

PREFACE

It has been the author's aim and design since eighteen years of age to publish a volume of poems. Beginning at the age of fourteen to write incidents that happened in the locality and occasionally occupying the poet's corner in a local newspaper, an acquaintance was formed with the editor of the Kelso Chronicle, who gave him every encouragement to persevere in his effusions.

When the Auld Stable End made its appearance before the public, the favor with which it was received by the villagers, both old and younger, encouraged the author to persevere in his enterprise.

Occupants of the Old Grave Yard are all real, the verses being written after their decease.

James Scott of West Gorden, a bosom friend of the author's, who was attending the University at Edinburgh with an aim for the ministry, unfortunately caught a severe cold, which in three weeks proved fatal. At the quiet gloaming grey in the lovely month of June, 1865, on a green hillside near the banks of the river Eden, where the author could see in the dim distance the home where the dear departed was born, reared and died, were the few verses written to his memory. He was a promising young man, but was called away from earth at the early age of twenty-one.

A few words may be said as an apology for the insertion of the poem Protestantism. The Rev. Robert Lang, minister of the Free Church, Neuthorn, Berwickshire, Scotland, and the Rev. Dr. Begg of Edinburgh compiled a catechism with proofs from the Bible, enabling the students to defend themselves as Protestants against the arguments of antagonists. The catechism was distributed among the young men and women of the parish, six months being given to prepare for the examination. Fifty-nine youths of the congregation began the task, but only sixteen came forward to compete. At the