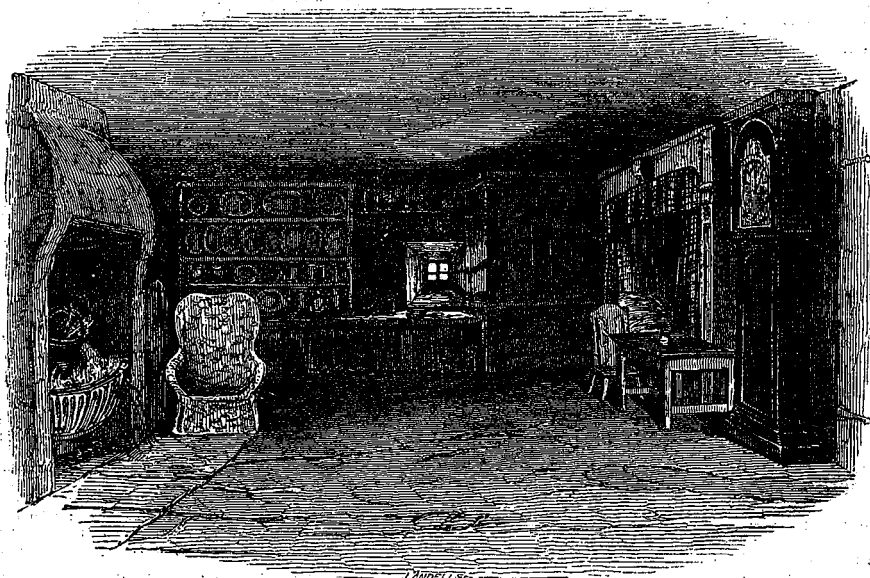
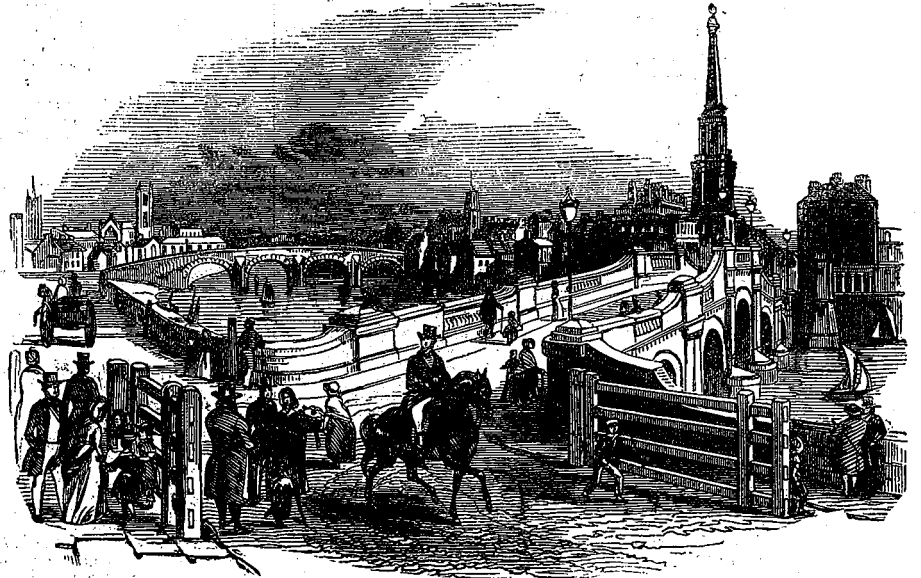


T H E B U R N S F E S T I V A L .



THE ROOM IN WHICH BURNS WAS BORN.



VIEW OF AYR.—THE BIRTH-PLACE OF BURNS

THE FESTIVAL IN HONOUR OF THE MEMORY OF ROBERT BURNS; ON THE 6th AUGUST, AT AYR.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

The announcement that a festival was to be held in the pretty and picturesque town of Ayr, in honour of the memory of Robert Burns, and as a solemn and impressive record of "welcome" to his sons, on their return to their native soil, drew together a crowd of people, not only from all parts of Great Britain, but from several continental countries. Among the visitors to "the birth-place of Burns," were strangers from far distant lands, and it was easy to distinguish those who were emphatically "strayers" from those who participate in the glories of the immortal poet.

