

To A Louse (On Seeing one on a Lady's Bonnet at Church)

1.
Ha! whare ye gaun, ye crowlan **ferlie!**
Your impudence protects you sairly:
I canna say but ye strunt rarely,
 Owre gawze and lace;
Tho' faith, I fear ye dine but sparely,
 On sic a place.

2.
Ye ugly, creepan, **blastet** wonner,
Detested, shunn'd, by saunt an' sinner,
How daur ye set your fit upon her,
 Sae fine a Lady!
Gae somewhere else and seek your dinner,
 On some poor body.

3.
Swith, in some beggar's **haffet squattle;**
There ye may creep, and sprawl, and
sprattle,
Wi' ither kindred, jumping cattle,
 In shoals and nations;
Whare horn nor bane ne'er daur unsettle,
 Your thick plantations.

4.
Now haud you there, ye're out o' sight,
Below the **fatt'rels**, snug and tight,
Na faith ye yet! ye'll no be right,
 Till ye've got on it,
The vera topmost, towrin height
 O' Miss's bonnet.

5.
My sooth! right bauld ye set your nose out,
As plump an' gray as onie **grozet:**
O for some rank, mercurial **rozet,**
 Or fell, red **smeddum,**
I'd gie you sic a hearty dose o't,
 Wad dress your droddum!

6.
I wad na been surpriz'd to spy
You on an auld wife's **flainen toy;**
Or **aiblins** some bit **dubbie** boy,
 On 's **wyliecoat;**
But Miss's fine Lunardi, fye!
 How daur ye do 't?

7.
O Jenny dinna toss your head,
An' set your beauties a' abroad!
Ye little ken what cursed speed
 The **blastie's** makin!
Thae winks and finger-ends, I dread,
 Are notice takin!

8.
O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us
 An' foolish notion:
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
 And ev'n Devotion!



Glossary

ferlie | wonder or marvel

blastet | blasted

squattle | to lie low or to squat

haffet | hair at the side of the face

fatt'rels | ribbon ends

grozet | gooseberry

rozet | resin (sticky sap from trees)

smeddum | spirit

flainen | flannel (a type of cloth)

toy | a hat with ear flaps

aiblins | perhaps

dubbie | muddy

wyliecoat | vest

blastie | a badly behaved child or animal