

William E. Aytoun (1813-65)

5 *The Massacre of the MacPherson*

I.

Fhairshon swore a feud  
    Against the clan M'Tavish;  
Marched into their land  
    To murder and to rafish;  
For he did resolve 5  
    To extirpate the vipers,  
With four-and-twenty men  
    And five-and-thirty pipers.

II.

But when he had gone 10  
    Half-way down Strath Canaan,  
Of his fighting tail  
    Just three were remainin'.  
They were all he had,  
    To back him in ta battle;  
All the rest had gone 15  
    Off, to drive ta cattle.

III.

"Fery coot!" cried Fhairshon,  
    "So my clan disgraced is;  
Lads, we'll need to fight 20  
    Pefore we touch the peasties.  
Here's Mhic-Mac-Methusaleh  
    Coming wi' his fassals,  
Gillies seventy-three,  
    And sixty Dhuinéwassails!"

IV.

“Coot tay to you, sir; 25  
Are you not ta Fhairshon?  
Was you coming here  
To fisit any person?  
You are a plackguard, sir!  
It is now six hundred 30  
Coot long years, and more,  
Since my glen was plunder’d.”

V.

“Fat is tat you say?  
Dare you cock your peaver?  
I will teach you, sir, 35  
Fat is coot pehaviour!  
You shall not exist  
For another day more;  
I will shoot you, sir,  
Or stap you with my claymore!” 40

VI.

“I am fery glad  
To learn what you mention,  
Since I can prevent  
Any such intention.”  
So Mhic-Mac-Methusaleh 45  
Gave some warlike howls,  
Trew his skhian-dhu,  
An’ stuck it in his powels.

VII.

In this fery way  
Tied ta faliant Fhairshon, 50  
Who was always thought  
A superior person.  
Fhairshon had a son,  
Who married Noah’s daughter,  
And nearly spoil’d ta Flood, 55

By trinking up ta water:

VIII.

Which he would have done,

I at least believe it,

Had ta mixture peen

Only half Glenlivet.

60

This is all my tale:

Sirs, I hope 'tis new t' ye!

Here's your fery good healths,

And tamn ta whusky duty!

*1844*

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