

There are some women on this creek,
Sae modest and sae mild and meek!
The deep red blush aye pentis their cheek,
They ne'er swear but when they speak.
Each ane's a Mistress too ye'll find.
To mak guid folks think that she's joined
In honest wedlock unto one
"She's your's or any other man."
But dinna fear, for me at least,
I'll never mak mysel a beast!
But let this drap—to "err is human,"
An' "Frailty thy name is woman."

"Love in itsel is very guid,
But 'tis by nae means solid fuid"—
Whan man and woman's tied thegither,
They are made one till death does sever;
So says the pastor—but is 't true?
Has Kate an' yon the self same mon?
Whan ye sit doon to eat betimes
Does this same mon fill baith ye're **WAMES?**
It may be sae, but this I ken,
Gif ye war ane ye noo are ten;
There's Jeames and Sawney, Kate and Meg,
An' Geordie wi' the crookit leg,
There's Wull and Hairry, Shuse and Jock,
Nae langer than his father's sock—
An' noo thisither brat ye've got—
Oh, Sawney! faigs, ye shud be shot!
Oure mony bairns—oure mony cares—
Oure many sant and pepper hairs!
TWA MAY MAK OOT TO LIVE AS ANE
BY PICKIN' GAE CLOSE TO THE BAN,
BUT WHAN THERE'S MAIR YE'LL FIND THIS TRUE,
THAT ILKA ANE HAS GOT A MOUT!

I'm glad to hear ye hae sic ois,
An' that ye sell ye're sax fat stots;
That a' gangs right aboot the fairm,
That Tam's feed for anither term;
An' that ye're pluin's no ahent,
That ye could pay the Laird his rent.

As water 's to a thirsty soul,
Or drinkin' toddy frae a bowl—
Wi' twa-three freen's—sae is guid news
To him wha's far frae them he lo'es (loves).

Gie my respects to your guid wife;
If ever I get hame to Fife,
I'll teach her hoo to mak loaf bread,
Wi' sour dough—oot o' HER ain head!
An' gee my love to a' ye're bairns,
To guid John Thomson o' the Cairns;
To ilka ane that speers for me,
My kind regards be sure to gie.

An' noo, dear Sawney, naething mair
I hae to say, yet canna bear
The thocht o' finishin' my rhyme,
'Tis like we pairted second time;
But I'll no fret—whate'er it seems—
Ye ken that I'm ye're true freend

JEAMES.

LETTER No. II.

[WRITTEN MARCH, 1866.]

DEAR SAWNEY,—What on earth's the matter,
Ye hinna answered my last letter?
A thocht sometimes comes i' my head
That my friend Sawney's maybe dead;
But sic a thocht I canna thole,
It grieves my very heart and soul,
An' sae I'll banish a' misgivin'
An' tak for granted that ye're livin'—
I mind me noo o' the old saw,
"That ill news faster rins than a',"
Sae gif ye're sands o' life had run
I wad a heard o' t' sure's a gun."
Ye canna surely hae forgot
Ye're auld freend Jeames, ye're brither Scot?
Ye mind in Rabie Burns' lays

What honest Tam o' Shanter says
About his ancient, drouthy crony,
The decent body, souter Johnny;
"Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither."
They had been fou for weeks thegither,
I weel believe their love wad end.
Nae surety's in a whisky freend:
A drunken chiel nae man can trust,
His word's as brittle as pie crust;
Gie me that freend that ne'er was fou,
And, Sawney, him I stand in you;
A doonright honest, sober man
As ever stood upon the lan'.
Our love was ne'er beget by drink,
But o' a purer stream, I think.
We baith were puir in warldly gear,
("Twas poverty that drove me here.")
But we were rich in haein' healib,
Itself a very mine o' wealth;
An' something o' as great a worth
As ane can ever hae on earth,
A heart that thro' misfortunes a'
Aye manfully o'ercomes them a',
An independent mind is what
"Maks man the man for a' that."
It's likely ye ne'er gill my letter,
Gif this be sae I'm still your debtor,
Or that your answer has miscarried,
Or in the mighty ocean buried
Wi' "Brother Jonathan" that gaed doon
Sometime last year near Crescent toon.
But as we canna help what's gane,
I'll try gif I can tax my brain
To gie ye a' I ken that's new
In this the land o' Cariboo.

