

# KIRK FOLK



BY

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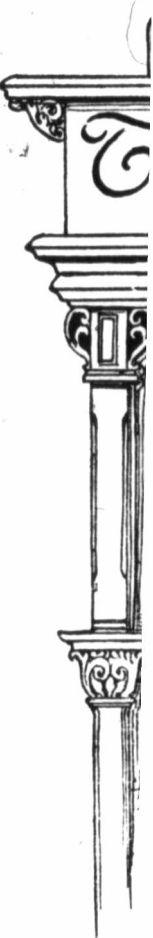
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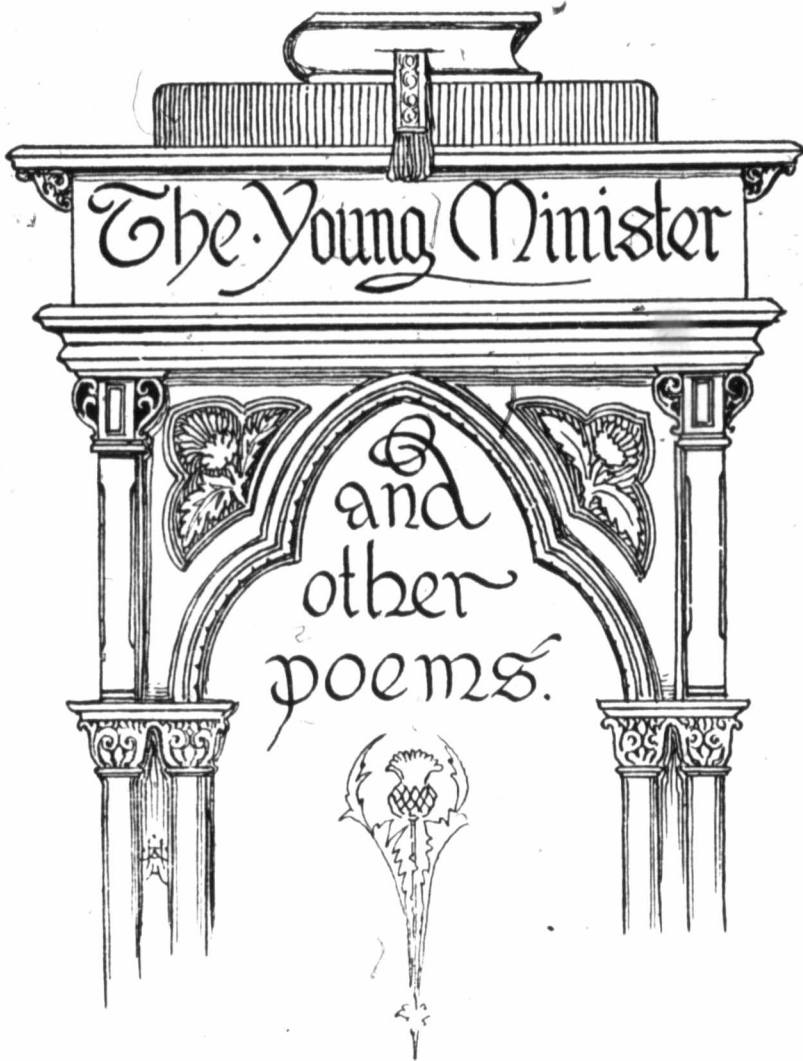
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KIRK FOLK





The Young Minister

and  
other  
poems.

# The young minister



**Y**'ES jist a bit callan' o' twenty,  
And bran' new oot frae the collidge ;  
But they tell me wha ken that he's gleg  
wi' the pen,  
And his heid's fu' o' book-lear and  
knowledge.

And O but he's graun', graun',  
And O but he's deep, deep,  
Tho' I canna complain, for I never knew  
ane  
That cud send me sae sune to sleep.

**H**'ES the nattiest man i' the parish,  
There's no anither sae braw',  
Wi' his bonnie surtou' o' the bluey-black hue,  
And his roond aboot collar and a'.  
And O but he's spry, spry,  
And O but he's sweet, sweet,  
Wi' "how-d'ye-do?" and "good morning  
to you,"  
When he passes ye oot i' the street.



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E'S a wise-luikin' chiel i' the poopit,  
For he's no sic an ill-faurit loon ;  
And the specs on his nose gie a look  
o repose,  
When they've riggit him up i' the goon.  
And O but he's graun', graun',  
And O but he's braw, braw,

He has sicna a poo'er he can daud oot the stour,  
Owre the buikboard and choir and a'.

**H**E'S the gleggest bit laddie at preachin',  
Wi' his stars and the rummlin' spheres,  
There's no ane cud hear it and ever grow wearit,  
We're aften a' meltit to tears.  
And O but he's glib, glib,  
And O but he's canty, canty,  
If ca'd on to speak either Latin or Greek  
He'd just spiel owre yer Shakespir and Danty !

