



SEA-DRIFT.

RHYMES AND VERSES.

MISS HESTER M'NEILL'S SONG,

COMPOSED BY HER WHEN HER FATHER'S MILL WAS
PULLED DOWN AT KILLORAN.

CHORUS.

Mo chridhe trom is duilich leam,
'Smuladach a tha mi,
Cilloran a cuir cùl rium
A' diùltadh a bhi blàth rium.

'Se sud am baile bòidheach
'San robh mi òg am phàisde,
A' choille 'n goir an smeòrach,
Bu chùbhraidh leam a fàile.

A chaoidh bi 'm chridhe lasadh,
Le meud mo thlachd do 'n àite,
Far am biodh cubhag ghorm an tùchain,
A' seinn a ciùil gach là dhuinn.

Mu 'n Dam, do lochan bòidheach
 Tha iomadh seòrsa, fàs aun,
 'Sna bric bha sinn ag iasgach—
 Is mi bliadhna dol a dh'fhàgail.

'Sna dearcan-coille lìonmhor,
 Bha cinntinn aig a bhràighe,
 Bu tric a shuidh mi sìos ann,
 A lìonadh cuiseag bhàn dhiù.

LITERAL TRANSLATION.

CHORUS.

My heart is sorry and heavy,
 Mournful that I am ;
 Killoran turns its back on me
 Refusing to be warm.

Yon's the bonny toun¹
 Where I was when I was young ;
 The mavis singing about the wood ;
 How sweet the smell of the wood was to me.

My heart lifted up when I got a sight of it,
 Such a fancy as I had to the place,
 Where the blue cuckoo is hoarse
 Singing tunes to us every day.

The pond ! O the bonnie wee loch !
 Where every herb and flower was growing,
 The trout that they used to fish out of it,
 This year I must leave it all.²

¹ Group of houses, the mill and miller's house. *Toun* in Scotch means farm steading.

² The mill lade dried up, and the mill was changed to another place.

There the blaeberries are so plentiful,
Growing on its banks ;
Many a time I was sitting gathering them,
Stringing them for chains on grasses.

TRANSLATION.

CHORUS.

Sorry is my heart, and sad,
Mournful all the day ;
Killoran now is lost to me,
Where I was once so gay.

There my happy days I spent,
Free and glad and young.
Sweet the fragrance of the wood
Where the mavis sung.

Light my heart leapt up to see
That sweet spot of ground,
Where, in spring, the blue cuckoo
Filled the grove with sound.

And the bonnie wee bit loch,
Fringed with many a flower,
Filled with speckled, darting trout ;
Ah ! this parting hour.

On its green and flowery banks
Blaeberries run wild ;
Oft I strung them on a chain
When a happy child.

CHORUS.

Sorry is my heart, and sad,
Mournful all the day ;
Killoran now is lost to me,
And I must hence away.

AN AUTUMN SAIL.

ONE mild day in early autumn we proposed a pic-nic and sail to the cliffs of Kilchattan. We were such a large party that the "Triton," our smaller sail boat, was well filled with passengers and wraps. The day was calm—too calm, as it turned out, for we never reached the cliffs. But, as we slowly moved along, my sister Mary amused herself with sketching the landscape. The following lines she placed opposite a little water-colour of the mouth of the strand and Ben Oronsay, with the hills of Jura in the blue distance. I have put them into Dorothy's album, and I wish that I could reproduce her picture here.

This little isle of Oronsay
First welcomed in its western bay
Columba and his band.

Up the steep cliffs he climbed the Ben,
And, gazing towards the south again,
Saw a low line of land.

“Not here !” he cried, “for never more
My eyes may rest on Ireland’s shore,
Such my stern vow’s command.”

Once more they hoist the flapping sail,
The curragh bears before the gale
To far Iona’s strand.

There lived the saint—worked—died ; since then
His shrine is visited by men
From out of every land.

M. H. R.

PHEMIE’S VERSES.

A VALUED member of our household, for many years in the service of my husband’s mother, is the authoress of the next four little poems. During the months of July and August, Mrs. Murray and her visitors occupied the house, and Phemie, with her pleasant manner and friendly ways, came to be heartily liked by every one on the island.

WELCOME TO COLONSAY.

Storm-tossed traveller ! on your way,
 Pass not lonely Colonsay.
 There you will a welcome find
 None more heartfelt, true or kind.
 Though the scene looks cold and grey,
 Hearts are warm in Colonsay.

