

"Up then crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the gray;
The eldest to the youngest said,
'Tis time we were away;

'The cock doth crawl, the day doth daw,
The channering worm doth chide;
Gin we be miss'd out o' our place,
A sair pain we maun bide."

'Lie still, lie still but a little wee while,
Lie still but if we may;
Gin my mother should miss us when she wakes,
She'll gae mad ere it be day."

In the confusion of ideas as shown in the birch gathered at the gates of Paradise, the penance dreaded in case of their absence being discovered, and the chiding of the grave's channering or fretting worm, there are striking illustrations of the undefined blending of conceptions of an immaterial existence wholly apart from the body; with the difficulty, as common to the mind of the English peasant as to that of the Australian savage, of conceiving any clear realisation of the disembodied spirit, or of death distinct from the "wormy grave." The same homely pathos and tenderness intermingle with a like confused interblending of the grave and the spiritual life, in "Clerk Saunders," "William's Ghost," and other Scottish ballads of this class. In both the dead are represented as reclaiming their faith and troth, without which they cannot rest in their graves. In the former ballad, Clerk Saunders, a noble lover who had been slain in the arms of May Margaret, the King's daughter, returns after "a twelvemonth and a day," and standing at her bower window an hour before the dawn, addresses her:—

"Give me my faith and troth again,
True love, as I gi'ed them to thee."

Before she will yield to his request, she insists on her lover coming within her bower and kissing her, though he warns her that his mouth is cold and smells of the grave. She questions him about the other world, and especially of what becomes of women "who die in strong travailing." He replies in the same simple style of homely pathos as in the ballad already quoted:—

"Their beds are made in the heavens high,
Down in the foot of our good Lord's knee,
Weel set about wi' gillyflowers;
I wot sweet company for to see."

"Oh cocks are crowing a merry mldnight,
I wot the wild-fowl are boding day;
The psalms of heaven will soon be sung,
And I ere now will be missed away."

May Margaret returns her lover's troth by a curiously literal process, thereby freeing the disembodied spirit of a tie which still

bound it to earth, and he leaves her with the tender assurance that

"Gin ever the dead come for the quick,
Be sure, Margaret, I'll come for thee."

But she follows the departing spirit without waiting to cover her naked feet; and then there once more appears the same simple child-like confusion of ideas which makes the grave not merely the portal to the spirit-land, but the sole spirit-world:—

"'Is there ony room at your head, Saunders?
Is there ony room at your feet?
Or ony room at your side, Saunders,
Where faun, faun, I wad sleep?'"

'There's nae room at my head, Margaret,
There's nae room at my feet;
My bed it is full lowly now;
Among the hungry worms I sleep."

'Cauld mould is my covering now,
But, and my winding-sheet;
The dew it falls nae sooner down
Than my resting-place is weat."

'But plait a wand o' the bonnie birk,
And lay it on my breast;
And gae ye hame, May Margaret,
And wish my saul gude rest."

Such confused ideas of Paradise and Purgatory, of the world beyond the grave, the final resting-place of the soul, and that where the body lies decaying in its "wormy bed," all illogically jumbled together without any conscious inconsistency, is of common occurrence in the early ballads. It represents the ideas of an age in which a belief in the immortality of the soul had been inculcated and inherited through many generations, and was entertained unquestioningly by all. Such embodiments of current popular thought may therefore be accepted as apt illustrations of how impossible it is to try by any standard of logical consistency the crude attempts of the savage mind to define its beliefs on the same subject. What shall we make—in view of such illogical opinions perpetuated for centuries in the most favorite popular forms, among a civilized Christian peasantry,—of such nice distinctions as that attempted to be drawn by Captain Burton, and quoted with highest approval, of the negro's belief in a ghost but not in a spirit; in a present immaterial life, but not in a future one? On evidence which seems far more indisputable than any definitions that he could possibly obtain of the negro's discriminating belief between ghosts and spirits, he may affirm that the Scottish peasantry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries believed that heaven and the grave were one and the same place.