**H**E'S mebbe a wee bit conceitit,  
Tho' I winna jist say that's a failin' ;  
And he's apt to forget there's the den-  
ner to het,  
Eh? What! Is the ither kirk scalin' ?  
O! O! but he's dreich, dreich!  
O! O! but he's lang, lang !  
If he disna stop preachin,' we'll sune  
stop our fleechin',  
I wish he'd gae aff the fang.



# The Precentor.



E'RE fairly deaved on Sawbaths noo,  
Oor vera lugs are sair ;  
They've got the kist o' whustles in,  
Wi' some new-fangled player,  
Whaur Tammas Lowrie set the tune  
For fifty years and mair.

**A** DOUR and thrawnlike man was  
Tam,  
Wi' lungs o' brass and airn ;  
A massy pow wi' lyart locks,  
Like some auld chieftain's cairn ;  
And somewhaur ben, tho' sneckit  
up,  
The hert o' a wee bairn.

**A** WILFU' man maun hae his w'y,  
Tam never cared a haet,  
He picked his tunes and sang them  
thro'  
At his ain shachlin' gait ;  
"Wi' speerit!" cried the meenister,  
But Tammas took "Retreat."

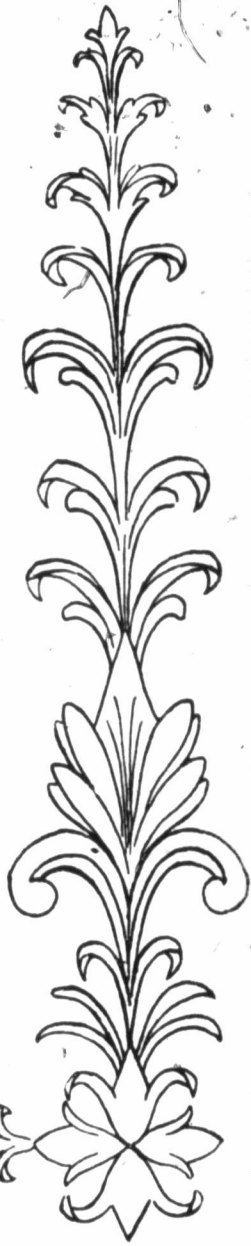


**W**OO sicna pride has aye its fa',  
As Tam f'und till his cost ;  
And frae that waefu' day o' shame  
Ye'd never hear him boast ;  
Ae Sawbath morn he took the desk  
Sair trachled wi' a hoast.

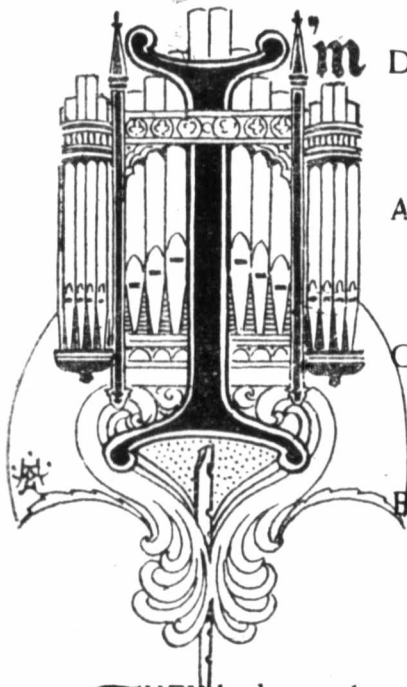
**H**ettled first the " Martyrs " tune,  
When somethin' took the gee,  
And aff he gaed to clim' " Coleshill,"  
But brocht up i' " Dundee " ;  
And when he made for " Newington,"  
'Twas " Martyrdom " to me.

**A** MIGHTY man o' sang he was  
Afore he 'gan to dwine ;  
Time played the mischief wi' his v'ice,  
But left the willin' min' ;  
And aye we kept him i' the desk  
For days' o' auld lang syne.

**D**EATH cam' to i'hers ; lang we thocht  
He'd never come for Tam ;  
Oh, why, man, did ye try high G  
And bring on sic a dwam ?  
Or ever we c'ud fetch a " nip,"  
Death f'und it oot and cam'.



# The ORGANIST



**T**DOWIE and wae for the Sawbaths are  
 sad noo,  
 And weary the kirk-road by what it  
 has been,  
 And the soon' o' the bell ne'er mak's  
 my hert glad noo,  
 Sin' they worship the Lord wi' that  
 pumpin'-machine.  
 Oh, sair did we plead at the deith o'  
 Tam Lowrie,  
 They'd thole wi' the auld fowk wha  
 held it a sin;  
 But the younkers were wud and they  
 cared na a cowry,  
 They bocht them an organ and  
 biggit it in.

