

## INTRODUCTION

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A SONG is generally the earliest form in which the literary taste of a nation is to be found, and the collected songs of a country placed before a critical reader is probably the most severe test of its excellence in literature. To write a mere song, or words to accompany a given air is a comparatively easy matter, but to write one which will touch the heart or the passions, and stand the test of time, after all the best test of poetic merit, is a gift comparatively rare. To be popular with the masses, its language must be simple and unaffected: nothing, in Scottish Song especially, is more nonsensical than the introduction of Phillis, Adonis, Miranda, or Strephon, or any of these classical beauties and exquisites. To be remembered, it must be short; and its sentiments whether amorous, bacchanalian, warlike, or domestic, must not be extravagant, but rather given with subdued power, while to please the critical reader its rhyme must be smooth and its rhythm faultless.

That these conditions are fulfilled by the majority of our best Scotch songs may be seen by glancing at the collection here submitted to the public. To select a few, what could be finer or more pleasing to critics and readers than "O waly waly up the bank," "Auld Robin Gray," "I've heard a liltin'," "Brume o' the Cowdenknowes," "Tam Glen," "My Nannie's awa," "Land o' the Leal," "Lucy's Flittin'," and many others?

There is one thing which cannot fail to strike the reader of these songs, and it is the fact that the great majority of our best songs are from the pens of writers born in the poorer ranks of society, and whose education was generally comparatively imperfect. Ramsay, Burns, Allan Cunningham, Mayne, Tannahill, Hogg, Gall, Laidlaw, may serve to illustrate this in the later period of the annals of our song. For the earlier period the song writers are generally unknown, but from various circumstances we must infer that the same fact is visible here also, especially when we remember that in the works of Sir David Lindsay, Gawain Douglas, or Dunbar, we do not find any piece which could be included in a collection of Scottish song; and assuredly these writers give us no name distinguished in their time for excellence in this department of their craft. Why this should be, we leave some future investigator into the Curiosities of Literature to determine.

We purpose devoting this introduction to an examination of the remains of our early songs, so as to give the reader such an idea of our earliest pieces as may be derived from an enumeration of the titles, which is almost wholly all that has come down to us. Where a fragment has been fortunate enough to escape the fate of its fellows, we shall faithfully and gladly give it. We will also take a glance at the most important printed collections, from Ramsay's Tea Table Miscellany onward.

The songs of Scotland, so far as they are left to us, begin at the period when the ancient minstrels, on whose social position so much valuable time, paper, and temper has been wasted, had fallen into the deepest disgrace, and were classed in Acts of Parliament along with beggars, rogues, and vagabonds. The decline of their influence, and in all likelihood the comparative worthlessness of their later compositions, caused the people generally to cherish more fondly the songs and ballads that had arisen amongst themselves, no one could tell how, and which better assisted their varying mood than the long rhymes of the strolling bard, and enabled them to keep men of the questionable character, which the representatives of the old minstrels had won for themselves, away from their dwellings and merry meetings.

The pastoral life which, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was followed by the majority of the people of the lowlands, would also favour the growth of song; and in each little community one man's success doubtless excited the emulation of his neighbour, and each would strive to be reckoned best at rhyming,<sup>1</sup> particularly if some rustic beauty were the prize to be won. However it may be, there is now hardly a village, river, or glen without a song in its honour; all the favourite names of the lassies, Mary, Kate, Jean, Meg, or Annie, are duly enshrined: every battlefield has been celebrated or wailed, while the popular enemies of the country, whether internal or external, are bedecked in satire which, justly or not, has sent them down to all posterity with an evil prominence that can never be removed.

A collection like this can only deal with the songs of the Lowlands. Could the Highland minstrelsy be collected and edited, it would be seen that the north is not behind the south in little pieces that touch the heart and fire the soul. Many of the Gaelic Airs especially, convey the impressions of love, sorrow, grief, and triumph in a manner at once beautiful, musical, and impressive.<sup>2</sup>

Prior to the publication of the Tea Table Miscellany in 1725, Scottish Song was preserved only in the precarious keeping of

<sup>1</sup> We know how well pleased the Ettrick Shepherd was at the title given him by the country lassies of "Jamie the Poeter."

<sup>2</sup> The bagpipe is commonly put down by Englishmen as a nuisance, but they never heard the pipers at a grave side, where, as each dull thud of earth falls on the coffin lid, a low plaintive wail is given forth at once touching and heart-rending.

the people, who, with each succeeding generation, altered the songs bequeathed by them to suit their own tastes. The words of course were first altered, then the ideas, till often the mere name of the original song given to us as the original name of an air, is all that remains to afford us an idea of the early words. Sufficient evidence of this will be given further on, when we detail the titles of the old tunes to which words in keeping with the titles cannot now be produced.

The earliest scrap of song which has been preserved occurs in Wynton's *Orygynale Cronykil* (which is supposed to have been written early in the fifteenth century), and seems to form part of a lament for the death of Alexander III., A.D. 1285:—

“Quhen Alysander oure kyng was dede  
That Scotland led in luwe and le,  
Away wes sons off ale and brede  
Off wyne and wax, off gamyn and gle;  
Oure gold was changyd into lede,  
Cryst, borne into vergynyte,  
Succour Scotland and remede,  
That stad in his perplexite.”

With the death of Alexander began the intrigues of the English king for the sovereignty of Scotland, and the next scrap we have refers to the first expedition of Edward I. into the northern kingdom. The town of Berwick-on-Tweed was in the possession of the Scotch and was strongly garrisoned by them. This of course had to be taken and was besieged. The inhabitants were so much elated at a temporary success (the burning of two English ships, assisting in the attack from the sea side), that the following was sung by them in derision at the attempts of the English:—

Wend Kyng Edewarde, with his lange shankes,  
To have gete Berwicke, al our unthankes?  
Gas pikes hym,  
And after Gas dikes hym.<sup>1</sup>

“This pleasantry, however,” says Ritson, “was in the present instance somewhat ill-timed; for as soon as the King heard of it, he assaulted the town with such fury that he carried it with the loss of 25,700 Scots.”

The battle of Bannockburn, fought July, 1314, was naturally the subject of a great rejoicing in Scotland, and we have a short fragment of a song which appears to have been popular at the time:—

<sup>1</sup> Harleian MSS. quoted by Ritson. Mr. Chambers, *Songs of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 5., suggests that the word *Gas* is an error for *Gar*, a suggestion very likely to be correct.



Major in his *De Gestis Scotorum*, mentions two songs by King James entitled—

Yas Sen.<sup>1</sup>  
At Beltayn.<sup>2</sup>

In one of the poems attributed to the king, entitled *Peblis to the Play*, two songs are mentioned as being struck up by the merry-makers—

Their fure<sup>3</sup> ane man to the holt<sup>4</sup>  
Their sall be mirth at our meiting yet.<sup>5</sup>

A curious poem entitled *Cockelbie's Sow* (which will be found printed in Laing's *Select Remains of the Ancient Popular Poetry of Scotland*; Edinburgh, 1822, 4to), seems to have been written about the year 1450. A man called Cockelbie had a sow "which he sold for the reasonable sum of threepence; and a detail of the various effects connected with the disbursement of this sum, constitutes the substance of the poem."<sup>6</sup> One of the pennies was lost, and was found by a woman who determined to expend it to the best advantage, by buying a pig with it and inviting her acquaintances to partake. The pig, however, escaped before being killed. The fortunes of the other two pennies are treated in their turn in the poem, but it is with the first only we have at present to deal. The list of the parties invited by the woman to discuss the pig is very curious, and contains also the following list of songs, which were given at the meeting:—

Joly Lemmanc.  
Tras and Trenass.  
The Bass.  
Perdolly.  
Trolly Lolly.<sup>7</sup>  
Cok thou craws quhill day.  
Twysbank.<sup>8</sup>  
Terway.  
Lincolne.  
Lindsay.  
Joly Lemmane dawis it not day.

