or that comic powers assist her,
While she fascinates the soul.

'Tis not that applausive thunder
Shakes the scene when she appears,
That she draws the gaze of wonder,

TO MISS WALLIS,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And unlocks the spring of tears:

'Tis not that capricious fashion
Hails her idol of the day;
But that general adulation
O'er her breast obtains no sway.

That the charities and duties
Which domestic life endear,
Add new lustre to her beauties,
Even in wisdom's view severe.

Lovely WALLIS , these are graces
That awake the Muse's flame;
And to these sequester'd places
Have convey'd thy honour'd name.

Pattern bright of filial duty,
Kindest sister, truest friend,
On thy innocence and beauty
Still may guardian sylphs attend!

Keep and wear this crimson blossom,
Place it near thy generous heart,
'Tis a charm that from thy bosom
Can repel detraction's dart.

On yon mountain's summit aerial,
Far above the clouds it grew,
Fann'd by purest gales ethereal,
Fed by bright celestial dew.

No voluptuous scents exhaling,
Deck'd with no luxurious dye,
Fiercest storms in vain assailing,
Blooming midst the wintry sky.

Type of virtue's wreaths victorious,
Flowering on the craggy height,
Those who mount with ardour glorious
Pay their labour with delight.

**AN
ODE,**

ON READING ONE UPON THE SAME SUBJECT BY PROFESSOR
RICHARDSON OF GLASGOW.

Say where, just Heav'n, was thy avenging brand!
TICKELL.

WHAT voice awakes the soul-afflicting theme
That oft with anguish fill'd my youthful breast,
When by the *Mohawk's* wild sequester'd stream
Indignant grief my labouring heart oppress'd?
Yes! there those generous tribes I saw,
Who, sway'd alone by Nature's law,
Th' unerring paths of rectitude pursue:
Who cherish friendship's holy flame,
And valour's greenest laurel claim,
Of rigid faith inexorably true:

Saw them reluctant yield their poplar groves,
And flow'ry vales in wild luxuriance gay;
Forsake their fame, their friendship, and their loves,
When sunk beneath the European sway;
While peace and joy, with all their smiling train,
Recede before th' insatiate lust of gain.

Though there no lofty rocks aspire,
Whose caves with ductile silver glow;
Nor avarice bids those streams retire
That wont o'er golden sands to flow;
Nor pearly banks enrich the seas,
Nor costly incense load the breeze;

Yet though no glittering ore allure
To these deep glooms the Christian race,
Where the brown native urg'd secure
Through pathless woods the headlong chase;
See lucre covet even the furry spoil
That wont to deck his limbs and crown his toil!

Ye sons of trade! whose fatal guile
Dishonours Britain's far-fam'd isle,
Who pour th' intoxicating draught
With dire disease and madness fraught,
With rage and all the furies in her train,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Ah! wherefore vainly talk of pow'rs above,
Yet blemish by your crimes the laws of truth and love

Yet what are these? your lesser guilt,—
Your towns, by fraud insidious built,
Your forts, that, proudly lowering round,
O'erlook those tracks of fruitful ground
Which guileful arts have made your home?
"Ah! what are these to proud *Iberia's* crimes,
Which blot the records of enlighten'd times?

Each southern breeze seem'd warm with sighs,
From sad *Potosi's* injur'd race;
Where nations fallen, no more to rise,
The annals of our kind disgrace;
Where still the fierce insatiate love of gain
Shuts up the rigid heart of unrelenting *Spain* .

Behold their pow'r's proud fabric rise,
Whose tow'ring front insults the skies;
Two mighty columns bear the lofty roof,
Avarice and Cruelty the names
Which each conspicuous pillar claims;
Immoveable they seem, to heaven's dread thunder proof.

Where were ye then, ye sacred band?
Ordain'd in every distant land
To spread salvation's joyful sound;
To chase the shades of night away,
And the bright throne of peace display,
Where Truth and Mercy sit, with olive crown'd?
Alas! deep sunk in superstition's gloom,
They bow beneath the tyranny of *Rome* .

But see! where Mercy's beams divine
Round bless'd CHIAPA'S mitre shine,
And with peculiar lustre grace
The champion of the suffering race;
Who, arm'd with sanctity and pray'rs,
With holy tears and zealous cries,
Like faithful ABDIEL kept the field alone,
And through th' oppressive Papal mist,
With saintly valour could persist
To chase the demon Guilt even to his burning throne.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Where are your lyres, ye sons of song?
Bring all your symphonies along,
And consecrate to this bless'd theme your lays:
What! has no lyre divine been strung?
And has no energetic tongue
Charm'd Virtue's ear with good LAS CASA'S praise?

In that mild region of the sky,
Where dove-eyed Pity dwells on high,
From golden harps his praise melodious flows;
Will none of all the tuneful throng
Responsive catch the heavenly song,
Of power to soothe even slavery's bitter woes?

Yes! from thy banks, dear native *Clyde* ,
I hear with pleasure and with pride,
A classic lyre resound the hallow'd strain,
While shades of feather'd Inca's near,
In mournful fix'd attention hear,
Nor think they wept and bled in vain;
Since RICHARDSON records in lasting lays
Their matchless woes, and bless'd CHIAPA'S praise!

**ANSWER
TO
A POETICAL APOLOGY**

SENT BY PROFESSOR M'LEOD OF GLASGOW, TO SOME LADIES
WHO HAD INVITED HIM TO AN
OYSTER FEAST .

**Thus sung the uncouth nymph to th' oaks and rills.
MILTON.**

WHEN FINGAL dwelt in windy halls,
As mournful OSSIAN tells,
Midst lofty *Selma's* shaded walls
He spread the feast of shells.

Each tuneful bard and warlike chief
Made haste the feast to share;
Where music, sorrow's best relief,
Oft charm'd the vocal air.

The soft harp's many-sounding strings,
Wak'd by the blushing maid,
Could melt the iron hearts of kings,
And beauty's influence aid.

Excluded from the hero's feast,
By some unhappy chance,
Dark anguish prey'd on ALDO'S breast,
And rust consum'd his lance.

Nor war nor hunting more could please,
Nor beauty's powerful charms,
He fled o'er *Lochlin's* stormy seas,
To shine in foreign arms.

Bless'd days! when Nature rul'd supreme
Uncheck'd by frozen Art,
And love and fancy's blended beam
Illum'd the artless heart .;

When hungry heroes sprung with joy
To snuff the ven'son's fume,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Nor nymphs could artifice employ
To heighten Nature's bloom.

Their heavy locks, that wont to fly
Unpowder'd in the wind;
Their blushing cheek and downcast eye,
That spoke th' ingenuous mind;

With more coercive force could sway,
And tame the manly breast,
Than belles in all the full display
Of modern fashion dress'd,

Alas! a mournful proof appears
Of this soul-harrowing truth;
For this sad Nature melts in tears,
And clouds o'erhang the south.

MACALPINE , NEPTUNE'S faithful priest,
Well known to beaux and belles,
Thrice bow'd adoring to the east,
Then spread the feast of shells:

There sportive maids, and festive swains,
Attend the hallow'd rite,
And weave to music's sprightly strains
The dance in mazes light.

Ye Echoes hold your tattling tongues,
Nor spread our sad disgrace;
Else busy Fame, with brazen lungs,
Will blaze it through the place.

The bard of Celtic race renown'd
Avoids great NEPTUNE'S feast,
Lest he in torrents should be drown'd,
Or blighted by the east.

Rude blasts from EOL'S airy hall
Pierc'd through each tender form,
While, snug behind his cloister'd wall,
He laugh'd to see the storm.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Secure, his adamantine heart
In learning's musty cell
Repell'd poor CUPID'S powerful dart,
And slighted every belle.

Had he like ALDO no repast
But what his bow supplied,
He'd dare well pleas'd the wintry blast
When shells were smoking wide.

But college sophs of modern times,
In Sloth's soft lap reclin'd,
Will praise the fair in well-turn'd rhymes,
Yet leave them to the wind.

He talks of gaining hearts of beaux,
To please the angry fair;
But whether they have hearts to lose,
He does not know nor care.

Ah! sly observer, deeply read
In Nature's ample page;
Too well you know that beaux well-bred
In this self-loving age,

In panoply of lead and brass
Their cautious hearts unfold,
Which beauty cannot pierce, alas!
Unless with darts of gold!

The jealous God from glittering scenes
On purple pinions flies,
To dwell where Truth and Nature reigns,
And victims pure supplies.

To rights of men a foe confess'd,
No limits bar his throne,
A despot o'er the generous breast,
He loves to rule alone.

Though beaux should yawn, or oysters gape,
Or drenching rains descend,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Methinks the fair might still escape
The scorning of a friend.

He whom the Muses all regard,
Against our power rebels,
The long-descended Celtic bard
Avoids the feast of shells!

**HYMN
FOR
THE SONS OF THE CLERGY.**

**And behold I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel.
NUMBERS III. 12.**

HOW bless'd those olive plants that grow
Beneath the altar's sacred shade,
Where streams of fresh instruction flow,
And Comfort's humble board is spread.

'Twas thus the swallow rear'd her young,
Secure within the house of GOD ,
Of whom the Royal Prophet sung,
When banish'd from that bless'd abode.

When, like the swallow's tender brood,
They leave the kind paternal dome,
On weary wing to seek their food,
Or find in other climes a home;

Where'er they roam, where'er they rest,
Through all the varied scenes of life,
Whether with tranquil plenty bless'd,
Or doom'd to share the deadly strife;

Still may the streams of grace divine
Glide softly near their devious way;
And faith's fair light serenely shine,
To change their darkness into day.

Still may they with fraternal love
Each other's shield and aid become;
And while through distant realms they rove,
Remember still their childhood's home;

The simple life, the frugal fare,
The kind parental counsels given,
The tender love, the pious care,
That early winged their hopes to heav'n:

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And when the evening shades decline,
And when life's toilsome task is o'er,
May they each earthly wish resign,
And holier, happier climes explore.

And when the faithful shepherds view
Each ransom'd flock around them spread,
How will they bless the plants that grew
Beneath the altar's sacred shade!

**TO THE
MEMORY
OF
A YOUNG LADY,
WHO DIED NEAR INVERNESS IN THE 21st YEAR OF HER AGE,
AUGUST, 1776.**

A FRAGMENT.

WHAT sound of woe from yonder grove
Floats mournful on the dying gale?
Like echo to the plaintive dove,
Responsive through the winding vale.

Each chaster love and milder grace
There weep round gentle JESSY'S tomb,
There join to consecrate the place,
And teach the flowers more lasting bloom.

Though now, an undecaying flow'r,
She decks the bright celestial shore,
And past the final painful hour,
She suffers grief and care no more!

Yet oft shall pity's melting tear
Bedew the turf where JESSY lies;
And often shall her fate severe
Dissolve in woe the brightest eyes.

The virgin choir shall there resort,
And there with sad remembrance tell,
How through malicious cruel sport
She envy's early victim fell.

Though formed in beauty's softest mould,
No pride her spotless bosom knew;
As years increasing onward roll'd,
Her gentle mind more timid grew.

Unknown to her each trivial art,
Which callous, hollow breasts conceal;
Sway'd by the feelings of her heart,
That artless heart was form'd to feel;

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

With pure and faithful love to glow,
To cherish friendship's sacred tie,
To melt away in virtuous woe,
Or throb with tenderest sympathy.

