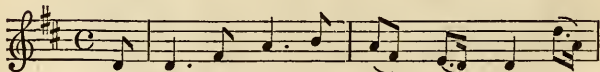
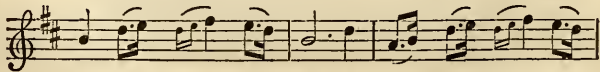


# THE BRUME O' THE COWDENKNOWES.



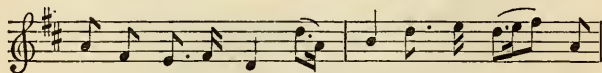
How blithe, ilk morn, was I to see My



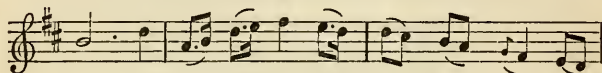
swain come o'er the hill! He skipt the burn and



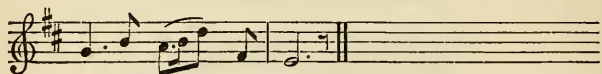
flew to me: I met him with good-will. Oh, the brume, the



bon - nie, bon - nie brume! The brume o' the Cow - den-



knowes! I wish I were with my dear swain, With



his pipe and my yowes.

How blithe, ilk morn, was I to see

My swain come o'er the hill!

He skipt the burn and flew to me:

I met him with good-will.

Oh, the brume, the bonnie, bonnie brume!

The brume o' the Cowdenknowes!

I wish I were with my dear swain,

With his pipe and my yowes.

I wanted neither yowe nor lamb,

While his flock near me lay;

He gathered in my sheep at night,

And cheered me a' the day.

He tuned his pipe, and played sae sweet,

The birds sat listening bye;

E'en the dull cattle stood and gazed,

Charmed with the melodye.

While thus we spent our time, by turns,  
 Betwixt our flocks and play,  
 I envied not the fairest dame,  
 Though e'er so rich or gay.

Hard fate, that I should banished be,  
 Gang heavily, and mourn,  
 Because I loved the kindest swain  
 That ever yet was born.

He did oblige me every hour ;  
 Could I but faithful be ?  
 He stawe my heart ; could I refuse  
 Whate'er he ask'd of me ?

My doggie, and my little kit  
 That held my wee soup whey,  
 My plaidie, brooch, and crookit stick,  
 May now lie useless by.

Adieu, ye Cowdenknowes, adieu !  
 Fareweel, a' pleasures there !  
 Ye gods, restore me to my swain—  
 Is a' I crave or care.  
 Oh, the brume, the bonnie, bonnie brume !  
 The brume o' the Cowdenknowes !  
 I wish I were with my dear swain,  
 With his pipe and my yowes !

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#### COWDENKNOWES.

When summer comes, the swains on Tweed  
 Sing their successful loves ;  
 Around the ewes the lambkins feed,  
 And music fills the groves.

But my loved song is then the broom,  
 So fair on Cowdenknowes ;  
 For sure so sweet, so soft a bloom  
 Elsewhere there never grows !

There Colin tuned his aiten reed,  
 And won my yielding heart ;  
 No shepherd e'er that dwelt on Tweed  
 Could play with half such art.

He sung of Tay, of Forth, of Clyde,  
 The hills and dales around,  
 Of Leader-haughs and Leader-side ;  
 Oh, how I blessed the sound !

Yet more delightful is the broom  
 So fair on Cowdenknowes ;  
 For sure so fresh, so fair a bloom,  
 Elsewhere there never grows.

Not Teviot braes, so green and gay,  
 May with this broom compare ;  
 Not Yarrow's banks, in flow'ry May,  
 Nor the Bush aboon Traquair.

More pleasing far are Cowdenknowes,  
 My peaceful happy home,  
 Where I was wont to milk my yowes  
 At even, among the broom.

Ye powers, that haunt the woods and plains,  
 Where Tweed with Teviot flows,  
 Convey me to the best of swains,  
 And my loved Cowdenknowes ?<sup>1</sup>

These two favourite specimens of the Scottish pastoral muse date from the early years of the eighteenth century, both of them

<sup>1</sup> From the *Tea-table Miscellany*, 1724.

appearing in the *Tea-table Miscellany*, 1724. The second is by Crawford, and a fair example of his manner. Regarding the authorship of the first, we only know that it is signed in the *Tea-table Miscellany* with the initials S. R. The tune, which is a ballad one in one part, was recommended to Dr Pepusch by its sweetness and simplicity, and adopted by him as the parting strain of Macheath and Polly in the *Beggar's Opera*.

These pastoral songs, however, are a comparatively modern creation, probably on the basis of some lost original, of which we see another and English offshoot in a vulgar ballad of the preceding century, of which a broadside copy, mostly in black-letter, is preserved in the Roxburghe Collection, British Museum.<sup>1</sup> What is here transcribed of this composition will be sufficient to give the reader some idea of it.

