

JACOBITE AND OTHER POETRY OF THE '45.

IN approaching the poetry which our local muse has woven round the kaleidoscopic incidents of the Jacobite cause from 1715 to the rebellion of '45, a brief glance at the state of affairs which helped to make that last rising, as far as Scotland was concerned, almost a success, and which tempered and toned the ballads and songs of the Jacobite muse, may not be out of place. After the suppression of Mar's rising in 1715, the means adopted by the Government for punishing the leading rebels, and, if possible, for preventing the recurrence of a like attempt, were not by any means such as could commend themselves to the Scottish patriots who bemoaned the Act of Union. For years, the Commissioners sent down to Edinburgh laboured at the sale of the forfeited estates, and, though the process was slow and in general unprofitable, what irritated the people most was seeing the possessions of their own flesh and blood passing into the hands of strangers, alien in everything. While the more hopeful of them sang—

The laird maun hae his ain again,
The laird maun hae his ain again;
Let us sing an' lilt fu' fair,
The laird will hae his ain again,

yet they knew well enough that all such hopes were based on a possible destruction of the Whigs, or on such a turn of affairs as,

When cantin Presbyterian Tubs,
Were made a sacrifice,
And costly flames on Lincoln Fields,
Rise to the wondering skies.

Then came the malt tax with its army of gaugers and excisemen, a direct attack on the national "twopenny". In spite

of the riots which occurred, the exciseman with his "sixpence a bushel" was victorious, and the discontented could only look forward in hope to the good time coming, for

We daurna brew a peck o' maut,
But Geordie says it is a faut;
And to our kail we'll no get saut
For want o' Royal Charlie.

On the other hand, while the industrial energies of the people, mostly in the towns of the southern portion of the kingdom, were showing signs of undoubted advance; while here and there in the country, ground was beginning to be enclosed, trees planted, and the culture of the land receiving more attention; while commerce, manufactures, facilities for the transit of goods, were advancing as peace and security were being established—the thieving propensities of the broken clans, the cattle lifting, and "black mail", helped to perpetuate the unsettled state of affairs out of which they had their origin. Clan life and industrial life, eternally incompatible, were still in conflict, and the clans looked "ower the water to Charlie" as the one who would yet establish things as they wished them to be.

Alongside these we have to note the relative positions of the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians, the former dominant, the latter lurking in every out-of-the-way sort of place, but still numerous and powerful. Though banished from the kirk, their clergy held forth in meeting houses, and lived concealed in private families all over the land. At that time Wodrow emphasises the "lamentable growth" of their meeting-houses in the north, always a stronghold of the prelatists. In many respects this party was the salt of the earth, which preserved an all-round joyous human nature in Scotsmen. They had cheerful views of life, enjoyed the creature comforts honestly, and said so like rational human beings, took kindly to dancing, music, and the drama, and in general did not believe that man needs to be unhappy here in order to be happy hereafter. But while thus winning themselves into the affections of unsophisticated human nature, they had unfortunately attached themselves to a system of church government so anti-democratic, that only in the absolutism of the latter Stuarts had they found, what they considered, the political conditions requisite for the true

church. Though now under a cloud, they never for one moment lost heart, but looked hopefully forward to brighter days, lost no opportunity of drinking to "the king over the water", and sturdily refused their prayers for the benefit of "Gilligapus".

Thus it came about that, in spite of the signal and decisive failure which attended the rising of 1715 under Mar, and its more futile sequel, fostered by the machinations of the Spanish king, in 1719, a great body of the people were in full expectancy of, and quite ready for, any attempt that might be made to regain the crown for "the rightfu' king".

During the many years of suspended hostilities, the friends of the exiled family were continually probing the sores of the Hanoverians, and keeping alive their own devotion in ballads and songs, which latterly got into print, but which then existed as a sort of floating, unwritten literature, which passed among the peasantry from mouth to mouth. The sword had meanwhile failed, and they fell back on song, as a weapon to harass their opponents, and as a solace to themselves. What could be more stirring to a desponding Jacobite than the following rousing war song, which, though not essentially Jacobite, is connected with one of the families who stood prominently out in that cause, and is itself a product of successive efforts of the muse through many generations. "The Gathering of the Hays" was first published by John Hay Allan (Sobieski Stuart) in 1822, and was printed by him from a copy which he found pasted into an old manuscript history of the Hays of Errol. From subsequent investigations he learned that the first stanza was of "considerable antiquity", that the second, from internal evidence, belongs to a period after 1646; and the rest is said to have been written by Captain James Hay about the time that the Earl of Errol joined the Pretender's standard on the Braes o' Mar. It is set to the Errol war-march, "a Highland pibroch—the most correct of which imitate in their measure and cadence the call of the gathering, the trampling of the march, the rush of the charge, the confusion of the battle, and the wailing of the lament". "Holleu! Mac Garadh" was the ancient war-cry or slogan of the Hays of Errol.

GATHERING.