Unskill'd in envy's treacherous ways,
How could she guard against its power?

**TO
A LADY,**

DEEPLY INTERESTED IN THE SUBJECT OF THE
FOLLOWING POEM.

**But soft, but see, or rather do not see,
My fair rose wither.
SHAKSPEARE.**

AWAK'D to thought, matur'd by age,
No more those sportive toys engage,
That wont in Fancy's jocund hours
To frolic through the festal bowers.
To memory dear, though far remov'd,
Oh say, what title most approv'd
Shall greet thee in the wonted lay
That hails once more this happy day .
Then with complacent smile attend
While my true heart salutes thee friend;
What nobler boon have I to give?
What worthier gift canst thou receive,
Indifference proud, and cold disdain,
Avert the scornful brow in vain,
While with exulting glance I view
The chosen band that ranks with you:
Those friends that led my earliest youth
Along the peaceful paths of truth,
Who, fir'd with Virtue's charms divine,
Oft mingled sympathies with mine;
Or those who in maturer years
Awak'd at once my hopes and fears,
While anxious fondness sketch'd their way
From thought's dim dawn to mental day;
And moulded soft with patient art
And tender care the yielding heart.
But since we feel that all is vain,
Since purest pleasures end in pain,
Since all that dazzles, charms, endears,
Eludes our grasps—or, seen through tears,
In dim perspective fades away,
What power shall animate the lay?
What Muse awake the plausible strain,
And bid my bosom glow again!
Gay fleeting visions rob'd in light,
That cheer'd my soul and charm'd my sight;
Elysian flowers, whose fragrant breath
Perfum'd with sweets the bed of death
The solemn thrill, the magic fire,
Wak'd by the soul—commanding lyre,

TO A LADY,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Adieu!—no more my haunts invade,
Nor come to cruel memory's aid;
For what can fancy now bestow
But darker shades to blacken woe?
Ah! why did flowers Elysian bloom,
Since cropt to wither in the tomb?
Then let us in the festive bow'r
Escape from cruel memory's pow'r;
The board where social friendship smiles,
A while the woes of life beguiles.
In vain, for see the forms deplor'd
Like angels hover o'er the board,
And seem, with softly-melting eye,
To look compassion ere they fly.
Say, generous youth, whose brow serene,
Benignant smile, and open mien,
With candour beaming in thine eyes,
Bespoke the soul without disguise;
By honour's purest dictates taught,
With "milk of human kindness" fraught,
Say, didst thou view with gentle scorn
The crowd by selfish passions torn,
Untry'd, forsake the dubious race,
And soar to thy congenial place?

And She, in hardest conflicts tried,
By truth, by love, by blood allied,
Who wept with sister's tears his doom,
Too soon to till a neighbouring tomb:
Ah! why profuse did Nature shed
Her gifts around her infant head;
With varying bloom her face adorn,
Like orient hues that deck the morn,
Shed purest lustre from her eyes,
Like radiant streams from northern skies?
At once inspiring awe and love,
Bade chaste'n'd graces round her move,
And native force of nobler soul
Pervade and dignify the whole;
And mild decorum's sober state
On all her looks and actions wait,
While mingled elegance and ease
Made every look and action please;
With feeling strong, with judgment clear,
Firm probity and truth sincere;
Through sorrow's clouds we saw her shine,
Those clouds that made her yours and mine!
Thus deck'd with every charm and grace,
The loveliest of a lovely race;
Like purest gold in fire refin'd,
And rich in all the wealth of mind,
Why did she tread the paths of pain,

TO A LADY,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And seek for long—lost rest in vain?
And why in vain did you and I
Pour the soft balm of sympathy?
With generous love the worthy youth
To whom she vowed her plighted truth,
Too fondly hop'd from future harms
To screen her in his faithful arms:
But soon he finds he grasps a shade,
And soon the transient roses fade,
And soon, dissolv'd in ambient light,
The beauteous vision quits his sight!
Yet ere she sunk to endless rest,
To soothe the anguish of his breast,
She left a tender pledge of love,
To shew how seraphs smile above.
Now mercy's cup, with blessings fraught,
Pours forth affliction's wholesome draught,—
A wholesome draught—yet drunk in vain,
If still the bitterest dregs remain,
If still with impious discontent
We murmur at the blessings *lent* ,
Or think the fruits of Paradise
Too early ripen'd for the skies,
And wish through wintry life to view
Their slow decay and wintry hue;
Or, like my fond presumptuous strain,
Lament as if they liv'd in vain:
On dear lov'd CHARLOTTE'S early tomb
Then let us mourn youth's withering bloom.
There will I lay my torpid lyre,
No more to glow with lambent fire;
No more to soothe the partial ear
With strains that friendship lov'd to hear,
Unless, with nobler ardour bless'd,
Some holier transport fire my breast,
The strain exalt,—the note refine,
And raise my moral to divine!

TO
LADY CLAN,

WHO INSISTED ON THE AUTHOR'S WRITING A POEM, ON
MEETING BY APPOINTMENT WITH HER AND THREE
OTHER LADIES AT AN INN ON THE ROAD BETWIXT
PERTH AND LAGGAN.

**I will tell you now,
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.**

MILTON.

DEAR LADY CLAN, you well may know,
At least I've told you long ago,
In all things lawful and expedient,
You'd ever find me most obedient;
This gratitude and friendship bid,
They're ties of which I can't get rid;
(Though some, to pride and envy martyrs,
Conceal them as they would their garters;)
Yet making lists of obligations,
Is so like owning poor relations,
It makes one feel so shy and backward,
And in good company look awkward;
On second thought 'twill answer better,
Ere I conclude this rhyming letter,
Instead of owning favours due,
In long detail from me to you,
To send you here a brief recital
Of what I've given you in requital;
Then, having set my mind at rest,
At leisure answer your request.

And first, the Muse that sixteen years,
With nightcap drawn about her ears,
Lay in lethargic deep repose,
Nor teas'd by friends, nor scorn'd by foes,
I wak'd, you well remember when,
To celebrate your *turkey-hen*;
And as she rubb'd her drowsy eyes,
And saw the bird's white spirit rise,
A spark of inspiration came
And kindled up the torpid dame,
To sing the happy annual feast
Where HYMEN smiles on every guest.
Whenever since I wak'd the lyre,
'Twas to comply with your desire;
The total sum, whate'er the amount,
Shall all be set to your account:
Now let me trace with backward view

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

The favours thus conferr'd on you.

And first, the playful varied lay
I sung to cheat the lonely way,
(While frozen winter chill'd my fancy)
Though chiefly meant to please my NANCY ,
Was to your partial praises owing,
That set my grateful breast—a-glowing,
And cheer'd me up with self-dependence,
To hope the Muse's prompt attendance:
Encourag'd thus along the road,
Description smooth and lofty ode
Fill'd up the middle, while both ends
Were hung with portraits of my friends,
To cheer my soul, whene'er I miss'd them,
So like, that I had almost kiss'd them.

Next, for my neighbour *Sybil's* sake,
I bade the willing Muse awake,
And tell what magic ties around
Young HUNTLY'S limbs the beldam bound.
Then liquid accents soft and clear
Stole gently on attention's ear;
The blue-hair'd nymph of yonder brook
In more than mortal language spoke,
And bade aerial music swell,
To woo fair CHARLOTTE to her cell ;
With feeble imitative strain
I strove to catch the sounds in vain.

Next I essay'd the up-hill road
Of "break-neck dythyrambic ode,"
Denounc'd on Spain perpetual vengeance,
And bless'd CHIAPA and his Indians;
Till, dizzy and bewilder'd grown,
The attempt beyond my powers I own.

The smarting wounds of recent woe
Now bid th' unstudied measure flow;
While wakeful anguish through the gloom
Of midnight weeps the fate of MOOME !
That night, so dismal and so long,
I strove in vain to cheat with song:
And when with dusky mantle grey
The weeping morn brought in the day,
The frequent shower and sighing wind
With mournful cadence sooth'd my mind.
But when will light restore to view
A friend so kind, so firm, so true!
Or who, when sickness sinks my head,
Will tend with equal care my bed?
Or who, when comfort crowns my toil,
With equal sympathy will smile?—
Sink all my strains in final gloom,
But live the lay inspir'd by MOOME !

TO LADY CLAN,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Again the Muse awakes to weep
O'er hamlets waste and flocking sheep :
The dusky hill and narrow plain,
Re-echo to the mournful strain;
The sad inhabitants around
With social grief prolong the sound;
While lost in woe they scatter far
To fill the sanguine ranks of war,
Or cross th' Atlantic's stormy roar,
Or tread the burning Indian shore,
Or mingle with the sordid train
Who know no bliss, no GOD but gain:
Where'er they rest, where'er they roam,
Stung with the hopeless thoughts of home;
With aching heart and searching eyes,
Oft will they trace their northern skies,
And say, "Yon dim-seen twinkling star
"Gleams o'er my father's sepulchre,
"Where once, when fate had clos'd my day,
"I hop'd my weary limbs to lay;
"Its rays illumine the shadowy vale,
"Where, lighted by the moon-beam pale,
"My faithful steps were wont to trace
"The loveliest of our far-fam'd race,
"And pour in her approving ear
"The artless vows of love sincere."
Thus, frequent does the exile's heart
With tender sad remembrance smart;
Some leisure will come, ere long,
T' arrange and prune th' unfinish'd song;
When winter's icy bolts are hurl'd,
And snow and silence wrap the world,
And cares and children sink in sleep,
The Muse shall faithful vigils keep;
And summon wisdom and reflection,
And critic powers of mild correction,
And diction chaste, and lucid order,
Like flowers arrang'd to grace a border;
My thoughts shall rise in fair succession
Unbroke by playful wild digression:
With heedless haste I now dispense them,
But then you'll see how I'll condense them.
But from my subject how I wander,—
I sung the sorrows of the *gander* ,
And if you'll re-peruse his letter,
You'll own no goose could sing them better,
You see what mighty debts you're owing
For benefits of my bestowing.
Can you forget the rainy morning,
When toil, fatigue, and danger scorning,
I headlong plung'd through new-swol'n *Spey* ,

TO LADY CLAN,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

And o'er *Drumochter* urg'd my way,
Try'd to o'ertake the fleeting wind,
And left the slow express behind?
Arriv'd with fluttering hearts at *Blair* ,
In chasing joy ye met despair:
No matrons with benignant smile
Appear'd our labours to beguile;
No sprightly nymphs, in rapt'rous guise,
With pleasure beaming from their eyes;
The gallant soul of *HARDYKNUTE* ,
When thrill'd with fear, with anguish mute,
He saw his castle dark and still,
Felt not a more horrific chill.
To cheer our souls and soothe our pain,
Our gentle hostess tries in vain;
In vain the Captain strives t' amuse
With foreign and domestic news;
Tells with delight how much he doats
Upon the frankness of *Miss COATES* ,
And how he tender'd her his help,
To nurse and rear her terrier whelp:
How sad our state, when themes like these,
By him rehears'd, could fail to please.
But now resolv'd with unanimity
T' exert our native magnanimity,
When changing clouds of purple dye
Were drawn o'er day's declining eye;
Again we urge th' impatient chase,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