<sup>1</sup> Supposed to be the song printed in Pinkerton's *Ancient Scottish Poems*, vol. ii., page 214, and Sibbald's *Chronicle*, vol. iv., page 55, beginning "Sen that [the] eyne that workis my weillfair." If this, however, be the case, the piece in question can hardly be called a song, consisting as it does of thirteen stanzas of nine lines each.

<sup>2</sup> In all likelihood, as has been remarked by Ritson, Chambers, and others, this refers to the poem of "*Peblis to the Play*," which begins, "At Beltane when ilk body bound is." <sup>3</sup> Went. <sup>4</sup> Wood.

<sup>5</sup> All trace of the words of these songs is now unfortunately lost.

<sup>6</sup> Irving's *History of Scottish Poetry*, edited by Carlyle, Edinburgh, 1861; 8vo, page 170.

<sup>7</sup> Mr. Chambers thinks this is the same as "*Trollee lollee lemmando*," mentioned in the *Complaynt of Scotland*, and to be the same as that printed under the same title by Ritson in his *ancient songs*.

<sup>8</sup> Supposed to be the same piece as the ballad preserved in the *Bannatyne MS.*, and printed in Laing's *Ancient Popular Poetry*.

Be yon wodsyd.  
 Late, late in evinnyngis.  
 Joly Martene with a mok.  
 Lulalow lute Cok.  
 My deir derling.<sup>1</sup>

In 1513, Gawin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, completed his celebrated translation of Virgil's *Æneid*, the first translation of a classic which appeared in Britain. Poetical prologues to each book were added by the translator, and these prologues are now considered, and that justly, as the most interesting part of the work. To these prologues we are indebted for the names of four old songs:—

“The ship sails ower the saut faem,  
 Will bring thir merchants and my lemman hame.”  
 — “I will be blythe and licht,  
 My heart is lent upon sae guid a wicht.”  
 “I come hidder to wow,”<sup>2</sup>  
 “The joly day now dawis.”<sup>3</sup>

In one of his poems, Dunbar mentions a tune, entitled—  
 Into June,  
 but no vestige of it remains.

King James V., whose reign covers what has been termed the Augustan age of early Scottish Poetry, is credited with two songs—

The Gaberlunzie Man.<sup>4</sup>  
 The Jolly Beggars.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is given as the name of a dance, but probably appropriate words were attached to the air.

<sup>2</sup> In all likelihood this refers to an early version of the favourite song, “I ha’e laid three herring in saut.”

<sup>3</sup> This appears to have been always a favourite in Scotland. It is mentioned by Dunbar. Montgomery has a song of a similar character, see page 3 of this collection. In the *Muses’ Threnodie*, 1774, the words are quoted as the title of a celebrated old song; and in the poem on the “Life and Death of Habbie Simpson” (Watson’s collection, part i., 1706), it is asked—

“Now wha shall play, the day it dawis.”

Ritson expresses a doubt as to whether the “song or tune” be actually, or at least originally, Scottish, as he found in the Fairfax MSS. (circa 1500) a song of two stanzas, written in praise of Queen Elizabeth, beginning—

This day day dawis,  
 This gentill day dawis,  
 And I must gone home;

but we see no reason for the doubt, as it is quite as likely that the English poet was acquainted with the Scottish song. He also admits that the music which accompanies the English song is poor, “so that it would seem as if either the English harmonist had entirely spoiled the Scottish tune, or the Scottish piper had improved the English one.”

<sup>4</sup> See page 1 of this collection.

<sup>5</sup> This song we were reluctantly obliged to omit on account of its indecency; and besides, we had great doubts as to its ascribed authorship being correct. It seems to us to have been written long after the time of James V., though it is likely intended to illustrate one of his wandering exploits.

In 1549 was published at St. Andrews the now celebrated Complaynt of Scotland, a work to which inquirers into early Scottish song and music are more indebted than to any other early production. The author of this production is quite unknown; Leyden, who edited the work in 1801, claiming it for Sir David Lindsay, while others ascribe it to James Inglis, Abbot of Culross, and to David Wedderburn of Dundee. It is probable that the question will never now be satisfactorily settled. Besides being remarkable for the knowledge it gives us of domestic life in Scotland, it is deeply valuable to the antiquary as being an excellent specimen of early Scotch prose, and to the book-worm as the earliest prose work printed in Scotland. The plan of the work is very curious. "It is divided," says Leyden, "into three parts, of which the first may be properly denominated the complaint of the author; the second, the monologue of the author; and the third, the dream of the author, or the complaynt of Scotland. In the first, the author, deeply afflicted by the miseries of his country, begins to speculate concerning their cause. In the second, which has little connection with the first or third, a variety of rural scenes and occupations are depicted, which are ingeniously diversified with a sea-fight, and a dissertation on Natural Philosophy. This diversion is terminated by the author going into a profound sleep, during the unsuccessful experiment of shutting his eyes and looking through his eyelids; and in the third part he relates his dream or vision. The subject of the third part is the same with that of the first—the miseries of Scotland; but the description is more particular, and the machinery more allegorical."<sup>1</sup> Nothing could be more tedious to an ordinary reader than a perusal of the piece, but it conveys a valuable legacy to the student of Scottish song, containing, as it does, the titles of thirty-seven songs, popular in their time. The author, tired of study, goes to the fields for relaxation, and there meets with some shepherds, who, for his amusement, sing to him a great number of their favourite songs; and in the work we have a list of their titles, as under:—

Pastance with gude cumpanye,<sup>2</sup>  
 The breir byndis me soir.  
 Stil vnder the leynis grene.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Complaynt of Scotland; edited by John Leyden: 8vo, 1801; Intro., p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> Said to be a song composed by Henry VIII., Ritson having a manuscript of that time where a song is printed, entitled "The King's Ballet," beginning—

Passetyme with good cumpanye,  
 I love and shall vnto I dye;

we are, however, far from being convinced by this that "The King's Ballet" is the song referred to in the Complaynt.

<sup>3</sup> There is a song or poem in the Maitland MSS. (*Pinkerton's Ancient Scottish Poems*, vol. ii., p. 205) entitled "The Murning Maidin," which is supposed to be the piece referred to. It is a poem of eighteen stanzas, of nine lines each, descriptive of a neglected damsel mourning the loss of her swain in the woods. She is overheard by the poet, who makes love to her and is accepted.

