Classic Poetry Series

James Hogg
- poems -

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James Hogg(1770 – 21 November 1835)

James Hogg was a Scottish poet and novelist who wrote in both Scots and English. As a young man he worked as a shepherd and farmhand, and was largely self-educated through reading. He was a friend of many of the great writers of his day, including Sir Walter Scott, whom he later wrote an unauthorized biography of. He became widely known as the "Ettrick Shepherd", a nickname under which some of his works were published, and the character name he was given in the widely read series Noctes Ambrosianae, published in Blackwood's Magazine. He is best known today for his novel The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. His other works include the long poem The Queen's Wake (1813), his collection of songs Jacobite Reliques (1819), and his two novels The Three Perils of Man (1822), and The Three Perils of Woman (1823).

Biography

Early Life

James Hogg was born on a small farm near Ettrick, Scotland in 1770 and was baptized there on 9 December, his actual date of birth having never been recorded. His father, Robert Hogg (1729–1820), was a tenant farmer while his mother, Margaret Hogg (née Laidlaw) (1730–1813), was noted for collecting native Scottish ballads. Margaret Laidlaw's father, known as Will o' Phawhope, was said to have been the last man in the Border country to speak with the fairies. James was the second eldest of four brothers, his siblings being William, David, and Robert (from eldest to youngest). Robert and David later emigrated to the United States, while James and William remained in Scotland for their entire lives.

James attended a parish school for a few months before his education was stopped due to his father's bankruptcy as a stock-farmer and sheep-dealer. Robert Hogg was then given the position of shepherd at Ettrickhouse farm by one of his neighbors. James worked as a farm servant throughout his childhood, tending cows, doing general farm work, and acting as a shepherd's assistant. His early experiences of literature and story telling came from the Bible and his mother's and uncle's stories. In 1784 he purchased a fiddle with money that he had saved, and taught himself how to play it. In 1785 he served a year working for a tenant farmer at Singlee. In 1786 he went to work for Mr. Laidlaw of Ellibank, staying with him for eighteen months. In 1788 he was given his first job as a shepherd by Laidlaw's father, a farmer at Willenslee. He stayed here for two

years, learning to read while tending sheep, and being given newspapers and theological works by his employer's wife.

In 1790 he began ten years of service to James Laidlaw of Blackhouse in the Yarrow valley. Hogg later said that Laidlaw was more like a father to him than an employer. Seeing how hard he was working to improve himself, Laidlaw offered to help by making books available for Hogg from his own library, and through a local lending library. Hogg also began composing songs to be sung by local girls. He became a lifelong friend of his master's son, William Laidlaw, himself a minor writer and later the amanuensis of Walter Scott. It was at this time that Hogg, his eldest brother, and several cousins, formed a literary society of shepherds.

Hogg first became familiar with the work of the recently deceased Robert Burns in 1797, after having the poem Tam o' Shanter read to him. During this period Hogg wrote plays and pastorals, and continued producing songs. His work as a sheep drover stimulated an interest in the Scottish Highlands, and over the next few years Hogg took a number of walking tours in summer time. In 1800 he left Blackhouse to help take care of his parents at Ettrickhouse. His collection Scottish Pastorals was published early in 1801 to favorable reviews. His patriotic song "Donald Macdonald" also achieved popularity.

Career

In 1801 Hogg was recruited to collect ballads for Walter Scott's collection The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border and met Scott himself the following year. He began working for the Edinburgh Magazine and kept a journal of his Highland tour in July and August which was published in the Scots Magazine. In 1803 he tried to lease a farm of his own, but due to trouble with his finances and a legal issue he was unable to secure the lease by 1804. Soon after this he met the novelist John Galt. In 1805-06 he worked as a shepherd, meeting the poet Allan Cunningham and becoming friends with him and his family. In October of 1806 he became the lover of a young woman named Catherine Henderson.

His first collection, The Mountain Bard, was published in February 1807 by Constable. At the end of summer 1807 his daughter by Catherine Henderson was born, baptized on 13 December as Catherine Hogg. He continued working as a sheep-grazer for other farmers, but his debts began to grow throughout 1808-1809. At the end of 1809 he began an affair with Margaret Beattie, and soon after absconded from his creditors, returning in disgrace to Ettrick.

