

Burns' Tribute to Title

IT is seldom in these days, says The Dundee Courier, that a hitherto unpublished poem of the great poet Burns comes to light. But Mrs. John Moffatt, St. Andrew's, is the happy possessor of such. The poem below was copied by Mrs. Moffatt's grandfather, the late Mr. Edward Sanderson, well-nigh 100 years ago.

The verses are prefaced with the following words:—"Composed by Robert Burns, and presented to the nobleman addressed upon being called up from the servants' hall (where he had been sent to dine along with them) to add to the entertainment of his company, along with which company he had been asked to go on an excursion to the Bass Rock. On presenting which he put on his hat, turned on his heel and retired."

The verses are as follows:—

"My Lord, I would not fill your chair,
 Tho' ye be proudest noble's heir.
 I came this night to join your feast
 As equal of the best and least!
 'Tis true that cash with me is scant,
 And titles trifles that I want.
 The King has never made me kneel
 To stamp my manhood with his seal.
 But what of that? The King on high
 Who took less pains with you than I,
 Has filled my bosom and my mind
 With something better in its kind
 Than your broad acres, something which
 I cannot well translate to speech.
 But by its impulse I can know
 'Tis deeds, not birth, that make men low.
 Your rank, my Lord, is but a loan!
 But mine, thank Heaven, is all my own!
 A peasant, 'tis my pride to be;
 Look round and round your hall and see
 Who boasts a higher pedigree!
 I was not fit, it seems, to dine
 With these fox-hunting heroes fine.
 But only came to bandy jests
 Among your Lordship's hopeful guests.
 There must be here some sad mistake—
 I would not play for such a stake.
 Be a buffoon for drink and meat,
 And a poor Earl's tax-paid seat!
 No, die, my heart, ere such a shame
 Descends on Robert Burns' name."