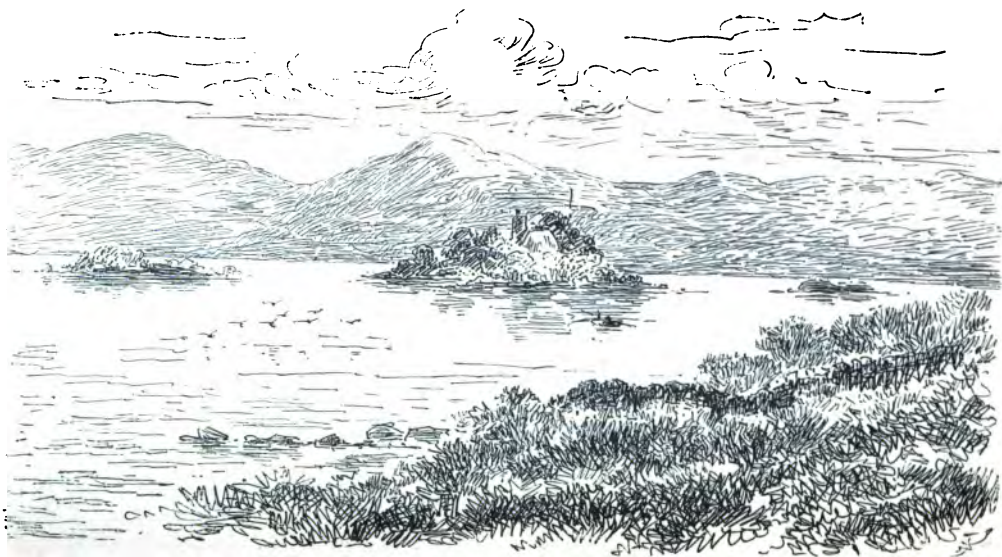
Scallasaig's grey inn appears,
 Weary heart dispel your fears !
 There a welcome you may trace
 In Donald's honest, beaming face ;
 Truer heart, I'm sure you'll say,
 Ne'er trod the shore of Colonsay.

Roaming happy, light, and gay
 'Mang the heather on the brae ;
 There you'll find in woe or weal
 Highland hearts as true as steel ;
 And remember many a day,
 The kind folks of Colonsay !

TO ORONSAY.

O ! sweetest island of the West,
 Thy people here are surely blest,
 Afar from toil and strife to rest
 In thee sweet isle of Oronsay.

The city's din we leave behind,
 A sunny spot in thee to find ;
 Love, peace, and plenty, all combined
 In thee, sweet isle of Oronsay.



LOCH SGOLTAIRE.

From thee we see dark Islay's shore
Where wild Atlantic billows roar,
And Jura's mountains rising hoar
Look o'er the sea to Oronsay.

Dundonald's lofty brow is seen,
Ben Oran crown'd with ivy green,
While 'cross the sea a silver sheen
Sheds sunshine o'er sweet Oronsay.

TO LOCH SCOUTER.

Sweet Highland loch, amid the heather hills,
In lonely solitude thou charmest more
Than sound of rushing streams, whose music fills
The heart with rapture. See! when gazing o'er
Thy heath-clad shores, where rippling waters dip
In tiny waves, reflected on thy bosom calm and deep,
The ivy-covered cot—the ancient keep—
A picture and a memory fair and sweet.
O! happy they who near thy shore may dwell,
Loving thy lonely waves, dear loch, so well,
Where all thy moorland beauty lies around,
In solitude and silence, all profound.
How fair thou art, sweet Highland loch, to me!
Who soon, alas! too soon, must say farewell to thee.

September 21st, 1886.

ON LEAVING ORONSAY.

Farewell! thou green and grassy isle,
Thy rocks and rugged hills ;
Farewell! I leave thee for a while,
My place a stranger fills.

It may be I shall ne'er behold
Thy rocky shores again,
Thy bonnie purple, heath-clad hills,
I sail far o'er the main.

But yet in fancy I shall see
Each scene to memory dear ;
Each well-remembered voice and form
All on my heart I bear.

The ancient, ruined priory,
The little graveyard nigh,
Where, sleeping peaceful side by side,
The rich and poor both lie.

Thy walls did shelter holy men ;
A saint in thee did dwell ;
To-day thou'rt but a ruined pile,
The waves, thy funeral knell.