1786, and from this work we have extracted the following list of songs:—

Wa worth Maryage.<sup>1</sup>  
 Sang upon a maist melancholie aventure.<sup>2</sup>  
 Sang on absence.<sup>3</sup>  
 A welcum to eild.<sup>4</sup>  
 The Lament of a pure courtman.<sup>5</sup>  
 God gif I war wedo now.<sup>6</sup>  
 The murning maidin.<sup>7</sup>  
 The Bankis of Helicon.<sup>8</sup>  
 Luve sang on houp.

<sup>1</sup> Attributed to —Clapperton, a poet, of whose life we have no particulars, even his christian name being unknown. He is supposed to have been contemporary with Dunbar. The song, which Pinkerton praises very highly, details the woes of a damsel who, being married to "ane schrew," regrets her position. It is too long for insertion here.

<sup>2</sup> A Love Song in four stanzas, unfit for quotation. The author is unknown.

<sup>3</sup> A Song in thirteen stanzas, of 9 lines each.

<sup>4</sup> A not very contented welcome to age as may be gathered from a reading of the last stanza—

My curland hair, my cristel ene,  
 Am beld, and bleird, as all may se,  
 My bak that sumtyme brent has bene  
 Now crukis lyk ane camok tree,  
 Be me your sampil ye may se,  
 For so said wourthy Solomon,  
 Elding is end of erthlie gile;  
 Welcum eild, for youth is gone.

<sup>5</sup> The Lament of a courtier. He tells how his two brothers have occupied good positions, one being a "Prelot of Pryde," and the other, having carried a pack, has attained great wealth; while he, devoting his attention and talents to the service of the court, has been left in great poverty. Beyond exemplifying the "old saw" of "Put not your trust in princes," it is of little moment.

<sup>6</sup> The lament of a married man for the loss of his freedom.

<sup>7</sup> Alluded to before. Note 3 page 7.

<sup>8</sup> A piece of eleven stanzas in the style of "The Cherrie and the Slae," and supposed to be by Montgomery, the author of that poem. In Mr. Chambers's Songs of Scotland prior to Burns, 1862, the first two stanzas are given in a modernised form to an air composed by Andrew Blackhall, Minister of the parish of Inveresk, who died in 1609. We here give the first stanza as printed by Pinkerton, which will serve as a specimen of the poem:—

Declair ye bankis of Helicon,  
 Parnassus hills and dailis ilk one,  
 And fontaine Caballein.  
 Gif ony of your muses all  
 Or nymphis, may be peregall  
 Unto my Ladye schein?  
 Or if the ladyis that did lave  
 Their bodyis by your brim,  
 So seimlie war or [yit] sa fauve,  
 Sa bewtiful, or trim?  
 Contempill, exempill,  
 Tak be hir proper port,  
 Gif onye so bonye,  
 Amang you did resort.

The faythful luifar.<sup>1</sup>  
 Constance the cure of absence.  
 On the New Yeir.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is a very pretty little song, and well worth insertion here,—

Gif faithfulness ye find,  
 And that your mynd content,  
 Ane band heirby I bind,  
 Of firme fayth and fervent,  
 And to be permanent  
 For ocht that may befall,  
 My hairt heir I present,  
 In pledge perpetuall.

Quhilk simplie I resing,  
 As hostage in your hand,  
 And willinglie it bring,  
 To bind it in sic band,  
 As pleises your command ;  
 To left, till I may leif,  
 Quhilk is the gadge and pand,  
 Maist suir that I can geif.

Resave it then, and treit it  
 As treuth sall try my pairt,  
 Gif I be fals, forfit it,  
 And let me suffer smairt.  
 Daill efter my desert,  
 Then dreid I no disdain,  
 Bot houpe to haif ane hairt  
 In recompence again.

Gif loyaltie may lufe  
 An recompence procure,  
 Or honest mening move  
 Your favour to induire ;  
 Gif lautie you alluire,  
 Or constance mak yow kind,  
 Firme fayth sall me assure,  
 And treuth content your mynd.

<sup>2</sup> Ascribed in the manuscript to Sir Richard Maitland. In 1560 the Queen Dowager, who acted as Regent of Scotland, was besieged in Leith by the Lords of the Congregation. The Regent was assisted by a body of French troops, under the leadership of the Count de Martiques, while her opponents were assisted by English troops and money. This song is very interesting as one of the political pieces of the period,—

In this new yeir I sie bot weir,  
 Na caus to sing,  
 In this new yeir I sie bot weir,  
 Na caus thair is to sing.

I cannot sing for the vexatioun  
 Of Frenchmen, and the Congregatioun,  
 That hes maid troubil on the natioun,  
 And monye bair biggin  
 In this new yeir, etc.

I have na will to sing or dans,  
 For feir of England and of France,  
 God send thame sorow and mischance,  
 In caus of thair cuming  
 In this new yeir, etc.

We ar sa reulit, riche and puir,  
 That we wait not quhair to be suire,  
 The bordour as the Borrow muir,  
 Quhair sum perchance will hing  
 In this new yeir, etc.

And yit I think it best that we,  
 Pluck up our hairt, and mirrie be ;  
 For thoch we wald ly down and die,  
 It will help us na thing  
 In this new yeir, etc.

Let us pray God to staunch this weir,  
 That we may leif withouten feir,  
 In mirrines quhil we ar heir  
 And hevin at our ending.  
 In this new yeir, etc.

In 1568, when Scotland was visited by the plague, a certain George Bannatyne retired to his house to escape infection, and employed his leisure time in compiling his celebrated collection of Scotch poetry, the most valuable in existence, it being the only medium by which many pieces of our best early Scotch poets have reached to our times. Of Bannatyne's personal life we know absolutely nothing; one of our antiquaries, who described him as a Canon of Moray, having evidently confounded him with Bellenden, an old Scotch poet, who held the position of Archdeacon of Moray and Canon of Ross.

To this collection we are indebted for the preservation of the following songs amongst others:—

Woing of Jok and Jenny.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We have given a modernised version of this song in the present collection, page 7: we here give it as written in the manuscript in all its beauty of antique spelling.

THE WOWING OF JOK AND JYNNY.

Robeyns Jok come to wow our Jynny,  
On our feist evin quhen we wer fow;  
Scho brankit fast, and made hir bony,  
And said, Jok, come ye for to wow?  
Scho birneist hir baith breist and brow,  
And maid hir cleir as ony clok;  
Than spak hir deme, and said, I trow,  
Ye come to wow our Jynny, Jok.

Jok said, forsuth, I yern full fane,  
To luk my heid, and sit down by yow,  
Than spak hir modir, and said agane,  
My bairnie hes tocher-gud to ge yow.  
Te he, quoth Jynny, keik, keik, I se yow;  
Muder, yone man makis yow a mok.  
I schro the, lyar! full lels me yow,  
I come to wow your Jynny, quoth Jok.

My berne, scho sayis, hes of hir awin,  
Ane guss, ane gryce, ane cok, ane hen,  
Ane calf, ane hog, ane fute-braid sawin,  
Ane kirn, ane pin, that ye weill ken,  
Ane pig, ane pot, ane raip thair ben,  
Ane fork, ane flaik, ane reill, ane rok,  
Dischis and dublaris nyne or ten;  
Come ye to wow our Jynny, Jok?

