

Out of the song a conversation grew,  
 Politico-economic, touching on  
 The current sins and sorrows of the day  
 As set forth in the country newspaper ;  
 Their talk excused, or, oftener still, condemned  
 The reckless course that raised regretted scandals  
 Anent the iron way is meant to clasp  
 In one our eastern and our western seas,  
 So that no wheel shall run on alien ground ;  
 And then, discursively, o'er topics ranged  
 In which were frequent heard the Scottish names,  
 Mackenzie and Macdonald,—now and then  
 With passing praise of him who worthily  
 Sways the vice-regal sceptre of the State.  
 The views expressed were various as the men.  
 The eldest son who, in the course of things,  
 Hoped to be squire and colonel, had his fears  
 'Twas dangerous to give the people power ;  
 But Algy, as he was Canadian born,  
 Had in him some slight touch of democrat,  
 And on the question of their suffrages  
 Spoke for the commons. Till the lady cried :  
 "In this rude country what are politics !"  
 But mildly said the squire : "Nay, mother, nay,  
 Our country, native or adopted, is  
 As fine a country as the sun shines on,  
 And, mother, we have given it girls and boys ;  
 Pray Heaven ! no race of ours may do it wrong  
 Or vilify the source from whence they sprung."

While thus they argued, an ear-splitting scream,  
 A sound as many cats were caterwauling,  
 Mingled with grunts and uneuphonious drone,  
 Came from the barn, where a bagpiper,  
 As is the wont of such musicians, strutted  
 Like to the Gothic cock before Sedan,  
 And marked the time, as loud his chanter blew  
 To Rothiemurchers or McDonald's reel,  
 (For many of the squire's most trusted men  
 Were natives of the kindly land of cakes.)  
 One other master made the orchestra,  
 A fiddler who knew well where ale would flow,  
 And sawed away at threadbare melodies,  
 With nodding head and honest rasp of bow  
 Whenever feast was held or frolic made,  
 And in the pauses of the bagpiper  
 Drew shrill *qforzaudos* and *arpeggios*  
 To let the world know the dance was on.

Up rose the girls laughing, and anon  
 Like swallows pressing round the chimney place  
 With twittering, bird-like ways, right fair to see,  
 In whispered underbreath arranged for partners,  
 And all had been as planned, had not an elf,  
 Tiny, a little mayflower maid, not yet  
 Admitted to the conclave, cunningly  
 Crept round their skirts and told her favorite Sam  
 The secret roll of the conspiracy,  
 Whereon he, boldly taking heart of grace,  
 Advanced and begged the honor, so-and-so,  
 And to the young men's infinite chagrin  
 Walked off the fairest maiden of them all.