Beloved land! sweet Oran's Isle,
Supreme within my heart
Thou reignest ; and o'er all the isles
A queen indeed thou art.

SONNET TO MY THREE CHILDREN.¹

Oronsay, 1882.

Lone, and wind swept, with ne'er a bush or tree,
Dear Island ! lying low amid the main ;
A little band we gather once again,
To spend the pleasant autumn days in thee.
Sweet land of moor, and rocky hill and plain,
Of mossy turf where flocks are roaming free,
Where children, like the white lambs on the lea,
Sport merrily through sun and wind and rain.
Go ! where the billows break upon the shore,
Fly, merrie lassies, barefoot o'er the bay ;
List to the wild duck's cry, the breakers' roar,
Watch the shy seal upon the waves at play,
Till turning homeward at the close of day,
Tired out with happy sport, you sink to rest once
more. F. M.

¹ When this was written, Anthony was too young to play with his sisters.

A MEMORY OF MY MOTHER.

IN the autumn of 1883 my mother paid us a visit. The weather was fine, and we were able to have many excursions. One of the most beautiful of these was to the "yellow sands" at Killoran Bay, where she found much to fill her poetical nature with joy. After she left us we found a pinafore embroidered in crewels ready for one of the children, which she had occupied her evenings by working, whilst my husband read aloud to us seated round the cheerful fire. Attached to the work was the following rhyme :

“ Though I'm not here
Your piochuch¹ to share
I leave a little apron
For Dorothy to wear.
With loving wishes for you all,
The old, the young, the great, the small.

“Oronsay, Sept. 18, 1883.”

¹ Scatthe—caught in hundreds with the fly.

SENT BY MY SISTER ALICE, WITH SOME PRESSED ALPINE
PLANTS, TO MY THIRD DAUGHTER, THEN A CHILD
OF FIVE YEARS OLD.

Chamounix, June 16, 1883.

Little Eunice gathers shells
On the shores of Oronsay,
While Aunt Alice culls the bells,
The Alpine plants, of Chamounix.

Ceaseless waves are lapping drear,
Round the lonely island home ;
Snowy peaks are shining here,
O'er them one surpassing dome.¹

In the valley at its feet,
These flowers I pressed, and now I send,
With loving memories to greet,
My little niece—my little friend.

GERMAN POETRY.

WHEN not sailing, or off for a rustic tea on the
bents, or on one of the islands of the coast, the
children used to spend part of the afternoon

¹ Mont Blanc.

sewing in the porch at their little round table, beside the pots of lobelia and geranium. One day I heard a great deal of laughing going on, and upon inquiry was told that "Marie," the German maid, was making up poetry with them about Oronsay. The result is given here, and will serve to remind the children in later days of a merry, innocent time.

TO ORONSAY.

Auf unserer Insel ist es schön,
 Auf den Felsen lichten Höhn,
 Wo die Lämmlein fröhlich springen,
 Und die Kinder lustig singen.

Wo die schönen Buchten liegen,
 Muscheln von dem Meer getrieben
 Liegen dort am schönen Strand,
 Funkelnd in dem weissen Sand.

Oft an schönen warmen Tagen,
 Gehen wir recht schwer beladen,
 Mit dem Segelboot hinaus,
 Für einen kleinen lust'gen Schmaus.

Auch um den Sonntag hier zu feiern
 Fahren wir nach Scalisaig ;
 Doch die Predigt ist so bleiern,
 Denn der Pfarrer ist so träg.

September, 1884.

GRUSZ.

“ Sei mir gegrüßt, du lieber theurer Strand !
Obgleich so fern von meinem Heimathland.
Bin ich, euch hohen Felsen doch gewogen,
Gern höre ich des Meeres wildes Tosen.

Wenn auf den nackten Felsen grau und roh
Die Wellen schäumend springen in die Höh,
Wenn an dem fernen Horizont im Westen
Die Sonne sendet ihren Strahl den letzten ;

Da hab' ich Stunden lang bei dir gesessen,
Und nie kann ich die schöne Zeit vergessen,
Ich werde traurig, und es thut mir weh,
Dasz ich dich meiden musz, O Oronsay !

Bald stöszt das Schiff von diesem theuren Land :
Ade ! du liebe Insel, schöner Strand !
Der Wind bläht frisch, fort in die Welt ich geh,
Doch kann ich nie vergessen Colonsay !

BERTHA GEISSLER.

October, 1886.