Mac Garadh! Mac Garadh, red race of the Tay,
 Ho! gather! ho! gather! like hawks to the prey.
 Mac Garadh, Mac Garadh, Mac Garadh come fast,
 The flame's on the beacon, the horn's on the blast.
 The standard of Errol unfolds its white breast,
 And the falcon of Loncarty stirs in her nest.
 Come away, come away, come to the tryst,
 Come in Mac Garadh from east and from west.

Mac Garadh! Mac Garadh! Mac Garadh come forth,
 Come from your bowers from south and from north,
 Come in all Gowrie, Kinnoul, and Tweeddale,
 Drumelzier and Naughton come locked in your mail,
 Come Stuart, come Stuart, set up thy white rose,
 Come in Mac Garadh, come armed for the fray,
 Wide is the war-cry, and dark is the day.

QUICK MARCH.

The Hay! the Hay! the Hay! the Hay!
 Mac Garadh is coming, give way! give way!
 The Hay! the Hay! the Hay! the Hay!
 Mac Garadh is coming, give way,
 Mac Garadh is coming, clear the way,
 Mac Garadh is coming, huzza! huzza!
 Mac Garadh is coming, clear the way,
 Mac Garadh is coming, huzza!
 Mac Garadh is coming, like beam of war;
 The blood-red shields are glittering far;
 The Stuart is up, his banner white
 Is flung to the breeze like a flake of light.
 Dark as the mountain's heather wave,
 The rose and the thistle are coming brave,
 Bright as the sun which gilds its thread,
 King James' tartan is flashing red;
 Upon them Mac Garadh, bill and bow,
 Cry Holleu! Mac Garadh! holleu! holleu!

CHARGE.

Mac Garadh is coming! like stream from the hill,
 Mac Garadh is coming, lance, claymore, and bill,
 Like thunder's wide rattle
 Is mingled the battle,
 With cry of the falling, and shout of the charge.
 The lances are flashing,
 The claymores are clashing,
 And ringing the arrows on buckler and targe.

BATTLE.

Mac Garadh is coming! the banners are shaking,
 The war-tide is turning, the phalanx is breaking,
 The Southrons are flying,
 "Saint George" vainly crying,
 And Brunswick's white horse on the field is borne down;
 The red cross is shattered,
 The red roses scattered,
 And bloody and torn the white plume in its crown.

PURSUIT.

Far shows the dark field like the streams of Cairn Gorum
 Wild, broken, and red in the skirt of the storm:
 Give the spur to the steed,
 Give the war-cry its hollo,
 Cast loose to wild speed,
 Shake the bridle and follow.
 The rout's in the battle,
 Like blast in the cloud,
 The flight's mingled rattle
 Peals thickly and loud.
 Then holleu! Mac Garadh! holleu! Mac Garadh!
 Holleu! Holleu! Holleu! Mac Garadh!

There is a great difficulty now in attempting to fix, not the authorship (for in most cases that is utterly hopeless), but the localities out of which these ballads and songs sprung; and one has often to be guided in such attempts by peculiarities of dialect, local allusions, and similar not very sure foundations on which to build conclusions, where traditionary lore is concerned. The north-eastern nook of our island, however, could scarcely fail to have contributed largely to this literature, when we consider the poetical genius of its people, coupled with the strong leanings of its landed gentry to Episcopacy and the Stuarts, and remember the influence which the opinions of the laird then had on the rustic mind. If ever there was a time when one needed little persuasion to "gae wa' like a man, an' be hangit to please the laird", it was then. He was omnipotent, not only over his acres, but over those who tilled them; not as a despot, but as one whose character and opinions percolated through the grades of society beneath him, until the facets of the rustic mind, if they reflected anything at all, reflected the laird. It was mostly from this cause, we believe, that the strength of the Jacobites lay in the rural, not in the

urban, population. Be this as it may, we undoubtedly find the rustic muse, not only readapting its old songs to the new circumstances, but turning now and again, from such luckless love as that which befel the unfortunate youth who ate "the tempting cheese o' Fyvie", and betaking itself to its not always clean native cudgel of coarse satire, against the yet successful usurper.

The following ballad undoubtedly hails from be-north the Grampians, its language being almost pure Aberdeenshire doric. From the allusions in the third verse, we would be inclined to fix its date some short time after the execution of Derwent-water and Kenmure and the disposal of the forfeited estates, which latter work occupied the Commissioners at Edinburgh for four years.

GEORDIE WHELP'S TESTAMENT.

Wae worth the time that I came here,
 To lay my fangs on Jamie's gear!
 For I had better staid at hame,
 Than now to bide sae muckle blame.
 But my base, poltroon, sordid mind,
 To greed o' gear was still inclin'd,
 Which gart me fell Count Konnigsmark,
 For his braw claes and holland sark.

When that was done, by slight and might
 I hitched young Jamie frae his right,
 And without ony fear or dread,
 I took his house out-owre his head,
 Pack'd up his plenishing sae braw,
 And to a swine-sty turn'd his ha'.
 I connach'd a' I couldna tak,
 And left him naething worth a plack.

