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ORIGINAL POETRY.

(For the Literary Transcript.)

SCOTTISH WAR SONG.

Hark! heard ye the war shout! the combat's begun!
And many a trophy this day shall be won;
See, see how the banner floats proudly on high,
As fluttering to welcome the fierce battle cry.

The steel to your steeds my brave bonnets all,
Tis the warcry of Scotland, let's answer the call;
Shake out the blue thistle flag over the fight,
To drunch in the blood of the Southron ere night.

In, in to the revel, the Douglas is here
With many a true sword, and many a spear,
And yonder, see Percy's flag floating afar—
The war light of England, a brave beacon star.

But ere the night sky throw her shroud on the lens,
Oh! broken, or brighter, that banner shall be,
For the Douglas hath sworn that the last look of day,
Shall turn from a Douglas or Percy in clay.

And see to the dust it already is borne,
The pennon of Percy, down, shattered, and torn,
While loud o'er the crash goes the dangour on high,
"A Douglas!" "St. Andrew for Scotland," the cry.

A. G. L.

THE SIMPLE MAN IS THE BEGGAR'S BROTHER.

"No doubt o' that Nicholas," said she, "but while ye are your own master ye are also my husband and the father o' my family, and it behoves me to look after ye."

"Look after yourself!" said I, quite pettily—for I am always very high and independent when I take a glass extra—ye wouldna take me to be a simple man then.

"There is no use in throwing yourself into a rage," added she, "for ye ken as weel as me Nicholas that ye never take a glass more than ye ought to do, but ye invariably make a fool o' yourself by say o' do, and some-body or other imposes on ye. And ye are so vexed with yourself the next day, that there is nae living in the house wi' ye. Ye weak a, the shame and ill-nature that ye feel on account o' your conduct upon us."

"Nicholas!" cried I, striking my hand upon the table, as though I had been an emperor, "what in the name o' wonder do ye mean? Who imposes upon me?—who dare?—tell me that!—I say tell me that?" and I struck my hand upon the table again.

"Owre many impose upon ye my man," quoth she, "and I hope nobody has been doing it the night, for I never saw ye come home in this key, but that somebody had got ye to do something that ye was to repent afterwards."

"Confound ye Nancy!" cried I very importantly, whipping up the tails o' my coat in a passion, and turning my back to the fire, while I gied a tort o' stagger, and my head knocked against the chimney-piece—confound ye Nancy I say, what do ye mean? Simple man as ye ca' me, and as ye take me to be, do ye think that I am to come home to get naething but a dish o' tongues from you?—Bring me my supper."

"O certainly, ye shall have your supper," said she, "if ye came it—only, I think that your bed is the fittest place for ye. O man," added she in a lower tone, half speaking to herself, "but ye'll be sorry for this the morn."

"What the mischief are ye muttering at?" cried I, "get me my supper."

"O ye shall have that," said she very calmly, for she was, and is, a quiet woman, and one that would put up with a great deal, rather than allow her voice to be heard by her neighbours.

My head was in a queer state the next day, for ye see I had as good as five glasses, and I never could properly stand above two. I was quite ashamed to look my wife in the face, and I was so certain that I had been guilty o' some absurdity or other, that my cheeks burned just under the dread o' its being mentioned to me. Neither could I drive the idea of having put my name upon the back of the bill from my mind. I was conscious that had

done wrong. Yet, thought I, Mr. Swanston is a very decent man, he is a very respectable man, he has always borne an excellent character, and is considered a good man both amongst men o' business and in society, therefore I have nothing to apprehend. I, according to his own confession, did him a good turn, and I could in no way implicate myself in his transaction by merely getting my name upon the back o' a bit o' paper to oblige him. So I thought with myself, and I became perfectly satisfied that I had done a good action, without in the slightest degree injuring my family.

But just exactly six months and three days afterwards, a clerk belonging to a branch o' the Commercial Bank called upon me, and after making his bow, said he—"Mr. Middlemiss, I have a bill to present to you."

"A bill!" said I, "what sort o' a bill sir?—Is it an auctioneer's for a roup o' furniture, or a sale o' stock?"

He laughed quite good-natured like in my face, and pulling out the bit stamped paper that I had been madman enough to sign my name upon the back o', "It is that sir," said he.

"That?" cried I, "what in the earthly globe have I to do wi' that? It is Mr. Swanston's business,—not mine. I only put my name upon the back o' it to oblige him. Why do ye bring it to me?"

