

**THE HEATHER LINTIE: BEING
POETICAL PIECES, SPIRITUAL
AND TEMPORAL, CHIEFLY IN
THE SCOTTISH DIALECT**

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The Heather Lintie: Being Poetical Pieces, Spiritual and Temporal, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect
by Roger Quinn

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ROGER QUINN

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THE HEATHER LINTIE;

BEING

POETICAL PIECES,

SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL,

CHIEFLY IN THE SCOTTISH DIALECT.

BY

ROGER QUINN,

DUMFRIES.

"Away from the gloom, like a bird on the wing,
O'er the moors and the mountains I'll warble and sing,
Inhaling the beauty, the breeze, and the bloom—
Oh my heart's in the heather, whatever my doom."

SECOND EDITION.

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ADT 17 229

TO

EAGLESFIELD BRADSHAW SMITH, Esq.

OF BLACKWOOD-HOUSE,

FOR SERVICES RECEIVED,

THIS VOLUME IS

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

HIS MOST GRATEFUL, HUMBLE, AND OBEDIENT

SERVANT,

ROGER QUINN.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE astonishing rapidity with which the "Heather Lintie" passed through its first impression of 1500 copies has emboldened the Author to venture upon a Second Edition of the work. In order as far as possible to meet the public taste, with which, through his recent intercourse with society, he has become a little more conversant, the Author has made considerable changes in the present issue. These consist in omissions, corrections, and additions, all of which, he humbly trusts, will be received by the reader as decided improvements.

The Author is, nevertheless, duly sensible of the remaining literary defects of the volume. While thus acknowledging his incompetency as an Author fully to satisfy the varied tastes of the reading public, he clings to the hope that, as the production of an illiterate working man, this edition, from its general tenor and the variety it offers both as regards spiritual and secular subjects, will, no less than the preceding one, secure on its behalf the kind patronage and indulgent approbation of at least the better portions of society, a distinction already conferred upon him, and which it is his highest ambition to retain.

The Author once more tenders his heartfelt acknowledgments to his subscribers generally for their very generous and liberal encouragement; and his thanks are doubly due to those literary friends who have kindly recognised the merit of his humble Muse, by allowing their names to stand at the head of his second subscription list. The "Lintie" warbles its moorland notes all the more cheerily under the influence of such general and special encouragement; and it may be led thereby to sim at higher strains "some other day," which shall be listened to with no less favour than the humble effusions which have been so warmly welcomed by the general public.

R. Q.

DUMFRIES, AUGUST, 1863.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

IN submitting the following pages to the Public, I beg to tender my most grateful acknowledgments to my numerous subscribers, for the very generous manner in which they have been pleased, without the inducement of even a specimen sheet, to assist an obscure unlettered workman in publishing a volume of poems. This assistance is doubtless owing, in some degree, to the superior influence of the distinguished names at the head of my subscription list, for whose munificent patronage my special thanks are due.

I cannot, like Burns and other bards, say when or where the Muse at first discovered me, or indeed whether she has found me at all ; but this I can say for certain, that if ever the genius of poesy did inspire me, it was under circumstances the most adverse ; so much so, that if described here—which they cannot be—my readers would scarcely credit the statement. She found me, if at all, without either material, time, or means for composition. I had no material, I mean no suitable fund of words with which to clothe my ideas. I had got no school education, and when out of boyhood, and on through maturer life, I had neither the time nor means necessary for the acquirement of due information, having married young, and being at the age of forty-five, the father of a family of twelve children, for whose maintenance I had often, while composing some of the following pieces, to work sixteen hours a-day in a very cheerless, enervating, and unpoetic atmosphere. I then followed the trade of a cotton hand-loom weaver. Authorship in my case was carried on by fits and starts, and in the face of a thousand difficulties, and the idea of publication, if ever entertained, seemed utterly hopeless.

Had I fancied that I should one day have had the honour of appearing in print, I would not, as I have done, through carelessness and neglect, have allowed so many of what I considered *the best of my productions* to be lost. However, I still retain

considerably more matter than I dare venture to speculate upon in the meantime, which may see the light at some future period, if my present undertaking shall prove successful up to the measure of my hopes and expectations. It will be seen that some of the pieces are of a satirical kind, and I can truly say that these were intended as a corrective to certain real evils and abuses in society. In some instances the satire may be considered somewhat severe by the advocates of universal forbearance; but I trust that even such will give me the credit of being actuated by a good motive—that of wishing to unmask hypocrisy, and make vice ashamed.

I have principally adopted the Scottish dialect, not so much because it is that with which I am most familiar, but because I see it apparently despised and neglected by those who ought rather to cherish and appreciate it; and because there is, in my estimation, no dialect more simple, expressive, and poetic than the Lowland (Saxon) Scotch. Take at random any of Burns' Poems, and you will at once perceive the truth of this assertion. The fashion now-a-days is to write and speak nothing but pure English, as if Scotia's "mither" tongue was something to be despised, and for ever banished from the hills and dales, mountains and streams, with which it has been so long associated.

The appearance of the present volume has been brought about mainly by the suggestions and encouragement of some influential persons, to whose superior judgment I felt myself bound to submit. For nearly half a century have I toiled in one of the hardest fields of manual labour, ever adhering to the strictest rules of sobriety and domestic economy, without realizing anything at all like prospective certainty of attaining to the grand object of my highest ambition and fondest aspirations, namely, that of dying, like my poor old Father, without owing to any one on earth a single farthing. He died poor as a man could do, spart from parochial relief, but nevertheless possessing a title—that of an honest man—*compared with which all others, notwithstanding their dazzling,*

pomp and tinselled glitter, at once sink into contemptible insignificance.

Such, imperfectly stated, are the grounds upon which I appeal to a generous and sympathising public for further patronage, and to the penetrating critic for the favour of his kind indulgence, at least to the same extent as that generally conceded to the illiterate working man's muse. Seeing my paramount object in thus appearing before the public, I trust my readers, though they may be at times inclined to condemn my presumption and untaught composition, will at least give me credit for and applaud my humble but honest motives. They need not look for high-flown sentiment or ambitious verse in the following pages. I do not attempt to soar to heaven's gates, singing like the sky-lark ; but my song is lowly and homely as the lilt of the little warbler whose name I borrow for the Title-page : and I fondly trust that it will be found, like it, true to nature, as it certainly is the spontaneous out-pourings of my heart.

R. Q.

DUMFRIES, 20 SEPTEMBER, 1861.

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