Invoke the stars to light our race,
And reach in thought the wish'd—for place.
Through the still shadowy veil of night,
While *VENUS* sent her glimmering light,
Our view the soften'd landscape charm'd,
And disappointment's pangs disarm'd;
And hope, in smiling graces dress'd,
Resum'd her influence o'er the breast.
The rising moon with friendly ray
Now led us to the banks of *Tay* ,
With raptur'd view while we begin
To trace a taper at the inn,
LEANDER thus transported, view'd
His *HERO'S* torch illumine the flood.
Why should the Muse attempt in vain
The morning's pleasures to explain?
To tell the tender explanations,
Embraces kind, and true narrations,

TOLADY CLAN,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

'Twould fill I'm sure a quarto volume,—
'Twere best methinks to raise a column
To mark the spot to future times,
Nor vainly trust to fleeting rhymes:
That scene, while memory holds her seat,
Shall still be new and still be sweet:
I will not tell you of your merit,
Your sense, integrity, and spirit;
These have their value in their places,
But I am charm'd by other graces;
That heart, whose cordial warmth so true,
Blooms ever fresh and ever new;
Affections, which, in spite of time,
Have all the glow of youthful prime;
With all the firmness, weight, and truth,
Which sage experience adds to youth,—
These make me count, with anxious pain,
The weeks till we shall meet again,
And treasure up the joys so fleeting,
That smil'd upon our short-liv'd meeting:
Dear ERSKINE too, whose eyes dispense
Her pure soul's bright intelligence,
Whose look is truth, whose speech is verity,
Whose genius, honour, and sincerity,
Live ever in my recollection,
I'd almost said my best affection,
I would not shock with adulation,
But view with silent admiration:
Her mother's dignity commanding,
And more than female understanding,
And probity so prais'd by you,
Esteem demand as tribute due.

Kind COATES ! could I her worth rehearse,
Might likewise claim a grateful verse;
Her quickness, humour, lively ease,
Her never-failing wish to please,
Might with her friendly warmth combine,
To win a harder heart than mine;
But children nurs'd in fortune's lap,
Are fed so soon with flattery's pap,
And so surrounded by duplicity,
They loose all relish for simplicity:
Folks jealous, rusticated, shy,
Shrink from gay fashion's critic eye:
Nor pour the cordial soul in vain,
Check'd by the dread of cold disdain.

I'm tir'd, and so I swear are you,
And sleep now claims her drowsy due:
May pleasing visions gently spread
Their airy wings around your head!
For my part, I devoutly hope

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

To see six ladies in a group,
And COATES , with ladle in her hand,
Dispensing mirth and negus bland;
Since our best pleasures will not last,
Let us in dreams live o'er the past.

ODE TO HYGEIA.

ADDRESSED TO THE LATE MRS. WILLIAM SPROT,
EDINBURGH:—SPRING 1779.

Drops that from my fountain pure,
I have kept of precious cure.

MILTON.

DAUGHTER of Exercise and calm Content,
By Temperance nourish'd in the shady vale,
Where *Dian's* nymphs resort with bows unbent,
To taste the freshness of the morning gale;
Divine HYGEIA, turn thy steps again,
Nor let the plaintive Muse implore in vain!

Oh! coy disdainful maid, in native charms array'd,
Beyond the needless pageantry of art,
Time was, thy radiant smile could every care beguile,
And shed sweet influence o'er my drooping heart.
Why, goddess, have thy lovely eyes
Their azure beams withdrawn?
Dost thou my artless prayer despise?
When oft at morning dawn
I lift pure hands from guilt and interest free,
And humbly seek for friendship, peace, and thee!

Return, inconstant fair, while through the soften'd air
Mild zephyrs waft the balmy breath of spring,
And budding woods with early music ring.
Ah! what avails their bloom, or all the soft perfume
Yon dewy violet banks exhale to me,
While through the birchen grove, with lingering steps I rove,
And vainly trace thy wanted haunts for thee?

Far from the crowd's tumultuous noise
Amid thy lov'd retreats I stray,
Averse from fashion's giddy joys,
Which oft bedim thy cheering ray.
Simplicity, presiding at my board,
With wholesome herbs supplies my temp'rate meal,
My constant drink yon limpid streams afford,
Whose liquid murmurs lull th' adjacent vale;
And oft at noon, reclin'd at rural ease,
I catch thy spirit from the mountain breeze.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

In yonder ambient wave my faded form I lave,
Where oft thy votaries bless thy healing power;
Yet in my languid mien no ray of thine is seen,
But stern disease, remorseless, haunts my bower.
Ah! what avail my cares, or all the ardent pray'rs
My trembling lips have offer'd at thy shrine,
Whilst thou, capricious power, dost all thy blessings shower
On others, heedless of thy gifts divine?

But wherefore shun the gentle train
Who court thee on the rural plain,
And love thy fav'rite shades;
Whose hearts, with tenderest feelings warm,
Enjoy fair nature's every charm,
While splendour's pageant fades?
Yet ah! the tender heart with keen peculiar smart
Shrinks trembling back when care or pain assail,
Even as the sweetest flow'rs, that bloom in yonder bowers,
Are soonest blighted by the eastern gale.

Though fancy's vivid beams illumine their morning dreams,
And sportive loves the roseate wreath entwine,
Yet doom'd to live all o'er, and smart at every pore,
At sorrow's frown thy blessings they resign:
Though all my vows are made in vain,
And thou relentless fly the plain,
So long endear'd by thee:
While chilling tremors, feverish pains,
Alternate spread through all my veins,
And pleasure dies to me.

Yet while in *Clutha's* winding vale,
Light floating on the western gale,
Thy spirit cheers my friend,
To thee shall grateful songs arise,
To thee the rural sacrifice
In fragrant fumes ascend .

And where *Edina's* turrets rise,
Though smoky wreaths obscure the skies,
And vapours taint the air,
Thy soft ambrosial pinions spread
O'er lov'd ASTERIA'S drooping head,
And soothe the languid fair.

And see, to woo thee down, she quits the noisy town,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

In quest of thee she seeks the breezy shore;
On Ocean's stormy breast, thou oft art found to rest,
His green-hair'd nymphs thy wat'ry haunts explore.
And when with trembling hope she laves,
Oh! shed thy influence o'er the waves,
Her bloom restore, her health renew;
There let her hail thy form divine,
Emerging from the foamy brine,
Like VENUS on the dazzled view!

**TO
MISS DUNBAR
OF BOATH .**

To cheer me in this melancholy vale,
This double gloom of nature and of soul.
YOUNG.

HELEN , by every sympathy allied,
By love of virtue and by love of song,
Compassionate in youth, and beauty's pride,
To thee those grateful artless lays belong,
For warmly in thy heart the flame of friendship glows,
And sweetly from thy lips the voice of comfort flows.

Dark clouds of woe involv'd my troubled soul,
The cheering sun but pain'd my weary sight,
To nurse my grief to secret shades I stole,
And shunn'd the social hearth and loath'd the light.
Grace, beauty, elegance, increas'd my pain,
For those too fondly lov'd, I lov'd, alas! in vain!

Soft pitying accents stealing through the gloom,
Like dawning light upon the formless void,
Withdrew my thoughts a moment from the tomb,
To scenes now dreary, hopeless, unenjoy'd:
Yet busy fancy trac'd thy form unseen,
And deck'd with charms thy face, and dress'd in smiles thy mien.

So, lonely journeying to LORETTO'S shrine,
Some darkling pilgrim in the pathless vale
Bends his enraptur'd ear to strains divine,
And turns to bid his guardian-angel hail:
'Tis some fair vot'ress pours unseen her strain,
By courteous echoes borne, to soothe the wand'rer's pain.

Enjoy, bless'd maid, the smiling joyous prime,
While pleasure frolics in thy morning ray;
Now, heedless of the hastening wings of time,
Crop the fresh primrose and the crocus gay;
Ere noon's bright fervours scorch their silken bloom,
Or weeping evening mourns their early doom.

As pure thy pleasures as those modest flowers

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

That twine around the bashful brows of spring;
Then, ere the changing sky inconstant lows,
Deck thy fair bosom with the sweets they bring;
For when they fade, nor sun nor fav'ring show'rs
Again can make them spring around thy bow'rs.

For me, with retrospection sadly pleas'd,
When hope's wide vista opens on my sight,
I seem from grief's corroding pressure eas'd,
To catch a glimpse of pure celestial light:
Then, while I patient wait my day's decline,
On thee may summer suns unclouded shine!

**INSCRIPTION
FOR
A GARDEN SEAT .**

SACRED

TO THE REMEMBRANCE OF A BELOVED FRIEND,
*MISS A. O****. FORT-AUGUSTUS, APRIL 29, 1774.*

SACRED to thee and friendly love,
I consecrate this humble seat,
Hither shall my weary feet
Oft at sober ev'ning move;
And when thou'rt far remov'd from me,
Here, sadly sitting, oft I'll muse on thee!

When the silver queen of night,
With her mildly pleasing beams,
Cheers the surface of the streams,
Or darts through dusky shades a visionary light:
Here Fancy shall exert her magic power,
And with thy image glad the solitary bow'r.

Fate soon will bear thee to some happier clime,
Yet that kind heart, that generous mind,
By truth and tenderness combin'd,
Adorn'd with charms beyond the reach of time:
Here oft shall mem'ry to my aid restore,
While I with fruitless sighs my loss deplore.

**ON READING
MANUSCRIPT POEMS
BY
A YOUNG LADY,**

NOT IN THE MANNER, BUT IN THE SPIRIT OF COLLINS.

**Deep in yon bed of whispering reeds
Thy airy harp shall now be laid!
That he whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
May love through life the soothing shade.**

COLLINS.

WHEN THOMSON'S harp of charming tone,
Giv'n to the favour'd bard alone,
(Its tuneful master snatch'd away)
Midst whispering reeds impervious lay;
The winds awak'd its mournful swell,
The wood-nymphs join'd the solemn knell.
Her yellow locks mild Autumn tore,
Wild Winter mourn'd in mantle hoar;
Sweet Spring in weeping buds was dress'd,
And Summer rent her flow'ry vest;
Sad Nature caught th' Æolian strain,
And bade it echo through the plain;
And Fate proclaim'd, no daring hand
Should THOMSON'S sacred harp command;
While COLLINS sooth'd the mourners round
With magic lyre of dulcet sound:
But when the Bard by *Arun's* stream
Indulg'd each sadly tender theme,
And with enchantment wild combin'd
The countless "shadowy tribes of mind;"
Or wept o'er valour's early tomb,
Bedeck'd with wreaths of freshest bloom;
Or bade the pictur'd passions rise,
In fancy'd forms, to human eyes,—
The fair creation rose confess'd,
And dazzled reason sunk oppress'd:
No more he feels the Muse inspire,
In slumber lay the magic lyre;
Again he lifts his languid eyes,
To wake its strain in vain he tries;
Then ere he sought th' *Elysian* plain,
Resign'd the magic lyre to JANE !

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

**WRITTEN IN ONE OF THE
DUKE OF ATHOLE'S WALKS
AT BLAIR,**

AFTER MAKING A CLANDESTINE ENTRANCE THROUGH THE
RIVER TILT, THEN VERY LOW; SUMMER 1796.

