

boy from her long ago, but she would never consent.

I shall do myself the very great pleasure to call for you when I come to town, and repay you the sum your goodness shall have advanced. . . . and most obedient.

R. B.

No. XLV.

DUMFRIES, 15th December, 1791.

I have some merit, my ever dearest of women, in attracting and securing the heart of "Clarinda." In her I met with the most accomplished of all womankind, the first of all God's works; and yet I, even I, had the good fortune to appear amiable in her sight.

By the by, this is the sixth letter that I have written you since I left you;<sup>1</sup> and if you were an ordinary being, as you are a creature very extraordinary—an instance of what God Almighty in the plenitude of his power, and the fulness of his goodness can make!—I would never forgive you for not answering my letters.

I have sent in your hair, a part of the parcel you gave me, with a measure, to Mr. Bruce the jeweller in Prince's Street, to get a ring done for me. I have likewise sent in the verses "On Sensibility," altered to

Sensibility how charming,  
Dearest Nancy, thou canst tell, &c.

to the editor of the "Scots Songs," of which you have three volumes, to set to a most beautiful air—out of compliment to the first of women, my ever-beloved, my ever-sacred "Clarinda." I shall probably write you tomorrow. In the meantime, from a man who is literally drunk, accept and forgive!!

R. B.

<sup>1</sup> In letter xlv. Burns speaks of his intention of visiting Edinburgh within a few days. He reached that city on the 29th November, and spent over a week in it. In the softened feelings arising from the contemplation of her approaching voyage to Jamaica to join her husband, Clarinda relented so far as to allow her platonic lover to call on her. Their last meeting took place on Tuesday evening the 6th December. The reconciliation seems to have been complete and the parting exquisitely tender. From the context it appears that Burns resumed the correspondence with all his former eagerness, but that the lady was not so liberal in her replies.

No. XLVI.

DUMFRIES, 27th Dec. 1791.

I have yours, my ever dearest Madam, this moment. I have just ten minutes before the post goes; and these I shall employ in sending you some songs I have just been composing to different tunes, for the "Collection of Songs" of which you have three volumes, and of which you shall have the fourth:

Ae fond kiss and then we sever;  
Ae fareweel, and then for ever, &c.<sup>2</sup>

Behold the hour, the boat arrive!  
My dearest Nancy, O farewell, &c.<sup>3</sup>

Ance mair I hail thee, thou gloomy December!  
Ance mair I hail thee wi' sorrow and care, &c.<sup>4</sup>

The rest of this song is on the wheels.  
Adieu. Adieu.<sup>5</sup>

R. B.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iii. p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. iii. p. 254.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. iii. p. 122.

<sup>5</sup> The lady's departure from Scotland was gradually drawing nearer. On the 25th Jany. 1792 (his birthday) she addressed him a letter which, as being the last of the correspondence on her part which is preserved, and otherwise as being characteristic and interesting, we give in full:—

"25th January, 1792.

"Agitated, hurried to death, I sit down to write a few lines to you, my ever dear, dear friend. We are ordered aboard on Saturday to sail on Sunday. And now, my dearest sir, I have a few things to say to you, as the last advice of her, who could have lived or died with you! I am happy to know of your applying so steadily to the business you are engaged in; but, oh remember, this life is a short passing scene! Seek God's favour—keep His commandments—be solicitous to prepare for a happy eternity! There, I trust, we will meet, in perfect and never ending bliss. Read my former letters attentively; let the religious tenets there expressed sink deep into your mind; meditate on them with candour, and your accurate judgment must be convinced that they accord with the words of Eternal Truth! Laugh no more at holy things, or holy men: remember, 'without holiness, no man shall see God.' Another thing, and I have done: as you value my peace, do not write me to Jamaica, until I let you know you may with safety. Write Mary often. She feels for you! and judges of your present feelings by her own. I am sure you will be happy to hear of my happiness: and I trust you will—soon. If there is time, you may drop me a line ere you go, to inform me if you get this, and another letter I wrote you on the 21st, which I am afraid of having been neglected to be put into the post-office.

"So it was the *Roselle*, you were to have gone in! I read your letter to-day, and reflected deeply on the ways of Heaven! To us they often appear dark and doubtful; but let us do our duty faithfully, and sooner

I suppose, neglecting to Europe<sup>1</sup>—a indifferent t relating to ; to guess and once had th to be no mor are these— never taste what drives lection of j is not lang derstand it of Feeling : bosom-choi as recolle are capable of Death a Being—co —But, hu is in the r

But, M madnes, return; a which Mi is restore tends Mis Two of m and her shire, w found ab moving : I pres

or later w God Omr here cau mighty G blessed f His glory friend,

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. in August Correspo Peacock of his f Miss P. turned, letter, wards.

<sup>2</sup> No c