"You are responsible sir," said the clerk. "Responsible!" the meikle mischief? I exclaimed, "what am I responsible for sir?—I only put my name down to oblige him I tell ye! For what am I responsible?"

"For three hundred pounds, and legal interest for six months," said my unwelcome visitor, "his face that showed as little concern for the calamity in which through mere simplicity and goodness of heart I was involved, as if he had ordered me to take a pipe and blow three hundred soapbubbles!"

"O lack-o'-me!" cried I, "is that possible? Is Mr. Swanston's a villain? I am ruined—I am clean ruined. Who in all the world will tell Nancy?"

But that I found was a question that I did not need to ask, for she kenned almost as soon as I did myself.

I need not say that I had three hundred pounds, interest and all, packed and farthing to pay. Though by my folly and simplicity I had brought my wife and family to the verge o' ruin, she never was the woman to fling my silly conduct in my teeth; and all that she ever did say to me upon the subject was—"Weel, Nicholas, this is the first o' your bill transactions, or o' your being caution for our body, and I trust it has proved such a lesson as I hope ye will never need another."

"O Nancy woman!" cried I, "dinna speak to me! for I could knock my brains out! I am the greatest simpleton upon the face o' the earth."

Now, that was one instance o' my simple conduct and its consequences, and I will just relate to you another or two. I had bought some ninety pounds worth o' flax from a merchant in Glasgow, for which I was to receive six months credit. Weel, he came round for his money at the appointed time, and I paid him accordingly, and got a line off his hand in acknowledgment. On that very day, and just about an hour after he had left, Nancy says to me—"Nicholas, I dinna owre and aboon like that man that ye ha'e been dealing wi' the day. He has owre meikle gab, and scraping and owing for me. I wish he may be honest. Have ye got a receipt from him?"

"Certainly," says I; "do ye think I would pay any body money without one?"

"And I hope it is on a stamp," said she.

"A stamp!" quoth I, "a stamp!—hoots woman! I wonder to see ye so suspicious. Ye dinna take a' the world be rogues?"

"No," said she, "I do not, and I should be sorry if I did; but if ye ha'e taken a receipt from him without a stamp ye are a simple man—that is all that I say."

"A simple man?" cried I, "gracious! what does he woman mean? Ye are for ever saying that I am simple this and simple that!

I wish that ye would explain yourself, and say what he wish to be after! Where or how am I simple?"

"It's not been one lesson that ye've had Nicholas," said she, "nor ten nor twenty either, but it is every week, I may say every day wi' ye. There is perpetually some person or another showing ye that the simple man is the beggar's brother, and ye canna see it, or ye winna regard it. But ye will perhaps be brought to think o't, when neither your burns nor me have a stool to sit upon."

"Woman!" exclaimed I, "flesh and blood cannot stand your tongue! Ye would exasperate the patience o' Job! What is it that ye wish to be after?—what would ye have me to do?"

"O, it is o' na use getting into a passion about it," said she, "for that winna mend the matter. But there is only this in it Nicholas, I would have ye to be as sharp in your dealings in the world, as ye are wi' me when I happen to speak a word to ye for your good."

There was so much truth in what she said, and she always spoke in such a calm, good-natured manner, that it was impossible to continue to be in a passion wi' her. So I said no more about the subject, but I thought to myself, that as I knew very little about the man I had dealt with, it would have been quite as safe to have had the receipt upon a stamp.

A few months afterwards I saw his name amongst the list o' bankrupts, and to my very great astonishment I received a letter from a writer, demanding payment from me o' the ninety pounds for the flax which I had already paid.

"The thing is unreasonable altogether," said I; "here is a man that hasna paid once himself, and he would come upon me to pay twice! But I'll see him far enough first!"

I paid no attention to the letter, and I was summoned to appear before the writer, and the three men that were called the trustees to the bankrupt's estate. (Deal kens where the estate lay.)

"Sir," said they to me, as haughtily as if I had been a criminal before them; wherefore do ye refuse to pay the ninety pounds?"

"For the best o' a' reasons, gentlemen," said I very civilly, "and that simply is, because I have paid it already."

"What proof can ye show for that?" asked the writer.

"Proof sir," said I, "here is a line off the man's own hand, acknowledging the payment o' every farthing o' the money."

"Let me look at it," says he.

