

The ascent of Cairnsmoor by three old men in March 1890

It was in March as I have heard,  
When the wind was high and stern,  
And roared between Beuniuner head  
And Cairnsmore of Carsphairn

That three old men with staff in hand,  
Went up the mountain's side  
And on the summit proudly scanned  
The storm and misty tide.

And who are these that thus invade  
The mountain in his wrath  
Though cloud and tempest have not swayed  
To take a humbler oath.

One of the three is Milligan  
For years by-gone straggler  
Who neath Beuniuner grew a man  
A sturdy mountain ranger

Three years beyond the allotted span  
He fares this March weather  
Yet light his step where once he ran  
A boy among the heather.

Another name that well honours  
Doth with his brother's marrow,  
Whose locks are white with driven -----  
On the Mountains of Cornharrow.

Tis Seaton of that ilk I trow  
His age is seventy -four  
He climbs the mountains rugged  
As days and years before

And who is he that leads this band  
His heart devoid of fears,  
As stout as any in the land  
That carry four score years .

Tis Furmieston a man of mark  
Between the Deugh and Ken  
Far as he walked in light and dark  
This doughtiest of men.

When he was young and morning shows  
Upon his manly brow,  
His step was fleet and with him none  
Could o'er the moorlands go.

Now four score years are on his head  
And yet his eye is bright,  
While the blessings of the poor are shed  
Where the almond blossom's white.

A friend of all his kind is he  
A standard bearer true  
Who for the light and liberty  
Is Presbyterian blue.

Long may he step upon the ground  
His spreading flocks to view  
And be the man that he has been  
For wit and kindness true.

And when the yearly spring comes round  
And the cuckoo haunts the hill,  
While the primrose decks the shabby ground  
What guards the mountain rill.

May those three heroes meet again  
And visit the Cairnsmore gray  
And may the sun on Deugh and Ken  
Make that a glorious day.

When they have climbed the hill of time  
And can no further go,  
Upon the bent and hoary rime  
And ages alpine snow.

Like Moses from mount Nebo's peak  
And Aaron from mount Floor  
May they in God there treasure seek  
And find life evermore.

Composed by  
Rev. James Mather