

# The Huntingdon Journal.

WM. BREWSTER,

"LIBERTY AND UNION, NOW AND FOREVER, ONE AND INSEPARABLE."

Editor & Proprietor.

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## SELECT POETRY.

### A MAN'S A MAN FOR A THAT.

—RUSSELL.

Is there, for honest poverty  
That hangs his head, and a' that?  
The coward-slave, we pass him by;  
We dare be poor for a that.  
For a' that, and a' that,  
Our toils obscure, and a' that,  
The rank is but the guinea-stamp—  
The man's the gowd for a that.  
What though on hameless fare we dine,  
Wear hoddie-grey, and a' that;  
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine;  
A man's a man for a that;  
For a' that, and a' that,  
Their stiel show, and a' that,  
The honest man, though e'er so poor,  
Is king o' men for a that.

Ye see yon birnie, e'er a lord,  
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;  
Though hundreds worship at his word,  
He's but a cuif for a that,  
For a' that, and a' that,  
His ribbon, star, and a' that,  
The man of independent mind,  
He looks and laughs at a that.

A king can make a belted knight,  
A marquis, duke, and a' that;  
But an honest man's aboon his micht,  
Gude faith, he mauna fa' that!  
For a' that, and a' that,  
Their dignities and a' that,  
The pith o' sense, the pride o' worth,  
Are higher rank, for a that.

Then let us pray that come it may,  
As come it will, for a that,  
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,  
May bear the gree, and a' that.  
For a' that, and a' that,  
It's coming yet for a that,  
That man to man, the world o'er,  
Shall brothers be for a that.

## A SELECT STORY.

### The Last Victim of the Scottish Maiden.

—From the Dublin University Magazine.

A Scottish maiden! What a pleasant  
vision do not these words call up! Who  
that has ever kept his twelfth of August  
on the northern moors could fail to be re-  
minded by them of some bright-eyed  
Highland lassie whom he met at early  
dawn of day crossing the mountain stream  
bare-foot, with her plaid thrown over her  
fair hair, and her clear voice singing out  
an old sweet ballad of her native land; or hap-  
pily, if he had an *cutie* to the homes of  
the Scottish aristocracy, they will bring  
before him some yet fairer picture of a  
pure, pale face, where eyes of a blue, tender  
and the morning sky, spoke of a noble  
and truthful soul within; and has learned  
to love the race that once had such dead-  
ly feuds with his Saxon ancestry, because  
of the 'glamour' cast around him by the  
golden-haired daughters of the land.

But very different is the real picture  
that Scottish maiden of whom we are about  
to speak; nor was she any vision of the  
fancy, but a terrible reality, whom all men  
knew and feared throughout broad Scot-  
land, two hundred years ago. A dark and  
stern lady—she was truly, and one who  
brooked no rivals—for they, whom she had  
embraced were never clapped to mortal  
heart again; and the lovers whom she  
piled on her bosom, slept a sleep that  
knew no waking. Few there were, even  
of the bravest, who did not shudder some-  
what as they saw her keeping her un-  
changing watch through storm and sun-  
shine, beneath the shadow of the old St.  
Giles, the principal church of the Northern  
capital; and oftentimes, when they saw her  
the ground beneath her feet was stained  
with blood, they muttered curses on the  
'foolish maidens'; that had done to death so  
many a gallant Scot. Yet to some this  
ghastly lady (which was none other than  
the public executioner) appeared to have at-  
tractions, such as a bright-eyed dame  
would have envied; for it is recorded of  
the noble Marquis of Argyre, the last who  
had died in her embrace, when our story  
commences, that he ran eagerly up the  
steps, and exclaimed as he had his head  
on the block: 'This is the sweetest maiden  
I have ever kissed.' This saying of his  
was often cited, and the world wondered  
what hidden pang had so darkened life for  
the gallant noble, whose homage was courted  
by the fairest ladies, that he should die  
with words of such bitter meaning on his  
lips; but when, some few years later, the  
maiden pressed with her cold hand the  
throat of him who proved to be her last vic-  
tim, the strange and tragic circumstance  
of his death obliterated all recollections of  
the Marquis and his dying words.

It happened singularly enough, how-  
ever, these two, the Lord of Argyre, and  
Kenelm Hamilton who succeeded him on  
the block, had been in life the deadliest en-  
emies; and by a peculiar chain of circum-  
stances, which we now shall proceed to  
detail, the death of the one caused that of  
the other.

It was about a month after the execution  
of the Marquis, that Hamilton, whose race,  
so closely allied to the kings of Scotland,  
was even prouder than Argyre's found  
himself, compelled by political business, to  
pass a night in the little town of Inverary,  
close to which stood the magnificent castle  
of the same name, which had been the her-  
itage of his dead rival.