But a' this couldna me content:
 I hang'd his tenants, seiz'd their rent:
 And to my shame it will be spoke,
 I harried a' his cottar folk.
 But what am I the richer grown?
 A curse comes aye wi' things that's stown,
 I'm like to tine it a' belyve,
 For wrangous gear can never thrive.

But care and wonder gars me greet,
 For ilka day wi' skaith I meet,

And I maun hame to my ain craft:
 The thoughts o' this hae put me daft.
 But yet ere sorrow break my heart,
 And Satan comes to claim his part,
 To punish me for dreary sin,
 I'll leave some heirship to my kin.

Ane auld black coat, baith lang and wide,
 Wi' snishin barken'd like a hide,
 A skelpet hat, and plaiden hose,
 A jerkin clartit a' wi' brose,
 A pair o' sheen that wants a heel,
 A periwig wad fleg the deil,
 A pair o' breeks that wants the doup,
 Twa cutties and a timmer stoup.

A mutchkin cog, twa rotten caps,
 Set o' the bink to kep the draps,
 Some cabbage growing i' the yard,
 Ane pig, ane pock, ane candle-sherd,
 A heap o' brats upo' the brae,
 Some tree-clouts, and foul wisps o' strae,
 A rusty sword that lies there ben,
 Twa chickens and a clockin hen.

A rickle o' peats out-owre the knowe,
 A gimmer and a doddit yowe,
 A stirky and a hummle cow,
 Twa grices and my dear black sow,
 A rag to dicht her filthy snout,
 A brecham, and a carding-clout,
 A bassie and a bannock stick,
 There's gear enough to mak' ye sick.

Besides a mare that's blind and lame,
 That used to bear a cuckold hame,
 A thraw-crook and a broken gaud,
 There's gear enough to put ye mad.
 A lang-kail knife, an auld sheer-blade,
 A dibble and a flaughter-spade.
 Tak part hereof, baith great and sma';
 Mine heirs, it weel becomes you a'.

But yet before that a' is done,
 There's something for my graceless son,
 That awkward ass, wi' filthy scouk;
 My malison light on his bouk!

And further for his part o' gear,
 I leave the horns his dad did wear;
 But yet I'd better leave the same
 To Whigs, to blaw my lasting shame.

To the same Whigs I leave my curse,
 My guilty conscience and toom purse;
 I hope my torments they will feel,
 When they gang skelpin to the deil.
 For to the times their creed they shape:
 They grin, they glour, they skouk, and gape,
 As they wad gaunch to eat the starns,
 The muckle deil ding out their harns!

Wi' my twa Turks I winna sinder,
 For that wad my last turkey hinder;
 For baith can speer the nearest gate,
 And lead me in though it be late,
 Where Oliver and Willie Buck
 Sit o'er the lugs in smeekie muck,
 Wi' hips sae het, and beins sae bare:
 They'll e'en be blythe when Geordie's there.

To Fisslerump and Kilmansack,
 Wha aft hae gart my curpin crack
 To ilka Dutch and German jade,
 I leave my sceptre to their trade.
 But O, my bonnie darling sow,
 How sair's my heart to part wi' you,
 When I think on the happy days
 That we hae had 'mang fat and flaes.

My darling, dautet, greasy, dame,
 I leave thee fouth o' sin and shame,
 And ane deil's brander, when I'm gone,
 To fry your sonsy hurdies on.
 But to my lean and shrinkit witch,
 I leave damnation and the itch.
 To a' my friends where'er they be,
 The curse of heav'n eternally.

The public measures associated with the king's name, and the reported scandals of his domestic life, were for long rolled as sweet morsels under the tongues of the Jacobites, who never failed to set as a companion picture, the charms of Jamie or Charlie and the cause they represented. Where originality in composition was unattainable, snatches, as we have said, of old

song, which may have been sung from generation to generation, time out of mind, and which had little meaning or purpose in them beyond being a vehicle for some favourite lilt, could easily be adapted to party purposes. There is at all times among the peasantry, although more common in days gone by than it may be now, a class of songs, usually wedded to capital airs, which readily admit, by change of name or place, any special application desired by the singer. No doubt many of our readers will remember how in their earlier years the "Johnny" of the following old fragment, was frequently altered by the mother, while dancing her son on her knee to its sprightly air:—

Johnny's nae a gentleman,
 An' Johnny's nae a laird,
 Yet I wad follow Johnny lad,
 Suppose he wis a caird.

Wi' you, an' wi' you
 An' wi' you, my Johnny lad,
 I'd drink the buckles o' my sheen
 An' think it no degrade.

So, in the verses,

Charlie keeps nae needles nor pins,
 And Charlie keeps nae trappin',
 But Charlie keeps twa bonnie black een,
 Will haud the lassies waukin'.