Early on Monday, the 5th, the streets of Ayr, and the roads leading from the town to the scene of the appointed festival, were literally lined by visitors. The day was fine; the steam-boat, from Liverpool, of the day before, had brought "a troop of voyagers," who took the earliest trains from Glasgow; the carriages from Edinburgh kept continually pouring in their augmentations; and private and public

Will your poor, narrow foot-path of a street,
Where twa wheel-barrows tremble when they meet—
Your ruin'd, formless bulk o' stane and lime
Compare wi' bonnie Brigs o' modern time?



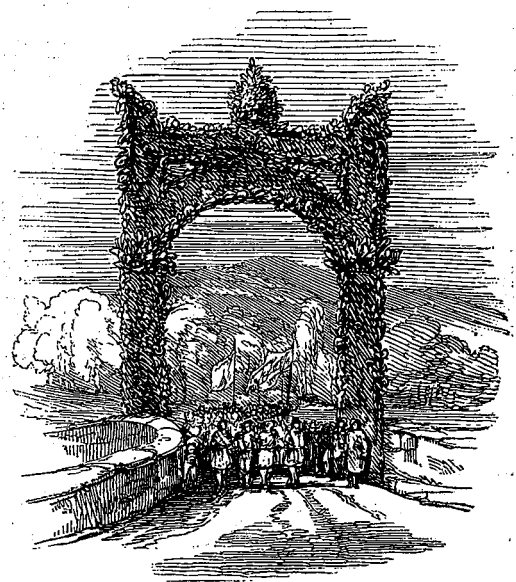
PROFESSOR WILSON, VICE-CHAIRMAN.

On the "Auld Brig,"
Conceited gowk! puff'd up wi' windy pride!—
This mony a year I've stood the flood and tide;
And tho' wi' crazy eild I'm sair forfairn,
I'll be a Brig, when ye're a shapeless cairn!

Passing through the town, of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter, another triumphal arch was reached. It was placed near the public-house in which the poet used often to meet his friends; and was appropriately topped by a painted representation of Tam O'Shanter and the Souter,

O'er a' the ills o' life victorious.

Along a road which leads through scenery of graceful and richly-cultivated beauty, the visitor passed towards the point of greatest attraction—the Birthplace of the Poet!—every house, and path and field, having some association with his memory.



ARCH ON THE OLD BRIG OF DOON.

Our present business is more with the facts than the poetry of the land of Burns. It is impossible, however, to pass it with a mere word of reference to a place that has been one of pilgrimage for more than half a century, and will so continue for generations yet unborn. The "auld clay biggin," in which the poet first drew breath, is still a cottage, thatched and formed of clay; but its existing uses are those of a wayside public-house, kept by the daughter of "auld John Goudie," who, for upwards of forty years, refreshed the passing traveller, and acted as the loquacious cicerone to adjacent wonders, the names of which have become imperishable as illustrations of the poet's early life. The small and low-roofed chamber in which he was born has undergone comparatively little change; the recess in which he was introduced into the world still occupies a corner of it; and it

(Continued on page 92.)

