THE MASONIC CHAPLET,

WITH

A few other Poems.

BY

ANDREW M'KENZIE.

"— Ye whom social kindness charms,
Whose hearts the tide of friendship warms;
Who hold your being on the terms,
Each aid the others—
Come to my bowl, come to my arms,
My friends, my brothers!"

BURNS.

BELFAST:
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1832.
DEDICATION.

TO THE REV. JOHNSTON NEILSON,
Whiteabbey.

My Dear Sir,

Unskilled in the established forms which may be required in a formal dedication, and unprovided with any patron in high life, to whom it might be addressed, permit me to dedicate the few following tribles to you.

My reason for doing so is, that I feel for you more esteem than for most other men. In you I have discovered that philanthropy, without which, no man may pretend to the high character of a true Freemason. But there is another tie which binds my affections to you still more closely: your family have long been the pride and ornament of that part of the country where my earliest associations were formed; and, from being accustomed, during the greater part of my life, to look up to them with reverence, I cannot forbear to indulge for you a superior degree of veneration.

When the hand which now guides this pen shall be mouldering in dust, may this remain, as a token of the esteem in which you were held, by

Your sincere friend,

ANDREW M'KENZIE.

Belfast, 24th Oct. 1832.
PREFACE.

It seems, by long established custom, that something by way of preface is absolutely necessary to every book. Many of these are written by way of an apology to the public; and I feel that, in my own case, an apology is due to my readers.

My excuse for offering such a silly production to the public, shall possess one good quality—it shall be the simple language of truth.

Many years ago, I had formed the resolution, never to publish again in a collected form. To this resolution it is probable I would have adhered, had it not been for an accident. A song which I had written in the earlier part of my life, happened to fall into the hands of a member of Ballycarry Masonic Lodge, by whom it was sung very tastefully, and copies were much required. I then suggested to a member of the Lodge, that if they, with others, were willing to engage a certain number of copies, which might defray the expense of printing, I would collect a few of my "fugitive pieces," and offer them to the public. Encouraged by their ready acquiescence, I had prospectuses distributed; and, as far as I can at present judge, have met with very flattering patronage. To all who have kindly bestowed their encouragement, I feel the deepest gratitude; but my proudest reflection is, that so respectable a portion of the inhabitants of my native county, among whom the happiest of my days were spent, have shewn such readiness to support me in this, perhaps my last, literary attempt.

Belfast, 23d Oct. 1832.

THE
MASONIC CHAPELET,
WITH A FEW OTHER POEMS.

DEDICATORY VERSES,
ADDRESS TO THE REV. JOHNSTON NEILSON.
BY THOMAS BEGGS.

"While Fortune's friend, the tasteless set,
In shameful splendour sins and shines,
Discouraged in some lonely cot,
The man of parts obscurely pines."

By fair Whiteabbey's hermit shore,
In early days, when I was young,
How happy was the heart I bore!
How joyous were the thoughts that sprung!
For witching was the maiden's tongue,
And witching was the glowing thrill,
That o'er my reckless bosom flung
Their wizard spell, at evening chill.

And oft by Monkland's mazy brook,
Where thou may'st steal an hour from care,
To linger in its fairy nook,
So green, so flowery, and so fair,—
The Masonic Chaplet.

Remember I have wander'd there,
While yet the buoyant flush would start,
Spontaneous as the living air,
Through all the openings of the heart.

While sailing down life's turbid stream,
To reach the dark eternal tide,
There's one who would thy friendship claim,
His veering barque sometimes to guide:
So may the joys which ne'er subside,
Pervade thy heart with holy flame—
The Muse's friend, the Poet's pride,
And honour'd aye be Neilson's name!

And old Dunover's early bard,
Whose page protection seeks of thee,
Lend, as his meed, thy kind regard,—
The minstrel of thy parent lea:*
Whose song has been, and long shall be,
The solace of the stricken breast;
And not the least, I ween, to me,
This time has told, and truth confest.

But now, in these degenerate days,
A friend the poet seldom finds,
To shelter and protect his lays,
Since lost the love of kindred minds:

* Andrew M'Kenzie, the author of the following poems, is a native of the County of Down. The Rev. J. Neilson is a native of the same County. His great grandfather, Moses Neilson, D.D. was Presbyterian Minister of Kilmore; his grandfather succeeded to the same office, which was again filled by the late Rev. Arthur Neilson, uncle to the gentleman here addressed. The late Rev. William Neilson, D.D. Professor of the Learned Languages in the Belfast Academical Institution, was another uncle of the same gentleman's.

And Other Poems.