O Charlie is neither laird nor lord,
 Nor Charlie is a caddie;
 But Charlie has twa bonnie red cheeks,
 And he's my juggler laddie.

one would almost think that they were reading a sample of these unpremeditated impromptu songs, which the mothers of a by-gone age were famous for singing to their bairns. But while thus liting about Charlie, evidently quite unconscious of any absurdity in associating him with "needles, pins, and trappin'", they manage to make the closing verse give the true Jacobite ring, and so become, like the postscript to a lady's letter, the really important part of the composition—

A pinch o' snuff to poison the Whigs,
 A gill o' Geneva to drown them;
 And he that winna drink Charlie's health
 May roaring seas surround him.

Such a fact as that noted above speaks directly to us now-a-days of the deep hold which Jacobitism—whether as a figment of the imagination, or as a possible, desirable, and strongly-hoped-for reality, matters not—had taken of the popular mind. We have no doubt now that they were mistaken, deluded; but as little doubt can we have that they were earnest, faithful. Of course we can readily suppose that in such a gathering as flocked to the Pretender's standard, there were some who lent assistance and encouragement to his schemes from dishonourable motives, some who may have been playing an analogous game to that of the French king who encouraged the scheme of invasion in hopes of a diversion of the British forces in his own favour. But this was not the case with the great body of Prince Charlie's plebeian followers—they loved him with all their heart and soul, and were ready at all times to risk life, limb, and possessions in the cause, of which he was to them, the living embodiment. We have no desire, and there is little necessity, to enter on the details of that series of brilliant feats of arms by which the Jacobites dazzled both friends and foes in their southward career, nor on the sadder reverses which speedily overtook them—they are all so well known already. History has not only chronicled all the facts, and romances been built upon them, but the whole progress of, and conclusion to, that dashing episode is readable in the very titles of our national songs. We have only to mention "Welcome Royal Charlie", "The Gathering of the Clans", "Wha's for Scotland and Charlie?", "Johnnie Cope", "Charlie is my Darling", "Falkirk Muir", "Culloden", and "Lewis Gordon", to indicate its leading points, for the whole field is completely enshrined in song. We will rather turn aside, however, to the sequestered nooks of northern rural life, and hear the rustic muse sing the joys and sorrows of their darling cause. Of anonymous songs hailing from the Buchan district "Wha wadna fecht for Charlie", by being wedded to an excellent old tune, "Will you go and marry Katie", has had a long lease of life, and is still popular. Another, less fortunate in its musical accompaniment, and now less known, but, in so far as versification is concerned, equally meritorious song is, "The Gathering Rant", communicated to Hogg by his Peterhead correspondent.

We a' maun muster soon the morn,
 We a' maun march richt early,
 O'er misty mount and mossy muir,
 Alang wi' Royal Charlie.
 Yon German cuif that fills the throne,
 He clamb to 't most unfairly;
 Sae aff we'll set, and try to get
 His birthright back to Charlie.

Yet e'er we leave this valley dear,
 Those hills o'erspread wi' heather,
 Send round the usquebaugh sae clear;
 We'll tak a horn thegether.
 And listen, lads, to what I gie;
 Ye'll pledge me roun sincerely;
 To him that's come to set us free
 Our rightful ruler, Charlie.

Oh better lo'ed he canna be;
 Yet when we see him wearing
 Our Highland garb sae gracefully,
 'Tis aye the mair endearing.
 Though a' that now adorns his brow
 Be but a simple bonnet,
 Ere lang we'll see of kingdoms three
 The Royal crown upon it.

But ev'n should fortune turn her heel
 Upon the righteous cause, boys,
 We shaw the warld we're firm and leal,
 And never will prove fause, boys.
 We'll fight till we hae breath to draw
 For him we love sae dearly,
 And ane an' a' we'll stand or fa'
 Alang wi' Royal Charlie.

The zeal with which our Scottish ladies took up the cause of "bonnie Prince Charlie" is strongly marked in its literature, and is unique in the history of political movements. Nowhere do we find feminine enthusiasm for a king and a political creed breaking out into such rapturous melody of song—yea, even the memory of it, inspired them for generations—as witness the splendid songs of Carolina Nairne, the beautiful "Flower of Strathearn". Although the names of these chivalric women—for certainly they were formed of the stuff out of which the gods make heroes—have for the most part escaped our chroni-

clers, yet we can point to Lady Mary Drummond, a daughter of the Countess Marischal, who, during a stay at Inverugie Castle, sang hopefully of "The day our King comes o'er the water". More obscure still, with her identity lost in the stir and whirl of the period, is that resolute heroine of the Mar family, who penned the following anent "Royal Charlie":—

The wind comes fra the land I love,
It moves the gray flood rarely;
Look for the lily on the lea,
And look for Royal Charlie.

Ten thousand swords shall leave their sheaths
And smite fu' sharp and sairly;
And Gordon's might, and Erskine's pride,
Shall live and die wi' Charlie.

The sun shines out—wide smiles the sea,
The lily blossoms rarely;
O, yonder comes his gallant ship,
Thrice welcome, Royal Charlie!