Ane blanket, and ane wecht also,  
Ane schule, ane scheit, and ane lang flail,  
Ane ark, ane almry, and laidillis two,  
Ane milk-syth, with ane swyne taill,  
Ane rowaty quhittil to scheir the kaill,  
Ane quheill, ane mell the beir to knok,  
Ane coig, ane caird wantand ane mill;  
Come ye to wow our Jynny, Jok?

Ane furme, ane furlet, ane pott, ane pek,  
Ane tub, ane barrow, with ane quheilband,  
Ane turs, ane troch, and ane meil-sek,  
Ane spurtill braid and ane elwand.  
Jok tuk Jynny be the hand,  
And cryd, ane feist; and slew ane cok,  
And maid a brydell up alland;  
Now half I gottin your Jynny, quoth Jok.

Ballat of evill Wyffis.<sup>1</sup>  
 Robyn and Makyn.<sup>2</sup>  
 Wife of Auchtermuchty.<sup>3</sup>  
 Twysbank.<sup>4</sup>

Besides a number of pieces by Montgomery, Scott, &c., a selection of which will be found in the present work.

Now, deme, I haif your bairne mareit ;  
 Suppois ye mak it never sa twche,  
 I lat yow wit schos nocht miskareit,  
 It is weill kend I haif annweh ;  
 Ane crukit gleyd fell our ane huch,  
 Ane spaid, ane speit, ane spur, ane sok,  
 Without oxin I haif a pluche  
 To gang to gidder Jynny and Jok.

I haif ane helter, ane eik, ane hek,  
 Ane colrd, ane creill, and als ane crail,  
 Fyve fiddir of raggis to stuff ane jak,  
 Ane auld pannell of ane laid sadil,  
 Ane pepper-polk maid of a padill,  
 Ane sponge, spindill, wantand ane nok,  
 Twa lusty lipplis to lik ane laiddill,  
 To gang to gidder Jynny and Jok.

Ane brechame, and twa brochis fyne,  
 Weill bukkit with a brydill renye,  
 Ane sark maid of the linkome twyne,  
 Ane gay grene cloke that will nocht steyne,  
 And yit for mister I will nocht fenye,  
 Fyive hundreth feis now in a flok,  
 Call ye nocht that ane joly menye,  
 To go to giddir Jynny and Jok.

Ane trene truncheour, ane ramehorn sponc,  
 Twa buthis of barkit, blasnit ledder,  
 All graith that ganis to hobbill schone,  
 Ane thrawcruk to twyne ane tedder,  
 Ane brydill, ane girth, and ane swyne bledder,  
 Ane maskene-fatt, ane fetterit lok,  
 Ane scheip weill keipit fra ill wedder,  
 To gang to gidder, Jynny and Jok.

Tak thair for my parte of the feist ;  
 It is weill knawin I am weill bodin ;  
 Ye may nocht say my parte is leist,  
 The wyfe said, speid, the kail are soddin,  
 And als the laverock is fust and loddin ;  
 Quhen ye haif done tak hame the brok,  
 The rost wes twche, sa wer thay bodin ;  
 Syne gaid to gidder bayth Jynny and Jok.

<sup>1</sup> Ascribed in the MS. to Fleming, a poet, of whom nothing is known.

<sup>2</sup> By Robert Henryson, Schoolmaster of Dunfermline. This fine ballad is printed in Mr. Laing's valuable edition of Henryson's Poems, Edinb. 1865.

<sup>3</sup> Ascribed to Moffat, and presumed to be by Sir John Moffat, a priest. The poem is that on which the more modern John Grumlie is founded, the outline of the story being the same in both pieces.

<sup>4</sup> Mentioned in the "Complaynt."

We are indebted to rather a curious work for our next reliques of song.<sup>1</sup> About 1570, during the height of the progress of the Reformation in Scotland, there appeared in Edinburgh a curious work entitled "Ane Compendious buik of Godlie Psalmes and Spirituall Sangis, collectit furthe of sindrie partis of the Scripture, with diveris otheris Ballatis changeit out of prophane Sangis, in Godlie Sangis for auoyding of sin and harlotrie," &c. It is conjectured to have been principally the work of three brothers, James, John, and Robert Wedderburn, of Dundee, but unfortunately very little is known regarding their lives except the fact that they were staunch supporters of the Reformation. "It is generally admitted," says Mr. Laing,<sup>2</sup> "that this collection was not only popular, but had considerable influence on the minds of the common people, who could easily appreciate words sung to popular airs. The number of such satirical invectives against the corruptions and abuses which prevailed in the Romish Church, could not fail to enlighten the ignorant portion of the laity, and tend to facilitate the progress of the Reformed doctrines."

The air of a song, often the first line or the chorus, formed the burden for a "Godlie" piece; and however unharmonious the association may appear to a refined mind, still we cannot but acknowledge that the *trick* was certain to be successful and popular among the lower and less educated orders of society. Even in our own time the religious agitators have not overlooked this method of gaining possession of the popular mind, for it is no uncommon thing to find a street preacher leading the harmony of his audience by a hymn to the tune of Annie Laurie, Annot Lyle, Rule Britannia, Such a getting Upstairs, and many other of the popular songs of the day.

To this volume we are indebted for the following names:—

Allone I veip in great distress.  
 Rycht sorely musing in my mynde.  
 O mine hart, hey this is my sang.  
 Greuit is my sorow.  
 Allace that samyn sueit face.  
 Huntis up.  
 In ane mirthful may morow.  
 All Cristin mennis dance.<sup>3</sup>  
 Hay let us sing and mak greit mirth.

<sup>1</sup> A very beautiful reprint of the earliest known edition of this work was published in 1808 at Edinburgh, under the editorial care of Mr. David Laing, who added a very valuable introduction and series of notes. Lord Hailes, in 1765, had issued a small volume of specimens, and in 1801 a reprint of another edition was published by Dalrymple, under the title of "Scottish Poems of the sixteenth century," 2 vols. An interesting pamphlet intitled "The Wedderburns and their Work," published 1867, by Professor Mitchell, of St. Andrew's, also gives some valuable information regarding the work and the authors.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to Gude and Godlie Ballatis, 1868, p. xlvii.

<sup>3</sup> These eight songs are previously mentioned in the "Complaynt."

In Burgh and Land, east, west, north, south.  
 For lufe of one I mak my mone.<sup>1</sup>  
 O vho is at my windo? quho, quho? <sup>2</sup>  
 My lufe murnis for me.  
 Johne cum kiss me now <sup>3</sup>  
 Downe be zone River I ran.

<sup>1</sup> These three are the first lines of hymns, and appear to have originally belonged to profane songs.

<sup>2</sup> Songs beginning in this or similar manner, have always been popular in England as well as Scotland. We here give two verses of this piece as a specimen.

O vho is at my windo? quho, quho?  
 Go from my windo, go, go!  
 Quho callis thair so lyke a strangair,  
 Go from my windo, go!

Lord I am heir ane wretchit mortall  
 That for thy mercy dois cry and call  
 Unto the my lord celestially,  
 Se quho is at my windo, quho.

How dar thow for mercy cry,  
 Sa lang in sin as thow dois ly?  
 Mercy to have thou art not worthy,  
 Go from my windo, go.