In 1810 he moved to Edinburgh to start a literary career. In March, 1810 his daughter by Elizabeth Beattie was born, christened Elizabeth Hogg in June. At

the end of 1810 he met his future wife Margaret Phillips. His magazine The Spy, begun in 1810, failed after a year. At this time he became a member of a debate society called The Forum, eventually serving as its secretary. In 1812 he started planning a long poetical work. His epic story-poem, The Queen's Wake (the setting being the return to Scotland of Mary, Queen of Scots in 1561 after her exile in France), was published in 1813 and was a success. At the end of 1813 he began writing what would later become his well-known poem Mador of the Moor.

In Summer of 1813 Hogg's mother died. In 1814 he met William Wordsworth and made a visit to the Lake District to see Wordsworth and other poets. In 1815 the Duke of Buccleuch granted him a small farm at Eltrive Moss, where he could live rent-free for his lifetime. He continued to write songs and poems, including "The Feild of Waterloo" and "To the Ancient Banner of Buccleuch". His poem Mador of the Moor was published in 1816. Later in the year he published his collection of parodies The Poetic Mirror, achieving a marked success.

Hogg first met the publisher William Blackwood in the aftermath of his own publisher John Goldie's 1814 bankruptcy, and in 1817 he helped with the start of Blackwood's Edinburgh Monthly Magazine. He published his two volume collection Dramatic Tales in May. In 1818 his collection The Brownie of Bodsbeck and Other Tales was published by Blackwood. At this time Hogg was busy with his work Jacobite Reliques. In 1819 he proposed marriage to Margaret Phillips. At the end of the year he published the first volume of Jacobite Relics. He married Margaret Phillips on 28 April 1820. His second tales collection Winter Evening Tales was published a month later. At the end of the year his father died. The second volume of Jacobite Relics was published in February, 1821, and his son James Robert Hogg was born in March, 1821. Around this time, Hogg began having serious financial problems.

It was through the Edinburgh Monthly Magazine, soon renamed Blackwood's Magazine, that Hogg found fame, although it was not the sort that he wanted. Launched as a counter-blast to the Whig Edinburgh Review, Blackwood wanted punchy content in his new publication. He found his ideal contributors in John Wilson (who wrote as Christopher North) and John Gibson Lockhart (later Walter Scott's son-in-law and biographer). Their first published article, "The Chaldee Manuscript", a thinly disguised satire of Edinburgh society in biblical language which Hogg started and Wilson and Lockhart elaborated, was so controversial that Wilson fled and Blackwood was forced to apologise. Soon Blackwood's Tory views and reviews – often scurrilous attacks on other writers – were notorious, and the magazine, or "Maga" as it came to be known, had become one of the

best-selling journals of its day.

But Hogg quickly found himself forced out of the inner circle. As other writers such as Walter Maginn and Thomas de Quincey joined, he became not merely excluded from the lion's share of publication in Maga, but a figure of fun in its pages. Wilson and Lockhart were dangerous friends. Hogg's Memoirs of the Author's Life were savagely attacked by an anonymous reviewer, causing Hogg to temporily break with Blackwood's, and go to work for Constable's smaller Edinburgh Magazine.

In 1822 the Maga launched the Noctes Ambrosianae or "Ambrosian Nights", imaginary conversations in a drinking-den between semi-fictional characters such as North, O'Doherty, The Opium Eater and the Ettrick Shepherd. The Shepherd was Hogg. The Noctes continued until 1834, and were written after 1825 mostly by Wilson, although other writers, including Hogg himself, had a hand in them. The Shepherd of the Noctes is a part-animal, part-rural simpleton, and part-savant. He became one of the best-known figures in topical literary affairs, famous throughout Britain and its colonies. Quite what the real James Hogg made of this is mostly unknown, although some of his letters to Blackwood and others express outrage and anguish.

Hogg's Poetical Works in four volumes were published in 1822, as was his novel The Three Perils of Man. In 1823, in debt to Blackwood, Hogg began publishing his work the Shepherd's Calendar in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. Hogg's daughter Jessie was born in April, and later in the year he published his novel The Three Perils of Woman. In June, 1824 he published his best known work, the novel The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. His epic poem Queen Hynde was published at the end of the year. In 1825 he found a new and lucrative market for his works as he began publishing in a literary annual called the Literary Souvenir.