"Yes, yon's a good and gallant ship,
Wi' banners flaunting fairly;
But should it meet your darling prince,
'Twill feast the fish wi' Charlie".

Wide rustled she her silks in pride,
And waved her white hand lordlie—
And drew a bright sword from the sheath,
And answered high and proudly.

"I had three sons, and a good lord,
Wha sold their lives fu' dearlie—
And wi' their dust I'd mingle mine,
For love o' gallant Charlie.

"It would hae made a hale heart sair
To see our horsemen flying;
And my three bairns, and my good lord,
Amang the dead and dying:

"I snatched a banner—led them back—
The white rose flourish'd rarely:
The deed I did for Royal James
I'd do again for Charlie".

The following song in the same measure, and conceived in

the same spirit as the above, we copied, along with the succeeding ballad fragment, many years ago from an old manuscript collection in the possession of an Aberdeen lady who had a great taste for such things. We have never met with them in print :—

Tune—"DONALD".

Whare are ye gaun ye bloody duke,
At sic an hour sae early?
I fear the road ye hae mistook,
Gin ye fa' in wi' Charlie.

For Charlie's up wi' a' his clans,
Awa' they're marching rarely,
There's no a heart but he trepans,
They're a' in love wi' Charlie.

He's marching on to Lunnon toun,
To kick yon doited carlie;
Wha but a King should wear a crown;
An' wha is King but Charlie?

Wha now dare say he was to blame,
Or wha dare cry a parlie;
Let him gae back the road he came,
Nae coward hearts for Charlie.

Our heiland and our lawland maids,
O' but they lo'e him dearlie;
An' well they like the tartan plaid,
That buckled on for Charlie.

The brulzie now is weel begun,
Then heart an' hand til't fairly;
Wi' heilan' sword an' heilan' gun,
We'll mak a road for Charlie.

Charlie cam' to our lords castle,
An' loudly he did ca';
An' Charlie sat in our lords chair,
Wi' bonnet on an' a'.

His plaid was bun' wi' siller belt,
An' to his knee cam' down;
He looked like nane but Scotland's king,
Sae worthy o' the crown.

* * * * * *

An' wi' him our brave lord maun gae,
 For him he's clenched his brand;
 An' be it weel or be it wae,
 The word is "fair Scotland"!

"MUSSEL-MOUD CHARLIE".

During the brief season of prosperity which smiled on the young Pretender as he marched southwards, the news which came to the north of his various successes stirred the hearts of the county Jacobites with great joy, and stimulated those who had been slow to come out in his favour to now exert themselves on his behalf. Week after week Aberdeen was kept in a state of suspense and insecurity, as the county lairds and their followers passed through it on their way southward. Pitsligo, Glenbucket, Lord Lewis Gordon, and Stoneywood, beat up by tuck of drum for recruits through the streets,—forbade the keeping of King George's birthday,—which, nevertheless, was kept with all the honours, save the ringing of the bells,—the townsfolk on Castle Street pledging King George's health before the house where Stoneywood and his friends sat drinking. To make up for this, Hamilton, chamberlain to the Duke of Gordon, compelled the magistrates to attend at the Cross while Prince Charlie was proclaimed regent of the kingdom. Chalmers, the printer, having refused to print any more of their proclamations, had to make his escape by a window from his own house, while the Jacobites afterwards smashed his presses and scattered his type by way of revenge. During this state of affairs news came to town that the M'Leods and other loyal clans, under Earl Loudon, were at Oldmeldrum and Inverurie; a call to arms was made, and the Jacobites, under Lord Lewis Gordon, mustered at the Heading Hill, and marched out to meet them by way of the Bridge of Don. One can easily imagine how many a loving lass that day, full of the ardour which springs from youthful feeling, as she saw the young lads mustered for Charlie with the "white cockade aboon the bree", sang in the words of a then familiar song—

I'll sell my rock, I'll sell my reel,
 My ripplin' kame, an' spinnin' wheel,
 To buy my lad a tartan plaid,
 A braidsword, an' a white cockade.

I'll sell my rockly, an' my tow,
 My guid grey mare, an' hawket cow,
 That every loyal Buchan lad,
 May tak' the field wi' his white cockade.

The foes met at Inverurie ; the skirmish was short and sharp, victory falling to Lewis Gordon, who returned to Aberdeen rejoicing, and with so many prisoners (says a traditionary account given by Peter Buchan), that some of those then in the Tolbooth were set at liberty to make room for the new comers. Among those reported to have been then set at liberty was one who, in a rather out-of-the-way manner, played an important part in these times. We refer to CHARLES LESLIE, or as he was popularly called, "Mussel-mou'd Charlie", one of the best known characters on the streets of Aberdeen for the greater part of the eighteenth century, and widely known in almost every town and village from Rattray Head to Firth of Forth. He was a natural son of Leslie of Pitcaple, and was born in 1677. He took early in life to hawking and singing ballads through the country—a Jacobite Homer singing his own compositions—and was ever a welcome presence in the hamlets of the shire in those days, when news travelled slowly, and gossips were less numerous than now. He was a most devoted Jacobite—sang everywhere their bitterest satires, and very probably was the "impious wretch" whom the author of "Scotland's Glory and her Shame" heard at Laurence Fair, singing that abominable song, "Whirry Whigs awa', man", to the delight of the "profane rabble." Tradition reports of him that he was so popular in Aberdeen as to have a complete monopoly of the "plainstones" in pursuing his calling. He is described as "a tall, thin man, with small, fiery eyes, a long chin, reddish hair, and carried a long pikestaff, a good deal longer than himself, with a large harden bag slung over his shoulder before him to hold his ballads, and a small pocket Bible with a long string attached to it"—a description which answers exactly to a copper-plate engraving, said to be a life-like portrait, prefixed

