

LANG ANDREW

BAN AND ARRIERE BAN:
A RALLY OF FUGITIVE
RHYMES

Andrew Lang

**Ban and Arriere Ban: A
Rally of Fugitive Rhymes**

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TO
ELEANOR CHARLOTTE SELLAR

‘Ban and Arrière Ban!’ a host
Broken, beaten, all unled,
They return as doth a ghost
From the dead.

Sad or glad my rallied rhymes,
Sought our dusty papers through,
For the sake of other times
Come to you.

Times and places new we know,
Faces fresh and seasons strange
But the friends of long ago
Do not change.

Many of the verses in this collection have appeared in Magazines: ‘How they held the Bass’ was in ‘Blackwood’s Magazine’; the ‘Ballad of the Philanthropist’ in ‘Punch’; ‘Calais Sands’ in ‘The Magazine of Art’ (Messrs. Cassell and Co.); and others are recaptured from ‘Longman’s Magazine,’ ‘Scribner’s,’ ‘The Illustrated London News,’ ‘The English Illustrated Magazine,’ ‘Wit and Wisdom’ (lines from Omar Khayyam), ‘The St. James’s Gazette,’ and possibly other serials. Some pieces are from commendatory verses for books, as for Mr. Jacobs’s ‘Æsop’; some are from Mr. Rider Haggard’s ‘World’s Desire,’ and ‘Cleopatra,’ two are from Kirk’s ‘Secret Commonwealth’ (Nutt, 1893), and ‘Neiges d’Antan,’ are from the author’s ‘Ballads and Lyrics of Old France,’ now long out of print.

ERRATUM

Reader, a blot hath escaped the watchfulness of the setter forth: if thou wilt thou mayst amend it. The sonnet on the forty-fourth page, against all right Italianate laws, hath but thirteen lines withal: add another to thy liking, if thou art a Maker; or, if thou art none, even be content with what is set before thee. If it be scant measure, be sure it is choicely good.

A SCOT TO JEANNE D'ARC

Dark Lily without blame,
Not upon us the shame,
Whose sires were to the Auld Alliance true,
They, by the Maiden's side,
Victorious fought and died,
One stood by thee that fiery torment through,
Till the White Dove from thy pure lips had passed,
And thou wert with thine own St. Catherine at the last.

Once only didst thou see
In artist's imagery,
Thine own face painted, and that precious thing
Was in an Archer's hand
From the leal Northern land.
Alas, what price would not thy people bring
To win that portrait of the ruinous
Gulf of devouring years that hide the Maid from us!

Born of a lowly line,
Noteless as once was thine,
One of that name I would were kin to me,
Who, in the Scottish Guard
Won this for his reward,
To fight for France, and memory of thee:
Not upon us, dark Lily without blame,
Not on the North may fall the shadow of that shame.

On France and England both
The shame of broken troth,
Of coward hate and treason black must be;
If England slew thee, France
Sent not one word, one lance,
One coin to rescue or to ransom thee.
And still thy Church unto the Maid denies
The halo and the palms, the Beatific prize.

But yet thy people calls
Within the rescued walls
Of Orleans; and makes its prayer to thee;
What though the Church have chidden
These orisons forbidden,
Yet art thou with this earth's immortal Three,
With him in Athens that of hemlock died,
And with thy Master dear whom the world crucified.

HOW THEY HELD THE BASS FOR KING JAMES – 1691–1693

Time of Narrating – 1743

Ye hae heard Whigs crack o' the Saints in the Bass, my faith, a
gruesome tale;
How the Remnant paid at a tippeny rate, for a quart o' ha'penny ale!
But I'll tell ye anither tale o' the Bass, that'll hearten ye up to hear,
Sae I pledge ye to Middleton first in a glass, and a health to the Young
Chevalier!