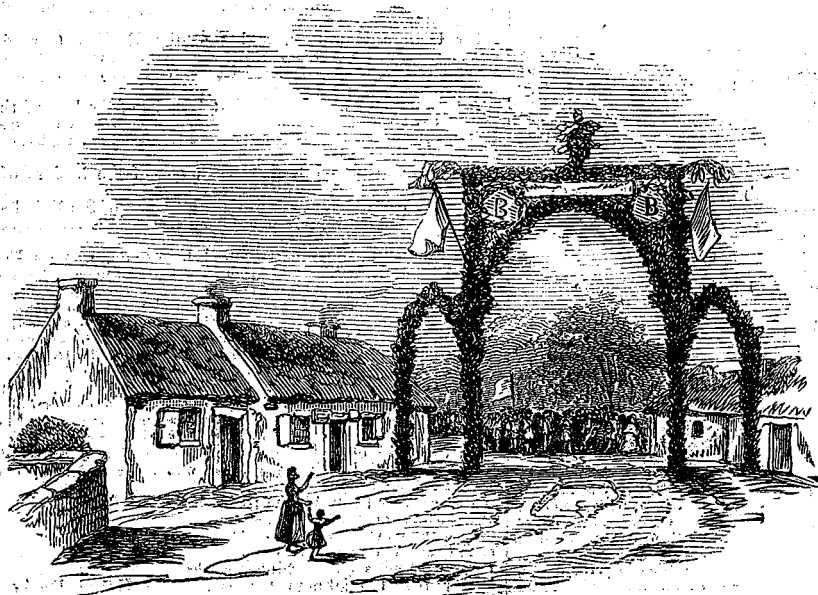


THE "MUCKLE STANE."—TAM O'SHANTER.

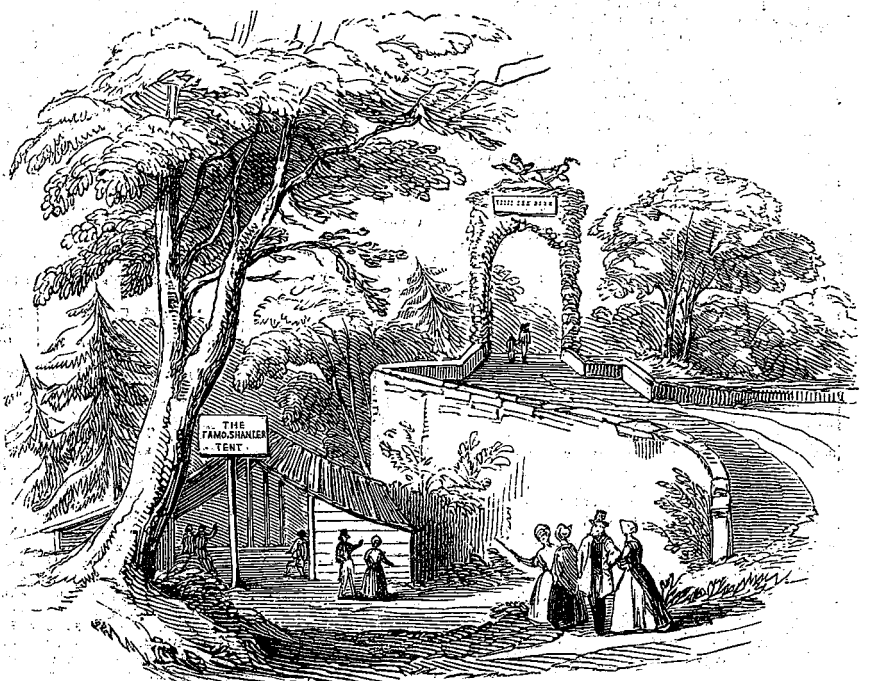
vehicles of all descriptions were arriving, with contributions to the assemblage throughout the day.

Among the earliest of the arrivals, were those of the poet's three sons: the eldest, Mr. Robert Burns; the second, Colonel Burns; and the third, Major Burns—the two latter having recently retired from long service in India, having been absent from Scotland for nearly a quarter of a century.

The visitor, on entering the town, by railway from Glasgow, arrived opposite the New Bridge of Ayr, having the "Auld Brig" to the left, distant from its rival about 100 yards. He was at once reminded of one of the most striking of all the compositions of the poet, written on the occasion of the building of the new bridge. Both the bridges were crossed by triumphal arches—the one being nearly similar to the other, except that "the new" was lopped by the arms of the town. Upon each was an inscription taken from the poem, where the rivals for fame and glory are described "in dialogue," as urging claims to pre-eminent distinction. The appended cut exhibits the triumphal arch over the new bridge, the inscriptions being as follow:—On the "New Brig,"



ARCH NEAR BURNS'S COTTAGE.



ARCH ON THE NEW BRIG OF DOON