Never, perhaps, did any one approach  
that beautiful spot with greater ill will  
than Kenelm Hamilton; he was a young  
man of peculiar fiery and impetuous dispo-

sition, of whom it was often said that his  
love and his hatred were alike to be dread-  
ed, so ardent and passionate was he in ei-  
ther; he was the second son of that noble  
family of Hamiltons, between whom and  
the Argyres there had been a deadly feud  
for many generations past. Never, how-  
ever, had it burnt more fiercely than in  
the time of which we write, when the fam-  
ilies had been represented by the Marquis  
who had just been compelled to lay his lofty  
head at the maiden's feet, and Kenelm,  
with his wild and angry temper; for his  
elder brother was an idiot, who bore the  
family title, but lacked the wit to defend  
their honor when assailed. Deep had been  
the hate between Argyre and Hamilton,  
which the new shed blood of the former  
had not availed to quench; for, in addition  
to the old clan feud, there was a private  
quarrel between them which had fearfully  
embittered their traditional hatred. The  
Marquis of Argyre had been betrothed al-  
most from boyhood to his cousin, the lady  
Ellen Graham, and although their engage-  
ment had been a matter of family arrange-  
ment, he loved her well and truly; not so  
the lady, however. She had not been con-  
sulted when she was bound, while yet a  
child, to the Marquis and with the true  
feminine spirit of contradiction, she re-  
solved to choose for herself, and accepted  
the addresses of Kenelm Hamilton, who by  
some unlucky chance had fallen in love  
with his rival's bride. Their wedding was  
even now fixed to take place in a few  
months, and this circumstance, no doubt,  
explained the last words of Argyre, which  
were destined to be the means of one day  
bringing his enemy to the arms of this same  
cruel maiden, whom he himself had em-  
braced with so much fervor. And now the  
recollection of that last bloody scene was  
doubtless, heavy on the heart of Hamil-  
ton as he rode down the path which led to In-  
verary Castle and the little village that lay  
at its foot. It was a cold and gloomy win-  
ter night; the darkness was intense, and  
the wild, north wind went shrieking and  
howling through the trees as if it bore upon  
its wings the souls of those who had ex-  
pired in some great agony, while the dark  
Scotch firs stood up like sentinels among the  
bleak, gray rocks. Truly it was an even-  
ing on which the stoutest heart might gladly  
seek a shelter, and Hamilton was faint, the  
sorely against his will, to rest for the night  
in the domain of his enemies. This had  
been no part of his intention when he set  
out on his journey; he had been accompa-  
nied by two of his retainers, and he had  
designed to have passed at a little distance  
from Inverary early in the day, and to have  
lodged for the night in a castle at some dis-  
tance, and belonging to a kinsman of his  
own; but unhappily that morning one of  
his guides had been thrown from his horse  
and injured so severely that his life was  
despaired of. Some hours were spent in  
conveying the wounded man to a resting  
place; and Hamilton, whose mission ad-  
mitted of no delay, was obliged to leave him  
in charge of his comrade and push on his  
road, although the short December day  
was already closing in when he started  
again.

He rode on as rapidly as he could, but  
the darkness soon became so impenetrable  
that he repeatedly lost his way; and when,  
at last, the lights of Inverary gleamed thro'  
the driving mist and rain, he felt that it had  
become a matter of necessity that he should  
rest there for the night, as his jaded horse  
was stumbling at every step, when every fa-  
tigue.

In these turbulent times, when every  
man's hand was against his fellow, there  
would have been considerable risk in Hamil-  
ton venturing into Inverary, and especially  
this particular Hamilton, had he been  
known; but Kenelm trusted that the  
darkness of the night would prevent his  
being seen by any but the landlord of the  
inn where he meant to sleep, to whom he  
was personally unknown, and who would  
not be likely to suspect that a solitary  
horseman, unattended by a single retainer,  
could bear so proud a name.

In this supposition he was proved to  
have judged rightly. Kenelm rode un-  
molested and unobserved through the little  
town, and the streets of which were in  
fact almost deserted; as the tempestuous  
weather had driven all the inhabitants into  
their houses, and he saw, to his great sur-  
prise, that even the door of the inn was  
shut—a sufficient proof that no guests were  
expected at the Argyre Arms that night.  
The landlord, a Campbell of course, and  
a sturdy Scot as one would wish to see,  
himself, came to the door to welcome the  
stranger, and after sending his tired horse  
to the stable, he ushered him into the huge  
stone kitchen, briefly remarking, that he  
must be content with such cheer as the  
family provisions could afford, for that he  
little expected any visitors on a night so  
'uncanny.'

Hamilton assured him he was not dis-  
posed to be fastidious and having thrown  
off his dripping mantle and disencumbered  
himself of his heavy riding boots, he sat  
down on the oaken settee opposite the huge  
fireplace; while Campbell went, out to see  
that the horse was attended to.

