

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)

15 *The Orphan Maid*

From *The Legend of Montrose*

“Tuning her instrument, and receiving an assenting look from Lord Monteith and Allan, Annot Lyle executed the following ballad, which our friend, Mr. Secundus M’Pherson, whose goodness we had before to acknowledge, has thus translated into the English tongue:” —

November’s hail-cloud drifts away,
November’s sun-beam wan
Looks coldly on the castle grey,
When forth comes Lady Anne.

The orphan by the oak was set, 5
Her arms, her feet, were bare;
The hail-drops had not melted yet,
Amid her raven hair.

“And, dame,” she said, “by all the ties
That child and mother know, 10
Aid one who never knew these joys, —
Relieve an orphan’s woe.”

The lady said, “An orphan’s state
Is hard and sad to bear;
Yet worse the widow’d mother’s fate, 15
Who mourns both lord and heir.

“Twelve times the rolling year has sped,
Since, while from vengeance wild
Of fierce Strathallan’s chief I fled,
Forth’s eddies whelm’d my child.” — 20

“Twelve times the year its course has borne,”