**There I suck the liquid air,
All amidst the gardens fair.
MILTON.**

YOUR jealous walls, great Duke, in vain
All access would refuse;
What walls can Highland steps restrain?
What bars keep out the Muse?
Where'er I go I bring with me
"That mountain-nymph, sweet LIBERTY !"

Would you engross each breathing sweet
Yon violet banks exhale?
Or trees with od'rous blooms replete,
That scent th' enamour'd gale?
Alike they smile on you and me,
Like Nature and sweet Liberty!

While pleasure's fleeting form you trace
In *Mona's* distant isle,
And leave forlorn your native place
Where rural beauties smile:
Congenial see them smile for me,
Then do not grudge my Liberty.

ENEAS pass'd with branch of gold
The gloomy gates below;
And silver branches, I am told,
Can smooth your porter's brow;
But wand'ring Highland folks like me,
Can seldom *purchase* Liberty.

While musing by the *Tilt* I stood,
And view'd its wand'ring tide,
Uprose a Naiad from the flood,
And beckoning shew'd its side:
I took the kindly hint with glee,
And scrambled hard for Liberty.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Beneath the bridge's bending arch
My vent'rous steps she led,
Till by yon ancient weeping larch
I laid my wearied head:
While birds methought on every tree,
Rejoicing, hail'd my Liberty!

The leaden gods above the gate
Aghast with wonder stood,
Olympian JOVE , his vixen mate,
And all the heathen brood:
"Bravo!" cried thievish MERCURY .
" 'Tis right to steal sweet Liberty!"

PEACEFUL SHADES.

My dear-lov'd home,
Which trees embosom, and which hills defend.
SHENSTONE.

YE peaceful shades! that guard my dear lov'd home
From the chill blasts that strip the fading grove,
While far from that sequester'd scene I roam,
Which justly claims my venerating love;
Long may the verdure linger on your boughs,
Which wont in happier times to deck the shepherd's brows!

And thou, sweet stream, that wand'ring through the vale
With mazy windings, lead'st thy waves along;
May thy translucent waters never fail
To feed the lake or aid the rural song:
For echo, pleas'd, retains thy murmurs sweet,
Where with the bubbling *Tarfe* thy lucid waters meet.

Fair is the bosom of that peaceful lake
When the soft zephyr on its bosom sleeps;
Dreadful the roar its troubled waters make,
When winter's rage declining Nature weeps:
Oh! may its glassy surface still present
The well-known dear abode of calm content!

Ye woods of wild *Glentarfe* , whose pensive gloom
Round SYLVIA'S dwelling spreads a solemn shade;
How dear to memory is your former bloom,
When SYLVIA'S sprightly converse cheer'd the glade.
When spring returns to deck the green retreat,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

Again with joy I'll hail the well-known seat,
The scene of social joys and tranquil pleasures sweet.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

**TRANSLATIONS
FROM THE
Gaelic.**

TO
ROBERT ARBUTHNOT, ESQ.

THE AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,—CANDID CRITIC,—AND
BENEVOLENT PATRON OF THE AUTHOR.

DEAR SIR,

THE poems here translated from the Gaelic, though they do not pretend to any remote antiquity, are well known to have existed before the translations, and even the Translator of *OSSIAN*. Thinking it may afford you some amusement, I take up the pen to make a few observations on those celebrated productions of the Celtic Muse. The time is fast approaching when it will be impossible to throw new light on this question. The most conclusive evidence which the nature of the subject will admit of, is fast fading away. It consists of traditions co-relative to the poems,—a kind of poetical phraseology derived from them,—and a resembling strain of sentiment in other compositions of great though not equal antiquity, which no one could ever have had any motive to falsify or alter. There is another clear, though now decaying evidence. Old people can very well remember, before Mr. *MACPHERSON* ever thought of translating these remains, when many comparisons and allusions to be found in them, were as current as Scripture quotations in the last age among the peasants of the west. "She is beautiful as *AGANDECCA* the daughter of the snow—She is musical as *MALVINA*—He is as forlorn as *OSSIAN* after the departure of the *FINGALLIANS*—Such a one is alert and nimble as *CUCHULLIN*"—were phrases in common use. Whatever embellishments, or whatever anachronisms the injudicious vanity of a translator may have grafted on these poems, no person who lived in the country of their reputed author, ever doubted their existence or antiquity; there, every stream and mountain, every tale, song, or adage, retained some traces of the generous hero, or the mournful bard: but there was little chance of getting at the truth of this question, while the contention lay betwixt learned pride on the one hand, and national vanity on the other. The former was accustomed to consider letters, not as the vehicle, but the essence of knowledge, accounting all unlearned people utterly savage and barbarous, and unable to conceive how any one could entertain noble or generous sentiments without deriving them from classical models. The latter was unwilling to confess how little the Gaelic had been used in writing, and to what a narrow district of the kingdom it had been, even in remote ages, confined; which was the real cause why no connected series of these poems had been written down, and why they had been so long hid in obscurity. To the same motive may be attributed the silent acquiescence of the Highlanders in the alterations and embellishments added to these poems, by a translator more ambitious of adapting them to modern taste, than of adhering strictly to the sense of the originals; more studious of his own advantage, than of the addition to be made to the science of human nature, by developing truly and closely the manners of the Heroic Age; by which I understand that intervening betwixt rude barbarity, and the regular establishment of law, property, and agriculture.

It is obvious that the greatest literary attainments do not enable a man to judge whether a work, written in a language he does not understand, differing in its form and construction from every other with which he is acquainted, be faithfully translated or not. It was highly absurd in the opponents of *OSSIAN* to cry out for written evidence, *i. e.* original manuscripts, of a work composed long before the signs of words were heard of in the country where they were composed. It is no shame for a man of learning and taste to be ignorant of the rude unwritten language of a savage people: certainly not; but he ought to be ashamed to decide upon facts without obtaining the necessary previous information. We have no right to strip the laurels off the tombs even of savages, until we clearly ascertain that they ought not to have been planted there: let *FINGAL* continue to be a hero, and *OSSIAN* a poet, were it but by the old rule of prescription, till those who challenge their right acquire their language, and are thus enabled to decide upon the question.

But it has been asked, why were the poems not committed to writing when the knowledge of letters was introduced, being so much admired by the people, and cherished as sacred vestiges of their heroic age, and venerated memorials of their ancestors? Here the ignorant defenders of *OSSIAN* erred; their national vanity would not allow them to confess, that except the monks of *Icolmkill*, who held the heathen poems of *OSSIAN* in abhorrence, and laboured to eradicate the prevailing passion for works of fancy, there were very few who did write Gaelic, and the writings of these few were merely confined to theology and to family archives, unless in

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

some rare instances, where a young chief, before he became entirely engrossed by war and hunting, might have wrote down some favourite passage, composed or recited by a bard, or some old chief preserved on parchment a genealogy delivered by a sennachie.

Though the imagination may be delighted with fiction, when the pictures drawn by the flowing pencil of Fancy resemble something that we know, or believe to exist; yet the love of truth is happily so fixed in the human mind, that we revolt from a mixture of truth and falsehood, especially where the boundaries are undistinguished. The quick disgust we feel on a discovery of this kind, is apt to lead us into an opposite mistake; wherever we are required to believe more than what is probable, we generally end in believing less, or in entire scepticism. The alterations and embellishments that have been made on these ancient poems, have contributed more than any thing else to shake their credit. But let us examine the circumstances which have been chiefly insisted on by the unbelievers.

First, It is said to be impossible that a people so savage and barbarous as the ancient *CELTÆ*, should either entertain generous and tender sentiments, or possess expressive and emphatic language to delineate their feelings, and record their exploits. I believe it is generally allowed that the inhabitants of the North of Britain were a branch of the ancient *CELTÆ*, whom the very Romans, who called them barbarians, (in common with all others who were strangers to the arts conducive to luxury, and the worship of their deities) allowed to possess exalted notions of liberty, friendship, and generosity, and a sense of probity in their dealings with each other. The clearest way to ascertain the possibility of heroic sentiments being delivered in eloquent language by wandering savages, who subsist by hunting, is to trace the manners of people who still exist in a similar state of society. The banks of the *Mohawk* very lately did, and the borders of the *Huron* and *Oneida* lakes still do, afford an apt illustration: there, heroic friendship, exalted notions of probity and honour, the fondest filial and fraternal affection, and the most enthusiastic patriotism, prevail: there every chief is an orator, and every orator a poet; if language, enriched with glowing imagery, exalted by the noblest conceptions, and modulated into harmonious periods, can be called poetry. The morality of these people is not indeed of so mild and amiable a cast as that of the *FINGALIANS*. Revenge makes a part of their religion: the cruelties they commit are not to gratify their inclinations, but to pacify the manes, and honour the memory of their departed friends: when that is once performed, they are kind and indulgent in no common degree to those whom accident, or the chance of war, throws into their power.

There is another cause which might operate powerfully to produce a superior refinement of humanity among our ancestors: women among uncivilized wandering tribes are generally in an abject and degraded state, and condemned to the most servile employments. Among the *CELTÆ* this appears not to have been the case. Women possessed considerable influence in society; they were admitted at a certain age to councils, and held in reverence on account of a prophetic spirit with which some individuals were supposed to be endowed. This fact is unquestionably established; and whether their obtaining so high a rank in society was the cause or the consequence of a greater degree of mildness and humanity in their manners than is usually found among uncivilized people, the inference is equally just.

The next circumstance which has been urged against the authenticity of the poems is, that the language in which they are preserved could not have subsisted for many centuries unaltered. What has altered language but the invasion and conquest of countries, or the travels of the inhabitants, whom commercial or other pursuits have attracted to foreign countries, and who, returning, bring new customs and foreign languages to the place of their nativity? From the reverence with which people in a state of nature usually regard their ancestors, it is presumable that a man would always call a deer, a fox, a river, or a mountain, by the name his father called it. Things newly invented or imported would have new names, but that would not change the original form of the language. In a country equally poor and inaccessible, the usual causes of alteration did not occur. It was naturally impregnable, and not worth conquering. Strangers had no motive of curiosity or advantage to visit it; nothing but extreme necessity made the natives emigrate; and when they acquired the language and manners of a civilized country, they were equally unfit and unwilling to live in their own. It is obvious that the language has undergone no material alteration since the establishment of the monks of *Icolmkill*.

The next impossibility asserted is, that of preserving an unwritten composition, unimpaired, for so long a series of ages. People who have long worn spectacles can make little use of their eyes without them. We have so long accustomed ourselves to a certain medium, by which knowledge is preserved, and through which it is received, that it is not easy for us to comprehend how others could retain in their memories what ours are unequal to. We

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

have such a number of new images continually passing through our minds, and effacing the old, that we are very inadequate judges of the deep impression which pathos and sublimity might make on a mind open to receive, and at leisure to fix their impressions. As little can we judge of the fidelity of retention, which might result from a man's making it the object of his life, like any other trade or profession, to retain and recite poems. Persons still living remember a woman in *Strathspey*, who, though never taught to read, could recite the whole book of Psalms in the Gaelic translation, merely by having it read to her by others. This to be sure was the employment and delight of all the leisure hours of a long life; but it is a proof what hold the memory takes, where the heart is deeply interested. Dr. *JOHNSON*, a name never to be mentioned but with respect and veneration, seems to have erred in his estimation of the faculties of the mind, when neither exalted by culture, nor debased by utter neglect. He imputed too much to learning, and did not think that a mind could be informed or enlarged by any other means. He does not appear to have considered that the book of Nature lay open to all, and that other books at best contain but the aggregate of human reflection and observation suggested by that great book. People who had abilities, made use of them to treasure up in their memories, for the delight and instruction of others, what had formerly delighted and instructed themselves. Their bequeathing their most valuable acquisitions unimpaired to others, was not at all improbable. The errors which crept into *written* legends, were often owing to their being copied over by those who merely performed a task in transcribing them, and felt no interest in the original: but in reciting, or rather chanting poems, where they were well known and highly relished, and where a certain rhythm or cadence was connected with them, which was broke in upon by the change of a syllable, no great departure from the original words could pass unnoticed, the ear in this case aiding the memory.