Along the ledge of life he winds,
Exposed to all the scoff, and scorn,
And narrow prejudice that binds
A world his labours might adorn.

Since Percy vanished from this earth,
And left a vacuum blank and drear,
Like Neilson few have ventured forth,
The child of sighs and song to cheer:
Yes, yet we see in humble sphere,
A light no clouds can e'er obscure,
Beam out so kindly, calm and clear—
What holds this wintry world so pure?

Should'st thou cross o'er Atlanta's waste,*
A loss poor Erin long must feel,
And far Columbia's land be graced,
With Neilson's genius, taste, and zeal:
The dove whose coming shall reveal
The mystic light of Love sublime;
Which round the wigwam horde shall steal,
And brighten man, and bless the clime.

Braidisland's bard is laid at rest,
And he who breathed his requiem song
Yet lingers on, with sunken crest,
The cold, the heartless crowds among;
And many a year of ruthless wrong
His doom it was to brook and bear;
But pride inherent, high, and strong,
Will dash away the starting tear.

* "Should'st thou cross o'er Atlanta's waste."—This is an allusion to Mr. Neilson's desire of emigrating to America; but it is to be hoped that a more favourable turn of fortune may yet encourage him to remain in his native country.
THE MASONIC CHAPLET,

Domestic peace to thee and thine,
   The hope and faith that swell the spring
Of joy terrene, and joy divine,
   Beneath thine Angel's azure wing:
And he who now essays to sing,
   Should men of doom his effort blame;
To Neilson's candour then shall cling—
   A living and a lasting name.

MASONIC SONG,

Sung at the Installation of Lodge No. 173, in Grey-abbey, May 3, 1811.

WHEN men received the first decree,
   From Him who reigns above,
It was His will that they should be
   A family of love:
But soon the wily serpent rose
   To wake infernal strife—
Bade man his neighbour's faults expose,
   And even seek his life.

In ev'ry clime, in ev'ry age,
   What seas of blood were shed!
For man obey'd the voice of rage,
   Nor dreamt a brother bled;
Till MASONRY, that glorious light,
   Descended from on high,
In love and friendship to unite
   All ranks beneath the sky.

AND OTHER POEMS.

And ye who have that light beheld,
   Which guides to Reason's throne,
With love your gen'rous hearts are fill'd—
   Fell discord ye disown:
Oh! may your influence extend,
   Wild warfare to restrain;
And Peace with olive crown descend,
   O'er all the earth to reign!

Ye who possess undoubted skill,
   Our infant Lodge to guide,
With constant care your charge fulfil—
   Let virtue still preside:
And may we all, my brethren dear!
   Be faithful to our trust—
So shall the world our names revere,
   When we lie in the dust.

Far distant be each party feud,
   Which would our peace annoy;
Nor let religious brawls intrude,
   Our concord to destroy:
For HE who fram'd this pond'rous ball,
   And laid great Nature's plan,
Prefers no sect, but will from all
   Admit the Honest Man.

Then join, my brethren, hand in hand—
   Aloft your voices raise;
For ever may our Lodge command
   The world's esteem and praise!
Till the dazzling sun withholds his light,
   And chaos rules again;
Oh! may its honour shine most bright,
   Nor know a single stain!
FAREWELL ADDRESS

To the Brethren of Green-Hill Lodge,* No. 985.

The pangs of this bosom what language can tell,  
Since now I must bid you a final farewell!  
For fate has ordained it that I must depart,  
Yet long shall your mem’ry be dear to my heart.

Wherever I wander through life’s thorny maze,  
You still shall receive my small tribute of praise,  
Till Lodges far distant their glasses shall fill,  
And toast with due honours the far-fam’d Green-Hill.

Here first the great law was impress’d on my mind,  
That all men are brethren—that all should be kind;  
That each should his neighbour’s distresses relieve,  
And minister peace to the bosoms that grieve.

The Saviour of Mankind, who came to bestow  
Sweet hope of salvation to sinners below,  
This charge gave to men ere he bade them adieu—  
“Still love one another as I have lov’d you.”†

The wisest of mortals, we boast, laid our plan,  
Which cherishes love, and unites man to man;  
Through life’s painful journey his precepts obey,  
“And see that ye do not fall out by the way.”‡

The widow and orphan defend from distress,  
The needy relieve, and the injur’d redress;  
So will our Grand Master, entron’d in the sky,  
Your actions approve, and reward you on high.

Let none enter here who are worthy of blame,  
For soon their misdeeds would be told to your shame;  
And those who with malice our order pursue,  
The whole will condemn for the faults of a few.

