

Oh! Blame Not the Bard.

BY THOS. MOORE.
Oh! blame not the bard, if he fly to the bowers,
Where Pleasure lies, carelessly smiling at Fame;

ELLEN DUNCAN.

There are some griefs so deep and overwhelming, that even the best exertions of friendship and sympathy are unequal to the task of soothing or dispelling them. Such was the grief of Ellen Duncan, who was silently weeping in her lone cottage on the borders of Glasgow county at that time in a frightful state of anxiety and confusion.

tin' how you'll miss the drop ov milk, an' the bit of fresh butter, for whin we part wid the poor baste, you won't have even thin to comfort you."
"Indeed, an' I do miss them, Ow'n," she answered, "shure its no matter, considerin' the bein' turned out ov one's home into the world. Remember the cow sayin' ov, 'out ov two evils always choose the laste' an' so, darlin', jist do whatever you think is fur the best."

After this conversation, it was agreed on by both that Owen should set out the next day but one for the town, to try and dispose of the "cow, the crathur?" and although poverty had begun to grind them a little, still they had enough to eat, and slept tranquilly. However, it so happened that the very morning on which he had appointed to set out, "Black Bess" was seized for a long arrear of a tax that had not been either asked or paid there for some time, and driven off, with many others belonging to his neighbors, to be sold. Now, you must know, good reader, that the very morning on which he had appointed to set out, "Black Bess" was seized for a long arrear of a tax that had not been either asked or paid there for some time, and driven off, with many others belonging to his neighbors, to be sold.

Some days after, the whole country was in a tumult—Daly, "the prothor," was found murdered in the centre of the road, and there was no clue perceptible, by which the perpetrators of the crime could be discovered. The very day before, Owen had borrowed the game-keeper's gun, to go, as he said, to a wild, mountainous part of the country to shoot hares; and from this circumstance, and his not having returned the day after, a strong feeling of suspicion against him was in the mind of most. In fact, on the very evening that he had represented Ellen sitting in tears, the police had come to the cabin in search of him; and their report to the magistrate was, that he had absconded with the whole state of mind.

"Ellen, my darlin', it was answered, "I know you'd be glad to get me back, and he would, again and again, her burning lips: "but what do you name, acushla? What reports do you spake ov, an' ov what am I accused?"
"Och, thin, Owen, I'm glad you didn't even hear ov id; an' the police here, acushla, the hang on make you pres'er. Shure, avick, Billy Daly, the prothor, that seized you Black Bess, was murdered the very morning you went to shoot the lures; an' on account ov yer borryin' the gun, an' threatenin' him the day ov the sale, they say it was you that done id; and I got thin all the lie, fur I knew you worked intid down, an' I'll get you something to eat. Och, but I'm glad that yer returned safe!"

little thought, on my return, that I'd be accused ov so black a crime, darlin'; but I hope I'll be all fur the best. I little thought I'd see the day that you'd be suspected ov murder."
"Och, shure enough, by shemmas Dyal's, I hope I'll be all fur the best. I little thought I'd see the day that you'd be suspected ov murder."

"Well, Ellen, aron, all's in it, it can't be helped. But, as I was sayin'—when I left this, I cut across by shemmas Dyal's, I hope I'll be all fur the best. I little thought I'd see the day that you'd be suspected ov murder."
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When he was finally removed, she seemed to lose all power; but for the arm of a bystander would have fallen to the ground. It was not without assistance that she was at length enabled to reach her cabin. It is strange how much the outward circumstances, and how his pride and strength may be entirely overcome by disheartening appearances! So it was with Owen, although constantly visited in prison by his faithful wife—although conscious of receiving assurances of hope from a numerous circle of friends—yet still his spirit drooped; the gloom of imprisonment, the idea of danger, the ignominy of public execution, and all the horrors of innocent conviction gradually wore away his mental strength; and when the assizes time approached, he was but a thin shadow of the former bluff, healthy Owen Duncan. In so short a time as this, care and harrowing thought exhibit its influence on the human frame!

