

THE GENTLE SHEPHERD
A NEW SCOTIS PASTORAL.

Fan from that scene of many a wordy war,
Where Fulton crosses turbulent Nassau.
Where, when some chariot overturns their stalls,
Pomona's virgins mourn their leas with squalls;
Where rattling engines 'neath the pavement move,
In sense the rivals of machines above;
Far from those dens where, sworn the mails to cheat,
Paris, Vienna, London, Berlin meet;
Where o'er some foreign journal's hacked remains,
Pate-pot and shears perform the work of brains;
Where 'neath their master's most uncertain eye,
Unhappy toilers stave lampoons supply;
Where, 'neath the influence of that magic squint,
They smear fresh licks on the smallest lint;
From mud familiar and congenial noise,
Jamie retired to taste bucolic joys.
At leisure stretched beneath unbragous trees,
He snoozed in quiet—scratch'd himself at ease;
And, as some butcher when his toils are o'er,
Slaughters and snores and sniffs a fancied gore;
As some stale punk, shut up in Blackwell's keep,
Dreams of Five Points, and pilfers in her sleep,
So Jamie dreamed, baronial towers below,
Of vicious joys, to wake to virtuous wo.
Or like a dit who opulent has grown,
By midnight scourgings of the fragrant town,
On many an ancient scent, in memory dwells,
And pines, 'mong roses, for accustomed smells;
And weeps, unheeding the perfumer's art,
Th' Arabian gales that hovered 'round his cart;
Our Jamie mourned, as each descending sun,
Saw him to bed, no dirty business done;
So 'midst the blossoms of his blooming seat,
Wept the retirement that still kept him sweet;
Unhappy Corydon! of what avail
To dream of Paris, and attend his kail?
Vainly with honest Scotch he feeds his nose;
Vainly he sniffs the strongest Athol brose;
Vainly for him neat Phyllis bolls or bakes
The woolly sheep's-head or the oaten cakes.
So when great Edwin with accustomed din,
(As black outside as Jamie is within.)
Othello plays, the galleries hear him mourn—
And wish 'twas true—his occupation gone.

"Better than this," cries Jeems, "the poignant pain
My shoulders felt, when fell the uplifted cane;
Better than this that nameless moist salute;
The doubled fist, the high, uplifted boot;
Better the thrusts of every honest pen,
The fear of woman and the scorn of men;
Better the general town's indignant hiss

Or still contempt, than such a fate as this.'
He spake; and summoning to his ancient side,
The bairn he loved, his own and Plumgut's pride,
He sang his sorrows, and the bairn replied.

OLD JAMIE.

Ye ken, my wean, in days of auld lang syne,
Before these biggins and this gear were mine,
My siller sma', I aften felt afraid
To buy the ointment that my pangs allay'd.
Poortith the bogle dogg'd me lang and sair;
Bannocks I'd name—of bawbees had nae mair;
Awesome my fate! but when I'd tarried lang,
Luck cam' at last and cam' too wi' a bang.

YOUNG JAMIE.

Go on *mon père*, and to your bairn relate,
What Plumgut saved you from a pauper's fate.

OLD JAMIE.

Gie me your lug, and hear the lave, my boy!
Ablins ye've heard or read of bauld Rob Roy;
How he agreed, if Loulands paid him weel,
Nae fauld to scatter and nae kye to steal.
He took their gowd and spar'd them, head and tail;
The gowd he took was aften ca'd Black Mail.
Sae when I chas'd to ken some roeif' gent
Had done the deed he wad nae hae in prent,
I gard him bring me meikle cash ye see;
And gif he brought enow, he went Scot free.

YOUNG JAMIE.

Go on, my sire! But say, 'twixt you and I,
Suppose he paid not?

OLD JAMIE.

Paid na! I let fly!
Gif he had freends, I made them a' turn cauld;
Gif he had face, I made them muckle bauld,
Had he a wife, and wad nae hae his shame
Break her soft heart, I broke it a' the same.
Sae when he, cannie, tried his luck ance mair,
He took enow, and Jamie had his share.

YOUNG JAMIE.

Your wisdom strikes with awe a simple tar;
Go on, I pray you! my sagacious pa!

OLD JAMIE.

Hout tout, mon! wad ye ken my vartous wiles?
Can ye nae read? Gae read my noble files!
Read how wi' mony a neat, satiric slap
I squibb'd my Maker—then auld Elder Knapp;
How I display'd, in bideous black and white,
For fules to girth at, God's baptismal rite;
And ev'ry morning brawler blasphem'd
The things that daft auld leddies holy deem'd!
Read how, when brothels made unusual noise,
And wanton lassies jig'd wi' wanton boys,
I tauld the story—decency defied,
While church and brothel figur'd side by side.
The blow that laid puir Ellen Jewett dead
Gave me a boost, and so I went ahead!
Wad ye ken mair?

YOUNG JAMIE.

The rest, my father, tell!

OLD JAMIE.

I put your mither, bairn, in prent as well,
To a' the mob her mony virtues told;
Folk star'd astonish'd—but the papers sold,
When you, a wee thing, in this world were born,
Fondly I wrote with a' a daddie's pride,
Call'd you *Le Jeune* and *Eclair* beside;
Sae ye were famous from your earliest day.

YOUNG JAMIE.

Such kindness, sire, O how can I repay?

OLD JAMIE.

Wad ye repay me O beloved son!
Keep up the broed, and do as I hae done.
When I'm nae mair, tho' on thy sounding back
The cudgels cruel fall wi' mony a thwack;

Tho' wi a scorn too deep for wards or blows,
Indignant fingers seek that comely nose;
Bear, as I've borne, a still unshrinking part;
Kicks are not kicks, when coppers heal the smart.
Prove to the world, against the general mind,
That moral monsters can repeat their kind.

YOUNG JAMIE.

I hear you, sire, but these evening airs
Should chill your aged frame, we'll go to prayers.
(They enter the castle.)