Supposing that such poems once did exist, it is not easy to believe they could be forgot or neglected by a people whose national vanity was so flattered by them; especially when we consider that every Chief retained a bard, whose principal business it was to recite those scriptures of chivalry, for such they were esteemed.

The simplicity of manners, ardent affections, heroic extravagance, and generous contempt of life, which these poems ascribe to our ancestors, correspond with the description left to us of the ancient *B RITONS* in the times of the *DRUIDS*. Their manners, indeed, strongly mark that period of society which the fables and traditions of various nations have decorated with enthusiastic embellishments, and peopled with heroes and demi-gods;—the time when people were not bound by laws, but, from reverence to their ancestors, held sacred the precepts and customs bequeathed by them; when property was so far ascertained, that the courageous might retain what their exertions acquired, yet so unsettled, that the weak found it necessary to dwell under the shadow of the strong;—when the love of glory predominated over every other passion, because all power, all esteem, all veneration, centered in him, who, by uniting courage with generosity, made himself at once beloved and feared;—when the passion of love was a powerful one, because opposed by no other, and exalted by that of glory, every woman being ennobled by the heroes with whom she was allied;—where friendship was a strong because a beneficial bond; for who loves his friend so well as he who is daily bestowing or receiving assistance and protection? And, lastly, when poetry, the audible and harmonious language of nature, flowed pure from the heart, and was consecrated to its best affections, to reward the successful, or console the suffering hero; to preserve the remembrance of noble actions; to lament the tender lover or faithful friend; and to give the joy of grief to the soul, that is purified, while it is melted. Such is the age which may be called *the golden one of heroism*; of which every nation delights to preserve the traditions and obscure or exaggerated history; and which intervenes betwixt that of the selfish, solitary savage, whose short life is spent in sudden transitions from violent exertion to gloomy indolence; and that of the civilized inhabitant, who becomes as selfish from the multitude of his wants, as the other from the precariousness of his possessions; adjusting his morality to coercive laws, and regulating his desires by every changing fashion. This heroic age is necessarily an illiterate one, the knowledge of letters being always preceded by agriculture and commerce. Civilization and regular polity succeed so soon to the heroic age, (which, after all, is a melancholy and precarious state of life) that it is very difficult to trace the fleeting images of the characters that adorn, or the events that diversify it. What, then, do we owe to the revered personage, at once a Poet, a Prince, and a Hero, who delineated in unfading colours a faithful picture of this short yet interesting interval; who sung the loves, the wars, the woes of his contemporary heroes, and arrayed them in such truth of character, and beauty of diction, as cannot fail to attract and delight through every age? The frequent recurrence of the same images and incidents may tire and disgust a taste refined to nicety; the style of the translator may perhaps at times be justly accused of swelling into tumidity; but wisdom and learning, after having long sat in

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

council upon the nature of poetical excellence, and laid down rules innumerable for attaining it, have at length come to this conclusion, that as it is the province of poetry to delight the imagination and affect the heart, what pleases and affects very many, and continues to please and affect very long, must needs be poetry of no inferior kind, however obvious, or however numerous its blemishes; and daily observation evinces, that the most correct and faultless poetry, formed on the purest classical models, if it fails in these great pre-requisites, if it can neither fix the attention or affect the heart, sinks into sudden oblivion.

The translator of *OSSIAN*, though he has on many occasions forfeited the praise due to literary integrity, has always rendered the sense of his author in a pleasing, and often in a faithful manner. Many circumstances concurred to lead him into deviations, which, while they adapted his performance more to the popular taste, derogated from the credit of its authenticity, and gave room to those who could not separate what was genuine from what was changed and enlarged, to impeach the whole as an imposture. Mr. *MACPHERSON'S* early years had been spent among the indigent and illiterate; and, when he made a spirited though difficult effort to cultivate those talents which he felt struggling for expansion, his progress in moral improvement and delicacy of sentiment was by no means commensurate to his other attainments. Justly conscious of his abilities, and not unjustly proud of his acquisitions, he had not sufficient address or knowledge of the world to conceal the opinion he entertained of his own consequence. He presumed on his descent from an ancient and respectable family, which every one was willing to forget; and forgot his poverty, which every one was willing to remember. He claimed abruptly, and often indelicately, that place in society to which he thought himself entitled; and was as often insolently repulsed by those who little knew how to estimate learning and genius at its true value: the treatment which would have crushed a gentle and timid spirit, hardened a lofty and resolute one, now past softening or polishing: he chose his own path, and walked firmly on in it, little consulting, and less valuing, the opinions of others; hence the liberties he took in enlarging his materials, and the general and vague assertions he made use of to defend the antiquity of the whole collection, as he presented it to the public.

Amidst all the crushing neglect to which he was subjected, and necessary occupations to which he owed his support, he wrote two original poems, which are not without merit, though they were neither formed to please, nor to last. The first, entitled *Death*, has many forcible thoughts, and striking descriptions. The other, the *Highlander*, has some original ideas and incidents, but is rendered obscure, and sometimes incongruous, by a strange mixture of Grecian and Gothic mythology, and is so strongly marked with the political prejudices in which the Author was educated, that it could not, on that sole account, be well received at the time when it was written. I have only seen it in the Author's manuscript. Two obvious remarks will occur to whoever peruses it with any attention: one, that Mr. *MACPHERSON* made no use whatever of the Gaelic fragments, which were then very well known to himself and others, in forming incidents or imagery to this poem: the other, that no traces appear in it of that harmonious and flowing diction which prevails in his translation: on the contrary, the sentences are often harshly constructed, and the versification in general rugged and uncouth. The progress he had made in the learned languages enabled him in some degree to form and to improve his poetical taste; but when he quitted the college, during the vacation, he only made a transition from Greek to Gaelic, from *HOMER* to *OSSIAN*. Dr. *MACPHERSON* of *Slate*, whose integrity was equal to his abilities, and whose veracity never was or could be questioned, had by his learned labours awakened a spirit of inquiry, and a taste for Gaelic antiquities. These soon became the favourite object of Mr. *JAMES MACPHERSON'S* studies: he delighted in running parallels between the Grecian and Celtic Bards, till they became in a manner associated in his imagination. Here it may be proper to observe, that the blindness of *OSSIAN*, which he has been accused of inventing for this purpose, is alluded to, not only in common sayings, but in many Gaelic poems, well known to have existed long previous to his translation, of which the *Old Bard's Wish* (in this volume) affords an instance.

Finally, he not only resolved to translate and publish the Gaelic fragments of *OSSIAN* relative to *FINGAL'S* Irish wars, but to enlarge and connect them, so that they should form a continued narrative poem, which he determined, though strongly dissuaded by a judicious friend, to call Epic, not considering that these poets of Nature never did nor ever could produce long connected narratives. They sat down under the shelter of a hollow rock, or an aged tree, and recollected and mused, till, as the Psalmist expresses it, "the fire burned;" then they poured out a burst of enthusiasm, and went on till they grew cold or hungry, but never dreamt of resuming the subject: this fire, once extinguished, could not be rekindled. Successive poems might be composed on successive actions, but they had no regular or immediate connection with each other. After the publication of his fragments,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

some literary gentlemen in Edinburgh subscribed a sum of money to enable him to make a journey to the western Highlands and islands, for the purpose of collecting those larger poems, which he thought proper to call Epic, and which he informed the gentlemen he had reason to believe existed there. This journey afforded him an opportunity also of gaining a more thorough acquaintance with those expressions in the language which were daily becoming obsolete; the purest Gaelic, or what the Highlanders call *fine Gaelic*, being spoken in some of the islands. This fine Gaelic does not by any means signify a different dialect in the language, but a more elevated style, enriched and varied by a kind of poetical phraseology. The superior classes of every community think more, converse more, and have a more elegant manner of expressing their sentiments, than those whose attention is necessarily engaged by their urgent wants. In the isles *gentlemen* still conversed in Gaelic, and this style was still familiar. It may be easily conceived how soon a language may be debased, when it ceases to be used but by the mere vulgar. On this excursion our Translator was accompanied by a person said to be one of the best Gaelic scholars of his time, who, however, was no otherwise useful to him than as a linguist, being destitute of taste, and even ordinary poetical knowledge, but a man of stubborn integrity, who could have no bias; for he liked his fellow-traveller better than any thing, except truth. From this worthy and venerable person the principal information here communicated was derived. The chief acquisition they made on this excursion was a more intimate knowledge of the Ossianic style, which cleared up many obscurities in the former collections, to which however much was not added. The collection from which the selection was made, was indeed a pretty ample one. Something no doubt has been added, and much subtracted; and this latter it was necessary to do, in justice to the old Bard, to whom his successors had appended many extravagant and grotesque ornaments. These, however, were easily known to be no part of the style of *OSSIAN*, which, though bold and figurative, is all along distinguished by a dignity, an exquisite pathos, and a sublime and tender melancholy peculiar to himself. The Translator wisely stripped off these ornaments, and brought the whole poems to the standard of those beautiful and simple ones which he found in their original undebased state. Among these are the Vision of *M ALVINA*, the Death of *OSCAR*, the Counsel of *FINGAL* to *OSCAR*, *BERRATHON*, and the Courtship of *OSSIAN* to *EVIR ALUINE*.—It may be easily judged, were there no genuine fragments but these, what the Poet that produced them was capable of, especially when he depicted, with the energy of truth, and glow of feeling, those scenes in which he had himself been an actor.

