

CERES RACES

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649427727

Ceres Races by John W. Wood

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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BY

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CUPAR-FIFE:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

1873.

280. n. 558.

PRINTED AT A. WESTWOOD'S STEAM PRESS, CUPAR.

CERES RACES.

WHA hasna been through Ceres toon,
And "owre a gill" wi' Teelyir Broom,
Or seen him while the Race-day passes,
Rampaugin 'mang the lads and lasses,—
And in "High Science's" in glee,
Ca'd through a nicht o' glorious spree,
Where he has heard of unco wars
Frae sodgers who can shew their scars,
Or handled doon frae dad to son,
Of battles Ceres shared and won!
And at midnight, when a' was dune,
Beneath the glory o' the Mune,
Gloured on wi' greedy, solemn glour,
The last brig Bishop Sharp rode owre
That day the Presbyters sae soor
Cam on the Rogue on Magus Moor,—
Although he has been mony a mile,
Or up the Rhine, or up the Nile,

Or through the Trossachs—nearer hame,—
 Or fifty places tongue could name,
 Hasna scen a' the warld, ye ken,
 Nor met wi' Nature's noblest men !
 For yon bright sun ne'er sets its face
 On sic a' tribe,—on sic a place,—
 And sic true-blues by Land and Sea
 As ever bade a Home be free ;
 Unlike the folk o' croodit slums,
 Wha cram their bairns wi' sugar-plums
 And dumplins made o' foreign flour,
 And foreign fruit, and foreign stoor ;
 Unlike the gentry—sae by luck—
 Wha canna even eat a juck,
 But twa-three cook-heads maun be rackit,
 To hae the beast wi' trashtrie packit,
 Spoiling baith appetites and sows,
 Filling the earth wi' deecin'-like Owls,
 Thin-shankit, white-skinned scraichs o' day,
 Wha pass in idleness away,—
 Yea, yea ! the Ceres breed is hale,
 For health and strength are in their kail,
 Their piz-an'-ait and barley scones,
 Pork, Cabbage, Leeks, an' grawnd Blue-dons,
 Their Beer and Whusky frae the Stell,
 Untouched wi' "kill-the-cairter" shell,
 Such as oor Pawrents, no oure nice,
 Lived Tenant-folk on Paradise !
 The bairns at nine months rin their lane,
 The halfins raise the quarry stane,

Their Faythers' Faythers—auld-like tykes,—
Gang oot sax miles to put up dykes,
Yet though they hirple owre the braes
Wi' rackit banes or corny taes,
You'll never hear the Carlies murn
Frae morning till the lang day turn ;
But see them smirking owre their denners,
A' rough and ready in their menners,
When seated 'neath some shady tree,
As happy as the Laird could be,
Tearing at greasy cauld-pork slices,
Crackin' o' swine and thriving grices ;
And e'er the sclyster's fairly owre,
The Laird himsel' will stap anour,
Haudin' an aipple in the air,
Or some lang gergynell sae rare,
And cry, " First here to grip his mell,
Will get this Codlin to himsel' !"—
When ilka ane bangs up wi' force,
Bounding and rifting like the horse
New set adrift on Sabbath morn,
To scour the fields and save the corn,
Juist as they used to play the Fule
At " catch-th'-hare " ahent the Schule,—
Ilk Fayther there a noble Laird,
Wha brags a theekit hoose and yaird,
Braw gruntin' swine and plots o' kail,
Hams i' the neuk and bunks o' meal,
As bonny hams a' in a raw,
As ever hang on Adam's wa',

Big tawty-pits in wooden sheds,
 And siller shoo'd within their beds,—
 The auld Man's surety and his stay
 When comes the hirpling, friendless day.

But, hark ! the Ceres Brass Band poors
 Its lively notes among the Moors,
 While here and there a Bagpipe yells
 Auld Scotia's music up the dells,
 To warn the Chiels wha ca' the harrows,
 The Chaps wha move the mells and barrows,
 And a' the lasses young and strang,
 Wha dwell our pleasant moors amang,—
 But ah ! yon bonny morning saw
 The Tarvit shepherd ta'en awa'
 To Cupar jail ; and wha will play
 The Tarvit lasses owre the day ?

The watchdog o' Balass had been
 At antrin times by Chairlie seen
 To skulk frae's fields at break o' morn,
 Whar sheep and lambs lay dead and torn ;
 But when he spak to " Auld Balass,"
 He stampit aye and gowled, " Ye ass,"
 And set him whiles wi' unco bang
 Whar shepherds scarcely care to gang,
 That " Rover," and as he'd be spared,
 Had barkit a' nicht in the yaird ;
 Sae Chairlie, juist to mak' things richt,
 Sat wi' a cockit gun by nicht,