

**YOUR IMMORTAL  
MEMORY, BURNS!  
HUGH MACDIARMID**

*for the Burns Centenary*

*Thought may demit  
Its functions fit  
While still to thee, O Burns,  
The punctual stomach of thy people turns.*

*Most folks agree  
That poetry  
Is of no earthly use  
Save thine—which yields at least this Annual Excuse*

*Other cults die:  
But who'll deny  
That you your mob in thrall  
Will keep, O Poet Intestinal?*

*From wame to wame  
Wags on your fame,  
Once more through all the world  
On fronts of proud abdomena unfurled.*

*These be thy train,  
No-Soul and No-Brain  
And Humour-Far-From-It  
Bunkum and Bung, Swallow-All and Vomit.*

*Palate and Paunch,  
Enthusiasts staunch,  
Wadly aver again  
"Behold one poet did not live in vain!"*

*"But us no Buts!"  
Cry Gullet and Guts  
Whose parrots of souls  
Resemble a clever ventriloquist's dolls.*

*Be of good cheer  
Twice once a year  
Poetry is not too pure  
A savoury for shopkeepers to endure!*

*And, dined and wined,  
Solicitors find  
Their platitudes assume  
The guise of intuitions that illumine*

*The hidden heart  
Of human art  
And strike in ignorance  
One wonders of unpredicated chance.*

*A boozy haze  
Enchants your lays  
And Gluttony for a change  
Finds Genius within accosting range,*

*And cottons on!  
—Thy power alone  
The spectacle attests  
Of drunken bourgeois on the Muses' breasts!*

*Only thy star  
Falls from afar  
To swim into the ken  
Of countless masses of befuddled men.*

*On their heart's skies  
Like barmaids' eyes  
Glabrous to glitter till  
Their minds like rockets shoot away and spill*

*These vivid clots  
Of idiot thoughts  
Wherewith our Scottish life  
Is once a year incomparably rife!*

*Belly will praise  
Thee all its days  
And spread to all nations  
Thy fame in belchings and regulations,*

*While mean minds soar  
And hiccoughs adore  
And butcher-meat faces  
Triumphant, transfigure, example thy graces!*