In 1825 Hogg's daughter Maggie was born, and he began writing a new prose work, later titled Tales of the Wars of Montrose. In 1826 Hogg was in serious trouble with his debts, while the firm of Constable collapsed, involving Walter Scott and Hogg's friend John Aiken. In 1827 his debts began to lighten as his Shepherd's Calendar pieces were being published, and he was getting more and more applications to contribute to annuals. The death of his father-in-law, whose family Hogg had been supporting, gave him relief. His third daughter Harriet was born at the end of the year. Hogg's collection Select and Rare Scottish Melodies was published in 1828, and he continued to write songs and contribute to annuals throughout 1828-29, while his Shepherd's Calendar was published in book form in Spring, 1829.

Later Life

In 1830 he started publishing in the new Fraser's Magazine, and at the end of the year he met with Walter Scott for the last time. In early 1831 Hogg's Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd was published, but the publishing of the companion volume A Queer Book was held up by Blackwood. Hogg's last child, his daughter Mary, was born in August. At the end of the year he quarrelled with Blackwood, and decided to publish his works in London. In 1832 his Altrive Tales was published in London, while Blackwood finally published A Queer Book in April. Hogg was offered a large sum to edit a collection of the works of Robert Burns, but the bankruptcy of his London publisher stopped the publication of his Altrive Tales.

In 1833 Hogg had an accident while curling, falling through the ice, causing a serious illness. In 1834 his biographical work Familiar Anecdotes of Sir Walter Scott was published in the United States, while a pirated version published in Edinburgh led to a break with Lockhart. Hogg mended his relationship with Blackwood in May, but Blackwood died at the end of the year. Hogg published Tales of the Wars of Montrose at the beginning of 1835. He died on 21 November 1835 and was buried in Ettrick Churchyard, close to his childhood home.

Death

Wordsworth's 1835 "Extempore Effusion upon the Death of James Hogg", written in the year of his death, includes the lines:

"The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,
'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies;
And death upon the braes of Yarrow,
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes."

This eulogy notwithstanding, Wordsworth's notes state "He was undoubtedly a man of original genius, but of coarse manners and low and offensive opinions."

Legacy

Among the reading public at large Hogg was, during his lifetime, one of the most admired writers of the day, but this admiration was largely for his success in overcoming the disadvantages of his peasant birth and lack of education. He was considered a man of great natural genius whose uncouth style and subject-matter, so natural for the clownish figure depicted in the Noctes Ambrosianae, should not be held against him. A collected edition of his works was published in

the 1830s, after Hogg's death, pruned of some passages which offended the increasing delicacy of the age, and another Works of the Ettrick Shepherd was prepared in the 1860s which took the process even further; some works, for example The Three Perils of Woman, were excluded altogether. Victorian readers of these emasculated texts naturally came to the conclusion that Hogg had been overrated, and that he was notable mainly as an example of triumph over adverse circumstances. Apart from Justified Sinner, which even his detractors acknowledged as unusually powerful (and often attributed to someone else, usually Lockhart), his novels were regarded as turgid, his verse as light, his short tales and articles as ephemera.

This situation only began to change in 1924, when the French writer André Gide was loaned Justified Sinner by Raymond Mortimer. Gide was amazed, writing that "It is long since I can remember being so taken hold of, so voluptuously tormented by any book." Its republication in 1947, with an enthusiastic introduction by Gide, helped bring about the modern critical and academic appreciation of this novel. Growing interest in The Confessions led to the rediscovery and reconsideration of his other work in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Now his novel ‘’The Three Perils of Woman’’ is also considered a classic and all his work, including his letters, is undergoing major publication in the Stirling/Carolina editions. However, Justified Sinner remains his most important work and is now seen as one of the major Scottish novels of its time, and absolutely crucial in terms of exploring one of the key themes of Scottish culture and identity: Calvinism. In a 2006 interview with Melvyn Bragg for ITV1, Scottish novelist Irvine Welsh cited Hogg, especially The Confessions as a major influence on his writing. A James Hogg Society was founded in 1981 to encourage the study of his life and 's story "The Brownie Of The Black Haggs" was dramatised for BBC radio 4 in 2003 by Scottish playwright Marty Ross as part of his "Darker Side Of The Border" series. More recently Ross returned to the villain of that story, Merodach, making him the villain of a Doctor Who audiobook, Night's Black Agents (Big Finish Productions 2010), in which this demonic figure assumes the pose of a Minister of the Kirk.