And thou who art worthy o’er men to preside,  
The flock will not wander while thou art their guide;  
Long mayst thou thy duties with honour fulfil,  
And may thy posterity grace the Green-Hill!

SONG,

Composed and sung at a dinner in Greyabbey, on the 17th March, 1819, where men of every religious persuasion divested themselves of party feeling, and joined like brothers in the hilarity of the evening.

Air—“Erin go Bragh.”

Awake, oh! my harp, from the silence of sadness,  
A bright beam disperses the darkness of woe;  
Again let thy chords ring responsive to gladness,  
And into each soul pour the patriot glow:

The sons of green Erin, in harmony blending,  
Warm national feelings their bosoms expanding,  
In friendship assemble, each patriot intending  
To pour a libation on Patrick’s Day.

* Lodge No. 985 held their meetings in a country-place, about 2½ miles to the eastward of Newtownards. The place had for centuries received the name of Green-Hill. In this Lodge, the author was first initiated in the mysteries of Masonry.
† St. John, 15th chap. 12th verse.
‡ Genesis, 45th chap. 24th verse.
Blest Spirit! look down on thy children delighted,  
No more by division's false light led astray;  
Each breast by the pure flame of Friendship is lighted,  
The demon of discord is fled far away:  
The few who religious dissension would cherish,  
The soil of our island no longer will nourish,  
Their power shall decline, and their influence perish,  
Ere next we assemble on Patrick's Day.

Accurst be the wretch, who, by bigotry blinded,  
The badge of a party would dare to display—  
The Shamrock is ours, round our hearts we have twined it;  
The soil where it grew we will never betray:  
Yes, land of the brave, though insulted and slighted,  
The time yet may come when thy wrongs will be righted;  
Long, long may thy children, like brethren united,  
In Love, Peace, and Plenty, hail Patrick's Day.

Wherever the sons of our isle are collected,  
To Patrick their heart's warm devotions to pay,  
May their meetings be joyful, their feelings respected,  
And hallowed by strangers their Harp's dulcet lay:  
From India's far shores to Columbian recesses,  
Where Irishmen meet, may they share no distresses;  
May pure native spirit replenish their glasses,  
And wake all their fervour on Patrick's Day.

STANZAS

Addressed to a Young Friend on his departure to America.

I've seen a florist, o'er some fav'rite stem,  
Delighted bending in the dawn of spring,  
And painting in his mind some flowery gem  
It might bring forth ere summer birds would sing:  
Just so, my Henry, borne on Fancy's wing,  
Even in thy days of childhood, oft would I  
The summer of thy life before me bring,  
And many a Godlike attribute descry,  
Which might assist to raise my country's fame on high.

As I have mark'd the opening flower unfold  
Some latent beauty each succeeding day;  
So, while thy few brief years of youth have roll'd,  
I've seen thee nobler qualities display;  
But as the summer meteor flits away,  
Leaving a path of darkness where it flew,  
Ere yet thy mind feels Reason's fullest ray,  
The dazzling light of Hope thou dost pursue,  
And to thy weeping country bidst a last adieu!  

Yes, hapless Erin! it must long be thine,  
From thy sweet harp to pour the sounds of woe;  
Thy sons who yet might bid thy glory shine,  
Are doom'd the exile's hapless fate to know:  
The fervid souls which feel that purest glow,  
True love of country only can inspire,  
Seek those rewards thou hast not to bestow,  
And early to some distant clime retire,—  
Adorn a foreign soil, and far from thee expire!
The woe-fraught widow in her humble shed
I've seen, the big tear glistening in her eye;
Dispensing to her sons the scanty bread,
Which all her efforts could but ill supply;
Yet even then a transient gleam of joy
Would light her soul—Hope named a happier day,
When, grown to greater strength, her eldest boy
Should well his mother's anxious cares repay,
And keep the frightful fiend of poverty at bay.

Fallacious hope! that youth, his mother's pride,
Ere yet he was to manhood's stature grown,
Those comforts saw her narrow lot denied,
And left her struggling with distress alone!—
Thus, Erin, thus thy dearest sons are flown,
To swell the glories of Columbia's name;
Though thou the cradle of the brave art known,
And many a conquering hero's birth can claim,
Yet thou art left a prey to bitterest grief and shame!

Dear youth, farewell! May fortune's brightest smile
Illume thy path wherever thou shalt roam;
Long mayst thou flourish on that foreign soil,
And long enjoy an independent home!
And when mild evening's peaceful hour shall come,
To shed the balm of slumber o'er my woes,
My soul shall glide across the western foam,
And for thy weal a fervent prayer propose,
Or, sighing forth thy name, my weary eyelids close.

