

greatly improved. He also gained a greater knowledge of composition, through the literary correspondence which he kept up with his schoolfellows.

He now had a strong idea of entering the matrimonial state, but his limited means preventing him from taking this step, he removed to the town of Irvine for the purpose of becoming a flax-dresser. In this attempt to improve his fortune he was unsuccessful, for the shop in which he was employed was burned, and he returned home penniless.

During his stay at Irvine he read some of Ferguson's poems, which were very helpful to him, as they aroused his poetic powers from the torpor in which they had fallen, and in a great measure determined the Scottish character of his poetry. Here also he made some friends who had a great influence over him, and, as he himself said, "not an influence for good, but rather for evil," and from this time there was a marked change in his conduct.

Soon after his return from his unsuccessful venture at Irvine his father died, leaving the support of the family to devolve mainly on him. He leased a farm, and the four years which he spent upon it were the most important of his life. It was here he felt that nature had designed him for a poet, and his genius began to develop itself in poems which have given to his name much of its glory.

The farm proving a failure, he determined to go to Jamaica to seek his fortune, and to procure means to enable him to make the journey he published a volume of his poems, which were everywhere received with delight. Yielding to the persuasion of some of his friends, he abandoned the idea of going to Jamaica and went to Edinburgh, where he soon found himself the centre of attraction among the literary men of the time.

After spending some time there he returned home, where he was soon afterwards married to Miss Armour, and once more settled down to a happy farmer's life. But he was not destined to remain in quiet very long, for about this time he received an appointment under government, and the duties of his office requiring that he should spend the greater part of his time in travelling, he finally abandoned the farm and settled in Dumfries. In his travels through the country he met with many temptations; his works had made him universally known, and he was therefore a welcome guest wherever he went. Being frequently called upon to share in the revels of the idle and dissolute, it is to be feared he was too often found in their company. In Dumfries he was exposed to still greater temptations than in the country, and his dissipation became more habitual, although it has been stated on good authority that he was seldom intoxicated.

Whatever may have been the extent of his dissipation, his powers as a poet remained unimpaired. It was at this time that he wrote "Tam o' Shanter" and some of his finest lyrics and songs. From his youth he had been troubled with palpitation of the heart. This was probably increased by his intemperate habits, which became more frequent towards the close of his life. In 1796 he was seized with rheumatic fever, from which he never recovered.

Thus, at the early age of thirty-seven, died Robert Burns, one of the greatest poets whom Scotland has produced.
Dor.

TID-BITS.

"FLIRT."

"Scene in Dodge."

Two spoons missing.

Who fell over the wheel-barrow on Sunday evening?

Which one of the ministerial students kills two birds with one stone every week?

A sofa in a cosy parlor on a fine January afternoon, with just room enough for two.(?)

Late, late, so late ye cannot enter now! Yes, you can, if you break a pane of glass!

Boots and shoes repaired at shortest notice. Ladies' wear a specialty. Apply to No. 6.

One of the Kings is on the fence. Some Day-iv-es not careful he will get knocked off.

The boys feel hurt to think that the ladies won't go along with them in the "cushioned chariot."

Professor (to lady student chewing tutti-frutti): "Young ladies are supposed to chew nothing but tobacco."

One of the young ladies at the last reception had a Slipp in No. 4. It proved quite serious at the time, but she is slowly recovering.

We were somewhat surprised on entering the bath-room one evening about 9.30 to find one of the boys taking a bath in full dress.

Was it the new fan-register or the lady's photo that proved such an attraction to the zealous theologian on the night of the ladies' reception?

Lady teacher: "Do you think flour is good for the