A Boy's Song

Where the pools are bright and deep,
Where the grey trout lies asleep,
Up the river and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest,
There to track the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little sweet maidens from the play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play
Through the meadow, among the hay;
Up the water and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

James Hogg

Aikendrum

Ken ye how a Whig can fight, Aikendrum, Aikendrum
Ken ye how a Whig can fight, Aikendrum
He can fight the hero bright, with his heels and armour tight
And the wind of heavenly night, Aikendrum, Aikendrum

Is not Rowley in the right, Aikendrum!

Did ye hear of Sunderland, Aikendrum, Aikendrum
Did ye hear of Sunderland, Aikendrum
That man of high command, who has sworn to clear the land
He has vanished from our strand, Aikendrum, Aikendrum,
Or the eel has ta'en the sand, Aikendrum.

Donald's running 'round and 'round, Aikendrum, Aikendrum,
Donald's running 'round and 'round, Aikendrum
But the Chief cannot be found, and the Dutchmen they are drowned
And King Jaime he is crowned, Aikendrum, Aikendrum
But the dogs will get a stound, Aikendrum.

We have heard of Whigs galore, Aikendrum, Aikendrum
We have heard of Whigs galore, Aikendrum
But we've sought the country o'er, with cannon and claymore,
And still they are before, Aikendrum, Aikendrum
We may seek forevermore, Aikendrum!

Ken ye how to gain a Whig, Aikendrum, Aikendrum
Ken ye how to gain a Whig, Aikendrum
Look Jolly, blythe and big, take his ain blest side and prig,
And the poor, worm-eaten Whig, Aikendrum, Aikendrum
For opposition's sake you will win!

James Hogg

Blessed Be Thy Name Forever

Blessed be thy name for ever,
Thou of life the guard and giver!
Thou canst guard thy creatures sleeping,
Heal the heart long broke with weeping.

Thou who slumbered not, nor sleepest!
Blest are they Thou kindly keepest:
Thine the flaming sphere of light!
Thine the darkness of the night!

Thine the morning and the even,
God of angels, God of heaven!
God of life that fadeth never!
Glory to thy name for ever!

James Hogg

Caledonia

Caledonia! thou land of the mountain and rock,
Of the ocean, the mist, and the wind-
Thou land of the torrent, the pine, and the oak,
Of the roebuck, the hart, and the hind;
Though bare are thy cliffs, and though barren thy glens,
Though bleak thy dun islands appear,
Yet kind are the hearts, and undaunted the clans,
That roam on these mountains so drear!

A foe from abroad, or a tyrant at home,
Could never thy ardour restrain;
The marshall'd array of imperial Rome
Essay'd thy proud spirit in vain!
Firm seat of religion, of valour, of truth,
Of genius unshackled and free,
The muses have left all the vales of the south,
My loved Caledonia, for thee!

Sweet land of the bay and wild-winding deeps
Where loveliness slumbers at even,
While far in the depth of the blue water sleeps
A calm little motionless heaven!
Thou land of the valley, the moor, and the hill,
Of the storm and the proud rolling wave-
Yes, thou art the land of fair liberty still,
And the land of my forefathers' grave!

James Hogg

Donald Macgillavry

Donald's gane up the hill hard and hungry
Donald comes down the hill wild and angry
Donald will clear the gouk's nest cleverly
Here's tae the king and Donald Macgillavry
Come like a weigh-bauk, Donald Macgillavry
Come like a weigh-bauk, Donald Macgillavry
Balance them fair, and balance them cleverly
Off wi' the counterfeit, Donald Macgillavry

Donald's run o'er the hill but his tether, man
As he were wud, or stang'd wi' an ether, man
When he comes back, there's some will look merrily
Here's tae King James and Donald Macgillavry
Come like a weaver, Donald Macgillavry
Come like a weaver, Donald Macgillavry
Pack on your back, an elwand sae cleverly
Gie them full measure, my Donald Macgillavry