Durnover, 7th May, 1818.
And while thy fast-receding barque
I watch with dim and steadfast eye,
And can thy form no longer mark,
Forebodings dark my hopes destroy.

Imagination paints thee laid
Where foul contagion's victims pine,
Or numbered with the nameless dead,
Beneath the ever-sultry line;

Or 'mid the wild tornado's sweep,
Far from thy friends and native shore,
Driven headlong in the foaming deep,
And sunk, alas! to rise no more.

But He whose hand is prompt to save—
Whose power pervades both land and sea—
May snatch him from th' overwhelming wave,
And yet restore my child to me.

Belfast, 8th Dec. 1831.

S O N N E T

Written in the Cottage at Greyabbey, in the month of Oct. 1814.

Since last my steps were guided to this cot,
Far have I wander'd on life's chequer'd way;
Repining oft beneath my luckless lot,
And sometimes blest with joy's delicious ray.

O'er many a plain far distant have I stray'd,
O'er many a fertile vale and mountain drear;

Yet never have my wand'ring eyes survey'd
A scene like that which lies before me here.

Delightful are the banks where Liffey flows—
The Boyne through fertile vallies seeks the sea;
And many a scene of wildest beauty glows
Along thy woody banks, romantic Cree!
But this sweet prospect yields me more delight
Than all that ever met my raptur'd sight.

E L E G Y

On the death of James Orr, the Bard of Ballycarry.

The child of wealth into the grave descends,
And venal bards the songs of sadness raise:
Down to the dust the son of Genius bends,
Too oft denied the well-won meed of praise!

Shall Orr, the rustic muse's favourite child,
Through Death's dark, dreary portal pass away,
And shall no bard who loved his "wood notes wild,"
Pour o'er his grave a spirit-soothing lay?

Yes, gentle shade, though wild and rude my lay,
Though o'er my harp the rust of time hath spread,
Yet I will seek "the narrow house of clay,"
Where rests thy mortal part among the dead.

There shall my saddest song of sorrow rise,
For him whose voice must never more be heard,
Whilst all the villagers, with streaming eyes,
Shall join to wail the patriotic bard.

Though humble was his lot, for Erin's weal
He would have braved the fiercest tyrant's wrath;
For all the race of mankind he could feel—
A kinder heart ne'er met the blow of death.

But, oh! that heart, so tender and so kind,
Which ne'er from honour's path was known to stray;
By unsuspecting friendship rendered blind,
Too oft was led far, far from wisdom's way.

Such is the fate of him whose fervid soul
The muse's sacred flame hath taught to glow:
Driven on by passions which deny control,
Full soon his "thoughtless follies lay him low."

Yet let his failings in oblivion rest,
The sorrows they produced were his alone;
That love of justice which his mind possessed,
Now pleads for all his faults at Mercy's throne.

Yes, gentle spirit, by thy nameless grave,
I brood o'er many a joy for ever fled;
But soon the rank grass o'er me too shall wave,
And I shall slumber in a dreamless bed.

But, if sweet Hope deceive not, yet with thine,
On some bright orb, far from this vale of woe,
My spirit may in blest communion join,
And feel the joys which mortals never know.

AND OTHER POEMS.

MONODY,

On receiving an account of the death of George Mc'Kinzie, who died at Stoney-hill Barrack, in the island of Jamaica, on the 4th June, 1830, in the 22d year of his age.

"Thus with forgiving tears, and reconcild,
The King of Judah mourn'd his rebel child;
Musing on days when yet the guiltless boy
Smil'd on his sire, and fill'd his heart with joy!"

JAMAICA, oh! Jamaica, tho' thy fervid sun is bright,
And thy fairy prospects all are bath'd in Heaven's most brilliant light;
Tho' verdure crowns thy waving woods throughout the circling year,
Yet there dwells baleful Pestilence, the source of many a tear.

To me thou art the source of woe—alas! my gallant boy!
Whose years of childhood fill'd my breast with ardent hope and joy,
Allur'd by dreams of future bliss, pass'd o'er the western wave,
And landed on thy deadly shore, but found an early grave.

Alas! my son, what joy was mine, thy infant steps to guide,
And mark thy daily growing strength with all a father's pride;
When first thy tongue essay'd to speak, how did my bosom bound! 
My spirit thrill'd with ecstasy, and hung upon the sound.

Yes, on those long-lost scenes of bliss tenacious memory dwells, 
And of thy childhood's playful hours with fond precision tells; 
She seeks my happy native vales, and lingers in the bowers, 
Where thou hast wander'd by my side, and cull'd the fairest flowers.

