

Then I laughed and joked—my language
 Hiding half my thoughts the while,
 Smiled upon his inexperience—
 He did not return the smile.

Than I sang a jolly ditty,
 Sang a ditty of mine own,
 And he set my heart a-dancing
 When he cried, "Well done! well done"

Then I said, "And will you listen,
 Verse of mine while I rehearse!"
 But the old man shrugged his shoulders—
 "I don't know the use of verse."

Should I wonder? his the training
 To toil on from day to day;
 'Twas not learning, but hard labour
 That had made his tresses grey.

When the flask of wine was emptied,
 I snatched up a pen to keep
 Record of a passing fancy,
 And the old man—fell asleep.

Then my mother entered, asking
 Hundred, thousand questions then;
 "This and that and t'other tell me—
 Fling away that dirty pen."

And I listened to my mother's
 Hundred, thousand questionings,
 Asking, answering one another's
 Talk of women, men, and things.

And I thought—the thought was dearer
 Than the loudest sounds of mirth;
 Oh! I have the dearest mother—
 Dearest mother on the earth!

The simplicity and verisimilitude of this picture will strike those who have returned home after long absence, especially good-natured scapegraces, who find a father's and mother's love stronger than a prodigal's follies. How kind and filial he was, flows forth in another song, relative to the hard lot of his old father, after he had lost his all by the overflow of the Danube in 1838, when the poet was only 15 years of age. These lines are addressed

TO MY FATHER.

Here where you must travel far, before the mountains
 Rise above the boundaries of the Netherland,
 Here I love to look on nature's quiet beauty,
 Freedom and repose surround me where I stand:
 Near the little hut in which I find my dwelling,
 Where the sounds of mirth their joyous echoes spread,
 Here an ancient man is master of the household—
 Blessings, blessings fall upon his hoary head!