Donald has foughten wi' reif and roguery
Donald has dinner'd wi' banes and beggery
Better it were for Whigs and Whiggery
Meeting the devil than Donald Macgillavry
Come like a tailor, Donald Macgillavry
Come like a tailor, Donald Macgillavry
Push about, in and out, thimble them cleverly
Here's tae King James and Donald Macgillavry

Donald's the callan that brooks nae tangleness
Whigging, and prigging, and a' newfangleness
They maun be gane; he winna be baukit, man
He maun hae justice, or faith he'll tak it, man
Come like a cobler, Donald Macgillavry
Come like a cobler, Donald Macgillavry
Beat them, and bore them, and lingel them cleverly
Up wi' King James and Donald Macgillavry

Donald was mumpit wi' mirds and mockery
Donald was blindid wi' blads o' property
Arles ran high, but makings war naething, man

Lord, how Donald is flyting and fretting, man
Come like the devil, Donald Macgillavry
Come like the devil, Donald Macgillavry
Skelp them an' scaud them that prov'd sae unbritherly
Up wi' King James and Donald Macgillavry

James Hogg

Elegy On The Death Of A Child

Fair was thy blossom, tender flower,
That open'd like the rose in May,
Though nursed beneath the chilly shower
Of fell regret, for love's decay.

How oft thy mother heaved the sigh
O'er wreaths of honour early shorn,
Before thy sweet and guiltless eye
Had open'd on the dawn of morn!

How oft, above thy lowly bed,
When all in silence slumber'd low,
The fond and filial tear was shed,
Thou child of love, of shame, and woe!

Her wrong'd but gentle bosom burn'd
With joy thy opening bloom to see;
The only breast that o'er thee yearn'd;
The only heart that cared for thee.

Oft her young eye, with tear-drops bright,
Pleaded with Heaven for her sweet child,
When faded dreams of past delight
O'er recollection wander'd wild.

Fair was thy blossom, bonnie flower,
Fair as the softest wreaths of spring,
When late I saw thee seek the bower
In peace thy morning hymn to sing.

Thy little foot across the lawn
Scarce from the primrose press'd the dew;
I thought the spirit of the dawn
Before me to the greenwood flew.

E'en then the shaft was on the wing,
Thy spotless soul from earth to sever,
A tear of pity wet the string
That twang'd, and seal'd thy doom for ever.

I saw thee late, the emblem fair
Of beauty, innocence, and truth,
Start tiptoe on the verge of air,
'Twixt childhood and unstable youth;

But now I see thee stretch'd at rest:
To break that rest shall wake no morrow -
Pale as the grave-flower on thy breast!
Poor child of love, of shame, and sorrow!

May thy long sleep be sound and sweet;
Thy visions fraught with bliss to be;
And long the daisy, emblem meet,
Shall shed its earliest tear o'er thee!

James Hogg

Kilmeny

Bonnie Kilmeny gaed up the glen;
But it wasna to meet Duneira's men,
Nor the rosy monk of the isle to see,
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
It was only to hear the yorlin sing,
And pu' the cress-flower round the spring;
The scarlet hypp and the hindberrye,
And the nut that hung frae the hazel tree;
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
But lang may her minny look o'er the wa',
But lang may she seek i' the green-wood shaw;
Lang the laird o' Duneira blame,
And lang, lang greet or Kilmeny come hame!

When many a day had come and fled,
When grief grew calm, and hope was dead,
When mess for Kilmeny's soul had been sung,
When the bedesman had pray'd and the dead bell rung,
Late, late in gloamin' when all was still,
When the fringe was red on the westlin hill,
The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,
The reek o' the cot hung over the plain,
Like a little wee cloud in the world its lane;
When the ingle low'd wi' an eiry leme,
Late, late in the gloamin' Kilmeny came hame!

'Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?
Lang hae we sought baith holt and den;
By linn, by ford, and green-wood tree,
Yet you are halesome and fair to see.
Where gat you that joup o' the lily scheen?
That bonnie snood of the birk sae green?
And these roses, the fairest that ever were seen?
Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?'

Kilmeny look'd up with a lovely grace,
But nae smile was seen on Kilmeny's face;
As still was her look, and as still was her e'e,
As the stillness that lay on the emerant lea,

Or the mist that sleeps on a waveless sea.
For Kilmeny had been, she knew not where,
And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare;
Kilmeny had been where the cock never crew,
Where the rain never fell, and the wind never blew.
But it seem'd as the harp of the sky had rung,
And the airs of heaven play'd round her tongue,
When she spake of the lovely forms she had seen,
And a land where sin had never been;
A land of love and a land of light,
Withouten sun, or moon, or night;
Where the river swa'd a living stream,
And the light a pure celestial beam;
The land of vision, it would seem,
A still, an everlasting dream.

