

POPULAR RHYMES
OF
SCOTLAND

ROBERT CHAMBERS.

NEW EDITION.



The wee bonnet

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JANET JO.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ—*A Father, Mother, Janet, and a Lover.*

Janet lies on her back behind the scenes. The father and mother stand up to receive the visits of the lover, who comes forward singing, to an air somewhat like the *Merry Masons* :

I 'm come to court Janet jo,
Janet jo, Janet jo ;
I 'm come to court Janet jo—
How 's she the day ?

Mother and Father :

She 's up the stair washin',
Washin', washin' ;

She 's up the stair washin',
Ye canna see her the day.

The lover retires, and again advances with the same announcement of his object and purposes, to which he receives similar evasive answers from Janet's parents, who successively represent her as bleaching, drying, and ironing clothes. At last they say:

Janet jo 's dead and gane,
Dead and gane, dead and gane;
Janet jo 's dead and gane,
She 'll never come hame!

She is then carried off to be buried, the lover and the rest weeping. She sometimes revives (to their great joy), and sometimes not, *ad libitum*—that is, as Janet herself chooses.

The above is the Edinburgh version. A south-country one differs a little, representing Janet as at the well instead of upstairs, and afterwards at the mill, &c. A Glasgow edition gives the whole in good west-country prose, and the lover begins: 'I'm come to court your dochter, *Kate Mackleister!*'

In the stewartry of Kirkcudbright, *Janet Jo* is a dramatic entertainment amongst young rustics. Suppose a party has met in a harvest or winter evening round a good peat fire, and it is resolved to have Janet Jo performed. Two undertake to personate a goodman and a goodwife; the rest a family of marriageable daughters. One of the lads, the best singer of the party, retires, and equips himself in a dress proper for representing an old bachelor in search of a wife. He comes in, bonnet in hand, bowing, and sings:

Guid e'en to ye, maidens a',
Maidens a', maidens a';
Guid e'en to ye, maidens a',
Be ye or no.

I'm come to court Janet jo,
Janet jo, Janet jo;
I'm come to court Janet jo,
Janet, my jo.

Goodwife sings :

What 'll ye gie for Janet jo,
Janet jo, Janet jo ?
What 'll ye gie for Janet jo,
Janet, my jo ?

Woer :

I 'll gie ye a peck o' siller,
A peck o' siller, peck o' siller ;
I 'll gie ye a peck o' siller,
For Janet, my jo.

Goodwife says :

Gae awa', ye auld carle !

Then sings :

Ye'se never get Janet jo,
Janet jo, Janet jo ;
Ye'se never get Janet jo,
Janet, my jo.

The woer hereupon retires, singing a verse expressive of mortification, but soon re-enters with a reassured air, singing :

I 'll gie ye a peck o' gowd,
A peck o' gowd, peck o' gowd ;
I 'll gie ye a peck o' gowd,
For Janet, my jo.

The matron gives him a rebuff as before, and he again retires discomfited, and again enters, singing an offer of 'twa pecks o' gowd,' which, however, is also refused. At his next entry, he offers three pecks o' gowd, at which the goodwife brightens up, and sings :

Come ben beside Janet jo,
Janet jo, Janet jo ;
Ye 're welcome to Janet jo,
Janet, my jo.

The suitor then advances gaily to his sweetheart, and the affair ends in a scramble for kisses.