<sup>3</sup> There is a very old and popular English tune with this title which has been traced to the time of Queen Elizabeth. Mr. Chappell has also found many allusions to the song in the works of the Dramatists. We cannot forbear quoting part of the version in the "Gude and Godlie Ballatis," as it shows to what an absurd extent this method of popularising religion may be carried:—

Johne, cum kiss me now,  
 Johne cum kiss me now;  
 Johne cum kiss me by and by  
 And mak no moir adow.  
 The Lord thy God I am  
 That Johne dois the call;  
 Johne representit man,  
 Be grace celestially  
 For Johne, Goddis grace it is  
 (Luha list till expone the same)  
 Och Johne, thow did amis,  
 Quhen that thow loist this name  
 Hevin and eirth of nocht  
 I maid them for thy saik  
 For cuir moir I thocht  
 To my lykenes thé mak  
 In Paradise I plantit thé  
 And made thé Lord of all  
 My creatures, not forbidding thé  
 Na thing bot ane of all;  
 Thus wald thow not obey,  
 Nor zit follow to my will;  
 Bot did cast thyself away,  
 And thy posteritie spill  
 My justice condemnit thé  
 To everlasting paine,  
 Man culd find na remedie,  
 To buy man fre againe.  
 O pure lufe and meir mercy  
 Myne awin Sone downe I send,  
 God become man for thé  
 For thy sin his lyfe did spend.

Hay now the day dallis!<sup>1</sup>  
 Till our gudeman, till our gudeman,  
 Hay trix trim go trix,<sup>2</sup>  
 Was not Solomon the king?<sup>3</sup>  
 All my lufe leif me not.  
 O man ryse up, and be not sweir.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See p. 6, note 3. We quote the first two verses of the version in the "Ballatis"—

Hay now the day dallis,  
 Now Christ on vs callis,  
 Now welth on our wallis,  
 Apperis anone.  
 Now the word of God regnis,  
 Quhilk is King of all kingis;  
 Now Christi's flock singis,  
 The nicht is neir gone.  
 Wo be vnto zow hypocritis,  
 That on the Lord sa loudlie leis.  
 And all for to fill zour foule belleis,  
 Ze ar nocht of Christis blude or bono.  
 For ze preiche zour awin dremis,  
 And sa the word of God blasphemis,  
 God wat sa weill it semis,  
 The nicht is neir gone.

The fourth stanza is directed against the papal dignitaries—

Wo be to zow Paip and Cardinall,  
 I traist to God ze sall get ane fall,  
 With Monkis, Preistis, and Freiris all,  
 That traistis nocht in God allone.  
 For all zour greit pomp and pryde,  
 The word of God ze sall nocht hyde,  
 Nor zit till vs na mair be gyde,  
 The nicht is neir gone.

<sup>2</sup> This song begins—  
 The paip, that pagan full of pryde,  
 and is a very vigorous exposure of the immoralities of the clergy.

<sup>3</sup> This shows the evils of being too much enamoured of the ladies. Mr. Laing notices that a piece similar in style, signed "Finis quod ane Inglisman," is in the Bannatyne MS., with the difference that in the MS. King Solomon is held up as a pattern to lovers, while in the ballads he acts as a warning.

<sup>4</sup> Begins—

O man ryse vp and be not sweir,  
 Prepair aganis this gude new zeir,  
 My new zeir gift thow lies in stoir,  
 Sen I am he that coft thè deir  
 Gif me thy hart, I ask no moir.

This is probably, as Mr. Chambers has remarked, based upon a silly rhyme sung by children about the new year time, to assist them in opening the hearts of the neighbours at that merry-making period, so as to enable them to amuse themselves in their own fashion. Mr. Chambers has heard the boys sing in Peebles—

Get up gudewife, and binna sweir,  
 And deal your breid to them thats here,  
 For the time will come when ye'll be deid,  
 And then ye'll neither need yill nor breid.

In Edinburgh and Glasgow it is different from this, but the import is the same—

Get up gudewife and shake your feathers,  
 Dinna ye think that we are beggars,  
 For we are bairns come out to play,—  
 Rise up an gies our hogmanay.

We are indebted for our next song to a very curious and unlikely source. In 1568, a "Psalmie Buike" was printed at Edinburgh, and at the end was printed what has been described as "ane bauldy sang," called—

Welcome Fortunes.

A very romantic story quoted by Ritson from "Verstegans Restitution of Decayed Intelligence," printed in 1605, introduces us to another song. "So it fell out of late years, that an English gentleman, travelling in Palestine, not far from Jerusalem, as he passed thorow a country town, he heard by chance a woman sitting at her door dandling her child, to sing 'Bothwel Bank, thou blumest fayre;' the gentleman hereat exceedingly wondered, and forthwith in English saluted the woman, who joyfully answered him, and said, 'she was right glad to see a gentleman of our isle,' and told him 'she was a Scottish woman, and came first from Scotland to Venice, and from Venice thither, where her fortune was to be the wife of an officer under the Turk, who being at that instant absent and very soon to return, she entreated the gentleman to stay there till his return; the which he did, and she for country sake, to show herself the more kind and bountiful unto him, told her husband at his home coming that the gentleman was her kinsman, whereupon her husband entertained him very friendly, and at his departure gave him divers things of good value.'"<sup>1</sup>

Between 1615 and 1620, a manuscript collection of music was compiled by a member of the family of Skene, and generally supposed to have been John Skene of Hallyards, son of Sir John Skene, Clerk Register of Scotland. He appears to have been born about 1578, and his death is known to have taken place in 1644. The manuscript was bequeathed by one of his descendants to the Library of the Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh; and in 1838, Mr. Daunev printed it with a valuable introduction and series of notes,<sup>2</sup> and to this work we are indebted for the following summary of the contents of the collection. The space at our disposal for this essay will not allow us to enumerate all the airs in the MS. We will therefore content ourselves with naming only the principal, referring the reader who wishes to follow the subject more fully to Mr. Daunev's very interesting and valuable work.

<sup>1</sup> In Pinkerton's *Select Scottish Ballads*, vol. ii., a song is given (see also in the present collection, page 149) purporting to be the original ballad sung in Palestine, as narrated in the quotation. Ritson, in his *Scottish Songs*, characterizes this version with his usual asperity as "a despicable forgery," and subsequent revelations showed that his assertion was quite right, and that the author of the song was his rival antiquary.

<sup>2</sup> *Ancient Scottish Melodies from a manuscript of the reign of King James VI., with an introductory inquiry, illustrative of the History of the Music of Scotland*, by William Daunev, Esq., F.S.A. Scot. 4to, Edinburgh, 1838.



Lady Cassellis lilt.<sup>1</sup>  
 Three sheeps skinns.<sup>2</sup>  
 My mistres' blush is bonie.  
 Bonie Jean maks meikle o' me.  
 The lass o' Glasgowe.  
 Doun in yon banke.  
 Sa mirrie as we hae been.  
 Kettie Bairdie.<sup>3</sup>  
 I serve a worthie ladie.<sup>4</sup>  
 Omnia Vincit Amor.  
 Marie me, marie me, quoth the bonie lass.  
 Pitt on your shirt on Monday.<sup>5</sup>  
 Froggis Galziard.<sup>6</sup>  
 The nighturale.  
 O, sillie soul, Allace.  
 Scerdustis.<sup>7</sup>

We again become indebted to a collection of music for our next insight into these forgotten songs. A manuscript cantus of about the beginning of the seventeenth century, which belonged to Mr. Constable, the celebrated Edinburgh publisher, gives us a few scraps, from which we select the following:—

"Come all your old malt to me  
 Come all your old malt to me,  
 And ye sall have the draff again  
 Though all our deukes should die."<sup>8</sup>

Johne Robinson, Johne Robinson,  
 That fair young man, Johne Robinson.