To that humble seat of learning recollection loves to stray, 
Where I saw thee from the proudest often bear the palm away; 
Then Hope would with my darkest thoughts a ray of sunshine blend, 
And whisper that when all was lost, I should possess a Friend.

For doubt would o'er my future path her darkening shadows cast, 
And tell me pain and poverty would chase me to the last: 
Oh! then how sweet the soothing hope, that on thy kindly breast 
My hoary head might find repose, till death should give me rest.

But thou hast gone before me to that country undefin'd, 
Whence traveller never has return'd to cheer the human mind—

Perhaps on some bright planet, far remov'd in boundless space, 
Thy spirit, with my father's, may have found a resting place!

And when this time-worn fabric shall become a clod of clay, 
My soul to that far distant orb may wing her joyful way; 
May join your kindred spirits, above man's conceptions blest, 
Where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

Those Heaven-directed dreams of hope, which raise the mind on high, 
Depart, as flits the meteor's light that mocks the gazer's eye; 
Imagination earthward falls, and takes her gloomy stand 
By thy solitary death-bed, in that friendless foreign land.

Alas! no father's voice was there thy agonies to soothe, 
No weeping mother's tender hand thy bed of pain to smooth; 
No comrade of thy early youth, thy last request to hear; 
No sister o'er thy nameless grave to shed affection's tear.

Oh! in thy last sad agonies how did thy spirit mourn 
For thy country, and those friends to whom thou could'st no more return; 
Through dreams of dark eternity, distracting thoughts would come, 
And picture to thy tortur'd mind thy childhood’s happy home.
THE MASONIC CHAPLET,

Though other sons survive thee, yet their hearts may prove unkind,—
Their deeds may tinge my cheek with shame, and wreck my peace of mind;
But thou canst never more offend, which will thy memory save—
The deepest, last transgression is forgotten in the grave.

Farewell, my son! throughout the space which here I must remain,
If ever joy's enchanting beam should gild my path of pain,
As driving clouds enwrap the sun with deep and sudden gloom,
My soul will fly the hour of mirth, to linger o'er thy tomb.

THE MASON'S WELCOME.

Air—"Cauld house o' clay."

Thrice welcome, Magarry*—my cottage is poor,
And seldom the affluent call at its door;
Yet here beats a heart which is upright and fair,
And would shield ev'ry son of the compass and square.

Long, long have I journey'd on life's chequer'd way,
But my soul yet expands under friendship's bright ray;

* The foregoing song was written on receiving an accidental visit from Mr. Richard Magarry, master, pro tempore, of Ballycarry Masonic Lodge. I have since visited that body, and have seen, indeed, "a band of true brothers."

AND OTHER POEMS.

Yes, children of love! it is yours to impart
A warm youthful glow to this time-wither'd heart.

Oh! that scene fond remembrance will often renew,
When the bandage of blindness a brother withdrew;
And surveying the circle around me, it seem'd
That the sunshine of Love on each countenance beam'd:

So, the poor wandering wight, who had long been remov'd
To a clime far remote from the family he lov'd,
Looks around him with feelings of pleasure and pride,
On the lov'd ones for whom, in his exile, he sigh'd.

Ask the father, whose children have play'd round his knee,
What pleasure he feels when in love they agree;
But if malice or spite in their bosoms should reign,
That parent must feel the most exquisite pain.

So the Builder of Systems, our Father on high,
Looks down on this globe with an all-seeing eye;
And the men who to brotherly love are inclin'd,
In that all-seeing eye the most favour will find.

To the birth-place of Orr let me wander with thee,
Where a band of true brothers united we'll see,
Among whom party spirit no entrance can find,
But each bosom dilates with the love of mankind.

Renown'd Ballycarry! till time's latest day,
When the earth's proudest glories shall sink in decay,
May honour and truth in your temple preside,
And the names of your sons be remember'd with pride!
SONG,

Sung in the Lodge-room of No. 173, Greyabbey, on the evening of St. John’s Day, 1815.

(INScribed to Sir Walter James, Bart.)

Again, my chosen brethren, we hail our patron’s day,—
This happy era tells us a year has roll’d away;
Oh! may our minds assure us, when that period we review,
That to the square and compass our conduct has been true.

For ye who the deep mysteries of Masonry can trace,
Should set a bright example to all the human race;
Since Masonry was founded by Heaven’s Eternal King,
Your morals should be pure as the limpid mountain spring.

But if some thoughtless brother has wander’d from the way
Which leads to that great temple where shines eternal day,
From him withhold not mercy, the attribute of Heaven;
Endeavour to forgive, as you hope to be forgiven.

