

For to unravel the amusing plot
 With studied gravity the Judge began ;
 But the appearance of our quondam Scot,
 At such a crisis, set it all afloat,
 And neutralized his well concerted plan.

With Jock at once the morning interview
 Imposing burst upon his recollection ;
 The muscles to the tickled fancy true,
 On ev'ry feature the ludicrous drew,
 And mirror'd all to Index's inspection.

As oft the Judge attempted to explain,
 As often laughter stifled the endeavour ;
 Index amazed at such a novel scene,
 Unconscious turning, saw his ' shepherd swain,'
 Palo as a ghost—tho' some ghosts might look
 graver.

Stewart aware how the denouement stood,
 Showed with a shrug its perilous position ;
 Index appeared in variable mood ;
 Whilst master Shepherd drenched and stained
 with blood,
 Examined both with eyes that spoke suspicion.

' Ah ! mister Shepherd, what has happen'd you ?
 The merchant rather anxiously enquired.
 ' Lord ! man,' says Jock, ' a' canna tell ye now,
 But a' saw naething o' the plaguet cow,
 Tho' a' hae sought her until a' im tired.'

' The cow !' said Index as he snuffed the game
 ' It was the donkey, sir, I bade you bring.'
 ' A' canna si,' said Jock, ' how a'm to blame,
 For isna Dunkee just the craytur's name ?
 A' could na think o' ony other thing.'

No longer etiquette remained to screen
 The various attitudes of both the two—
 As Jock described where his cruise had been,
 And what about the river he had seen
 In his excursion after the dun cow.

' Weel, sic a place !' said he, ' this een o' mine
 Has never seen since that day a' was born ;
 Aiang the sea it's nought but rocks and syne—
 What trees ye meet are only sticks o' pine,
 But a' saw naething like a field o' corn.

' Thero was ae pickle gerse that lookit gude,
 And up and down grew tataes gazin' rife,
 And near a sort o' grandish house that stude
 Restin' itsel' among a strip o' wude,
 Some big fat swine just ready for the knife.

' A kind o' tow'r thing on a risin' fell,
 Grown round wi' trees, but they were well out
 bye
 Like some auld lino kiln sittin' there itsel'—
 But a' saw naething that a one could tell
 To be aught like a sheep or horse or kye.

When a' had gotten to a wee bit haugh
 Aside the river, a' began to tire ;
 And louted down to take a drink—but augh !
 As sure as death (O ! fegs—ye needna laugh)
 The water there was just as saut as fire.

' Sae a' gaed up till a' came at a stane
 Wi' a big ring in't fasten'd down wi' lead ;
 A' saw nae use for't sticking there alane,
 And gae't a tug—but slippin' wi' the rain,
 A' plumpit in the water owro the head.

' A' splatter'd up and doon awhile—but then
 A ne'er could soom an inch in a' my life,
 Sae how to manage there a' didna ken,
 The place was rather wildish like for men
 Or women either to be verra rife.

' Ae time a' tried to make a monstrous spring,
 And got my face a crack against the rock—
 A' thought by chance that a' might clutch the ring,
 And tried again—but still the only thing
 A' got by that was just another knock.

' A' mind nae mair anent the river jig,
 Sae ye can guess the rest o't as ye like,
 Only somebody brought me in a gig,
 And sent me down ayont the wooden brig*
 That gangs across the little drumlie syke.†

' Then did you see no animal at all ?'
 Enquired the Judge, '—when after a brief study,
 Said Jock, ' Whilst a' was sedden to the soul,
 A' heard some crayter gie an ugly squall.
 And lookin' up, a' saw—a tinkler's cuver.'

M. N. S. I. B. S.

* Anglice—Bridge.

† Brook.