The Translator, with such models before him, was at no loss in forging links to connect the detached parts into a seemingly whole. Having fame and profit more in view than tracing the familiar habits and domestic manners of remote times, he threw into shade, on some occasions, circumstances that might betray our ancestors to the ridicule of modern fastidiousness; such as their rash and sudden quarrels, minute details relative to their hunting, their food, and their dogs, their jealousies, and the fatal power which enchanted rings had over their inclinations. These moles and freckles which might have delighted the virtuoso, as genuine marks of antiquity, would infallibly disgust the common reader. In this respect he might be compared to *S USAN*, when she took such pains in scouring *SCRIBLERUS'S* shield: he defaced the marks of antiquity in hopes of procuring the general applause of the gossips who awaited the christening of his work: he was like an architect who should endeavour to adapt a Gothic edifice to the purposes of modern convenience; it might be more elegant, but it would no longer be a genuine Gothic edifice. Thus expanded and embellished, the translation was published: it happened to be at an unlucky juncture, when the more numerous and clamorous party held the name of Scotchman in detestation, and depreciated with industrious acrimony every Scotch production, the character of which time had not established. The attack upon *OSSIAN* was made on false grounds, from ignorance of the true and just ones; a violent clamour was raised for these ancient original manuscripts, which never could or did exist. Like a nurse, who, being teased by a petulant child to reach him down the moon to play with, assures him he shall have it tomorrow, Mr. *MACPHERSON* in an evil hour promised to produce the original manuscripts; and by this pious fraud injured the credit of those valuable remains. The manuscripts were then eagerly demanded, and the demand variously evaded. Producing a legible manuscript would never do. Yellow parchments of grey antiquity were demanded. To talk of impossibilities to a deaf multitude, predetermined against conviction, was useless. However, it luckily, as he thought, occurred to him, to produce a *Leabhar Dearg*, or Red Book, in which a chieftain had caused several of the original fragments to be written down. It was parchment, and it was old; but upon examination it shrunk from trial; for I am told it was not three hundred years old; these, however, proved superabundantly that the translator was not the author of the poems.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

A most formidable adversary now came forth to defy the armies of *F INGAL* .

Dr. *JOHNSON* , hardened in prejudice, fortified with incredulity, and covered with the weighty mail of ancient learning, (which, however, served only to encumber and retard him in this pursuit) marched heavily on against the *Leabhar Dearg* . Not satisfied with pronouncing the whole an imposture, he pronounced it an easy and flimsy one, and a thing that any one could do with very moderate abilities. He did not even leave the translator the merit of deceiving agreeably: in short, he said so much on the subject, that he reduced himself to a dilemma like that in which he had involved his opponents. He had said more than he could prove; and, to support the credit of his assertions, he set about looking for proofs where they could not be found. It is probable that his journey to the *Hebrides* was in a great measure occasioned by his desire to obtain positive proofs of the non-existence of these poems. But the indispensable pre-requisite for this enquiry was wanting. He was like a man who should visit a river without implements for fishing, and declare upon his return there were no fish, because he had caught none.—Without understanding the language in which the poems were composed, the evidence of their antiquity, which was entirely local and intrinsic, could not be traced;—he enquired of country gentlemen, advanced in life, and engrossed by its cares, what they knew of the remains of *O SSIAN* ? They honestly told him they heard such poems in their youth, but had never thought or enquired about the authenticity of them, or of ascertaining the date of their antiquity, and that they had never heard them in a connected series. The Highland Presbyterian clergy, who on all other occasions shared in the contempt he avowed for that persuasion, seem to have gained great credit with him, because they shewed no extraordinary warmth in defence of these poems, as they appeared in the translation. He asked of Dr. *MACQUEEN* , Whether the poems ever existed in the form in which *JAMES MACPHERSON* had given them to the world? The Doctor could not, consistently with his wonted probity, say they had; nor did he choose to give such an explanation as would afford a fair pretext for infidelity. The clergy in these remote places were more estimable for the purity of their lives, and the diligence of their evangelical labours, than remarkable for their taste in elegant literature. They rather, from a conscientious motive, maintained a kind of warfare with bards and sennachies, such as our more austere divines did with the theatre.

Upon the Reformation, they found the taste of the people vitiated by the legends of the monks, and the absurd and extravagant fictions of the latter bards; and that this acquired passion for the marvellous, laid them open to every kind of imposture, and made them less relish the simplicity of those truths in which it was the duty of the clergy to instruct them. It was no wonder, then, that in the indiscriminate war carried on by pious zeal against poetical fiction, these fragments, wrapt in a debasing cloud of adventitious matter, should meet with little favour or indulgence. Yet Dr. *MACPHERSON* , whose probity and learning were universally respected, having led the way in elucidating these antiquities, some of the younger clergy of more cultivated taste admired and studied them. With these however Dr. *JOHNSON* did not chance to meet; and when he came to *Edinburgh* , where he met with people abundantly qualified to discuss with him all other points of polite literature, he could not, though he had been open to conviction, obtain any light upon this; a Scotchman who is not a Highlander, being no better qualified to decide upon it, than a native of *London* is to judge of the authenticity of a poem in Welsh. The Doctor returned hardened in infidelity. The correspondence which succeeded is well known. In this the Doctor had greatly the advantage, both from the purity of his moral, and the dignity of his literary character; as well as from the violence with which the current of prejudice ran against his adversary.

Grown quite regardless of his literary character, under all this hostility, Mr. *MACPHERSON* devoted himself to more profitable pursuits, but did not find them a sufficient consolation for the severity with which he had been treated by the public,—a severity which he may be said to have in some measure justly incurred, by his presumptuous attempt to translate *HOMER* . Though wealthy, prosperous, and seemingly indifferent to public applause, the chagrin he felt at having so mingled falsehood with truth, that he could not separate them with credit to himself, preyed upon his spirits; and a short time before he died, he ordered the Gaelic originals of the translated poems to be printed for the satisfaction of his particular friends.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE writing the preceding Observations, I have seen a dissertation on the subject, written with so much acuteness, learning, and force, as will probably render it in the general opinion conclusive. It would be tedious and difficult to explain all the grounds on which the opinions I entertain are founded;—suffice it to say, that I still think as I did formerly, yet would not be understood to engage in controversy, where I only meant to amuse, and in some degree inform a friend; and chose this subject, because it was the only one I thought myself capable of shewing him in a new light.

MORDUTH.

A *FRAGMENT*. TRANSLATED FROM THE GAELIC.

It was the intention of the Translator to insert the Gaelic Originals of *MORDUTH* and the succeeding poem, in compliance with a wish expressed by Mr. *MACKENZIE*, well known as the *A DDISON* of Scotland; but this volume having considerably exceeded its proposed size, and the Gaelic of both poems being already published in Gillies's and Macdonald's Collections, she contents herself with giving the Translations.

ARGUMENT.

MORDUTH, we are told, is the name of the aged hero, who, speaking in the first person, narrates part of the transactions of his early life, relative to the wars then carried on between the Scotch and the Norwegians. He begins in a manner suited to pre-dispose the mind to regard him with mingled admiration and compassion. In an apostrophe to the wind, whose violence disturbed his meditations, he recurs to the days of his youth, when he ardently pursued the enemies of his country; and in foretelling the approaching weakness of the wind, when time should destroy its power; introduces an affecting allusion to his own feeble and forlorn state.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

MORDUTH.

BOOK I.

COM'ST thou with swift wing in thy strength, O Wind!
Wilt thou not to my helpless age be kind?
And lightly o'er my rocky shelter wave,
While here I sit all mournful by the grave,
Where busy memory feeds on endless woe,
While youth's dear lost companions sleep below.
And while they still my sorrowing thoughts engage,
I sink beneath th' enfeebling hand of age:
Alone I tremble till the storm be past,—
Then strive not with my weakness, Northern Blast!
Once was my step as light as thine, O Wind!
With fearless valour, matchless strength combin'd;
My foes from many a battle, pierc'd with wounds,
With feeble step retir'd to distant bounds:—
But *Sorrow* yet shall stop thy airy flight,
O Wind! nor shalt thou climb yon mountain's height,
Nor o'er the dark wood bear th' impending cloud—
That wood which once beneath thy prowess bow'd:
The grass shall scorn to yield beneath thy pow'r,
But every twig and every laughing flow'r
Erect its head,—then to my age be kind,
Since thou thyself to age must yield, O Wind!

Come, lovely hunter of excelling grace,
Awake a flame to warm and cheer the place;
Heap branches dry to kindle up in light,
For slowly from the east approaches night:
The Sun now hovers trembling in the west,
Already thrice the happy isles of rest
Have op'd their veil of clouds, and bade him lave
His glowing visage in the western wave :
They cry, "O haste! thy daily task is done,
"Come with thy bright looks streaming round, O Sun!
"Behind the surge, dark wandering clouds of night
"Come frequent on, to shade thy lustre bright:
"Fair visage! that first smiles to joy the east,
"Come, sink among the heavenly isles to rest."
Dark frowning clouds on sable wings arise,
See shadowy forms invite him from the skies;
Departed heroes, hark! the Sun invite
To pass with them, in isles of bliss, the night.

Blest be the meek-ey'd Virgin of thy love, ;
Unerring be thy shaft in every grove!
Hunter! who kindly lend'st me frequent aid,
While weak with age I wander through the shade,
Sit thou attentive on yon moss grown grave,
While through the hollow rock the loud winds rave:
While fraught with meaning I the tale relate

Of heroes brave, and their eventful fate:
Now stretch'd beneath the monumental stone,
The gallant chiefs who first in battle shone!

How bright the hue of years that ne'er return,
I feel my soul with wonted ardour burn!
Return, my youth, with all thy acts of might,
Rise, memory, on my soul in beams of light!
Show me the battles where I rul'd the storm,
And bright in armour show each hero's form.
O you that pour'd the tempest on your foes,
Look smiling from the clouds of your repose;
And while your children hear your proud renown,
See tears of transport silently steal down:—
My soul grows bright while former years arise,
With all their deeds of fame to glad my eyes:
In long succession see the scenes unfold,—
Hunter, attend! a tale of times of old!

The stars slept viewless on their cloudy bed,
The moon in formless darkness hid her head,
Erewhile tumultuous winds through ocean rav'd,
Now tost in air, the clouds the billows brav'd—
When, awful riding on the midnight storm,
From ocean's bed rose SHALMOR'S shadowy form:
Dim o'er the ridgy surge he seems to go,
Dark in the whelming cloud of drifting snow;
Then high upon the blast's tempestuous breath,
Rose to the lofty rock the son of death!
Chill vapours hung around his pointless spear,
While from his cold, dark bed, the chief drew near;
Emphatic truths his awful words convey,
And thus in hollow sounds he seem'd to say:
"Rise, sons of ALBION, from unsafe repose,
"Fierce from the north approach your ancient foes:
"Cold LOCHLIN'S smooth ships through the stormy surge,
"With mighty pow'rs the bold invasion urge:
"Children of ALBION, long renown'd, come forth
"To meet your bold invaders from the north!"