The Bass stands frae North Berwick Law a league or less to sea,
About its feet the breakers beat, abune the sea-maws flee,
There's castle stark and dungeon dark, wherein the godly lay,
That made their rant for the Covenant through mony a weary day.
For twal' years lang the caverns rang wi' preaching, prayer, and psalm,
Ye'd think the winds were souging wild, when a' the winds were calm,
There wad they preach, each Saint to each, and glower as the soldiers
pass,
And Peden wared his malison on a bonny leaguer lass,
As she stood and daffed, while the warders laughed, and wha sae blithe
as she,
But a wind o' ill worked his warlock will, and flang her out to sea.
Then wha sae bright as the Saints that night, and an angel came, say
they,
And sang in the cell where the Righteous dwell, but he took na a Saint
away.
There yet might they be, for nane could flee, and nane daur'd break
the jail,
And still the sobbing o' the sea might mix wi' their warlock wail,
But then came in black echty-echt, and bluidy echty-nine,
Wi' Cess, and Press, and Presbytery, and a' the dule sin' syne,
The Saints won free wi' the power o' the key, and cavaliers maun pine!
It was Halyburton, Middleton, and Roy and young Dunbar,
That Livingstone took on Cromdale haughs, in the last fight of the war:
And they were warded in the Bass, till the time they should be slain,
Where bluidy Mitchell, and Blackader, and Earlston lang had lain;
Four lads alone, 'gainst a garrison, but Glory crowns their names,
For they brought it to pass that they took the Bass, and they held it for
King James!

It isna by preaching half the night, ye'll burst a dungeon door,
It wasna by dint o' psalmody they broke the hold, they four,

For lang years three that rock in the sea bade Wullie Wanbeard gae swing,
And England and Scotland fause may be, but the Bass Rock stands for the King!

There's but ae pass gangs up the Bass, it's guarded wi' strong gates four,
And still as the soldiers went to the sea, they steikit them, door by door,
And this did they do when they helped a crew that brought their coals on shore.

Thither all had gone, save three men alone: then Middleton gripped his man,

Halyburton felled the sergeant lad, Dunbar seized the gunner, Swan;
Roy bound their hands, in hempen bands, and the Cavaliers were free.
And they trained the guns on the soldier loons that were down wi' the boat by the sea!

Then Middleton cried frae the high cliff-side, and his voice garr'd the auld rocks ring,

'Will ye stand or flee by the land or sea, for I hold the Bass for the King?'

They had nae desire to face the fire; it was mair than men might do,
So they e'en sailed back in the auld coal-smack, a sorry and shame-faced crew,

And they hirpled down to Edinburgh toun, wi' the story of their shames,
How the prisoners bold had broken hold, and kept the Bass for King James.

King James he has sent them guns and men, and the Whigs they guard the Bass,

But they never could catch the Cavaliers, who took toll of ships that pass,

They fared wild and free as the birds o' the sea, and at night they went on the wing,

And they lifted the kye o' Whigs far and nigh, and they revelled and drank to the King.

Then Wullie Wanbeard sends his ships to siege the Bass in form,
And first shall they break the fortress down, and syne the Rock they'll storm.

After twa days' fight they fled in the night, and glad eneuch to go,
With their rigging rent, and their powder spent, and many a man laid low.

So for lang years three did they sweep the sea, but a closer watch was set,

Till nae food had they, but twa ounce a day o' meal was the maist they'd get.

And men fight but tame on an empty wame, so they sent a flag o' truce,

And blithe were the Privy Council then, when the Whigs had heard
that news.

Twa Lords they sent wi' a strang intent to be dour on each Cavalier,
But wi' French cakes fine, and his last drap o' wine, did Middleton
make them cheer,

On the muzzles o' guns he put coats and caps, and he set them about
the wa's,

And the Whigs thocht then he had food and men to stand for the
Rightfu' Cause.

