

Raise your voice bravely to assert the right; and in your household see that it is done. Forbid the late shopping—forbid even all trading with the houses that do keep open. Think, too, it is the merry month of May—bright summer, golden autumn, are before us; then turn in thought, as you breathe the perfume of flowers, or inhale the fresh sea-breeze, to those crowded shops, and their sickly, heart-crushed denizens! Yet they *might* have the morning and evening walk in the bright summer, and in the winter the cheerful fireside, the friendly converse, and the pleasant book. Health *might* bloom on their cheeks, and joy sparkle in their eyes!

THE FIDDLE.

A SERIO-COMIC RHAPSODY; OR THE POWERS OF MUSIC AND IMAGINATION—"OW'R TRUE A TALE,"—A RHYME OF LANG SYNE.

Care worn and sad, Rab sat him down,
Whupt aff a dram, and play'd a tune,
To heaze his spirits up; 'twas done :
Rab was refresh'd,
His fiddle he gratefu' gaz'd upon,
An' thus address'd :

"Fair fa' ye, sony bit o'timmer!
Sae featly form'd.—wi' neck sae slimmer,
I wad na gie ye 's I'm a sinner,
For ony fee:
E'en bonny Meg, than wha nan's trimmer,
I'd yield to thee.

"Let Pan gae crack o' 's whistle fine,
Apollo brag o' 's lyre,—the Nine,
O musics various; but to mine,
They a' maun bow;
For wha or what, my winsome frien',
Can sing like you!

"How droll that sic a simple thing,
Wi' four sma' bits o' catgut string,
By horse hair scrap'd should instant ring,
A tone sae sweet;
Sure ilka god a help did bring,
Thee to complete!

[Here the poet is supposed suddenly to recognize, close by, the masterly touch of a friend, equally noted for his tasteful execution of favourite slow Scottish airs, and popular reels and strathspeys.]

"But, whisht!—what notes melodious float
Upo' the breeze frae yonder grot!
Blaw saft ye winds aroun' the spot;
Ye leaves lie still!
Ye burdies hush your varied note;
Learn thus to trill.

"*Roslin*! * thy mould'rin' towers may fa',
Thy rev'rend ruins fade awa,
And time his levellin' ploughshare ca'
Whare ye hae stood,
But that sweet air thy *name* will shaw,
For ay and gude.

"How saftly sighs that tender touch!
Sure music's god my hugs bewitch!
Haud there, O haud! another such!—
But, ah! its still,
Heugh! Rabbe, lad; ye'd gie, how much!
For half that skill!

"But, whisht—the strings are tun'd again,
O for anither sic a strain!
Hark! there he's to't, baith might and main!
Ay, what the deil!
Heugh! now for lads and lasses fain,
To dance a reel.

Up wi't, my lad, whae'er ye be—
Heugh! "*Moncymusk's*,"¹ the thing for me;
"*The Ruffians Rant*,"² or let me die;
Now, best of ony,
"*McDonald's Reel*,"³ bears a' the gree:
Now "*Berwick Johnny*"⁴

"Hoot, toot, (cried Rab,) I'll thole nae mair;
For partner here's my elbo' chair;
Diel fa' me, but I'll hae a steer:
Gae wa' my fiddle!"
He said, and quat the scraper dear,
And aff did sidle.

But wae's his case; a tawty peelin'
Unkent gat neth his frisky heel, an'
Ere he wist, wi' awfu' reelin'
He ow'r did cowp—
Ill starr'd Cremona wi' him wheelin',
Smash, neath his doup!

Yes; there the scatter'd flinders lie!
For ever mute; fell fancy's prey,
As Rab's poor banes can testify,
By sair felt token,
While curses follow ilka sigh,
For 's fiddle broken.

* * * * *
Ye hair-brained birkies, ane an a',
Poets, fiddlers, wits, *et cetera*,
Wha yield to Fancy's flighty ca',
Tak timous note;
And fen' your glaiket noddles a',
Frac Rab's sad lot.

* The well known favourite Scottish air of "*Roslin Castle*."
1, 2, 3, 4.—All favourite reels, well known to trippers on the light fantastic toe.