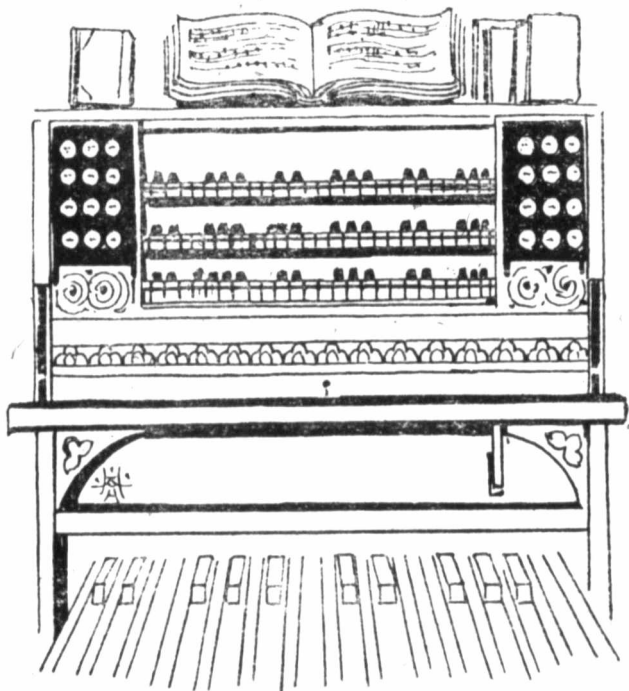
**T**HEY hadna a player, but seekers cam' heapin',  
 And Sawbaths were tint in a graun' playin'-match;  
 An orra ane sairly his worship was keepin'—  
 The lave had an eye to the wale o' the batch.  
 Ah, brawly I min' when we croodit the preachin',  
 But sweer i' thae days are the younkers to come;  
 Noo gie them their fill o' this blawin' and screechin';  
 The kirk 'll be techt as the heid o' a drum.

**T**HE feck o' the men were for wee Robin Pirrett,  
 A douce, canny chiel and a son o' the manse;  
 He's a wee auld and crabbit, and twice he's been mairret,  
 But wae's the puir body, he hadna a chance;  
 For the lassies a' plumpit for Donal McEwen,  
 As ilka ane hopit to tak' him in tow—  
 A bonnie bit birkie, aye smirkin' and booin',  
 Wi' a heidfu' o' hair like a stack in a lowe.

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**T**HERE'S nae peace ava noo for Donal's aye dirlin',  
 He's at it afore I can win to the laft;  
 He vows that our herts are uplift by the skirlin'—  
 There's times I jalouse that the creatur' is daft.  
 Oh I lo'ed the auld Psawlms as they lilted them slowly,  
 But the gait that they're sung noo wud onythin' cow;  
 And after the Blessin' the silence seemed holy,  
 Noo he gars us a' flee wi' that rowdy-dow-dow.

**T**HE K ane has his nest that some ither will harry,  
 And mine was the kirk wi' its sough o' the Past;  
 It's gane, and there's nocht but the mind o't to carry  
 Whaur the deid are foregathered, forgotten at last.  
 Sair, sair, is my hert noo my life's at the gloamin',  
 As a stranger I sit in the kirk o' my freen's;  
 But I dream o' the sang that I'll hear at my homin',  
 In the land o' the leal whaur they need nae machines.



# The Beadle.



E ne'er saw sic a solemn chiel  
As oor respectit beadle ;  
Hech, sirs ! ye'd think he wasna weel,  
A face as lang 's a fiddle,  
When, climin' up the poopit stairs,  
He tak's the buiks o' Sunday ;  
Ne'er fash ; if it is lang the day,  
It'll be as broad o' Monday.

**W**HEN, cockit up, he sits his lane  
Fornest the vestry door,  
The laddies daur na gie a cheep,  
Their faithers daur na snore  
He glowers sae glurn ; ye'd think the chiel  
The pink o' a' decorum ;  
Just wait the morn, and see him leg  
The reel o' Tullochgorum.

**A**ND gin he staun's ahint the "plate,"  
Wi' luiks o' soor dejection,  
There's never ane daur gang that gate  
And no put in "collection."  
They ken the body is na blate  
To spier if trade is dwinin' ;  
But nane e'er kent the loon himsel'  
To gie the plate a linin'.

**T**IS w'y is law aboot the kirk  
He kens as weel as ony ;  
And gin ye daur to meddle him  
A birsy man is Johnnie.  
The wind may blaw or het or cauld,  
And folk be blithe or sober,  
He'll damp the fires the end o' March,  
And licht them in October.

**W**E needna sniff aroon' the kirk,  
As if it wantit airin' ;  
Gin Johnnie sees ye trying that,  
My word ! ye'll get your fairin'.  
He tell't the meenister himsel',  
Wha ca'd it "foul" to gall 'im,  
"It has a maist releegious feel,  
And smells uncommon solemn."

**O**R beadle's a by-or'-nar' chiel,  
Whatever w'y ye tak' him ;  
The poo'ers abune micht change his wull,  
But nane on earth 'il mak' him ;  
Tho' ilka time he gangs his gate  
We vow we'll mak' him rue it,  
But juist as sure's he tries 't again  
We girn and let him do it.

AUG - 5 1965



THE END