Left to himself, Kenelm began to look  
around him, and he was much struck by  
the scene which presented itself within the  
room. The huge fireplace, which was  
filled up with wood, sent a bright and  
lively glow over the whole room, and  
lighted up with a brilliant glare the fig-  
ure of a young woman, who sat at one cor-  
ner of the ample hearth, and who was the  
only other occupant of the apartment be-  
sides himself. 'There was something very  
peculiar in the appearance of this girl,  
which riveted Hamilton's gaze in spite of  
himself. She sat perfectly motionless, ex-  
cepting for the rapid movement of her fin-  
gers, which she was employing in knitting;  
her plaid thrown back from her head left

her pale face exposed to view, which was  
marked by a singularly frigid and yet by  
no means vacant expression. This was  
caused in part, no doubt, by the fixed stare  
of her large blue eyes, which never moved  
in their sockets nor brightened with a spar-  
kle of life; it was evident that she was  
stone blind, while there lurked certain lines  
round the thin compressed lip which seem-  
ed to indicate that she had all the acuteness,  
amounting almost to cunning, which often  
characterizes persons thus afflicted.

The countenance was far from beautiful  
—scarcely even pleasing—yet it impressed  
Hamilton with a sense of power such as  
he often felt and yet can not define in the  
presence of persons unknown to us. She  
gave no signs of being conscious of his  
presence, but he felt she was aware that he  
was in the room; and as he continued to  
watch her sitting there in her strong im-  
passiveness, an indelible feeling of  
shrieking and dread took possession of him,  
for which he could not account. He had  
been thinking of his rival's bloody death,  
and it struck him that the unplaceable  
'maiden' who had taken Argyre's young  
life might have been fully represented by  
this weird damsel who sat there so like a  
blind inexorable fate weaving a web of in-  
evitable doom.

The gallant knights of those times who  
feared neither death nor danger, were  
greatly prone to superstition and Hamil-  
ton, hot-blooded and impetuous as he was,  
returned, heartily glad when the keeper  
returned and broke the ominous silence  
which had so oppressed him.

'Here, Elspeth,' said Campbell, ad-  
dressing the figure in the broad Scotch of  
those days which we will not attempt to  
reproduce, 'Here's a gentleman, cold and  
hungry, come and see what you can find  
for his supper.'

Hamilton listened anxiously for the  
sound of her voice, feelings as if it would  
be a relief to hear her speak, but she  
never opened her lips; she rose up, how-  
ever, at once, and began to move about in  
a strange mechanical manner, her blind-  
ness becoming more apparent as she gazed  
herself by the touch, while the staring  
glassy eyes seemed to him absolutely  
glazily as she passed near him. She  
placed some oatmeal cakes and dried fish  
on the table, along with a jug of whiskey,  
and then returned to her place by the fire,  
where she sat immovable as before.

'Is that your daughter?' said Hamil-  
ton to the innkeeper, as he availed him to  
draw near and sat.

'My only child; and blind from her  
birth,' was the reply, uttered almost with  
sternness, as if the subject were painful.  
'Elspeth's not like other folk, and you had  
better take no heed of her.'

Hamilton took the hint and said no more,  
while he applied himself to the rude fare  
before him with a keen set appetite.  
Nor did he spare the whiskey, which was  
wonderfully cheering after his wet ride;  
and when he had finished his repast, he  
felt, as he said, like a new man altogether.  
Piling his glass again, he invited Campbell  
to join him, and the two began to converse  
together on the events of the day. Ken-  
elm sat with his back to the blind girl,  
and as she never moved or spoke, he soon for-  
got her presence altogether, and had well  
nigh forgotten, also, the necessity of some  
retainer of his horse, when he was startled  
into a sudden remembrance of his position.  
Adding to some political event, he men-  
tioned that he had been at Holyrood the  
day before.

'Ye come from Edinburgh,' said the  
innkeeper, kindling with a sudden fierce-  
ness, and clenching his fist, he struck it on  
the table with a violent blow, exclaiming:  
'Curses on the bloody city!—the city of  
murderers! and may the fire from heaven  
come down upon it and consume it!'  
'Amen,' said a deep, stern voice, almost  
at Kenelm's ear, and he started involuntarily  
as he saw that it had come from the  
blind woman's lips. Something too in the  
sudden passion of the Campbell had stirred  
the angry blood within himself, and whilst  
an involuntary instinct told him what train  
of thought had thus fired the retainer of  
Argyre, he had much ado to hide his own  
antagonistic feelings.

'You speak sharply, Master Campbell,'  
he said at last. 'The Capitol of Scotland  
is beholding to you a truth.'

