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AND
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FOR THE CANADIAN CRAFTSMAN.]

TO MARY IN HEAVEN.

The Celebrated Poem by Robt. Burns, With Explanatory Notes by Dr. Rob Morris.

It is hard to read these lines, "Mary in Heaven," without tears. Even without the accompanying history, though the name of the departed and the name of the poet who wrote it may be unknown, few but must pause after perusal, and remove a certain mistiness from the vision.

Thou lingering star, with lessening ray,
That lovest to greet the early morn,
Again thou usherest in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallowed grove
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love!
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace,
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thickening
green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twined amorous round the raptured scene:
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray,
Till too, too soon the glowing west
Proclaim'd the speed of winged day.

Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care:
Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

My space does not permit a detailed account of the connection between Burns and Mary Campbell, but the reader shall have facts to

elucidate the poem. In the spring of 1786, Burns was released from his marriage-covenant with Jean Armour, and formed another a few weeks later with Mary Campbell. In the song of Highland Mary, which I give further on, he speaks of "The Castle of Montgomery" where she lived. This was that of Coilsfield, near Tarbotton, the property of Hugh Montgomery, who became in 1796, twelfth Earl of Eglinton. (Hugh was a skilful musician and composed "Lady Montgomery's Reel," "The Ayrshire Lassies," and other popular pieces.) Among the dairy-women of the castle we find one Mary Campbell, a young woman, formerly from Campbell-town, a highland place in Argyleshire. She is said to have been handsome, rather than lovely; but she had the neat foot, and the low melodious voice which entered in Burns' ideals of female attractiveness. He was furthermore delighted with her good sense, and on Sundays loved to show her his favorite walks on the banks of the Ayr, in the woods of Coilsfield, and by the stream, where a thorn tree is still pointed