

'He has na cow—there must be some mistake.'  
'Na, na,' says Jock, 'by what the maister stated,  
A' think the beast maun hae tent the gate o't,  
Did ye no si one down among the brake?'

The worthy Judge, though on the bench severe,  
And sometimes stern in summing up a case,—  
Yet to the circle of his friends was dear;  
And if it trenched not on decorum's sphere,  
Indulged a joke in proper time and place.

This simple Scot had furnished him a clue  
To some adventure, though a little dim;  
And chuck'ling o'er it still in far review,  
Began to quiz his countryman anew,  
By asking if the cow belonged to him.

'Ou na,' says Jock, 'a' cam but here yestreen,  
And gae'd to sweer about a lot o' land  
With maister Index—a' thought he had been  
A Justice like—but he is none, I ween;  
So then he hired me just amais't off hand.'

'And how d'ye like him?' next the Judge enquir-  
ed:

'O, fine,' says Jock, 'he must be verra ritch:  
In sic a place afore a' never hired,  
Last night they gae me tea till a' was tired,  
O' that at home a' seldom had a skitch.

'There's rowth o' bread, and butter by the ell,  
And finer salmon a' hae not seen kipper'd,—  
Besides a' hae a bedroom to masel',  
And ae thing a' think sair ashamed to tell,  
It looks sae droll—they ca' me *maister Shep-herd*.'

At this the Judge's gravity took flight,  
The simple sheepishness of Jock o'ercame him:  
And laughing lustily with all his might,  
But lest he should affront the loon outright,  
Enquired what he expected they would name him.

'O, a've been aye sae muckle used wi' Jock,  
Nae other thing seems handy to me now:  
But they're a kind, obleegin', civil folk,  
'They tell'd me nae to rise till six o'clock,  
And then do naught but gang an' seek the cow.

'And where did Mr. Index bid you go?'  
Returned the Judge with more eclat than ever,  
'Why some gate here,' said Jock, 'as down be-  
low,  
It is ilka place a' ken yet though,  
But he said it wad be about the river.'

'Ye've past the river, Jock' the Judge replied:  
'Na, na,' says Jock, 'that story's no wise like,  
Ye must be fuin' but ye needna try't,

A'm surely nae sae blind as to come by't,—  
And a've cross'd naething but a wee bit syke.

A' si fu' weel that ye are makin' mirth,  
But mind ye, sir, a' noticed a good bit o't,  
For yesterday as we cam' up the firth,  
A' saw a kind o' camp like thing o' yirth,  
Stan'in' itsel' there close besido the fit o't'.

Jock in his turn began to chuckle now,  
And made his footsteps wasted time retrieve,  
Away he ran to seek the donkee cow,  
And left the Judge, as ye may read'ly trow,  
Pleased with the plot and laughing in his sleeve.

Though Mr. Index made some aberrations  
From rectitude among the softer sex,  
In other vices he held no relations—  
Lucre and ladies were his occupations,  
No failing else could fame to him annex.

True as the watchman telegraphed the hour,  
He came to breakfast home at eight o'clock,  
And thought it strange that when a quarter more,  
And stranger still when nine was passing o'er,  
That not a syllable was heard of Jock.

The bell struck one—the hour that Index dined,  
And home again as fast as he was able  
He hurried onward to the spot assigned,  
And saving Jock all else was to his mind—  
A good plain dinner ready on the table.

Dinner was finished punctual at two,  
And off the merchant started for his store:  
But as he turned at Unicke's avenue,  
There stood Judge Stewart with a civil bow,  
Ready to greet him as he passed the door.

'Good day—good day!' responded both at once,  
'What news?' said Stewart, 'did you hear th'  
alarm?'

'What 'larm?' said Index, with his eye askance,  
'Why,' says the Judge, 'I heard to-day by  
chance,  
Some one is drown'd about the North-West  
Arm.'

'Good heav'n's!' said Index, 'when was it or  
how—

'That cannot be the stranger lad of mine?'  
'No,' said the Judge, 'by what I learned just now  
It seems the man was looking for a cow,  
'And you've no dealings in the cattle line.'

'A cow!' cried Index, 'no sir—none indeed,  
But I've a donkey, and I bade him go  
Down to Fresh Water where it use to feed,  
And bring it home—but then he took no heed;  
Then is he drown'd for certain do you know?'