Since last we were assembled this festive day to hail,
How many of our brethren in death’s embrace lie pale!
For the sand is always running, which no human pow’r can stay,
And the sweeping scythe of Time soon must lop us all away.

Then let our lives be ordered according to that law,
Which from the ancient emblems of Masonry we draw;
That when we feel the moment of dissolution nigh,
We may hope to be transferred to a happier Lodge on high.

Adieu, my worthy brethren! may peace and concord reign,
Till on the same occasion you shall be met again;
May He who from confusion bade order to arise,
Watch over all our actions, and guide us to the skies!

STANZAS

Addressed to Mr. R——M——y, on the departure of the year 1831.

“What is the worst of woes that wait on age?
What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?
To view each loved one blotted from life’s page,
And he alone on earth, as I am now.”

Childe Harold, Canto II.

The ever-flowin’ stream o’ time
Has floated down anither year,
An’ leaves thee yet in manhood’s prime,
While I, though auld an’ craz’d, am here:
Then bid the mantlin’ cogie ream—
Let’s talk o’ joys we ken’d langsyne,
An’ lov’d anes sunk in that dark stream,
Whose virtues memory ne’er may tine.

Now half a hundred years ha’e fled,
Since first I brav’d life’s troubled sea;
THE MASONIC CHAPLET,

An' mony a heart's been lowly laid,
That ance beat true wi' love to me:
I seem like some poor shipwreck'd wight,
The last survivor of the crew,
Wha lang may strain his aching sight,
But nae familiar face can view.

An' thou, though few ha' been thy years,
Hast felt the cauldriese blast o' woe;
An' pour'd thy unavailing tears
Owre kindly kindred hearts laid low.
I've seen thee by thy mither's knee,
Her gowden-hair'd—her dawted wean;
But she was snatch'd awa frae thee—
An' Jock an' Sandy baith are gane!

Kind-hearted lads! shortsyne I hail'd
Wi' them the dawning o' the year,
When lightsome jest an' sang prevail'd;
But now their memory claims a tear!—
For Jock the warmest heart possesst,
That e'er in human bosom lay;
An' Sandy was o' men the best,—
But Heaven soon call'd its ain away.

Then, since 'tis sae ordain'd that we
Should hail anither year's return,
Ne'er let our hearts unthankfu' be,
Though for departed frien's we mourn;
The cup o' life is mixed wi' gall,
Yet e'en the wretch some sweets may share;
While on the land o' hope we dwell,
Let's ne'er gi'e way to dark despair.

AND OTHER POEMS.

If we should baith be spar'd to see
The birth-day o' anither year,
Frae self-accusin' memory free,
May inward peace our bosoms cheer;
An' as we're borne alang the flood,
To meet eternity's dark wave,
May He, the source o' that's good,
Stretch forth a han' our souls to save.

31st Dec. 1831.

THE MASONIC PIRATE.

Air—"Then join, brother Masons."

ATTEND, ye bold sailors, who cross the wide sea,
Whatever your creed or complexion may be;
If your hearts are expanded with Masonry's glow,
You will meet with pure friendship wherever you go.

CHORUS.

Here's a health to all Masons, where'er they may be,
May they feel no misfortunes by land or by sea.

As from Rio Janiero for Britain we steer'd,
Through the morning's dark haze a smart schooner appear'd;
That her decks were all cover'd with men we descried—
She bore down with all sails set, and ran alongside.

Here's a health, &c.

They boarded in swarms, and we saw, with dismay,
They were pirates, who made all fair traders their prey;
Our men hand and foot they proceeded to bind,
And we read in their looks that they murder design'd!
Here's a health, &c.

As resistance was vain, and our lives were at stake,
I was urged by despair a last trial to make:
Ere my arms they had pinion'd, to one of the crew
The sign of a Royal Arch Mason I threw.
Here's a health, &c.

That sign in an instant gave hopes of relief—
The man understood me, and flew to their chief;
He call'd me aside, and our signals agreed,
So from bondage my crew were immediately freed!
Here's a health, &c.

They abandon'd our ship—all our goods were restor'd,
And a cask of fine brandy they sent us on board;
With three hearty cheers then they bade us adieu,
And wish'd us fair breezes our voyage to pursue.
Here's a health, &c.

Though the bigot and fool may our order deride,
We pity their folly, and smile at their pride;
For ours is the tie which to virtue doth bind,
And confirms a Freemason the Friend of Mankind.

Here's a health to all Masons, where'er they may be,
May they feel no misfortune by land or by sea!

A FRIEND.

"Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul,
Sweet'ner of life, and solder of society,
I owe thee much."—Blair.

