

mournful, and could distinguish that the words were those of a simple old ballad, —

O, Marti'mas wind! when wilt thou blaw,  
 An' shake the green leaves aff the tree?  
 O, gentle death! when wilt thou come,  
 An' tak a life that wearies me?

I could listen no longer, but raised the latch and went in. The evening was gloomy, and the apartment ill-lighted; but I could see the singer, a spectral-looking figure, sitting on a bed in the corner, with the bed-clothes wrapped round his shoulders, and a napkin deeply stained with blood on his head. An elderly female, who stood beside him, was striving to soothe him, and busied from time to time in adjusting the clothes, which were ever and anon falling off as he nodded his head in time to the music. A young girl of great beauty sat weeping at the bed-foot.

“O, dearest Robert!” said the woman, “you will destroy your poor head; and Margaret, your sister, whom you used to love so much, will break her heart. Do lie down, dearest, and take a little rest. Your head is fearfully gashed; and if the bandages loose a second time, you will bleed to death. Do, dearest Robert! for your poor old mother, to whom you were always so kind and dutiful a son till now, — for your poor old mother’s sake, do lie down.”

The song ceased for a moment, and the tears came bursting from my eyes as the tune changed, and he again sang, —

O, mither dear! make ye my bed,  
 For my heart it’s slichterin’ sair;  
 An’ oh! gin I’ve vex’d ye, mither dear,  
 I’ll never vex ye mair.