#### THE LOVELY NORTHERN LASS.

Who in this ditty here complaining shews

What harm she got milking her daddy's ewes.

To a pleasant Scotch tune, called *The Broome of Cowdenknowes*.

Through Liddersdale as lately I went,

I musing on did passe,

I heard a maid was discontent,

She sighed and said, Alas!

All maids that ever deceived was,

Bear a part of these my woes,

For once I was a bonny lass,

When I milked my daddy's ewes.

With O the broome, the bonny, bonny broome,

The broome of Cowdenknowes;

Fain would I be in the North Countrie,

To milk my daddy's ewcs.

My love into the fields did come,

When my daddy was at home;

Sugared words he gave me there,

Praised me for such a one;

<sup>1</sup> *Roxburghe Ballads*, Vol. i., No. 190.

His honey breath, and lips so soft,  
 And his alluring eye,  
 And tempting tongue, [that] wooed me oft,  
 Now forces me to cry :  
 All maids, &c.

\* \* \* \*

In Danby forest I was born,  
 My beauty did excel.

\* \* \* \*

I might have been a prince's peer,  
 When I came over the knowes,  
 Till the shepherd-boy beguiled me,  
 Milking my daddy's ewes.

\* \* \* \*

A young man, hearing her complaint,  
 Did pity this her case,  
 Saying to her, Sweet beauteous saint,  
 I grieve so fair a face  
 Should sorrow so—then, sweeting, know,  
 To ease thee of thy woes,  
 I'll go with thee to the North Countrie,  
 To milk thy daddy's ewes.

Leander-like, I will remain  
 Still constant to thee ever,  
 As Pyramus or Troilus,  
 Till death our lives shall sever ;  
 Let me be hated evermore,  
 Of all men that me knows,  
 If false to thee, sweet heart, I be,  
 Milking thy daddy's ewes.

Then modestly she did reply,  
 Might I so happy be,  
 Of you to find a husband kind,  
 And for to marry me.  
 Then to you I would, during life,  
 Continue constant still,  
 And be a true obedient wife,  
 Observing of your will.

With O the broome, the bonny, bonny broome,  
 The broome of Cowdenknowes ;  
 Fain would I be in the North Countrie,  
 Milking my daddy's ewes.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \*

Cowles, it may be remarked, was a publisher of broadside ballads in the reign of Charles II., if not also somewhat earlier. A considerable number of those published by him and preserved in the Roxburghe Collection, including this of *The Northern Lass*, are in a certain style marking one authorship—a style distinguished by its involving a great deal of mythological allusion, thus somewhat recalling the manner of Burn the Violer. One of these pieces bears the initials 'L. P.,' which we may consequently regard as a shadow of the name of the author of *The Northern Lass*.

In Playford's *Dancing Master*, as early as 1650, occurs a tune called *Broom, the Bonny Bonny Broom*, which perfectly suits this song, and is believed by Mr William Chappell to have been its proper melody: it is probably that alluded to in the well-known book of that period, Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, under the name of *O the Broom, the Bonny Bonny Broom*. Thus we pretty clearly take back the date of this famous air to the middle of the seventeenth century.

It is the opinion, however, of Mr Chappell<sup>2</sup>—and no opinion on such a subject can be entitled to greater weight—that the tune was of still earlier origin. There is in the Pepys Collection another black-letter emanation of the press of Francis Cowles, entitled *The New Broome*, and opening thus :

Poor Coridon did sometimes sit  
 Hard by the broome alone,  
 And secretly complained to it,  
 Against his only one.

<sup>1</sup> Printed at London for F. Cowles.

<sup>2</sup> *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, ii. 458.

He bids the broome that blooms him by,  
    Beare witness to his wrong,  
And, thinking that none else was nigh,  
He thus began his song :

*The broome, the broome, the well-favoured broome,  
    The broome blooms fair on hill ;  
What ailed my love to lightly me,  
    And I working her will.*

Mr Chappell remarks that this song recalls ‘the bunch of ballads and songs all ancient, as *Broom, Broom on Hill,*’ &c., which are mentioned in Laneham’s *Letter from Kenilworth, 1575*, and also, we may add, the tune *Brume, Brume on Hil*, introduced in the list of melodies in the *Complaynt of Scotland, 1548*. We thus seem to obtain a hint that our *Broom of the Cowdenknowes* is the representative of an air of uncommon antiquity, and which, in all its mutations, has constantly been connected with the idea of broom—broom growing on elevated ground—though not from the first on Cowdenknowes in the valley of the Leader, in Berwickshire. It is, for this and other reasons, the opinion of Mr Chappell, that the tune is of English origin, and only came to be called a Scotch tune on the front of *The Northern Lass*, from the song being on a Scotch subject, and in imitation of the Scotch dialect. The case, however, is—to say the very least—‘not proven.’