When cares oppress, when joy is fled,
And every thought of pleasure dead—
When terror-waking dreams infest,
And oft disturb the hours of rest—
When Hope, the wretch's brightest star,
Is dimm'd amid the mental war—
What can a ray of comfort lend?
—The consolation of—a Friend!

The captive, from a dungeon drear
Releas'd, feels freedom doubly dear—
The wanderer, doom'd afar to roam,
With joy reviews his native home—
The traveller on Arabian waste,
The long-sought spring will gladly taste,—
Yet he whose bosom sorrows rend,
More joyful hails a generous Friend!

The guilty wretch, condemn'd to die,
Who feels his destin'd hour is nigh—
Whose gloomy soul no hopes illume,
Save those which rise beyond the tomb—
What joys his wretched bosom cheer,
When pardon's voice salutes his ear!
Such joys the grief-worn wretch attend,
Who meets a sympathizing Friend!
Behold what fawning crowds caress
The man whom Fortune deigns to bless;
Base adulation’s voice they raise,
And even his grossest vices praise;
But mark the change!—his wealth is flown—
His foibles now to all are known;
The selfish crew no longer bend,
Nor prostitute the name of FRIEND!

Yet one, perchance, of nobler mind,
To share his sorrows seems inclin’d;
With kind attention soothes his care,
And lures his thoughts from fell despair:
His love outlives the squander’d store—
He feels a tie unfelt before—
His soul to flattery could not bend,
Yet in distress he proves—a FRIEND;

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SONG,

Written on visiting Legoniel Lodge of Friendship, No. 513.

Air—“Rejected Mason.”

Ye brethren true, who wear the blue,
And prize that ancient order,
Oh! could you our encampment view,
On Lagan’s verdant border:
There discord’s voice is never heard,
But peace and love are cherish’d,
In our blest retreat, pure friendship’s seat,
Where charity is nourish’d.

While nations war, and parties jar,
Their peace of mind destroying,
Far happier, we like friends agree,
Sweet harmony enjoying;
Dire faction’s noise we all despise,
That nurse of wild distraction;
Religious pride we lay aside,
And cultivate affection.

Where fam’d Belfast from ocean’s blast
By mountains is protected,
Far from the ken of envious men,
Our temple is erected:
Three pillars grand beneath it stand,
Nam’d wisdom, strength, and beauty;
And the level, true to each member’s view,
Marks out a Mason’s duty.

The stranger poor, whose heart is pure,
By us is still befriended;
To Adam’s race in every place
Our kindness is extended:
Then charge your goblets—let this toast
Go round ere we retire:
May honest men adorn the glen,*
Till Nature shall expire!”

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* The place where this respectable body of Masons hold their meetings, is situated at the head of a beautiful and romantic glen, among the mountains to the westward of Belfast: on this account it is frequently denominated “the Glen Lodge.”
LINES

On the Death of the late Queen Caroline.

And art thou freed from wily treason's toil?
And is thy heart at rest? Poor Caroline!
The brow of death must ever wear a smile,
To souls opprest with anguish such as thine:
Tho' round thy bier the cypress wreath we twine,
We bless the hand that set thy spirit free;
For calumny's fell poison bade thee pine,
As blight destroys the fairest bud; and he
Who should have cherished, chose thy deadliest foe to be!

Yet fatherless and friendless as thou wert,
When base detraction strove to blast thy fame;
Hadst thou reigned guiltless in a husband's heart,
The front of malice had been put to shame:
But there had jealousy's accursed flame
Already blazed; and as the hunted roe,
When from the herd she would protection claim,
In every former favourite meets a foe,
So, thou wert left a prey to life-consuming woe!

The wretch whose wanderings claim no place of rest,
Save that by melting charity supplied,
Oft nourishes an infant at her breast,
Whose smile can turn the shafts of woe aside;
But even that comfort was to thee denied—
Though born to share the splendour of a throne,
Thy child, a mother's and a nation's pride,
Was doom'd a mother's fondness to disown—
And thou wert childless left, heart-broken, and alone.

How shall our children wish from history's page
To blot that era, stain to Britain's name!
When persecution strove with headlong rage,
To drag an injured Queen to public shame!
Oh! hadst thou e'er indulged a guilty flame,
The senate's gaze had struck thee with dismay;
Thy bravery did thy innocence proclaim,
And many hearts by falsehood led astray,
Confessed thy wrongs, and now weep o'er thy lifeless clay.