Swift on the cold blast fled the son of night,
The strong oak bow'd beneath th' impetuous flight;
The shatter'd forest shook before his wrath,
While to his wat'ry tomb retir'd the son of death.
The gentle Chief of ALBION'S generous race
Awak'd,—and, "Call my warriors from the chace,"
He cry'd, "and high on *Feanna's* ridgy brow
"Let warning flames alarm the vales below!"
From every mountain's side the Chiefs descend,
And bright in arms their gallant King attend:—
MORDUTH, the ruler of the *strath* around,
With warlike shouts, made trembling rocks resound:
The sons of battle heard the sound a—far,
And gleaming swords impatient threat the war.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Now morn dim dawning in the east appears,
And bids the sons of tempest seize their spears:
Mild in his beauteous radiance smil'd the sun,
While from blue Ocean's breast his course begun;
His beams resplendent glitter'd on the arms
Of Chiefs renown'd in battle's fierce alarms:
Up valiant CHIAGLAS rose, devoid of fear,
And thick behind the Chief rose many a spear;
Tommora gathers all his people round,
Nor in the rear was ardent MORDAL found.
CHIAGLAS, who bow'd beneath the weight of years,
Cries, "Where are northern SUNAR'S thronging spears?
"Even I in former days have gather'd fame
"From SUNAR, when to ALBION'S coasts he came:
"Though feeble age now foils me in the fight,
"Great was my strength, and great my deeds of might!"
'If strength or hardihood can ought avail,'
MACORDUIBH cries, with fear and envy pale,
'Now is the time,—for SUNAR of the North,
'In all the gallant pomp of war comes forth;
'Redoubled sun-beams dance on polish'd arms,
'And ardent warriors, smit with glory's charms,
'Fierce in their strength move threatening at his side;
'The woods before them bow their lofty pride.
'See while they mount on *Thirmor's* rocky side,
'His head diminish'd sinks before their stride;
'In stormy wrath approaches LOCHLIN'S might,

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

'In vain the sons of ALBION urge the fight,
'To tempt their fate and turn in shameful flight.'
"Fly, dastard, to the quiet abodes a—far,
"Where timorous females shun the din of war;
"Thy soul shakes like the green leaf in the air,
"When Autumn's chill blast makes the forest bare;
"As flies the leaf before the wint'ry gale,
"Fly thou; when foes our valiant host assail;
"But many a stately tree this mountain owns,
"That stands erect when winter fiercest frowns;
"And oft our northern foes in fury came,
"But when retir'd with conquest or with fame?
"Depart unheard of, son of small renown!
"To where degenerate cowards dwell unknown!
"Had we no greater foes than thee to dread,
"How soon to certain conquest we might speed:
"We'd draw our weapons on this northern race,
"Assur'd, as when the tim'rous deer we chace:
"Bloody and bold are those thy taunts that hear,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"On every side then shun destruction near:"
'Still in our ears thy base reproaches ring,—
'Thou son of pride, withdraw thy venom'd sting!'
Two spears with hostile terror threat on high,
And half-drawn swords and clashing shields draw nigh:
With civil rage now wakens ALBION might,
To pour on kindred foes the sudden fight.
But the strong shield that guards th' impetuous throng,
The lovely King of ALBIONS, came along,
With mighty anger frowning in his wrath,
He came like the impending cloud of death:
From Chief to Chief dark roll'd his ardent eyes,
And as he came, with fierce impatience cries,
"Ye children of the waves, restrain your might,
"Nor vainly say you conquer'd us in fight:
"Oft rose our fathers' spears in battle's roar,
"And oft your tombs upon the sea-beat shore.
"But well may joy arise in SUNAR'S hall,
"When by each other ALBION'S warriors fall!"
Asham'd, dismay'd, before their monarch's ire,
The Chiefs who wak'd the deadly strife retire.

As two dark clouds that travel o'er the hills,
When from the sky the misty show'r distils,
With low'ring horror fill the darken'd vale,
While on in gloomy majesty they sail:
Thus dark in frowning might our heroes came,
And thus fierce LOCHLIN'S host of mighty name.

Onward the king of ALBION bent his course,
Then as a rock resists the billow's force,
Whose foaming rage assails the base in vain,
Then sinks with baffled fury back again,
So fierce, so clam'rous, rush'd the tide of foes,
So firm, so fearless, did the Chief oppose:
As come the loud winds through the gloom of night,
Came LOCHLIN'S deadly spears to urge the fight:
Nor comes the fatal blast of night alone,
As fast the clouds that bid the tempest frown.
Thus high resistless ALBION rose in arms,
Like bursting thunder came the loud alarms:
As rocky fragments from the mountain's brow,
By thunder torn, encounter fierce below,—
With furious shock the onset first began,
And many a foe lay gasping on the plain:
The Chieftains spears with rushing blood were dy'd,
And broken arms lay scatter'd far and wide;
Bold hardy warriors urg'd the conflict sore,
And many a wound ran purple on *Dalmore* .
But vainly force unequal we oppose,
What single arm can meet a hundred foes?
Our dauntless King our yielding steps beheld,
By LOCHLIN like a rushing tide impell'd,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

The hero's soul with rage impetuous blaz'd,
While high in air his bloody spear he rais'd;
The foe's fierce conflict round the King appear'd,
While distant far his banner yielding steer'd.
At length he came, as ocean's wearied wave,
Where restless surges round *Iona* rave,
In vain assaults the rock's unyielding pride,
Then falls repell'd indignant from its side:
"Why art thou darken'd ere the day's decline,
"Fair Sun, that wont with fav'ring beams to shine ?
"Think not the warriors fought with feeble hands,
"Though far out-number'd by the adverse bands:
"Oft has an envious cloud obscur'd thy light,
"When sable tempests wing'd th' impetuous flight;
"But when the winds are hush'd, and through the sky
"The driving *rack* is seen across to fly;
"When clouds retiring hear thy strong command,
"And the rude blast thou graspest in thy hand;
"When kindly thou look'st forth with beauty crown'd,
"And all thy bright locks glitter wide around;
"When thy fair visage brightens with a smile,
"And pleasure gleams on every rock the while,
"Rejoic'd we see thy beaming glory rise,
"Rejoic'd we bless thy progress through the skies.
"Oh thou! who dwell'st among the starry train,
"Move on with music to the western main !
"Although this night oppress'd, with wounds we pine,
"Our course to-morrow shall be bright as thine!"

BOOK II.

THREE times dark hovering in the east the night
Chas'd with black misty wings the lingering light;
And thrice the stars with feebly glimmering ray
Shot through the struggling clouds that barr'd their way;
Low sullen winds that o'er the hillocks rise,
Seem laden with afflicted heroes sighs;
The shades of ancient Chiefs, renown'd for might,
In wrath were moving o'er the mountain's height:
Deep moans of new-made ghosts came on the breeze,
And weak their voices whisper'd through the trees;
Still in our ears their dying sorrows rung,
And anguish every manly bosom wrung.

High on a lofty rock the king appear'd,
Th' indignant glance desponding warriors fear'd;
His mighty purpose lab'ring in his breast,
The monarch thus his high disdain express'd:
"When'er the dark occasion seems to frown,
"With trembling fear the little heart sinks down;
"And quick the feeble to the covert flies,—
"The brave on danger looks with fearless eyes,
"Sees him approach in his most hideous form,
"And lifts his head undaunted in the storm:
"Though through the wood the howling tempest raves,
"The stedfast oak the blast unshaken braves.
"Say, then, ye Chiefs, who warlike honours claim,
"If from the sons of little men we came?
"The spears we lift to quell invading foes,
"Not from weak twigs of bending osier rose:
"From the firm oak our well-try'd weapons came,
"Of ALBIONS'S growth, renown'd for deeds of fame!"

"How oft have foes come blustering from the north,
"How oft our valiant ancestors gone forth,
"And drove them vanquish'd from the bloody field,—
"And will you to the sons of ocean yield?
"Where moans of wounded foes from blast to blast,
"And dying groans in sad succession pass'd:
"The flat grey stones, the monuments of death,
"That frequent rise on yonder dusky heath;
"Preserve the memory of our gallant sires—
"Hark! from their tombs a warning voice inspires,
"And says, 'Ye sons of sires that never fled,
'Your fathers' steps with dauntless ardour tread! "

Listening to hear the King disclose his wrath,
The heroes stood dejected, still as death:
Then rais'd aloft the buckler, sword, and spear,
While hollow sounds still murmur'd in their ear:
MORCHEAN, the third that rul'd the sable rock,

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Thrice shook his locks, thrice struck in wrath the oak:
"Though now my strength bows with the weight of years,
"No coward vein my cheek indignant bears;
"Seldom I struck an unavailing stroke,
"And oft my sword through hostile ranks has broke.
"I thought, and joy'd to think my gallant son
"Would build my tomb when life's short day was done;
"I hop'd when joy and grief alike were fled,
"Low in the narrow house he'd lay my head.
"Alas! nor stone nor shield his hand shall raise,
"But long in deathless songs shall live his praise!
"His step was in the battle foremost found,
"Till every friend or fell or fled around:
"But matchless odds can mortal might oppose?—
"The hero fell before a thousand foes!"
'Blest be the hero's soul,' the king return'd,
'Alone he shall not lie, so justly mourn'd,
'This night shall ALBION'S Chief his footsteps trace,
'And dark our foes shall find the fatal place!'
MACORDUIBH'S blooming spouse now grasp'd the shield:
"Shall men till sun-rise linger in the field?
"Will ye not hunt the foe like tim'rous deer,
"While doubt and darkness aggravate their fear?"
A mighty Chief, for strength and courage fam'd,
With milder words her rash impatience blam'd:
"The sons of ALBION oft, when wars were o'er,
"And strangers chanc'd to tread her woody shore,
"With kindly welcome gave the joyful shell;
"But never yet did ancient story tell,
"Where death in treacherous ambush lay in wait,
"When strangers pass the hospitable gate:
"Manly and generous LOCHLIN'S sons appear,
"When the blest days of peace reverse the spear !"
The moon in gloomy silence hid her head,
The stars lay slumbering in their cloudy bed,
The whirling tempest waken'd loud alarms,
And rattling hail rebounded from our arms:
But dusky twilight bade its fury cease,
And every hostile blast was hush'd to peace.
Now morn's fair visage in the east arose,
The sun awak'd, more beauteous from repose,
Shook his bright locks resplendent o'er the field,
Till gladsome beams reflect from every shield.
Rejoicing in the rays of new-born light,
Each Chieftain seiz'd his arms, and wish'd the fight.
Said MORFOLT ; 'Let no warrior further come,
'Who trusts that beauty's tears shall deck his tomb,
'For whom a soft white hand shall trembling raise
'The stone that gives his fame to future days.
'For me,—this night, stretch'd on yon dusky heath,
'I'll sleep within the cold embrace of death—

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

'No stone of fame shall o'er my grave appear,
'For me no cheek be moisten'd with a tear;
'No hoary sire in me lament a son,
'No son bewail a father's life is done;
'Nor gentle maiden cry, alas! my love!
'Still must my heart my erring hand reprove,
'Still cruel memory view the fatal dart
'That pierc'd the snowy breast, the faithful heart
'Of her whose beauty, with excelling grace,
'Outshone a thousand fair of ALBION'S race:
'My alien sword, that draws the purple flood
'From LOCHLIN'S sons, smokes with my kindred's blood!
'My ancestors of old were ALBION'S foes,
'And high in fame round LOCHLIN'S king they rose:
'Twas my bold youth's delight my course to urge,
'With daring prow across the foaming surge:
'Six gallant heroes rais'd my white sail high,
'The northern blast in fury swept the sky,
'The swelling billows rais'd their heads in wrath,
'Or whirl'd us in the dreadful pools of death,
'While blinding drift incessant drove around,
'And angry skies with double darkness frown'd:
'Fair ALBION with the dawning light appear'd,
'And o'er the ridgy waves its white cliffs rear'd;
'Each oak its green locks shook with welcome kind,
'And early music floated on the wind;
'High banks, with melody on every spray,
'Seem'd nodding o'er our bark to bid us stay:
'A courteous Chieftain stretch'd his ready hand,
'And "Welcome, LOCHLIN'S sons," he cries, "to land:
"Now hush'd in soft repose are war's alarms,—
"And peaceful rust has settled on our arms;
"Here many are our deer, and full our shel's,
"High deeds of fame our ancient story tells;
"Honour and valour in our tales appear,—
"Who ever saw a guest a stranger here?"
'With ready haste they spread the joyous feast,
'Weary and faint we shar'd the glad repast:
'On every hand the song of bards arose,
'Well pleas'd we blest our country's ancient foes:—
'Sweet as the sun just breaking forth to view,
'That glittering cheers the foliage bent with dew,
'BOSMINA mov'd amidst the courteous throng,
'Soft as the whisper'd melody of song,
'And as with timid step she glided by,
'Her path was trac'd by many a hero's eye !
'In vain, sweet maid, their looks were cast on thee,
'Whose soft regards alone distinguish'd me.
'For me no hills arose with forests crown'd,
'No warriors to my standard crowded round,
'In early youth my ready weapon rose