I biggit a bouir to my lemmane  
 In land is none so fair.

<sup>1</sup> This air is almost the same as that of the ballad of Johnnie Faa, the Gipsie Laddie, on which the well-known beautiful air of Glen's equally beautiful song of Waes me for Prince Charlie is founded. The story of Lady Cassellis will be found entered fully into in the companion volume to this work, *The Ballad Minstrelsy of Scotland*.

<sup>2</sup> A similar air to that of Clout the Caldron.

<sup>3</sup> This seems to have been a very popular air, and Kitty is still celebrated amongst us in the form of a nursery rhyme. King James VI., in Scott's *Fortunes of Nigel*, is made to say that "a man may lawfully dance Chrichty Bairdie, or any other dance in a tavern, but not *inter parietes ecclesie*."

<sup>4</sup> The air is that of the more modern song of Dumbarton's Drums.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Daune is careful to point out that this is not to be taken literally, that is, in terms of reminder that a clean shirt is essential at least once a week, but that it is a gathering cry to be ready for action by putting on their armour, Monday being generally the day on which the weapon schaws were held.

<sup>6</sup> Supposed to be the song mentioned in the *Complaynt*, as "The frog cam' to the myl dur."

<sup>7</sup> Probably a corruption of the old name of Surdastruma, drum. The air is similar to that of "Steer her up and haud her gaun."

<sup>8</sup> See p. 56 of the present collection.

The Hemlock is the best o' seed  
That any man may sow,  
When bairnies greet after breid  
Give them a horne to blow.

Come reke me to the Rowan tree.

Come row me round about, bony dowie.

I and my cumner, my cumner and I  
Shall never part with our mouth so dry.

All the mane that I make says the guidman;  
Who's to have my wife, deid when I am?  
Care for thy winding sheet, false lurdun,  
For I shall get ane other when thow art gone.<sup>1</sup>

We have now exhausted the majority of the early sources of fragments of our songs, and will conclude this essay by a glance at our principal printed collections. It cannot but be painful to any literary antiquary to contemplate the baldness of these early remains, and to reflect that the songs prior to the middle of the seventeenth century, which delighted our ancestors and assisted them in their merry-meetings, and emboldened them in love or war, have with few exceptions passed away with them, leaving only the titles of a small number, to register, like tombstones in an auld kirk-yard, that such things were. No one can fully appreciate the amount of knowledge of the daily life of the singers, their little troubles and doings, the appearance of their homes, their dress, sentiments, education, and other objects far beneath the dignity of history to chronicle which have thus been lost to us, never to be recovered! The fragments we have only enable us to see that the song was a favourite species of literature, that the airs which were current were often of the most beautiful description, and to surmise that the words to which they were allied were often equal to the beauty of the tune, and that is all.

The Aberdeen Cantus published at the city of Bonaccord in 1666, contains about fifty songs with their tunes, of which only some half-a-dozen are Scottish, and these of the most dubious description: amongst others, Alexander Scot's O Lusty Maye, with Flora Queen, is there set to music.

Watson's collection of Scots poems published at Edinburgh in 1706, 1709, and 1711, is the first collection of Scottish poetry we have, and is supposed to have been compiled by John Spottiswood, editor of Hope's Minor Practicks. It contains for the first time, "Fy let us a' to the Bridal," the version of Old Long Syne, attributed to Ayton; several pieces by the Marquis of Montrose, etc.

<sup>1</sup> A complete list of the scraps in this cantus will be found in the introduction to Mr. Chambers's Scottish Songs, 1829, vol. i.

The first of our collections of songs is the Tea-Table Miscellany of Allan Ramsay, the first volume of which appeared in 1724. Scottish music had become fashionable about that time, and Allan Ramsay the bookseller, considered a collection of the Songs of his country would answer as a publishing speculation, while his own talents as a poet and those of his friends, would assist him in making a respectable-sized volume. The work has been a perfect mine to all future collectors and editors of song, and its extent may be learned from the fact that it gives us upwards of twenty presumably old songs, upwards of a dozen old songs altered, and about one hundred by Allan himself, Crawford, Hamilton, and others; we also have a great number of names of old airs to which the new songs were directed to be sung, and a host of the popular English songs of the day. As an editor, Ramsay has been much blamed by antiquaries for preferring to give his own songs rather than the old versions on which he based some of his pieces, but surely these gentlemen do not reflect sufficiently on the character of a great majority of these old songs. When Ramsay set about collecting, he had a task before him at once delicate and dangerous. He required to prune the old songs of indelicacies before submitting them to the taste of

“Ilka lovely British lass,  
Frae ladies Charlotte, Ann, and Jean,  
Down to ilk bonnie singing lass,  
Wha dances barefoot on the green.”

He dared not present any thing which would be flouted as immoral at the rigidly righteous tea-meetings which then abounded, and as a poet he exerted his skill in covering over these blemishes,<sup>1</sup> in providing new verses to fill up obvious gaps, and to furnish totally new songs in place of old ones at once worthless and wicked. A trenchant editor, certainly, for the antiquary; but no lover of poetry can regret the cause which drew so many fine songs from the best Scotch poets of the time. Hamilton, Crawford, and Ramsay himself, gave not a bad exchange, for songs in all likelihood trashy and licentious, and we have sufficient confidence in Ramsay's judgment to believe, that no piece at all worthy of preservation which came under his notice in its entirety was not duly preserved.

Herd's Collection, issued in 1770, and afterwards with additions in 1776, attends more to the taste of the antiquary. Very little is known of the life of Honest David, and even the editorship of the two celebrated volumes cannot with certainty be given to him. All that is known is that he was a native of

<sup>1</sup> Since Ramsay's time public refinement has so far advanced, that no editor would dare to print in a popular work a great number of the songs given in the Tea Table Miscellany, a fact which may be confirmative that Ramsay did not use too much liberty with the old pieces—certainly no more than what made them presentable.