'Ay,' said the Highlander, his brow  
growing red with suppressed rage, 'but  
why should I curse the senseless stones,  
though they were stained with blood of  
the noble Lord Argyre. Rather let me curse  
his enemies, who drove him to the death—  
his bitter foes, who made his life so dark  
that he was fain to break some petty  
law that he might die. Curses, then, I  
say, upon the traitor Hamilton, who stole  
his bride.'

'Amen,' the deep voice answered, but  
this time Kenelm heard it not; his fiery  
passions were aroused beyond control; he  
forgot all but that he had been called on  
a traitor, and starting to his feet, he advanced  
on the Campbell, saying:

'Man, know you to whom you are speak-  
ing.'

'Neither know nor care,' said the inn-  
keeper, rising, also. 'But say yet more:  
not only curses upon him, the traitor, but  
upon her, his lady love, who would have  
brought a stain upon Argyre's name-  
honored house had she become his bride.'

This was too much. In another mo-  
ment Hamilton's drink was gleaming in  
his hand. 'Villain, unsay that word,' he  
thundered out; 'she is as pure as driven  
snow.'

'His lady light o' love,' repeated the  
Campbell, with a mocking smile; at the  
same time preparing to defend himself; but  
the furious Hamilton had closed with him  
and the words had well passed his lips—  
one fierce struggle followed, then the

Highlander fell heavily to the ground as  
his assailant plunged the dagger into his  
breast up to the very hilt, exclaiming:  
'Die then, with the foul lie in your  
throat.'

One deep groan—one strong convulsion  
of the stalwart limbs and Campbell was a  
corpse.

Hamilton stood transfixed, while his boil-  
ing blood gradually subsided, and his pas-  
sion cooled in the presence of death. The  
whole thing had taken place so suddenly,  
that he could hardly believe the living,  
breathing man he had been talking to so  
amicably, but a few moments before, was  
lying there murdered by his own hand.—  
But suddenly as he gazed, he felt his flesh  
creep with a strange horror, as he saw the  
senseless eyes of the blind maiden upturned  
towards him, as she knelt on the ground  
by her dead father, towards whom she had  
crept with a step so stealthy that he had  
not heard her. Hamilton drew back,  
shuddering from the fixed stare, so dread-  
ful seemed the expression of hate on her  
white ghastly face; but as he recoiled she  
crept towards him on her knees and laid  
her hand, which she had steeped in her  
father's blood, on his still it bore the same  
red stain, and said in a low stifled voice:  
'You have murdered him, and you shall  
die for it. None saw the murder, for my  
blind eyes saw it not; but think not to  
escape, the vengeance of Heaven will  
track you out one day.' Then flung up  
her arms to Heaven, she exclaimed—'My  
father, O my father!' and fell upon the  
corpse with a shriek so wild and piercing,  
that Hamilton felt as if it must have rung  
upon the ears of every person in the town,  
and reached even through the massive  
walls of Inverary Castle.

That cry recalled him to himself; he  
must escape right speedily, or another  
moment would see him surrounded by  
those whom it must rouse, the instinct of  
self-preservation at once took the place of  
every other feeling, and with one bound  
he darted to the outer door, opened it,  
rushed to the stable, mounted the horse  
without saddle or bridle, and the clattering  
of his horse's feet, as he galloped away,  
was all that the inhabitants heard of him  
as they rushed to the inn, whence the  
blind girl's shrieks were still heard echo-  
ing.

Hamilton never slackened his pace till  
he had laid ten miles between him and  
Inverary. In those days the course of  
justice was as stern as it was summary;  
and he felt well assured that the present  
Marquis of Argyre, the younger brother of  
his rival, would never rest till he had found  
out the murderer of his father, especially  
when he heard from Elspeth the circum-  
stances of his death; and if he succeeded  
in his search, the services of the 'maiden'  
would right speedily be called into action  
for Kenelm himself.

When at last he ventured, under cover  
of a fair wood, to stop his furious course,  
he began to consider the best means of avoid-  
ing discovery, with no small anxiety as to  
the issue. His best hope was in the fact,  
that none had been present during the mur-  
der but the blind girl, who could not iden-  
tify him; and that not a single inhabitant  
of Inverary had seen him except her dead  
father himself. He was now not very far  
from the house of his kinsman, where he  
originally intended to have passed the night.  
The inn he had spent so fatally in the inn  
at Inverary had not extended beyond an  
hour, and the rapid pace at which he had  
traversed the last ten miles had fully brought  
him to the time when he would, according  
to his ordinary style of traveling, have  
reached his destination. He therefore re-  
solved to proceed thither at once, as if he  
were only arriving from the village where  
he had left his servants, and to trust that  
no one would ever suspect him of having  
made his unfortunate detour into the do-  
main of his enemy. This plan succeeded  
perfectly; he was expected by his cousin;  
and the next morning his servant joined him  
having left his comrade doing well; so that  
no doubt was for a moment entertained that  
he had ever deviated from the road he