



E P I S T L E

T O

J. L * * * * K,

A N O L D S C O T C H B A R D .

April 1st, 1785.

WHILE briers an' woodbines bud-
ding green,

An' Paitricks sraichan loud at e'en,

And morning Pooffie whiddan seen,

Inspire my Muse,

This freedom, in an *unknown* frien',

I pray excuse.

A a 2

On Fasteneen we had a rockin,
To ca' the crack and weave our stockin;
And there was muckle fun and jokin,
Ye need na doubt;
At length we had a hearty yokin,
At *sang* about.

Song
No. 2
in
Lappricks
Poems

There was ae *sang*, amang the rest,
Aboon them a' it pleas'd me best,
That some kind husband had addrest,
To some sweet wife:
It thirl'd the heart-strings thro' the breast,
A' to the life.

I've scarce heard ought describ'd fae weel,
What gen'rous, manly bosoms feel;
Thought I, 'Can this be *Pope*, or *Steele*,
Or *Beattie's* wark;
They tald me 'twas an odd kind chiel
About *Muirkirk*.

It pat me fidgean-fain to hear't,
An' fae about him there I spier't;

Then a' that kent him round declar'd,

He had *ingine*,

That nane excell'd it, few cam near't,

It was fae fine.

That fet him to a pint of ale,

An' either douse or merry tale,

Or rhymes an' fangs he'd made himsel,

Or witty catches,

'Tween Inverness and Tiviotdale,

He had few matches.

Then up I gat, an swoor an aith,

Tho' I should pawn my pleugh an' graith,

Or die a cadger pownie's death,

At some dyke-back,

A *pint* an' *gill* I'd gie them *baith*,

To hear your crack.

But first an' foremost, I should tell,

Amaist as soon as I could spell,

I to the *crambo-jingle* fell,

Tho' rude an' rough,

Yet crooning to a body's sel,
Does weel eneugh,

I am nae *Poet*, in a sence,
But just a *Rhymer* like by chance,
An' hae to Learning nae pretence,
Yet, what the matter?
Whene'er my Muse does on me glance,
I jingle at her.

Your Critic-folk may cock their nose,
And say, 'How can you e'er propose,
'You wha ken hardly *verse* frae *prose*,
'To mak a *sang*?'
But by your leaves, my learned foes,
Ye're maybe wrang.

What's a' your jargon o' your Schools,
Your Latin names for horns an' stools;
If honest Nature made you *fools*,
Whatfairs your Grammars?
Ye'd better taen up *spades* and *shools*,
Or *knappin-hammers*.

A fet o' dull, conceited Haffes,
Confuse their brains in *Colledge-classes* !
They gang in Stirks, and come out Affes;
Plain truth to speak ;
An' fyne they think to climb Parnassus
By dint o' Greek !

Gie me ae spark o' Nature's fire,
That's a' the learning I desire ;
Then tho' I drudge thro' dub an' mire
At pleugh or cart,
My Muse, tho' hamely in attire,
May touch the heart.

O for a spunk o' ALLAN'S glee,
Or FERGUSON'S, the bauld an' flee,
Or bright L*****K'S, my friend to be,
If I can hit it !
That would be *lear* enough for me,
If I could get it.

Now, Sir, if ye hae friends enow,
Tho' *real friends* I b'lieve are few,

Yet, if your catalogue be fow,
 I'fe no infist;
 But gif ye want ae friend that's true,
 I'm on your list.

I winna blaw about *mysel*,
 As ill I like my fauts to tell;
 But friends an' folk that wish me well,
 They sometimes roose me;
 Tho' I maun own, as monie still,
 As far abuse me.

There's ae *wee faut* they whiles lay to me,
 I like the lasses—Gude forgie me!
 For monie a Plack they wheedle frae me,
 At dance or fair:
 Maybe some *ither thing* they gie me
 They weel can spare.

But MAUCLINE Race or MAUCLINE
 LINE Fair,
 I should be proud to meet you there;
 We'fe gie ae night's discharge to *care*,
 If we forgather,

An' hae a fwap o' *rhymin-ware*,
Wi' ane anither.

The *four-gill chap*, we'fe gar him clatter,
An' kirf'n him wi' reekin water;
Syne we'll fit down an' tak our whitter,
To chear our heart;
An' faith, we'fe be *acquainted* better
Before we part.

Awa ye felfish, warly race,
Wha think that havins, fense an' grace,
Ev'n love an' friendship should give place
To *catch-the-plack!*
I dinna like to see your face,
Nor hear your crack.

But ye whom focial pleasure charms,
Whose hearts the *tide of kindness* warms,
Who hold your *being* on the terms,
' Each aid the others,'
Come to my bowl, come to my arms,
My friends, my brothers!
B b

But to conclude my lang epistle,
As my auld pen's worn to the grifsle;
Twa lines frae you wad gar me fifsle,
Who am, most fervent,
While I can either sing, or whifsle,
Your friend and servant.

T O T H E S A M E.

April 21st, 1785.

WHILE new-ca'd kye rowte at the
stake,
An' pownies reek in pleugh or braik,
This hour on e'enin's edge I take,
To own I'm debtor,
To honest-hearted, auld L*****K,
For his kind *letter*.

Forjesket fair, with weary legs,
Rattlin the corn out-owre the rigs,
Or dealing thro' amang the naigs
Their ten-hours bite,