to Peter Buchan's "Wanderings of Prince Charles". The story of his release from Aberdeen prison is thus given in a letter to Peter Buchan by a Mr. James Troup, who knew the minstrel personally:—"Mussel-mou'd Charlie was in Aberdeen jail when the account of M'Leod's defeat came to the town, together with a great many more townsmen. The jail was so full that it would hold no more. Mr. Alexander Macdonald, merchant, Broadgate, Mr. Francis Rose in the Green, and a good many more were put into the guardhouse. Mr. Rose was put in for lending Troup, the dancing master, a pair of pistols to go to Inverury. However, next day the news came of the defeat, and they were all liberated, and the prisoners from Inverury put in. Charlie was no sooner at the Cross than he began to sing, 'Come, countrymen', &c. This I had from an old lass when I was 'prentice in the town. She was a servant to Turner of Turnerhall, who sent her every day with victuals, &c., to Charlie, who sang the whole day-time to plenty of company; and she and Charlie had the pleasure of standing in the crowd, and saw some gentlemen and Provost James Morison mount the Cross, and caused him [the Provost] to drink a glass of red wine to the Prince's health, and proclaim him Prince Regent". Rumour has it that Charlie was out both in the "Fifteen" and the "Forty-five", but if he did not do much in furtherance of the Jacobite cause with his sword, his pen, or, rather, his "deep and hollow roar", as his voice has been picturesquely called, aided the great cause for a long series of years. He is said to have never missed an execution at Edinburgh, where he played the prototype of the modern "representative of the press", and took down the dying words of the chief actor in the grim drama, which he reproduced in dolorous verse. As he advanced in years, the eccentricity of his person and habits seems to have secured, as we mentioned above, a sort of prescriptive right to the street minstrelship of the town, and its reward in the shape of "gweed awmous". He died at Old Raine, his native place, in the year 1782, at the extraordinary age of 105, and it is said that, after his death, there was no small competition among brothers of the craft ambitious of acquiring the office, which he had so long and honourably filled. His Jacobite productions have almost entirely perished,

("Geordie Sits in Charlie's Chair" is reputed to be his), and all that remains of Charlie's ballad stock-in-trade is contained in a small volume, privately printed at Edinburgh in 1827. This curious collection consists of 29 items, exclusive of an elegy which seems to have been composed and sung by the successor of Charlie to the street laureateship of Aberdeen. A few verses of this production may be welcome to the curious:—

O dolefu' rings the bells o' Raine!

Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie,
For Charlie ne'er will sing again,
My bonnie Highland laddie.

* * * * *

He danced and sang five score years and five,
Bonnie laddie, &c.

Few men like him are now alive,
My bonnie, &c.

Gae lads and lasses to the fair,

Bonny laddie, &c.
For Charlie ne'er will meet you there,
My bonnie, &c.

Nor in the streets of Aberdeen,

Bonnie laddie, &c.
Will his lang spindle shanks be seen,
My bonnie, &c.

* * * * *

The fame of Charlie wandered far,
Bonnie laddie, &c.

Through Angus, Buchan, Mearns, and Mar,
My bonnie, &c.

Strathbogie can and Garioch tell,

Bonnie laddie, &c.
That oft he sent the Whigs to hell,
My bonnie, &c.

* * * * *

And how, for comfort of his life,
Bonnie laddie, &c.

In Edinburgh he bought a wife,
My bonnie, &c.

Each ballad a bawbee him brought,

Bonny laddie, &c.
And for that sum his wife he bought,
My bonnie, &c.

Her tocher was not quite worth a plack, O,
 Bonny laddie, &c.
 A farthing's worth of cut tobacco,
 My bonnie, &c.

The above reference to Charlie's marriage would incline one to the belief that the sale of wives was not altogether confined to Smithfield. In one of his own ballads he makes allusion to the momentous domestic event in the following stanza:—

I bought a wife in Edinburgh
 For a bawbee :—
 I got a farthing in again
 To buy tobacco wi'.

It may be gratifying to learn that the printer of Charlie's effusions has been preserved to posterity in one of the stanzas of the elegy.

These songs in the long nights of winter,
 Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie,
 He made, and *Chalmers* was the printer,
 My bonnie Highland laddie.