Never was there a finer or more sed in a day of trial. The court-house was crowded to suffocation, the mob outside fearfully numerous, and never before, perhaps, was Emis in such a state of feverish excitement. Daly's murder was as no light in the minds of all, in comparison with Duncan's accusation. All the forenoon was an occurrence of too frequent repetition to be very much thought of; but the latter—namely, Owen's being suspected—was a subject of the extreme wonder. His former high character—his sobriety—his quietness, and his being a native of the town, in some measure accounted for this latter feeling; and there was an inward conviction in most men's

hands that he was guiltless of the crime for which he was accused. Although the court-house was crowded, yet the prisoner was called to the bar a pin could be heard to drop in any part of the place. There was a single female figure leaning on the arm of an aged and silver-haired old man, and hearty man, within a few feet of the dock; and as the prisoner advanced, and laying his hand on the railing, confronted the judges and the court, she slowly raised the hood of the cloak, in which she was completely muffled, and gazed long and earnestly on his face. There was in that wistful look a fear—a hope—an unyielding tenderness; and when his eyes met hers, there was a proud, yet soft and warm expression in his glance, that reassured her sinking heart. As she looked round on the court, and the many strange faces, and all the striking paraphernalia of justice, a slight shudder crept stealthily over her frame, and she clung closer to her companion, as if to ask for all the protection he could afford. It was Ellen and her father, who came, the former summoned as a witness, and the latter to accompany and support the daughter of his aged heart.

Duncan was arraigned; and on being asked the usual question of "guilty, or not guilty?" he answered in a clear, calm voice, "Not guilty, my lord!" and the trial proceeded. The same evidence that was given at the magistrate's house was a second time repeated; and evidently, its train of circumstances made a deep impression on the court. While the first part of the examination was going forward, Ellen remained as motionless as a statue, scarcely daring to move or breathe; but when the depositions went more and more against Owen, her respirations became quick, short, and gasping; and when the cries desired her to get upon the table, it was with difficulty that she obeyed him. When seated, she gazed timidly round on the crowd of counsellors and the judges, as though to bespeak their sympathy; but then, not meeting a single glance from which to glean even the shadow of hope, she covered her face with her hands. A moment or two elapsed, and she grew more assured, and the counsel for the crown proceeded with the examination. "Ellen Duncan, is not that your name?" "It is, sir," she strikingly answered, without raising her eyes.

"Do you know the prisoner at the bar?" "Do I know the prisoner at the bar?" she reiterated; "do I know Owen Duncan?" she asked; "do I know my own husband?" "Do you recollect the night of the twenty-first of September?" "I do, sir." "Can you swear to whether your husband was at home on that night or not?" Her voice faltered a little as she answered in the negative; and on the presiding judge repeating the question, with the addition of, "Did he return at all next day?" It seemed as if she first thought that her answers might criminate him still further, and clasping her hands convulsively together, and raising her face to the bench, while the scalding tears chased each other down her sunken cheeks, she passionately exclaimed:—"Oh, for the love of heaven, don't ask me anything that'll be worse for him! Don't, counsellor, jeev, don't—don't ask me to swear, anything 'ill do him harm!" "Do you recollect the night of the twenty-first of September?" "I do, sir." "Can you swear to whether your husband was at home on that night or not?" Her voice faltered a little as she answered in the negative; and on the presiding judge repeating the question, with the addition of, "Did he return at all next day?" It seemed as if she first thought that her answers might criminate him still further, and clasping her hands convulsively together, and raising her face to the bench, while the scalding tears chased each other down her sunken cheeks, she passionately exclaimed:—"Oh, for the love of heaven, don't ask me anything that'll be worse for him! Don't, counsellor, jeev, don't—don't ask me to swear, anything 'ill do him harm!"

After a few cheering expressions from the bench, evidently very much moved by her simple, energetic language and action, she was asked whether she could tell the court where her husband was, and with all the eagerness that an instantaneously formed idea of serving him could give, she answered:—"Oh, yis! yis! my lord, I can. He was in the mountains shootin' wid Phil Doran's gun, an' he was seized by some men, that made him stay wid them; an' take an' oath not to reveal who they wor, an' they thrashed him badly; so, after three days he made his escape, an' come home to the cabin, whin he was taken by the police."

And Owen, on the splendid group around him, and the glitter of the lights, the lustre of the jewels, and the graceful waving of the many-colored plumes, gave everything a courtly, sumptuous appearance, and the air was heavy with odors, the fragrant offering of many a costly exotic. Suddenly every eye was turned on the door with wonder and astonishment and every voice was hushed as Lady—entered, her cheeks blushing from excitement, and her eye bright with anticipated triumph. She left the poor and humbled Ellen by the hand, who dared not look up, but with her gaze riveted on the splendid carpet, was brought like a tomaton to the feet of the Duke, where she mechanically knelt down.