St. Cyrus, in Kincardineshire, that he was for many years a clerk to an accountant in Edinburgh, and died in June, 1810, aged 78 years. A notice of his death appeared in the Scots Magazine for July, 1810, and included the following sketch:—"He was a most active investigator of Scottish Literature and Antiquities, and enjoyed the friendship of nearly all the eminent artists and men of letters who have flourished in Edinburgh within these fifty years. Runciman, the painter, was one of his most intimate friends; and with Ruddiman, Gilbert Stuart, Fergusson, and Robert Burns, he was well acquainted. His information regarding the History of Scotland was extensive. Many of his remarks have appeared in periodical publications; and the notes appended to several popular works are enriched by materials of his own collecting. He was a man truly of the old school, inoffensive, modest, and unambitious, and in an extraordinary degree forming in all these respects a very striking contrast to the forward puffing and ostentatious disposition of the present age." Sir Walter Scott informs us that "His hardy and antique mould of countenance and his venerable grizzled locks procured him, amongst his acquaintances, the name of Greysteil." George Paton, who appears to have been co-editor of the Collection, was in the Custom-house. He carried on a most extensive correspondence with many of the most celebrated antiquarians of his time, amongst others Bishop Percy, Gough, and Joseph Ritson.<sup>1</sup> Herd's Collection, as it is commonly called, was arranged in several divisions according to the subject of the pieces, and a glance at the pages of the present volume will show how much old Scottish Song has been indebted to it for preservation. Herd and Paton, so far as we know, were model editors for antiquarians: Scraps and Fragments were printed exactly as they found them, as well as complete songs, without the slightest regard to rhyme or metre, decency or beauty.<sup>2</sup>

What must always be esteemed as the most valuable collection of the early Songs and Music of Scotland, "Johnson's Scots Musical Museum," was begun at Edinburgh in 1786. James Johnson was a Music Seller and Engraver in Edinburgh, and was the first who used Pewter plates for engraving music. The work seems to have been projected by William Tytler, of Woodhouselee, the celebrated antiquary (whose "Dissertation on Scottish Song and Music" was long the standard authority on the subject, though now but of little use), Dr. Blacklock, and

<sup>1</sup> A Selection of Letters received by Paton from Percy, Herd, and Callender of Craigforth, were published by Mr. Maidment, at Edinburgh, in 1830, and forms one of the most valuable contributions which that zealous antiquary has given to Scottish Literature.

<sup>2</sup> Herd's Collection was reprinted twice during 1860, one at Edinburgh being produced under the editorial care of Mr. Sidney Gilpin, while the other, published in Glasgow, is a mere reprint.

Samuel Clark who appears to have acted as musical editor. From the note addressed "To the True Lovers of Caledonian Music and Song," prefixed to the first volume, we find that the work originated from "A just and general complaint, that among all the music books of Scots Songs which have been hitherto offered to the public, not even altogether can be said to have merited the name of what may be called a complete collection; having been published in detached pieces and parcels; amounting however on the whole to more than twice the price of this publication; attended moreover with this further disadvantage, that they have been printed in such large unportable sizes that they could by no means answer the purpose of being pocket-companions, which is no small encumbrance, especially to the admirers of social music." Each volume was to contain one hundred songs with music, &c. In the second volume, the authors' names so far as known were given, and several of the old pieces marked as such. The work would probably not have reached a third volume had not Robert Burns entered into the scheme. Burns had been introduced to Johnson in Edinburgh, and contributed two original songs to the first volume. To the second volume he contributed largely, and continued to furnish the publisher with songs original, or collected, or half of each. He informed a friend that he had "collected, begged, borrowed, and stolen, all the songs" he had met with, and this enthusiasm continued to the last. Without his aid in rousing contributors, finding material, old or new, the Scots Musical Museum would have been on a level with Thomson's Orpheus Caledonius, instead of occupying the important position it now enjoys in the literature of our song. The work finished with the sixth volume. One thing was wanted, as Johnson left it, to make it complete, and that was, a series of good and trustworthy notes. This was undertaken by William Stenhouse, an accountant in Edinburgh who died in 1827, leaving his task unfinished. Mr. David Laing next took up the work, and with the assistance of Mr. Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, gave a series of additional notes illustrative and corrective of those of Stenhouse, added prefaces and indexes, and in 1853 gave all lovers of Scottish Song an edition of Johnson, the value of which is immeasurable. To it we gratefully acknowledge our obligations for much and valuable information.

In 1794 the celebrated antiquary, Joseph Ritson, published a collection of Scottish Songs with the music in two volumes. The collection itself so far as the songs were concerned, was of little consequence, the Scotch words being very incorrectly printed, and the music in a great number of instances being left blank. Its principal value lies in the Introductory Essay, the first dissertation on our Songs and Music written in a fitting manner, and to it the student is indebted for a careful investigation into the early remains of our Song. There

are of course many things in it now allowed to be incorrect, and at least one of his critical opinions will be laughed at;<sup>1</sup> but in spite of this Ritson's Essay at once occupied and still holds the position of being the best historical sketch we have of our early songs. To its pages every succeeding writer and editor has been largely indebted, and we have also to award it our homage.

Thomson's *Select Melodies of Scotland* has been characterised in this work as "a sort of drawing-room edition," of the Scots Musical Museum. Its publication was begun in 1793, by Mr. George Thomson, Clerk to the Board of Trustees, Edinburgh. Mr. Thomson's idea was to give the favourite airs accompanied where possible by the words. When, from their character, these were unfitted for the perusal of ladies he proposed to print original verses. He also gave symphonies and accompaniments to the airs by the best composers of his time, as Haydn, Beethoven, and Pleyel; and, greatest of all, he secured for the literary portion the services of Robert Burns, who entered into the spirit of the work with the greatest enthusiasm and enriched it with a great number of original songs, many of them being the best that came from his pen, and given to Thomson without fee or reward. Sir Walter Scott, Sir Alexander Boswell, Johanna Baillie, Thomas Campbell, and many others contributed to the work, and as it also contained a selection of the best of the old songs, with the music carefully given, the work was altogether a noble undertaking, well planned and carried out.

In 1829, Mr. Robert Chambers published his collection of Scottish songs in two volumes, with an Introductory Essay. It is needless at the present time to reiterate Mr. Chambers's numerous services to the literature and antiquities of Scotland. On the subject of songs and ballads, Mr. Chambers has always been considered, and justly so, as one of our foremost critics, while in the "Book of Days," "Popular Annals of Scotland," and his *Histories of the Rebellions*, he has made a name for himself in the popular elucidation of our History and Antiquities. Mr. Chambers in his essay on Scottish Song principally follows the authority of Ritson, adding much valuable information resulting from his own inquiries. The songs are well selected, but printed without any attempt at arrangement, a fact which we cannot too deeply deplore. In the notes affixed to the songs, Mr. Chambers adds greatly to our knowledge of their history, and we have to acknowledge with pleasure the obligations we are under to them. In a few instances we have had to dissent from several of Mr. Chambers's speculations, but we have done

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<sup>1</sup> We allude to the passage where he says of Burns, that "he does not appear to his usual advantage in song."

so only after very careful consideration and with very great regret.<sup>1</sup>

A few words on a peculiar branch of our subject, and we conclude. Scotch Music became very popular in England about the middle of the seventeenth century, and in 1719 Thomas D'Urfey issued his celebrated "Pills to purge Melancholy," a Collection of Songs, &c., containing a great number of Scotch airs and imitations, with *Scotch* words specially written for the collection by D'Urfey, and his Grub-street compeers. Why the Scotch words were rejected we cannot say, certainly it was not on grounds of morality, for a more filthy series of volumes could hardly have been issued; nor on grounds of *poetry*, for we might as well compare Boucicault to Shakspeare, as the Songs in D'Urfey's collection to their Scottish Models. But it is certain that the work was highly popular in England, and is now one of the rarest gems in the Ballad Collector's Library.

Nothing can be more distasteful to any lover of the ring of

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<sup>1</sup> It may increase the usefulness of this work to give a list of some of the minor collections and works illustrative of the subject which have appeared.