As a specimen of Charlie's political songs, the following extract may suffice. The "Highland Laddie" would seem to have been the favourite form in which his Jacobite improvisations were composed. One line in the extract shows that Charlie either was a considerable bit of a humorist, for it cannot be denied that Prince Charlie himself comes in for a pretty severe rub on the occasion, as well as the Duke of Cumberland, or else that some of his opponents have managed somehow to interpolate a line:—

Will ye go to Crookie den,
 Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie,
 There you'll see Charlie and his men,
 My bonnie Highland laddie.

All the Whigs will gang to hell,
 Bonnie laddie, &c.
Charlie he'll be there himsell,
 My bonnie, &c.

Satan sits in the black nook,
 A bonnie laddie, &c.
 Riving sticks to roast the Duke,
 My bonnie, &c.

We are inclined to think that the line in italics is a "weak invention of the enemy", for Mr. Kinloch, the editor of the above mentioned volume, notices a "penny ballad" which was in the collection of the late Mr. Maidment, entitled, "A new song, called the Jacobite's Lamentation: composed and sold by Charles Lesly, Flying Stationer, the Poet", and bearing the imprint—"Edinburgh, printed for Charles Leslie, Flying Stationer, the Author, 1746". This "Jacobite's Lamentation" is a violent tirade against the Jacobite doctrines and party, and is evidently a roguish trick of some wag to torment poor Charlie, whose faith burned with an almost insane fervour for Prince Charlie and his followers.

The songs, which have been preserved in the privately-printed volume of Mr. Kinloch, although they breathe scarcely a word of Jacobitism, are very curious, and in their way of no mean value. They show us the kind of popular song that prevailed upwards of a century ago, and though, in all conscience, many, even most of them, are too broad and coarse for reproduction at this time of day, we doubt if they ever produced such a demoralising effect as do some of the music-hall songs of to-day. They contain dirt, but it is all on the surface, and leaves no stain on the imagination like the inuendo and *double-entendre* of the music-hall comique. Echoes of not a few of them will, we are sure, be found in the memories of many aged and middle-aged readers. For example, "The Sleepy Merchant":—

The merchant's bed it was weel made,
 And the merchant lad in it was laid,
 A dram for him she did provide,
 Bade him drink and lie down:
 For ye are the sleepy merchant,
 For ye are the sleepy merchant,
 For ye are the sleepy merchant,
 That canna lie your lane.

The song ends with the "merchant" marrying the lass that gave him the dram:—

He's tane the lassie by the hand,
 And tied her up in wedlock band,
 And now she is the merchant's wife,
 And she lives in Aberdeen:

For she's married to the merchant,
 She's married to the merchant,
 She's married to the merchant,
 An' he need na lie his lane.

“Jock Sheep” is evidently a Scottish version of “The Baffled Knight”, published in Percy’s “Reliques”. The English version is, however; decidedly inferior, in point of humour and fancy, to Charlie’s. Like most of his songs, it has a profane, if not an immoral perfume, which is best confined to the pages of a privately-printed and rare volume; but Charlie’s productions were the simple, unartificial utterances of a happy and enthusiastic heart, too full of humour to be particular in choosing dainty themes or phrases, and well contented to find a few jingling rhymes to help it to regulate its beatings. The refrain or chorus must be familiar to not a few:—

You’re like a cock my father has,
 He wears a double kaim,
 He claps his wings but craws nane,
 And I think ye are like him.
 Sae whistle o’ your thoom Jock Sheep,
 And whistle o’ your thoom,
 Sae stan’ you there, Jock Sheep, she says,
 And whistle o’ your thoom.

As Shakespeare refused not to utilise old plays, histories, &c., as a foundation for his wonderful dramas, so our minstrel seems to have laid the old ballad literature under contribution; and, after imbuing them with the Lesliean spirit, issued them as original, which to all intents and purposes they were. His song of “The Friar” may be traced back to the squibs so liberally fulminated at the Roman Catholic priests and friars during the days of Sir David Lyndsay, and an English version of it may be found in the pages of Tom d’Urfey. “Kempy Kaye” is a ludicrous parody on a passage in the old metrical romance of “The Marriage of Sir Gawaine”, a fragment of which may be found in Percy’s “Reliques”.

Kempy Kaye is a wooing gane,
 Far, far ayont the sea,
 And there he met wi’ auld Goling,
 His gudefather to be, be,
 His gudefather to be.

"Whar are ye gaun, O Kempy Kaye,
 Whar are ye gaun sa sune?"
 "O I am gaun to court a wife,
 And think na ye that's weel dune, dune,
 And think na ye that's weel dune".

"An ye be gaun to court a wife,
 As ye do tell to me,
 'Tis ye sall hae my Fusome Fug,
 Your ae wife for to be, be.
 Your ae wife for to be.

"Rise up, rise up, my Fusome Fug,
 An' mak your foul face clean,
 For the brawest wooer that ere you saw
 Is come develling down the green, green,
 Is come develling down the green."