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

'And slaughter dealt amongst my country's foes;
'Yet all the deeds my single arm could claim,
'Nor fill'd the song of bards, nor rais'd my fame.
"Go," cried the maid, "and seek some distant land
"Where mighty monarchs adverse hosts command,
"There let the ardent soul of valour flame,
"And deeds of proud renown adorn thy name;
"Then when thy fame returns on ev'ry wind—
"To glad the mourner whom thou leav'st behind,
"Come bright in arms and hear BOSMINA own
"Her love the meed of MORFOLT'S *worth* alone."
'To *Erin's* king my subject arms I bore,
'And many a foe sunk breathless on the shore,
'And many a bard around the nightly flame
'The notes of triumph mingled with my name.
'My fatal fame now swelling on the breeze,
'Reach'd every shore, and wafted o'er the seas,
'To fair BOSMINA'S happy home convey'd
'The name so favour'd by the matchless maid:
'Daughters of *Erin*, vain were all your charms,
'Your softly rolling eyes, and snowy arms;
'For me ye sigh'd, on me ye smil'd in vain,
'When peace brought safety to your plains again:
'On wings of speed I hasted to depart,
'And sought the secret treasure of my heart.
 'The sun lay slumb'ring in his wavy bed,
'The moon through clouds a dubious lustre shed;
'I saw her father's mossy tow'rs appear,
'The birchen grove with streaming branches near
'Wav'd its light foliage to the whisp'ring wind,
'Dark horror rose in my presaging mind;
'I stopt, and heard a well known voice repeat,
'Like summer's balmy breath in accents sweet:
"Go, and should fate decree my hero's fall,
"Oft shall my soul this parting hour recal,
"And through the course of sad surviving years
"Thy mem'ry shall be hallow'd by my tears."
'My soul, that never knew to fear before,
'With doubt and terror now was clouded o'er:
'Within the dusky shelter of the wood
'A stately warrior by BOSMINA stood,—
'I bent my bow, and bid my arrow go
'And seek the false heart thro' the breast of snow—
'Let never other warrior wander wide
'Through fields of fame to win that heart of pride
'Deep in her bosom sunk the shaft of death,
'Wide spread her floating vesture on the heath;
'The sanguine stream distains her tresses bright,
'Her low groans mingle with the sighs of night.'
"Whence came the dart of death?" the warrior cried.
'From no weak arm,' my boastful wrath replied.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

"Insidious foe," th' astonish'd youth returns,
"Though fall'n beneath thy arm the helpless mourns,
"No mighty arms that valour gives to shine
"Are ever rais'd before a heart like thine;
"Amidst the airy forms of ages past
"Thy surly ghost shall mingle with the blast;
"To hollow winds the fatal deed deplore,
"Nor lift thy steel against the lovely more."
'Long on the heath alternate blows we deal,
'She groan'd unheard amidst the clash of steel.
'His broken spear no more repels the blow;
'Prone at my feet I saw my gallant foe;
'The moon burst forth—my dying *Friend* I view'd,—
'BOSMINA'S brother! welt'ring in his blood!
"And art thou fall'n, our aged father's pride?"
'Th' expiring maid with falt'ring accents cried:
"Where art thou, MORFOLT ,—on what distant shore
"Do mighty foes thy deadly force deplore?
"Who now shall hail thee with a brother's name,
"And call thee homeward from the fields of fame?
"Yet shall my hero come, and raise my tomb
"Amidst yon peaceful grove, whose hallow'd gloom
"Once heard our faithful vows!"—The steel I drew,
'And when the sanguine torrent burst anew
'My mingling tears her bleeding breast bedew'd

[This and the following two lines are connected by a large brace in the right margin of the original printed edition.]

'Once more her closing eyes her lover view'd,
'And saw his guilty hands in blood imbrued!
'In the weak shriek the gen'rous soul was lost,
'From my sad grasp escap'd th' abhorrent ghost,
'Shunn'd the fierce terrors of my jealous love,
'And on a moon-beam sought her friends above.
'Four stones now mark the dwelling of the brave,
'There, too, the lovely finds a peaceful grave:
'The virgins oft with solemn brow draw near,
'And deck the sacred spot with beauty's tear;
'The shrubs wave mournful as the breezes blow,
'Their tuneful inmates pour the notes of woe;
'All night I listen to the howling blast,
'Or gaze on clouds with double gloom o'er cast:
'On me they darkly frown while gliding by,
'And airy forms from me with horror fly.
'*Dunairm's* sad chief in lonely silence mourns,
'In vain he weeps,—the past no more returns;
At times his hands explore his children's tomb,
'His voice of woe breaks through the midnight gloom,
'No more he lifts the spear;—but I again

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

'Shall bid his weapons thunder o'er the plain;
'Against my father's house his arms I wield,
'His gleaming steel shall pierce my kindred's shield;
'My fatal weapon slew his valiant son,
'Ere well his race of glory had begun;
'Now round his early tomb, his country's foes
'Shall fall, the victims of my guilty woes.
'The moon's faint beams beheld the frantic deed,
'By her pale light my kindred host shall bleed.
'Once more I feel my wonted ardour burn,—
'Once more I go, but never to return!'

**THE
AGED BARD'S WISH,**

TRANSLATION OF A GAELIC POEM COMPOSED IN THE
ISLE OF SKY.

**As when a minstrel, taught by Heav'n to sing,
Awakes high raptures to the vocal string.**

POPE'S ODYSSEY.

OH ! lay me by yon peaceful stream
That glides away so softly slow,
Where boughs exclude the noon-day beam,
And early violets round me blow .

And thou, O sun! with friendly eye
Regard my languid limbs of age;
While on the new spring grass they lie,
Their warmth restore, their pains assuage.

Then on the pure stream's sloping side,
Wave soft thy wings thou western gale,
Clear stream, how gently dost thou glide,
To wake the flow'rets of the vale.

The primrose pale, of lovely dye,
Around my dewy bank be spread;
The daisy ope its modest eye,
And golden blooms bedeck my bed.

From lofty banks that bound my glen,
Let blossom'd branches softly bend,
While sweetly from each rocky den
The little birds their love-notes blend.

Where from yon crag, with age so grey,
The fresh stream bursts with rushing sound,
And echo bears the din away,
While ocean's distant waves resound.

Each rock and hill returns the strain
Of nature's joy that wakes around,
While sportive kids in frolic vein,
And roes in sprightly gambol bound.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

The low of herds on yonder gale
Comes pleasing to my aged ear,
And sweetly rural from the dale
The bleating of their young I hear.

And near me let the hinds repose,
And dappled fawns when tir'd of play,
Beside my brook's green margin close,
Or where the dashing fountains play.

Oh! wake the chase, where I may hear
The hunter rouse th' impatient hounds;
Their voice is music to my ear,
My cheek glows youthful at the sound.

I feel youth's cheerful spirit rise,
To hear the bugle sound so shrill,
While triumph bursts in joyful cries,
Where sinks the dun deer on the hill.

Then quick I see the goats rebound,
That morn and eve my steps pursue;
Yon mountain tops their cries resound,
Which I at hopeless distance view .

I see *Benard* of lofty brow,
Amidst his green locks dream the roes,
A thousand hills appear below,
And on his head the clouds repose.

Above my glen I see the grove
Where first is heard the cuckoo's song;
Where deer in peaceful freedom rove,
And pines protect the harmless throng.

I see the lake where wild ducks play,
And lead about their tender young,
With water-lilies border'd gay,
Its banks with evergreens o'erhung.

The water-nymph, with bosom white ,
Swims graceful on the swelling wave;

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Her infant train, with new delight,
Their downy breasts incessant lave:

And when she wings her lofty flight,
Afar amidst the clouds to rise,
And when she quits my aching sight,
Commixing with the northern skies;

She goes upon the southern gale
Where vent'rous prow ne'er cut the waves,
Where never rose the flutt'ring sail,
But ocean solitary raves.

Be thou, with snowy plumage soft,
O swan! not far from my repose;
Even when I see thee soar aloft,
Thy parting strain will soothe my woes.

Tell from what distant land the wind
Bears on its wings the sound of woe—
Sure 'tis his voice, who left behind
His Love, to trace the realm of snow.

Stream thy bright eyes, O virgin mild!
For him on LOCHLIN'S stormy coast
Who perish'd midst the tempest wild,—
To thee—to me—for ever lost!

The graceful youth, in manly bloom,
Who left my grey locks thus forlorn,
Far off to seek an early tomb,
Dost thou with social sorrow mourn?

Thy beauteous cheek, grown pale with grief,
Still leans upon thy hand of snow,
Still heaves thy bosom for the chief
Long in the narrow bed laid low.

O! be his mem'ry ever bless'd,
Bright be the clouds of his repose;
Soon shall we share the hero's rest,
Soon life, and love, and sorrow close.

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

Rise thou, whose soft melodious song
Pours on my heart the balm of ease;
Ye plaintive echoes come along,
And waft the notes, thou sighing breeze!

From ocean's breast, O gale, arise!
Bear on thy wings the dulcet strain,—
Bear it where high on clouds he lies,
Tell him he hears the fair complain.

Tell, ere thy strength be past, O wind,!
Where weak in helpless age I lie,
Low on my rusty shield reclin'd,
And view his fair flow'r with'ring nigh.

Lift me, O you, whose arms are young!
Lay me beneath yon broad oak's shade;
For now the noon-day sun grows strong,
Let not his rays my eyes invade.

Then wilt thou come, thou vision fair,
Oft mingled with the stars of night;
Scenes of my youth shall rise in air,
And times of manhood's active might.

Shew to my soul the lovely maid,
Beneath the oak, the forest's pride;
Her cheek let golden tresses shade,
Her lover, smiling, grace her side.

May endless joy their spirits wait,
And meteors waft th' enamour'd pair!
Bless'd be your souls, and bless'd thy fate,
Maid with the graceful locks so fair!

Leave not my soul, O dream of joy!
O turn again, once more return!
They hear me not—My darling boy!
For thee, for her, not long I mourn!

Now lay me close by yonder fall
That leaps in thunder o'er the rock;

The Highlanders, and Other Poems.

My lyre and shell attend my call,
The spear my sires in battle shook.

And come whence ocean's waters roll,
Ye breezes mild that softly blow,
And bear away my parting soul
Where sinks the sun at evening low.

O bear me to the happy isles
Where shades of mighty heroes rest,
Who, sunk in sleep, forget their toils,
Or wake the music of the bless'd.

Blind OSSIAN'S misty halls unfold:
Your eyes no more the bard shall view:
Let me my harp and shell behold,—
And now, dear harp and shell, adieu!