Thou saw'st the gaudy pageant pass away,
In which thou wert denied to bear a part;
A languid smile did o'er thy features play—
But, oh! it was a smile which rent thy heart,
Then did that wondrous fortitude depart,
Which long had borne thee through a sea of woe;
Yet was no tear of thine observed to start;
Nor were thy deep complainings heard to flow—
But silent rankling sorrow quickly laid thee low.

Peace to thy spirit, hapless Caroline,
The road of life had many thorns for thee:
To judge thy wrongs and frailties is not mine—
Thy sufferings claimed my sympathy; but He
Who all the secrets of all hearts can see,
Hath fairly judged between thee and thy foes;
If innocent, sure thy reward will be;
If guilty, still may Mercy interpose,
And shed eternal balm o'er all thy wounds and woes.
GANNAWAY BURN.*

'Thy banks, silver Lagan, rich beauties discover,
An' commerce expands her braid wings on thy tide—
Tall ships frae thy port roam the universe over;
Between thy twa headlands a navy might ride.
Tho' blithe I hae stray'd on thy banks, noble river,
Yet visions o' boyhood would aften return,
An' tell me in whispers that here I might never
Be blest, as when wand'ring on Gannaway Burn.

Yes, dear native streamlet, wherever I wander,
Tho' nature's beauties afore me were spread,
Thou com'st o'er my soul wi' a feeling sae tender,
That back to thy margin my fancy is led:
There early ken'd objects, by memory hallow'd
Awake recollection wherever I turn;
For nature's rude dictates I carelessly follow'd,
Amang the rich vales o' the Gannaway Burn.

That spot whar the earliest may-flow'rs I gather'd,
On memory's vista I mark wi' delight—
That bank whar I watch'd till the nestlins were feather'd,
An' wept when I found they had a' ta'en their flight!
That pool, whar the quick fleeting minnows pursuin',
I waded, nor wist how the time glided by;
That nook whar I linger'd the green rashes puin',
'Till gloamin' had spread her dark veil owre the sky.

That ford yet is precious to fond recollection,
Whar fairies were said to dance roun' the auld tree;

* A small stream running through a fertile and well cultivated district, in the barony of Ards, and County of Down, which, tho' unnoticed by the children of taste and literature, is the "native streamlet" of the author.

AND OTHER POEMS.

Yet fearless, when guided by early affection,
I cross'd it at midnight my lassie to see:
Oh! sad is my soul when I think o' that maiden,
An' brood owre the joys that can never return—
Purer love never glow'd since its birth-day in Eden,
Than that which we felt on the Gannaway Burn.

The dark grove o' pine which its margin o'ershaded,
Fond memory shall cherish, while life warms my breast;
There aften, ere sorrow my mind had invaded,
I stray'd wi' blithe comrades, in innocence blest;
But that grove is laid low, an' my playmates sae cheery
Are gane to that country whence nane can return;
While some wha survive, wander heartless an' weary,
Like me, far awa' frae the Gannaway Burn.

GREEN-HILL.

Written on being initiated a Member of the Green-Hill Lodge,
No. 985, Feb. 2, 1810.

TUNE—"Lochaber no more."

ENVELOP'd in darkness, forlorn and astray,
A poor lonely wand'rer enquiring my way;
My spirits were lost in the horrors of night,
And vainly I wish'd for the morning's fair light:
But Providence deign'd for my wants to provide,
When fairly bewilder'd, I met with a guide,
Who gave me his hand with the purest good will,
And safely conducted me to the Green-Hill.

Arriv'd in that temple of friendship and love,
The words of instruction I heard from above;
THE MASONIC CHAPLET.

Three lights the most glorious threw splendour around,
And shew'd me no falsehood was there to be found.
What bosom so cold but must glow with delight,
Too see all the brethren in friendship unite!
All striving their Master's great plan to fulfil,
They joyfully labour upon the Green Hill.

Let none to this temple of friendship repair,
But those who in dealing with men will be square.
May virtue's strict compass our actions confine
In the bounds of true Masonry's precepts divine;
The level shall teach us no rank to despise—
The beggar's our brother, if upright and wise:
And, oh! till the hour-glass of time shall stand still,
May peace, love, and harmony crown the Green Hill.

TO A FRIEND,
ON THE DEATH OF HIS INFANT SON.

My friend, the tenderest tie which bound
Thy soul to this dark world is broken;
And shall no soothing voice be found,
Through which kind comfort may be spoken?

No! friendship's words would fall in vain,
When nature's holiest chords are riven;
No voice can sooth the bosom's pain,
Save that sweet Voice which speaks from heaven.

Of sorrow's children, happiest they
Who say, when 'rest of all they valued,
"The Lord hath given and taken away;"
Oh! may his wise decrees be hallowed!

THE END.