Up then raise the Fusome Fug,
 To mak her foul face clean;
 An' aye she cursed her mither
 She had na water in, in,
 She had na water in.

She rampit out, and she rampit in,
 She rampit but and ben;
 The tittles and tattles that hang frae her tail
 Wad muck an acre o' lan', lan',
 Wad muck an acre o' lau'.

She had a neis upon her face,
 Was like an auld pot-fit,
 Atween her neis bot and her mou,
 Was inch-thick deep o' dirt, dirt,
 Was inch-thick deep o' dirt.

Kempy Kaye does not, like the knight in the original, uncourteously anathematise the "lothely ladie", for the song ends up:—

Whan thae twa lovers had met tegether,
 O' kissin' to tak' their fill;
 The slaver that hang atween their twa gabs,
 Wad hae tether'd a ten-year-auld bill, bill,
 Wad hae tether'd a ten-year-auld bill.

The "Man in the Moon" is an excellent piece of fooling, particularising various optical illusions and strange absurdities, to which a man in his cups is subject:—

I saw the man in the moon,
 Wha's fou, wha's fou?
 I saw the man in the moon,
 Wha's fou, now, my jo?
 I saw the man in the moon,
 Driving tacketts in his shoon;
 And we're a' blind drunk, bousin' jolly fou, my jo.

* * * *

I saw a pyet haud the pleuch,
 Wha's fou, wha's fou?
 I saw a pyet haud the pleuch,
 Wha's fou, now, my jo?
 I saw a pyet haud the pleuch,
 And he whissel'd weel enouch,
 And we're a', &c.

* * * *

I saw a sheep shearin' corn,
 Wha's fou, wha's fou?
 I saw a sheep shearin' corn,
 Wha's fou, now, my jo?
 I saw a sheep shearin' corn,
 Wi' the heuck about his horn;
 And we're a', &c.

* * * *

I saw an eel chase the deil,
 Wha's fou, wha's fou?
 I saw an eel chase the deil,
 Wha's fou, now, my jo?
 I saw an eel chase the deil
 Roun' about the spinnin' wheel,
 And we're a', &c.

The "Ram o' Diram" is a song of which several versions are localised in different parts of the country. What the common origin is, it is impossible to say, but Charlie's version is a good specimen of what went for wit in rustic circles not so very long ago:—

As I cam in by Diram,
 Upon a sunshine day,
 I there did meet a Ram, Sir.
 He was baith gallant and gay.

He had four feet to stand upon,
 As ye sall understand;
 And ilka fit that the ram had,
 Wad hae cover'd an acre o' land.

The woo that grew on the ram's back,
 Was fifty packs o' claith;
 And for to mak' a lee, Sir,
 I wad be very laith.

The horns that war on the ram's head,
 Were fifty packs o' speens;
 And for to mak' a lee, Sir,
 I never did it eence.

* * * *

The tail that hang at the ram,
 Was fifty fadom and an ell,
 And it was sauld at Diram,
 To ring the market bell.

The following well-known verses are from Charlie's version of "The Mautman", which is a different, if not an older, version than that published in "Herd's Collection":—

Some say kissin's a sin,
 But I think it's nane ava,
 For kissin' has won'd in the warld,
 When there was but only twa.

If it was'na lawfu'
 Lawers wad'na allow it,
 If it was'na holy
 Ministers wad'na do it.

If it was'na modest,
 Maiden's wad'na tak' it,
 An' if it was'na plenty,
 Puir fowk wad'na get it.

The following is perhaps the best in the budget, and may yet be heard sung at many a country fireside:—

Quhilk o' ye lasses will go to Buchairn?
 Quhilk o' ye lasses will go to Buchairn?
 Quhilk o' ye lasses will go to Buchairn?
 And be the gweedwife o' bonny Buchairn?

I'll no hae the lass wi' the gowden locks,
 Nor will I the lass wi' the bonny breast-knots,
 But I'll hae the lass with the shaif o' bank notes,
 To plenish the toun o' bonny Buchairn.
 Quhilk o' ye, &c.

I'll get a thiggin' frae auld John Watt,
 An' I'll get ane frae the Lady o' Glack,
 An' I'll get anither frae honest John Gray,
 For keeping his sheep sae lang on the brae.
 Quhilk o' ye, &c.

“Lassie, I'm gaun to Lawren-fair”,
 “Laddie, what are ye gaun to dee there?”
 “To buy some ousen, some graith, and some bows,
 To plenish the toun o' Buchairn's knows”.
 Quhilk o' ye, &c.

No apology, perhaps, is needed for resuscitating the above specimens of Charlie's stock-in-trade, when we consider that upwards of 100 years ago they must have been very familiar to the inhabitants of Bon-Accord—that now they are so scarce as only to be found on the shelves of rich literary antiquaries—that the minstrel was an institution on the streets of Aberdeen for so many years,—and that he signed himself not only “Flying Stationer”, but also “Poet”.