"Will yer Excellency be pleased?" began Lady—playfully mimicking the brogue, "to hear this poor crathur's complaint. Her husband has been condemned to die for a murder he didn't commit, by no manner of means, as the sayin' is; an' as there was a strong recommendation to mercy, and (in an undertone) your Excellency knows what the sayin' is; an' as the Duke seemed a little bewildered, as if he could not make out what it meant, and the glittering crowd now all surrounded the group; when Ellen, who had ventured to look timidly up, conceiving that the Duke hesitated about the pardon, (poor creature!) she knew that he had not even heard of Owen's trial; eagerly grasped the drapery of his chair, and while the big tears rolled from beneath her eyelids, exclaimed:—"Oh! may the great and just Providence, that sees the workin' of all our hearts, pour a blessin' on yer Lordship's head; may His holy grace be wid you for iver an' iver, an' do listen to my prayers! My husband is innocent—oh, oh! as you hope for mercy at the last day, be merciful now to him!"

"Lady—," said the Duke, "what is the meaning of all this—will you explain?" "Your Excellency," answered she, in the natural sweet pathos of her tones, "it is a poor man who has been condemned to die on circumstantial evidence. He has been strongly recommended to mercy, and this weeping female is his wife. I, poor heart-broke, pray for admission, and have brought her thither. She has travelled mostly on foot, upwards of ninety miles, to ask a pardon; and I trust you will not refuse a request, till your Grace has time to inquire into the circumstances. This is the head and front of my offending!" "May heaven bless yer Ladyship," burst from the depths of Ellen's grateful heart, "for becomin' thim that had no support but His gracious mercy."

Lady—saw that she was deeply seconded by many a fair creature, who thronged around; and the Duke smiled as he answered:—"Well, well! one could not refuse so many fair beseechers, so we will order him to be reprieved. And there, now, let the poor woman be removed." Ellen's heart was light, and her eyes were glad, and her very inmost soul was thankful to the Omnipotent, as she that night rested for a few hours, ere she set out on her return; and Lady—, as she pressed her costly pillow, felt a fuller sense of happiness in being useful to her fellow creature than ever she experienced before. Oh! that all the wealthy and in power were incited by similar feelings! The remainder of our simple tale is soon told. The reprieve arrived—the sentence was changed to banishment—and the very day appointed for Owen's departure was his day of successful return. One week previous to the embarkment of those sentenced to transportation, a man was to be executed for sheep-stealing. On the drop he confessed his guilt, and that he, and not Duncan, was the murderer of Daly. Owen was immediately released, and a subscription raised for him, with which, as well with a weighty purse presented to Ellen by Lady—, he took a comfortable farm, and rebought "Black Bess."

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DOMESTIC RECIPES.
Fresh meat beginning to sour will sweeten if placed out of doors in the cool air over night.
As much nitrate of soda as can be taken up between the forefinger and thumb put in the glass every time the water is changed will preserve cut flowers in all their beauty for above a fortnight.
GALLETTES.—Take one pound each of butter and flour, a little salt, and two eggs, knead the whole together into a paste; roll it not more than an inch in thickness, and make it in the size of a dessert-plate. Then put it in the oven for a quarter of an hour; take it out, beat up two eggs with a little cream and some salt, pour over the cakes, and return it to the oven, or, if you please, ornament the back with candied citron.
COOKING MEATS.—It is a common practice of cooks, and often of those who are called good housekeepers, to sprinkle salt all over meat just ready to be put over the fire. Now, to salt any meat before it is well heated through—or, better still, half-cooked—will injure very materially the best ever sold in market, and certainly quite spoil a poor article, no matter whether it is steak, roast, or stew. It will harden the fibres, toughen the meat all through, extract the best part of the juice, make it very injurious to the stomach, and give no pleasure to the palate.
TO BOIL ONIONS.—There is a great deal of prejudice against this most wholesome of all vegetables. Take two quarters of onions, peel them carefully; wash and put in two quarts of cold water; when it has boiled up twice, change the water, and replace with the same quantity of boiling water; add two table-spoonfuls of salt, and boil again until the onions are tender; the length of time onions require to cook depends upon the condition of the onion; if in summer, when fresh, they take from one-half to three-fourths of an hour; in winter, when cold, they take from three-quarters to one hour; when boiling is finished, put in a colander, and allow them to drain thoroughly; for the sauce take a tablespoonful of flour, a tablespoonful of butter, and mix them thoroughly, beating them to a cream; a spoonful of salt, half of white pepper, a pint of milk, and one-half pint of water; boil the milk and water, pour it over the butter and flour, and then cook the sauce on a slow fire; put the onions into the sauce, and heat thoroughly.