In yon green-wood there is a waik,
And in that waik there is a wene,
And in that wene there is a maike,
That neither has flesh, blood, nor bane;
And down in yon green-wood he walks his lane.

In that green wene Kilmeny lay,
Her bosom happ'd wi' flowerets gay;
But the air was soft and the silence deep,
And bonnie Kilmeny fell sound asleep.
She kenn'd nae mair, nor open'd her e'e,
Till waked by the hymns of a far countrye.

She 'waken'd on a couch of the silk sae slim,
All striped wi' the bars of the rainbow's rim;
And lovely beings round were rife,
Who erst had travell'd mortal life;
And aye they smiled and 'gan to speer,
'What spirit has brought this mortal here?'—

'Lang have I journey'd, the world wide,'
A meek and reverend fere replied;
'Baith night and day I have watch'd the fair,
Eident a thousand years and mair.
Yes, I have watch'd o'er ilk degree,
Wherever blooms femenitye;

But sinless virgin, free of stain
In mind and body, fand I nane.
Never, since the banquet of time,
Found I a virgin in her prime,
Till late this bonnie maiden I saw
As spotless as the morning snaw:
Full twenty years she has lived as free
As the spirits that sojourn in this countrye:
I have brought her away frae the snares of men,
That sin or death she never may ken.'—

They clasp'd her waist and her hands sae fair,
They kiss'd her cheek and they kemed her hair,
And round came many a blooming fere,
Saying, 'Bonnie Kilmeny, ye're welcome here!
Women are freed of the littand scorn:
O blest be the day Kilmeny was born!
Now shall the land of the spirits see,
Now shall it ken what a woman may be!
Many a lang year, in sorrow and pain,
Many a lang year through the world we've gane,
Commission'd to watch fair womankind,
For it 's they who nurice the immortal mind.
We have watch'd their steps as the dawning shone,
And deep in the green-wood walks alone;
By lily bower and silken bed,
The viewless tears have o'er them shed;
Have soothed their ardent minds to sleep,
Or left the couch of love to weep.
We have seen! we have seen! but the time must come,
And the angels will weep at the day of doom!

'O would the fairest of mortal kind
Aye keep the holy truths in mind,
That kindred spirits their motions see,
Who watch their ways with anxious e'e,
And grieve for the guilt of humanitye!
O, sweet to Heaven the maiden's prayer,
And the sigh that heaves a bosom sae fair!
And dear to Heaven the words of truth,
And the praise of virtue frae beauty's mouth!
And dear to the viewless forms of air,

The minds that kyth as the body fair!

'O bonnie Kilmeny! free frae stain,
If ever you seek the world again,
That world of sin, of sorrow and fear,
O tell of the joys that are waiting here;
And tell of the signs you shall shortly see;
Of the times that are now, and the times that shall be.'—
They lifted Kilmeny, they led her away,
And she walk'd in the light of a sunless day;
The sky was a dome of crystal bright,
The fountain of vision, and fountain of light:
The emerald fields were of dazzling glow,
And the flowers of everlasting blow.
Then deep in the stream her body they laid,
That her youth and beauty never might fade;
And they smiled on heaven, when they saw her lie
In the stream of life that wander'd bye.
And she heard a song, she heard it sung,
She kenn'd not where; but sae sweetly it rung,
It fell on the ear like a dream of the morn:
'O, blest be the day Kilmeny was born!
Now shall the land of the spirits see,
Now shall it ken what a woman may be!
The sun that shines on the world sae bright,
A borrow'd gleid frae the fountain of light;
And the moon that sleeks the sky sae dun,
Like a gouden bow, or a beamless sun,
Shall wear away, and be seen nae mair,
And the angels shall miss them travelling the air.
But lang, lang after baith night and day,
When the sun and the world have elyed away;
When the sinner has gane to his waesome doom,
Kilmeny shall smile in eternal bloom!'—

They bore her away, she wist not how,
For she felt not arm nor rest below;
But so swift they wain'd her through the light,
'Twas like the motion of sound or sight;
They seem'd to split the gales of air,
And yet nor gale nor breeze was there.
Unnumber'd groves below them grew,

They came, they pass'd, and backward flew,
Like floods of blossoms gliding on,
In moment seen, in moment gone.
O, never vales to mortal view
Appear'd like those o'er which they flew!
That land to human spirits given,
The lowermost vales of the storied heaven;
From thence they can view the world below,
And heaven's blue gates with sapphires glow,
More glory yet unmeet to know.