So he got a' he craved, and his men were saved, and nane might say
them nay,

Wi' sword by side, and flag o' pride, free men might they gang their
way,

They might fare to France, they might bide at hame, and the better
their grace to buy,

Wullie Wanbeard's purse maun pay the keep o' the men that did him
defy!

Men never hae gotten sic terms o' peace since first men went to war,
As got Halyburton, and Middleton, and Roy, and the young Dunbar.

Sae I drink to ye here, *To the Young Chevalier!* I hae said ye an auld
man's say,

And there may hae been mightier deeds of arms, but there never was
nane sae gay!

THREE PORTRAITS OF PRINCE CHARLES

1731

Beautiful face of a child,
Lighted with laughter and glee,
Mirthful, and tender, and wild,
My heart is heavy for thee!

1744

Beautiful face of a youth,
As an eagle poised to fly forth,
To the old land loyal of truth,
To the hills and the sounds of the North:
Fair face, daring and proud,
Lo! the shadow of doom, even now,
The fate of thy line, like a cloud,
Rests on the grace of thy brow!

1773

Cruel and angry face,
Hateful and heavy with wine,
Where are the gladness, the grace,
The beauty, the mirth that were thine?

Ah, my Prince, it were well, —
Hadst thou to the gods been dear, —
To have fallen where Keppoch fell,
With the war-pipe loud in thine ear!
To have died with never a stain
On the fair White Rose of Renown,
To have fallen, fighting in vain,
For thy father, thy faith, and thy crown!
More than thy marble pile,
With its women weeping for thee,
Were to dream in thine ancient isle,
To the endless dirge of the sea!
But the Fates deemed otherwise,
Far thou sleepest from home,
From the tears of the Northern skies,
In the secular dust of Rome.

* * *

A city of death and the dead,
But thither a pilgrim came,
Wearing on weary head
The crowns of years and fame:
Little the Lucrine lake
Or Tivoli said to him,
Scarce did the memories wake
Of the far-off years and dim.
For he stood by Avernus' shore,
But he dreamed of a Northern glen
And he murmured, over and o'er,
'For Charlie and his men:'
And his feet, to death that went,
Crept forth to St. Peter's shrine,
And the latest Minstrel bent
O'er the last of the Stuart line.

FROM OMAR KHAYYAM

RHYMED FROM THE PROSE VERSION OF

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M‘CARTHY

The Paradise they bid us fast to win
Hath Wine and Women; is it then a sin
To live as we shall live in Paradise,
And make a Heaven of Earth, ere Heaven begin?

The wise may search the world from end to end,
From dusty nook to dusty nook, my friend,
And nothing better find than girls and wine,
Of all the things they neither make nor mend.

Nay, listen thou who, walking on Life’s way,
Hast seen no lovelock of thy love’s grow grey
Listen, and love thy life, and let the Wheel
Of Heaven go spinning its own wilful way.

Man is a flagon, and his soul the wine,
Man is a lamp, wherein the Soul doth shine,
Man is a shaken reed, wherein that wind,
The Soul, doth ever rustle and repine.

Each morn I say, to-night I will repent,
Repent! and each night go the way I went —
The way of Wine; but now that reigns the rose,
Lord of Repentance, rage not, but relent.

I wish to drink of wine – so deep, so deep —
The scent of wine my sepulchre shall steep,
And they, the revellers by Omar’s tomb,
Shall breathe it, and in Wine shall fall asleep.

Before the rent walls of a ruined town
Lay the King’s skull, whereby a bird flew down
‘And where,’ he sang, ‘is all thy clash of arms?
Where the sonorous trumps of thy renown?’

ÆSOP

He sat among the woods, he heard
The sylvan merriment: he saw
The pranks of butterfly and bird,
The humours of the ape, the daw.

And in the lion or the frog —
In all the life of moor and fen,
In ass and peacock, stork and dog,
He read similitudes of men.

