

## VII.—SIR PATRICK SPENCE,

## A SCOTTISH BALLAD,

Is given from two MS. copies transmitted from Scotland. In what age the hero of this ballad lived, or when this fatal expedition happened that proved so destructive to the Scots nobles, I have not been able to discover; yet am of opinion that their catastrophe is not altogether without foundation in history, though it has escaped my own researches. In the infancy of navigation, such as used the northern seas were very liable to shipwreck in the wintry months; hence a law was enacted in the reign of James III. (a law which was frequently repeated afterwards), "That there be na schip frauched out of the realm with any staple gudes, fra the feast of Simons day and Jude, unto the feast of the purification of our Lady, called Candelmess." Jam. III. Parl. 2, ch. 15.

THE king sits in Dumferling toun,  
Drinking the blude-reid wine:

O *quhar* will I get guid sailor,  
To sail this schip of mine?

Up and spak an eldern knight,  
Sat at the kings richt kne:  
Sir Patrick Spence is the best sailör,  
That sails upon the se.

The king has writtén a braid letter,\*  
And signd it wi' his hand;  
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spence,  
Was walking on the sand.

The first line that Sir Patrick red,  
A loud lauch lauched he:  
The next line that Sir Patrick red,  
The teir blinded his ee.

O *quha* is this has don this deid,  
This ill deid don to me;  
To send me out this time o' the *zeir*,  
To sail upon the se?

Mak hast, mak haste, my mirry men all,  
Our guid schip sails the morne.

O say na sae, my master deir,  
For I feir a deadlie storme.

Late late yestreen I saw the new moone  
Wi' the auld moone in hir arme;  
And I feir, I feir, my deir master,  
That we will com to harme.

O our Scots nobles wer richt *laith*  
To weet their cork-heild *schoone*;  
Bot lang owre a' the play wer playd,  
Thair hats they swam aboone.

O lang, lang, may thair ladies sit  
Wi' thair fans into their hand,  
Or eir they se Sir Patrick Spence  
Cum sailing to the land.

O lang, lang, may the ladies stand  
Wi' thair gold kems in their hair,  
Waiting for thair ain deir lords,  
For they'll se thame na mair.

Have owre, have owre to Aberdour,\*  
It's fiftie fadom deip:  
And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spence,  
Wi' the Scots lords at his feit.

\* A braid letter, i.e. open or patent, in opposition to close rolls.

\* A village lying upon the river Forth, the entrance to which is sometimes denominated *De mortuo mari*.

## *Appendix II*

### *Two Ballads by Bürger, translated by William Taylor of Norwich*

LENORA.

A Ballad, from Bürger.

AT break of day, with frightful dreams

Lenora struggled sore:

My William, art thou slaine, say'd she,

Or dost thou love no more?

He went abroad with Richard's host,

The Paynim foes to quell;

But he no word to her had writt,

An he were sick or well.

With sowne of trump, and beat of drum,

His fellow-soldyers come;

Their helmes bydeckt with oaken boughs,

They seeke their long'd-for home.

And ev'ry roade and ev'ry lane

Was full of old and young,

To gaze at the rejoicing band,

To hail with gladsome tounge.

'Thank God!' their wives and children saide,

'Welcome!' the brides did saye:

But greete or kiss Lenora gave

To none upon that daye.

She askte of all the passing traine,

For him she wisht to see:

But none of all the passing traine

Could tell if lived hee.

And when the soldyers all were bye,

She tore her raven haire,

And cast herself upon the growne

In furious despaire.