So as honesty never needs to be feared for what it does, I handed him the bit paper. But after looking at it for a moment, he held it up between his finger and thumb, and wi' a kind o' sarcastic laugh, inquired—"Where is the stamp?"

The sweet broke over me from head to foot. "Sir," said I, "what has a stamp to do wi' it?—ye are as bad as my wife Nancy! Is that document in the hand-writing o' the man himself, not proof positive that I have paid the money?"

The writer shook his head, and a gentleman that was standing near me, and who was very probably in a similar predicament to myself, said—"Unstamped receipts sir may do very well, where ye find a world o' purely honest men,—but they winna do where ye arena sure but ye may be dealing wi' a rogue."

"Gentlemen!" cried I, "have ye really the cruelty and injustice to say that I am to pay that money over again?"

"Owre again or not owre again," said the writer, "ye must pay it, otherwise summary proceedings will be entered against ye. I have already paid it in the way ye say, it is only making good the proverb, that 'the simple man is the beggar's brother!'"

"O confound ye!" cried I, "for a parcel o' unprincipled knaves,—that is exactly what my wife says, and had I followed her advice, I would never have seen one o' your faces."

However, the ninety pounds I had to pay

again, down upon the nail; and that was another o' the beautiful effects o' my simplicity. I didna ken how in the universal globe I was to muster courage to look my wife in the face again. Yet all that she said was—"O Nicholas! Nicholas!—would ye only be less simple!"

"Heigho!" said I, "dinna talk about it Nancy,—I'm owre grieved as it is,—I can stand no more!"

The loss o' the three hundred pounds wi' the bill business, and the ninety just mentioned, made me to stagger, and those that knew about the circumstances, wondered how I bore them. But I had just begun a new concern, which was the manufacture o' table-cloths upon a new principle, and with exceedingly splendid patterns. I got an extraordinary sale for them, and orders came pouring in upon me. But I had to employ more men to fulfil them, and their wages were to pay every Saturday, while the remittances did not come in by half so regular as the orders, and I found it was not easy to pay men without receiving money for their work. Had I been a man o' a great capital the case might have been different. There was one day, however, that a gentleman had had dealt wi' me very extensively called upon me, and he gave me a very excellent order. But although he had seen a great deal o' my goods, I never had seen the shadow o' his cash. I canna say that I exactly liked his manner o' doing business; yet I couldna for the breath that was in my body, have the face to say an impertinent thing to one, and I was just telling him that his order should be attended to, when my wife, whereas sitting in a room off the parlour, gave a tap upon the door, and asking the gentleman to excuse me for a minute, I stepped ben, and I half whispered to her—"What is it dear?"

"Has that man spoken about paying ye?" said she.

"No," said I.

"But I think it is time he was," quoth she, "before ye trust him any farther. Remember that ye have men's wages to pay, and accounts to pay, and a wife and family to support, and those things canna be done upon nothing."

"Very true dearie," said I, "but ye wouldna have me to speak abruptly to the gentleman or to affront him?"

"It will affront no gentleman," replied she, "at least no honest man, to ask him for what is your own. Therefore ask him for your money. Remember Nicholas, that the simple man is the beggar's brother."

"O dear woman!" says I, "ye ken I dinna like to hear these words. I'll ask the gentleman to pay me,—to be sure I will,—and what is the use o' your keeping tease, teasing at a body, just as if I were a simpleton."

"So I slipped back to the customer, and after a few words about his order, I said to him—"

"Sir, ye understand that I have men's wages to pay, and accounts to pay, and a wife and family to support, and its no little that does it; therefore if ye could just oblige me wi' the settlement o' your account, it would be a favour."

"My dear Mr. Middlemiss," said he, "I am extremely sorry that you did not inform me that you were in want of cash sooner, as I have just, before I saw you, parted with all I can spare. But if you be very much in want of it, I can give you a note,—that is a bill for the money,—at three or six months. You can get it cashed you know, and it is only minus the discount, and that is not much upon your profit—eh?"

"Begging your pardon sir," says I, but, I take it I would have my name to write on the back o' it."

"Certainly sir," said he, "you knew that follows as a matter of course."

"Yes sir," continued I, "and I have found that it sometimes follows also as a matter o' coercion! I never had to do wi' what ye call a bill in my life but once, which was merely writing my name upon the back o' it, and that cost me three hundred pounds—exactly sixteen pounds, two shillings and three pence and a fraction, for every letter in the