‘Of these, from those,’ he cried, ‘we come,
Our hearts, our brains descend from these.’
And lo! the Beasts no more were dumb,
But answered out of brakes and trees:

‘Not ours,’ they cried; ‘Degenerate,
If ours at all,’ they cried again,
‘Ye fools, who war with God and Fate,
Who strive and toil: strange race of men.

‘For *we* are neither bond nor free,
For *we* have neither slaves nor kings,
But near to Nature’s heart are we,
And conscious of her secret things.

‘Content are we to fall asleep,
And well content to wake no more,
We do not laugh, we do not weep,
Nor look behind us and before;

‘But were there cause for moan or mirth,
’Tis *we*, not you, should sigh or scorn,
Oh, latest children of the Earth,
Most childish children Earth has borne.’

* * *

They spoke, but that misshapen slave
Told never of the thing he heard,
And unto men their portraits gave,
In likenesses of beast and bird!

LES ROSES DE SÂDI

This morning I vowed I would bring thee my Roses,
They were thrust in the band that my bodice encloses,
But the breast-knots were broken, the Roses went free.
The breast-knots were broken; the Roses together
Floated forth on the wings of the wind and the weather,
And they drifted afar down the streams of the sea.

And the sea was as red as when sunset uncloses,
But my raiment is sweet from the scent of the Roses,
Thou shalt know, Love, how fragrant a memory can be.

THE HAUNTED TOWER

SUGGESTED BY A POEM OF THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

In front he saw the donjon tall
Deep in the woods, and stayed to scan
The guards that slept along the wall,
Or dozed upon the bartizan.
He marked the drowsy flag that hung
Unwaved by wind, unfrayed by shower,
He listened to the birds that sung
Go forth and win the haunted tower!
The tangled brake made way for him,
The twisted brambles bent aside;
And lo, he pierced the forest dim,
And lo, he won the fairy bride!
For *he* was young, but ah! we find,
All we, whose beards are flecked with grey,
Our fairy castle's far behind,
We watch it from the darkling way:
'Twas ours, that palace, in our youth,
We revelled there in happy cheer:
Who scarce dare visit now in sooth,
Le Vieux Château de Souvenir!
For not the boughs of forest green
Begird that castle far away,
There is a mist where we have been
That weeps about it, cold and grey.
And if we seek to travel back
'Tis through a thicket dim and sere,
With many a grave beside the track,
And many a haunting form of fear.
Dead leaves are wet among the moss,
With weed and thistle overgrown —
A ruined barge within the fosse,
A castle built of crumbling stone!
The drawbridge drops from rusty chains,
There comes no challenge from the hold;
No squire, nor dame, nor knight remains,
Of all who dwelt with us of old.
And there is silence in the hall
No sound of songs, no ray of fire;
But gloom where all was glad, and all
Is darkened with a vain desire.
And every picture's fading fast,

Of fair Jehanne, or Cydalise.
Lo, the white shadows hurrying past,
Below the boughs of dripping trees!

* * *

Ah rise, and march, and look not back,
Now the long way has brought us here;
We may not turn and seek the track
To the old Château de Souvenir!

BOAT-SONG

Adrift, with starlit skies above,
With starlit seas below,
We move with all the suns that move,
With all the seas that flow:
For, bond or free, earth, sky, and sea,
Wheel with one central will,
And thy heart drifteth on to me,
And only Time stands still.

Between two shores of death we drift,
Behind are things forgot,
Before, the tide is racing swift
To shores man knoweth not.
Above, the sky is far and cold,
Below, the moaning sea
Sweeps o'er the loves that were of old,
But thou, Love, love thou me.

Ah, lonely are the ocean ways,
And dangerous the deep,
And frail the fairy barque that strays
Above the seas asleep.
Ah, toil no more with helm or oar,
We drift, or bond or free,
On yon far shore the breakers roar,
But thou, Love, love thou me!

LOST LOVE

Who wins his Love shall lose her,
Who loses her shall gain,

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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