Thomson's *Orpheus Caledonius*, 1725 folio, and 2 vols. 8vo, 1733, is the first collection of Scotch Music styled such. It is of but little importance now, and only prized by collectors. The *Charmer*, "a collection of songs chiefly such as are eminent for poetical merit; among which are many originals and others that were never before printed in a song book," 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1752; "The Lark," Edinburgh, 1740. Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, though principally treating of Ballads, contained a number of songs. Jamieson's *Popular Ballads and Songs*, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1806; Cromek's *Select Scottish Songs, ancient and modern*, with Critical and Biographical Notes by Robert Burns, 2 vols., London, 1810; Gilchrist's *Select Scottish Ballads, Tales and Songs*, with explanatory notes and observations, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1815; Campbell's *Albans Anthology*, Edinburgh, 1816. Hogg's *Jacobite Relics of Scotland*, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1819-21, deals as its title imports exclusively with the songs relating to the Rebellions, and, in place of a better, must rank as the best collection. Struthers's *Harp of Caledonia*, 3 vols., Glasgow, 1819; Smith's *Modern Scottish Minstrel*, 6 vols., Edinburgh, 1820-24, a fine collection, the music given with much care and taste, as would be expected from the composer of the air of "Jessie the flower o' Dumblane." C. K. Sharpe's "Ballad Book," a tiny volume of which only thirty copies were printed in 1824, contains a few traditional scraps of song, as does also Maidment's *North Country Garland*. The impression of which was also limited to thirty copies issued in the same year. Allan Cunningham's *Songs of Scotland*, 4 vols., 1825, was a most ambitious performance, but of little use. In 1835, Peter Cunningham edited a small volume of songs which gave the public, for the first time, the pieces arranged in the only satisfactory manner—according to their age. It is one of the best of the minor collections. Mr. George F. Graham edited "The Songs of Scotland," adapted to their appropriate melodies, in three volumes 1854-6. This work is undoubtedly the most popular drawing-room edition of the songs, and deservedly so. In 1845, Mr. William Whitelaw edited "The Book of Scottish Song," a work which aimed at comprehensiveness in the early and latter period. Original songs were freely admitted, and the consequence is that we have a pretty full collection of early song printed side by side with the effusions of every petty poetaster; in short, the editor's boast that his work comprised upwards of twelve hundred original songs, seems to us the greatest blemish of the work. To do Mr. Whitelaw every justice, his notes displayed great research, and his pieces are, as a rule, correctly printed, but we have them without any arrangement, a vast heterogeneous mass. The modern *Scottish Minstrel*, edited by Dr. Charles Rogers in 1856, is a valuable contribution, dealing as it does with the poets of the first half of the present century and containing memoirs of many minor poets. We have to acknowledge our indebtedness to it for much information for the later part of our work.

our old Songs than to read these poor rhymes, and yet for a long time they passed current in England, if not to a great extent among the educated Scotchmen of their time as veritable Scottish productions: Ramsay's Tea Table Miscellany, Herd's Collection, and Johnson's Museum, will be found to contain a large number of them.

In later times several southern writers have "tried their hands," and succeeded so well that it was with great regret that the plan of the present collection could not allow the Editor to include a number in it. But from the outset, the plan was to give only veritable native productions, and we have now to be content with drawing attention to the names of two of these writers. Richard Hewit, a native of Cumberland, who was for some time Secretary to Dr. Blacklock, the admirer of Burns, wrote the following beautiful song<sup>1</sup>:—

#### ROSLIN CASTLE.

'Twas in that season of the year,  
When all things gay and sweet appear,  
That Colin with the morning ray,  
Arose and sung his rural lay,  
Of Nanny's charms the shepherd sung,  
The hills and dales with Nanny rung,  
While Roslin Castle heard the swain,  
And echoed back the cheerful strain.

Awake sweet muse! the breathing spring  
With rapture warms; awake and sing!  
Awake and join the vocal throng,  
Who hail the morning with a song,  
To Nanny raise the cheerful lay,  
O! bid her haste and come away,  
In sweetest smiles herself adorn,  
And add new graces to the morn.

O hark, my love, on ev'ry spray  
Each feather'd warbler tunes his lay:  
'Tis beauty fires the ravish'd throng,  
And love inspires the melting song.  
Then let my raptur'd notes arise,  
For beauty darts from Nanny's eyes,  
And love my rising bosom warms,  
And fills my soul with sweet alarms.

O come, my love! thy Colin's lay,  
With rapture calls, O come away,  
Come while the muse this wreath shall twine,  
Around that modest brow of thine,  
O hither haste, and with thee bring,  
That beauty blooming like the spring,  
Those graces that divinely shine  
And charm this ravish'd breast of mine!

<sup>1</sup> From Johnson's Museum,

Miss Susanna Blamire, another native of Cumberland (died 1795), wrote a number of Scotch Songs of which the following is at once the best and most popular:—

#### THE SILLER CROWN.

And ye sall walk in silk attire,  
 And siller hae to spare,  
 Gin ye'll consent to be his bride  
 Nor think o' Donald mair.  
 Oh! wha wad buy a silken gown  
 Wi' a puir broken heart;  
 Or what's to me a siller crown,  
 Gin frae my love I part?

The mind wha's every wish is pure  
 Far dearer is to me,  
 And ere I'm forced to break my faith,  
 I'll lay me down and dee;  
 For I hae pledged my virgin troth  
 Brave Donald's fate to share,  
 And he has gi'en to me his heart,  
 Wi' a' its virtues rare.

His gentle manners wan my heart,  
 He gratefu' took the gift,  
 Could I but think to seek it back  
 It wad be waur than theft;  
 For langest life can ne'er repay  
 The love he bears to me,  
 And ere I'm forced to break my troth  
 I'll lay me down and dee.

Towards the conclusion of his Essay on Scottish Song, Ritson indulges in the following literary prophecy:—"The era of Scottish Music and Scottish Song is now passed. The pastoral simplicity and natural genius of former ages no longer exist; a total change of manners has taken place in all parts of the country, and servile imitation usurped the place of original invention. All, therefore, which now remains to be wished is, that industry should exert itself to retrieve and illustrate the relics of departed genius." Never was judgment more erroneously pronounced, or prophecy more easily shown to be false, so far as the Songs are concerned, than this. On the contrary, the brightest period in this branch of our literature is that of Ritson's own time, or immediately after, as the names of Robert Burns, Lady Nairne, Lady Ann Barnard, Hector Macneill, and Robert Tannahill, as the authors of some of our finest and most popular pieces sufficiently prove. And though the singers have not been so great as the past merges nearer the present, still we can point to more than sufficient to show that the grand roll of our lyric

bards is not yet at an end. Boswell, Hogg, Scott, Johanna Baillie, Allan Cunningham, Riddell, and Motherwell, have all contributed to our treasures, what we would not willingly let die; and their successors, our own contemporaries, have given us many proofs that the harp will not rest even in our day, but that the Halls and Villages, Hills and Rivers, Lads and Lasses, will still continue to be celebrated, rousing depths of love and passion hitherto unknown, and fanning patriotism into a still purer and brighter flame.

GLASGOW, *November*, 1870.

