

SONG—THE DAY RETURNS, MY BOSOM BURNS.¹

TUNE—"Seventh of November."

"I composed this song out of compliment to one of the happiest and worthiest married couples in the world, Robert Riddell, Esq., of Glenriddell, and his lady. At their fireside I have enjoyed more pleasant evenings than at all the houses of fashionable people in the country put together; and to their kindness and hospitality I am indebted for many of the happiest hours in my life."—*Burns' notes to Johnson's Museum.*

The day returns, my bosom burns,
The blissful day we twa did meet,
Tho' winter wild in tempest toil'd,
Ne'er summer-sun was half sae sweet.
Than a' the pride that loads the tide,
And crosses o'er the sultry line;
Than kingly robes, than crowns and globes,
Heaven gave me more,—it made thee mine!

While day and night can bring delight,
Or nature aught of pleasure give;
While joys above my mind can move,
For thee, and thee alone, I live!
When that grim foe of life below
Comes in between to make us part;
The iron hand that breaks our band,
It breaks my bliss,—it breaks my heart.

A MOTHER'S LAMENT FOR THE DEATH OF HER SON.²

As to the origin of these lines see letter of Burns to Mrs. Dunlop, September 27th, 1788.

Fate gave the word, the arrow sped,
And pierc'd my darling's heart:
And with him all the joys are fled
Life can to me impart.
By cruel hands the sapling drops,
In dust dishonour'd laid:
So fell the pride of all my hopes,
My age's future shade.

¹ The song is transcribed into a letter to Miss Chalmers, dated 16th September, 1788. The air, which displays very little musical talent, is the composition of Mr. Riddell himself, who named it from the day of his marriage, The Seventh of November.

² Burns says himself:—"The 'Mother's Lament' was composed partly with a view to Mrs. Fergusson of Craigdarroch, and partly to the worthy patroness of my early unknown muse, Mrs. Stewart of Afton." Mrs. Fergusson's son died November 19, 1787, at the

age of eighteen, after leaving college. Mrs. Stewart of Stair, the early patroness whom Burns had complimented in the "Brigs of Ayr," lost her only son, Alexander Gordon Stewart, only some days later (at Strassburg, 5th December, 1787); and the circumstances of the two mothers resembling each other so closely it is not to be wondered at that Burns inclosed a copy of this lament to Mrs. Stewart also, without subjecting himself to the charge of cheap sympathy and idly-feigned poetic pains.