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TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

On turning one down with the plough in April, 1786.

Wee, modest, crimson, tipped flow'r,
Tho's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my pow'r
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet!
Bending thee mang' the dewy weat!
Wee spreckl'd breast.
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east,

Could blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm.
Scarce rear'd above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield,
But thou, beneath the random bield
O'clod, or stane
Adorns the listie stibble-field.
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom unsward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maids,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betray'd
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee all soil'd is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple Bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd
Unskillful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n
By human pride or cunning driv'n
To mis'r'y's brink
Till, wrenched of ev'ry stay but Heav'n
He, ruin'd, sink!

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the daisy's fate
That fate is thine—no distant date
Stern ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom.

—BURNS.

TO A MOUSE

On turning her up in her nest with a plow in November.

Wee sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
'Twad be laith to rin and chase thee,
Wee murdering pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
An' fellow mortal!

I doubt, na, whyles, but thou mayst thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessing w' the lave
And never miss't.

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the winds are strewin!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' faggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell and keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell
Till crash! the cruel coulter pass'd
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
Has cost thee many a weary nibble!
How thou's turned out for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

But, mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain
The best laid schemes o' mice and men
Gang aft a-gley,
An' leave us naught but grief and pain,
For promised joy.

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee;
But, och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see
I guess an' fear.

—BURNS.