



Scottish Poets and Poetry

Address to a Haggis

Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great Chieftain o' the puddin'- race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place, painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy o'a grace as lang's my airn

The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hilt,
Your pin wad help to mend a mill in time o'need,
While thro' your pores the dews distil like amber bead

His knife see rustic Labour dight,
An' cut you up wi ready sleight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright like ony ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight, warm-reekin', rich!

Then, horn for horn, they stretch and strive:
Deil tak the hindmost! on they drive,
Till a' their weel-swallow'd kytes belyve are bent like drums;
Then auld Guidman, maist like to rive, "Bethankit!" hums.

Is there that owre his French ragout,
Or olio that wad staw a sow,
Or fricassee wad make her spew wi' perfect scunner,
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view on sic a dinner?

Poor devil! See him owre his trash,
As feckless as a wither'd rash,
His spindle shank, a guid whiplash, his nieve a nit;
Thro' bloody flood or field to dash, O how unfit!

But mark the Rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his wallee nieve a blade, he'll mak it whistle, An' legs
an' airms, an' heads will sned, like taps o' thistle.

Ye Pow'rs wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware that jaups in luggies;
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer, gie her a Haggis!

It's good to see your honest jolly face,
Great Chieftain of the pudding race!
Above them all you take your place, paunch, tripe or gut,
Well are you worthy of a grace as long as my arm.

The groaning platter there you fill,
Your hips like a distant hill,
Your pin would help to mend a mill in time of need,
While through your pores the juices ooze like amber beads.

His knife, see the country lad wipes,
And cuts you up with great finesse,
Digging your bulging innards bright like any ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight, warm-steaming, rich!

Then spoonful after spoonful they stretch and strive:
Devil take the slowest, on they drive,
Till all their swelled bellies, by, and by are stretched like
drums,
Then old husband who'd like to burst "Be Thankful" hums

Is there that (one who) over his French ragout
Or hodgepodge that would stuff a sow,
Or fricassee that would make her spew with perfect disgust
Looks down with a sneering scornful view on such a dinner?

Poor devil! See him over his feed,
As puny as a withered rush,
His skinny leg, a good whiplash, his fist a nut.
Through bloody battle field to run, O how unfit!

But note the farm-boy, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds (beneath) his tread,
Held in his, mighty fist a blade, he'll make it whistle,
And legs and arms and heads, will fall like tops of thistles

You Powers that make mankind your care,
And deal them out their lives paths,
Old Scotland wants no watery stew that slops in bowls,
But, if you want our grateful prayer, give her a Haggis!