They bore her far to a mountain green,
To see what mortal never had seen;
And they seated her high on a purple sward,
And bade her heed what she saw and heard,
And note the changes the spirits wrought,
For now she lived in the land of thought.
She look'd, and she saw nor sun nor skies,
But a crystal dome of a thousand dyes:
She look'd, and she saw nae land aright,
But an endless whirl of glory and light:
And radiant beings went and came,
Far swifter than wind, or the linkèd flame.
She hid her e'en frae the dazzling view;
She look'd again, and the scene was new.

She saw a sun on a summer sky,
And clouds of amber sailing bye;
A lovely land beneath her lay,
And that land had glens and mountains gray;
And that land had valleys and hoary piles,
And marlèd seas, and a thousand isles.
Its fields were speckled, its forests green,
And its lakes were all of the dazzling sheen,
Like magic mirrors, where slumbering lay
The sun and the sky and the cloudlet gray;
Which heaved and trembled, and gently swung,
On every shore they seem'd to be hung;
For there they were seen on their downward plain
A thousand times and a thousand again;
In winding lake and placid firth,
Little peaceful heavens in the bosom of earth.

Kilmeny sigh'd and seem'd to grieve,
For she found her heart to that land did cleave;
She saw the corn wave on the vale,
She saw the deer run down the dale;
She saw the plaid and the broad claymore,
And the brows that the badge of freedom bore;
And she thought she had seen the land before.

She saw a lady sit on a throne,
The fairest that ever the sun shone on!
A lion lick'd her hand of milk,
And she held him in a leish of silk;
And a leifu' maiden stood at her knee,
With a silver wand and melting e'e;
Her sovereign shield till love stole in,
And poison'd all the fount within.

Then a gruff untoward bedesman came,
And hundit the lion on his dame;
And the guardian maid wi' the dauntless e'e,
She dropp'd a tear, and left her knee;
And she saw till the queen frae the lion fled,
Till the bonniest flower of the world lay dead;
A coffin was set on a distant plain,
And she saw the red blood fall like rain;
Then bonnie Kilmeny's heart grew sair,
And she turn'd away, and could look nae mair.

Then the gruff grim carle girn'd amain,
And they trampled him down, but he rose again;
And he baited the lion to deeds of weir,
Till he lapp'd the blood to the kingdom dear;
And weening his head was danger-preef,
When crown'd with the rose and clover leaf,
He gowl'd at the carle, and chased him away
To feed wi' the deer on the mountain gray.
He gowl'd at the carle, and geck'd at Heaven,
But his mark was set, and his arles given.
Kilmeny a while her e'en withdrew;
She look'd again, and the scene was new.

She saw before her fair unfurl'd
One half of all the glowing world,
Where oceans roll'd, and rivers ran,
To bound the aims of sinful man.
She saw a people, fierce and fell,
Burst frae their bounds like fiends of hell;
Their lilies grew, and the eagle flew;
And she herkèd on her ravening crew,
Till the cities and towers were wrapp'd in a blaze,
And the thunder it roar'd o'er the lands and the seas.
The widows they wail'd, and the red blood ran,
And she threaten'd an end to the race of man;
She never lened, nor stood in awe,
Till caught by the lion's deadly paw.
O, then the eagle swink'd for life,
And brainyell'd up a mortal strife;
But flew she north, or flew she south,
She met wi' the gowl o' the lion's mouth.

With a mooted wing and waefu' maen,
The eagle sought her eiry again;
But lang may she cower in her bloody nest,
And lang, lang sleek her wounded breast,
Before she sey another flight,
To play wi' the norland lion's might.