But, first o' a' anent mysel
A word or twa I'm gann to tell:
Ye nae doobt think my pouch is lined
Wi' gowden dust in Geordie's coined,
That I'm as rich as any Jew
That swindles aff auld claes for new;
Noo, just that ye may ken my story,
I'll set my doin's a before ye.

In '63 I left my hame,
In that same year I bought a claim
Frae Cameron, Jock o' Canada—
As smart a lad 's ye ever saw,
Wha's greatest fault was name uncommon,
A gae strong likin' for a woman;
An ill loon wi' some men was Johnny,
Because he had sae muckle money!
But I hae travelled near and far
And aften hae I met wi' waur;
The claim he sell't me was nae bad,
An' ere three months I silter had,
Gin next year's spring I tried my luck
At prospeckin', but I got stuck,
An' Red Gulch eased me o' my cast
(I wish I hadna been so rash!)
Weel, I began the warid again,
An' warked for months wi' might an' main,
An' when 'twas drawin' towards the fa'
I wadna that ill aff ava,
The "Cameron" was my auld stay bye,
To feed my pouch when pumped dry.
In '65 I gaed to seek
My fortune upon Lightning Creek;
I fell in love—noo dinna start,
Dear Sawney, I ne'er lost my heart.
But ance—"the theft I've lang forgave,
Forget the thief—ne'er while I live."
But to my tale: I fell in love,
O'er head and lugs and hand and glove,
An' thocht that nane could e'er surpass
The tocher o' the "Ayrshire Lass";
I tried my best to catch her tin;
But ah, the jid, she took me in:
For four lang months I ran her drift,
Then wearied oot ga'er in a gift!
Syn'e back to Williams I dgd ca

As puir a chiel 's ye ever saw,
A summer than I stayed at hame
An' warked awa at my auld claim,
O' luck I had a real guid streak,
While's makin' thirty pounds a week,
And yet I wadna half content,
On prospeckin' I still was bent,
Had shares o'er a' the kintra side,
In shafts gann' doon thro' slum and slide,
Thocht ilka day I'd strike it big,
Sae didna mind the costs a fig,
Oh, had I kent what I ken noo
I'd sent my siller hame to you,
For lang afore the winter's snaw,
My cash took wings and flew awa,
And left me e'en without a groat,
But still an independent Scot,
A sae I mair begin anew
To fecht the ilks o' Cariboo,
"But freedom's battle once begun
Tho' baffled off is ever won."

Such, Sawney, is a mining life,
Cases like mine are unco rife.
In fae there's dozens livin' here
Hae seen hard times for mony a year,
Yet still they wrestle on thro' a'
Tho' sometimes they do rin awa',
But whan a man can do nae better
He has to leave the creek a debtor,
Ailtho' I think it is a flight
That's no just a thegither right;
HOOPER'S SAE PUIR A MAN MAY BE
HIS MOTTO SHOULD BE HONESTY;
Still here the miner on the whole
Is a straight gann' honest souk;
Wha pays his debts baith fair and free,
Gif he's the cash to pay it wi'!

There's naething on the creek but want;
In this cauld season o' the year
There's little ane can do up here,
An' wark is ut sae low a figure
As ane wad hardly pay a nigger!

There's nought but care on ilka lan',
On every hour that passes, O!
An' Sawney, man, we hae nae chance
To spark among the lassies, O!

A warldly race that riches chase,
Yet a gangs tapsel'terie, O!
An' every hour we spend at e'ea
Is spent without a dearie, O!

Last simmer we had lassies here
Frae Germany—the hurdies, O!
And troth I wot, as I'm a Scot,
They were the bonnie hurdies, O!

There was Kate and Mary, blithe and airy,
And dumpy little Lizzy, O!
An' aye they ca'd the kangaroo,
A strappin' rathin' Lizzy, O!

They danced at night in dresses light,
Frae late until the early, O!
But oh! their hearts were hard as flint,
Which vexed the laddies sairly, O!

The Dollar was their only loaf,
And that they lo'ed fu' dearly, O!
They didna care a flea for men,
Let them coort hoo'er sincerely, O!

They left the creek wi' lots o' gold,
Danced frae oor lads sae clever, O!
My blessin's on their sour kron' heads
Gif they stay awa for ever, O!

Cronics—Bonnie are the hurdies, O!
The German burdy gurdies, O!
The dafest bott that e'er I spent
Was dachin' wi' the hurdies, O!