

Epistle To Colonel De Peyster

My honor'd Colonel, deep I feel
 Your interest in the Poet's weal;
 Ah! now sma' heart hae I to speel
 The steep Parnassus,
 Surrounded thus by bolus pill,
 And potion glasses.

O what a canty world were it,
 Would pain and care and sickness spare it;
 And Fortune favour worth and merit
 As they deserve;
 And aye rowth o' roast-beef and claret,
 Syne, wha wad starve?

Dame Life, tho' fiction out may trick her,
 And in paste gems and frippery deck her;
 Oh! flickering, feeble, and unsicker
 I've found her still,
 Aye wavering like the willow-wicker,
 'Tween good and ill.

Then that curst carmagnole, auld Satan,
 Watches like baudrons by a ratton
 Our sinfu' saul to get a claut on,
 Wi'felon ire;
 Syne, whip! his tail ye'll ne'er cast saut on,
 He's aff like fire.

Ah Nick! ah Nick! it is na fair,
 First showing us the tempting ware,
 Bright wines, and bonie lasses rare,
 To put us daft
 Syne weave, unseen, thy spider snare
 O hell's damned waft.

Poor Man, the flie, aft bizzes by,
 And aft, as chance he comes thee nigh,
 Thy damn'd auld elbow yeuks wi'joy
 And hellish pleasure!
 Already in thy fancy's eye,
 Thy sicker treasure.

Soon, heels o'er gowdie, in he gangs,
 And, like a sheep-head on a tangs,
 Thy girning laugh enjoys his pangs,
 And murdering wrestle,
 As, dangling in the wind, he hangs,
 A gibbet's tassel.

But lest you think I am uncivil
 To plague you with this draunting drivell,
 Abjuring a' intentions evil,
 I quat my pen,
 The Lord preserve us frae the devil!
 Amen! Amen!