

Andy M. Stewart

"Tak' It, Man Tak' It"

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When I was a miller in Fife,
Losh! I thought that the sound o' the happer
Said, "Tak' hame a wee flow to your wife,
To help to mak' brose to your supper."

Then my conscience was narrow and pure,
But someway by random it rackit;
For I lifted twa neivefu' or mair,
While the happer said, "Tak' it, man tak' it."

Then hey for the mill and the kiln,
The garland and gear for my cogie,
And hey for the whisky and gill,
That washes the dust frae my craigie.

Although it's been lang in repute
For rogues to mak' rich by deceiving,
Yet I see that it disna weel suit
Honest men to begin to the thieving.

For my heart it gaed dunt upon dunt,
Oh, I thought ilka dunt it wad crack it;
Sae I flang frae my neive what was in't,
Still the happer said, "Tak' it, man, tak' it."

A man that's been bred to the plough,
Might be deav'd wi' its clamorous clapper;
Yet there's few but would suffer the sough,
After kenning what's said by the happer.

I whiles thought it scoff'd me to scorn,
Saying, "Shame, is your conscience no chackit?"
But when I grew dry from a horn,
It chang'd aye to "Tak' it, man, tak' it."

The smugglers whiles cam' wi' their pocks,
'Cause they kent that I likit a bicker,
Sae I bartered whiles wi' the gowks,
Gied them grain for a sowp o' their liquor.

I had lang been accustomed to drink,
And aye when I purposed to quat it,

That thing wi' its clappertie clink
Said aye to me, "Tak' it, man, tak' it."

But the warst thing I did in my life,
Nae doot but ye'll think I was wrang o't;
Od! I tauld a bit bodie in Fife
A' my tale, and he made a bit sang o't.

I have aye had a voice a' my days,
But for singin' I ne'er gat the knack o't;
Yet I try whyles, just thinking to please
The greedy, wi' "Tak' it, man, tak' it."

Now, miller and a' as I am,
This far I can see through the matter;
There's men mair notorious to fame,
Mair greedy than me o' the muter.

For 'twad seem that the hale race o' men,
Or, wi' safety, the hauf we may mak' it,
Ha'e some speaking happer within,
That said to them "Tak' it, man, tak' it."

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