But to sing the sights Kilmeny saw,
So far surpassing nature's law,
The singer's voice wad sink away,
And the string of his harp wad cease to play.
But she saw till the sorrows of man were bye,
And all was love and harmony;
Till the stars of heaven fell calmly away,
Like flakes of snaw on a winter day.

Then Kilmeny begg'd again to see
The friends she had left in her own countrye;
To tell of the place where she had been,
And the glories that lay in the land unseen;
To warn the living maidens fair,
The loved of Heaven, the spirits' care,
That all whose minds unmeled remain

Shall bloom in beauty when time is gane.

With distant music, soft and deep,
They lull'd Kilmeny sound asleep;
And when she awaken'd, she lay her lane,
All happ'd with flowers, in the green-wood wene.
When seven lang years had come and fled,
When grief was calm, and hope was dead;
When scarce was remember'd Kilmeny's name,
Late, late in a gloamin' Kilmeny came hame!
And O, her beauty was fair to see,
But still and steadfast was her e'e!
Such beauty bard may never declare,
For there was no pride nor passion there;
And the soft desire of maiden's e'en
In that mild face could never be seen.
Her seymar was the lily flower,
And her cheek the moss-rose in the shower;
And her voice like the distant melodye,
That floats along the twilight sea.
But she loved to raike the lanely glen,
And keepèd afar frae the haunts of men;
Her holy hymns unheard to sing,
To suck the flowers, and drink the spring.
But wherever her peaceful form appear'd,
The wild beasts of the hill were cheer'd;
The wolf play'd blythly round the field,
The lordly byson low'd and kneel'd;
The dun deer woo'd with manner bland,
And cower'd aneath her lily hand.
And when at even the woodlands rung,
When hymns of other worlds she sung
In ecstasy of sweet devotion,
O, then the glen was all in motion!
The wild beasts of the forest came,
Broke from their bughts and faulds the tame,
And goved around, charm'd and amazed;
Even the dull cattle croon'd and gazed,
And murmur'd and look'd with anxious pain
For something the mystery to explain.
The buzzard came with the throstle-cock;
The corby left her houf in the rock;

The blackbird alang wi' the eagle flew;
The hind came tripping o'er the dew;
The wolf and the kid their raike began,
And the tod, and the lamb, and the leveret ran;
The hawk and the hern attour them hung,
And the merle and the mavis forhooy'd their young;
And all in a peaceful ring were hurl'd;
It was like an eve in a sinless world!

When a month and a day had come and gane.
Kilmeny sought the green-wood wene;
There laid her down on the leaves sae green,
And Kilmeny on earth was never mair seen.
But O, the words that fell from her mouth
Were words of wonder, and words of truth!
But all the land were in fear and dread,
For they kendna whether she was living or dead.
It wasna her hame, and she couldna remain;
She left this world of sorrow and pain,
And return'd to the land of thought again.

James Hogg

Love Is Like A Dizziness

O, love, love, love!
Love is like a dizziness;
It winna let a puir body
Gang about his biziness!

James Hogg

The Father's Lament

How can you bid this heart be blithe,
When blithe this heart can never be?
I've lost the jewel from my crown -
Look round our circle, and you'll see
That there is ane out o' the ring
Who never can forgotten be -
Ay, there's a blank at my right hand,
That ne'er can be made up to me!

'Tis said, as water wears the rock,
That time wears out the deepest line;
It may be true wi' hearts enow,
But never can apply to mine.
For I have learn'd to know and feel -
Though losses should forgotten be -
That still the blank at my right hand
Can never be made up to me!

I blame not Providence's sway,
For I have many joys beside;
And fain would I in grateful way
Enjoy the same, whate'er betide.
A mortal thing should ne'er repine,
But stoop to supreme decree;
Yet oh! the blank at my right hand
Can never be made up to me.

James Hogg

The Skylark

Bird of the wilderness,
Blithesome and cumberless,
Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place -
O to abide in the desert with thee!

Wild is thy lay and loud,
Far in the downy cloud,
Love gives it energy, love gave it birth.
Where, on thy dewy wing,
Where art thou journeying?
Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.

O'er fell and fountain sheen,
O'er moor and mountain green,
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day,
Over the cloudlet dim,
Over the rainbow's rim,
Musical cherub, soar, singing, away!

Then, when the gloaming comes,
Low in the heather blooms
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place -
O to abide in the desert with thee!

James Hogg