

The Petrie Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland



Edited by David Cooper

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Irish modernized and
edited by Lillis Ó Laoire



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Abbreviations and Acknowledgements

Pitches are notated according to the ASA rather than the Helmholtz system. The following table converts between the two systems:

ASA	Helmholtz
C ₁	CC
C ₂	C
C ₃	c
C ₄ (Middle C)	c'
C ₅	c''
C ₆	c'''
C ₇	c''''

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Editor's Introduction

Background

In an address on the death of George Petrie delivered to the Royal Irish Academy in February 1866 by its president, the Very Revd Charles Graves, his date of birth is given as 1 January 1790. This was the very beginning of one of the most significant decades in Irish history, for it was a time when many Irish Catholics and Protestants would find it possible to declare themselves United Irishmen, with the shared aims of Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform.¹ An ideological debate in this movement concerned the role of Irish language, literature and music, for while to some Southern members the appeal to tradition was seen as at best unhelpful and at worst a positive hindrance to the cause, a number of Ulster, and generally Presbyterian, United Irishmen, held indigenous culture to be of considerable significance in the development of a non-sectarian national ethos.² The Belfast Harp Festival of 1792, for instance, which was organized by the Belfast Library and Society for Promoting Knowledge, and at which the nineteen-year-old Edward Bunting noted down the 'ancient Irish melodies' played by the performers, was regarded as a last opportunity to preserve an important part of the Gaelic cultural heritage which otherwise faced annihilation. George Petrie's own life would be devoted to the archaeological and antiquarian study of Ireland and to the furtherance of knowledge and understanding of the land before the Anglicization of the country. He collected Irish music, not for the benefit of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy and gentry who were, he felt, 'a different race – a race who possess no national music', but for the ordinary citizen.³ Although, as Harry White remarks, 'there is nothing in Petrie's work which expressly advocates a challenge to the political *status quo*',⁴ Petrie did note in this same manuscript journal that 'well may Ireland exult in the possession of such strains; but she will exult more when *freedom* shall bid her indulge the proud feelings that of right belong to her'.⁵

As a boy, George Petrie was not entirely insulated from the politics of the

¹ A. Graves, 'Address', 325–36. Stokes gives the birth year as 1789, but without any date.

² For example, the Dublin Society of United Irishmen noted that 'we have thought little about our ancestors and much of our posterity'. See W. A. Maguire (ed.), *Up in Arms: The 1798 Rebellion, A Centenary Exhibition*, p. 129.

³ W. Stokes, *The Life and Labours*, p. 316. Quoting from a manuscript journal of Petrie.

⁴ H. White, *The Keeper's Recital*, p. 64.

⁵ Stokes, *The Life and Labours*, p. 316. My emphasis.

time. His father, James, a first generation Irishman whose own father had left Aberdeen to settle in Dublin, was arrested and for a short time imprisoned in the Dublin Provost jail on suspicion that he was a United Irishman. It seems that James Petrie was, in fact, a loyalist, but he was certainly familiar with some of the radicals of the period, and had produced miniatures and engravings of such leading lights of the movement as Napper Tandy, Michael Dwyer and Robert Emmet (the latter drawn during Emmet's trial for high treason), and the Whig MP and barrister John Philpot Curran, who acted as defence counsel for a number of United Irishmen. A member of the Dublin middle classes, James Petrie was a jeweller and a dealer in coins and antiques as well as a miniaturist, his business and his home being located at 82 Dame Street. His first wife, Elizabeth (née Simpson), who originated from Edinburgh, died in April 1793, and he was from that point on responsible for the upbringing of his only child, George, whom he sent at the age of nine to the famous school of Samuel Whyte in Grafton Street, where Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Thomas Moore had studied before him. According to Stokes, Whyte gave priority to the teaching of morality, never losing 'an opportunity of inculcating the love of truth, and the shamefulness of equivocation . . . and strove to imbue his pupils with the taste and manners of gentlemen'.⁶

Although his father had designs for him to train as a surgeon, this was not to the taste of George, who was a delicate child, ill suited to the butchery of early nineteenth-century surgery. Instead, he followed his father's calling, training as an artist at the drawing school of the Dublin Society. He seems to have developed his interest in archaeology during his teens, and in a journal of 1808, written while he was sketching the Poulaphouca Falls, he describes the stone circles on Church Mountain, the symbols on boundary stones and the earthworks at Ballymore, in each case detailing their structure.⁷ He was already collecting 'the ancient music of Ireland' at this stage, for he writes in another journal entry of that year:

Got one Peter Power to spend the evening with me, having heard that he had many Irish airs; got but two from him.⁸

Petrie's skill as a draughtsman developed during his twenties, and by his thirties he was contributing numerous illustrations to such guidebooks as Cromwell's *Excursions through Ireland* (1820), Wright's *An Historical Guide to Ancient and Modern Dublin* (1821) and Brewer's *Beauties of Ireland* (1825). He was elected an associate member of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1826, the year of its first exhibition, at which he displayed a painting of Ardfinane Castle, and in 1828 was awarded full membership.

In drawing and painting the historical sites of Ireland, Petrie became increasingly interested in the artefacts from an archaeological point of view. He first came across the ecclesiastical remains at Clonmacnoise (near the River Shannon, south of Athlone), in 1818, and copied more than three hundred

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 2.

⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 3–4.

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 4.

inscriptions from monuments. As he was unable to find any explanation for the names he found there in modern printed sources, he began to collect manuscripts for documentary evidence that would help him to unlock the secrets held by the inscriptions. His election, in 1828, to membership of the Royal Irish Academy was the logical outcome of these endeavours as an amateur antiquarian and archaeologist. The membership of the Irish Academy (which was founded in 1775, the title Royal being added the following year) was drawn from the social and intellectual elite of Ireland. Roy Foster notes that the founders of the Academy

saw it as a decisively 'national' institution, in Ascendancy terms. But in the early nineteenth century, it would unintentionally help nurture an intellectual interest in native antiquity that would be put to the purposes of an ideology very different to that of 'colonial' nationalism.⁹

Within two years of his election to the RIA, Petrie found himself serving on its Council. By this stage the institution had fallen into a period of stagnancy, and Graves remarks that Petrie 'at once applied himself, in conjunction with other distinguished members, to raise the Academy from that state of torpor in which it had remained for the previous quarter of a century'.¹⁰ He regarded the establishment of a proper museum and a library as of prime importance and he devoted considerable energy to these tasks, assisting with the purchase of a number of important manuscripts, including the second volume of the *Annals of the Four Masters*. He also began to contribute to the proceedings of the Academy, reading some twenty-eight papers for it between 1831 and 1855 on matters ranging from the provenance of manuscripts to the history of such artefacts as the Cross of Cong.¹¹ The most influential of these papers concerned the Round Towers of Ireland (1833) and Tara Hill (1837).

In 1824, the Ordnance Topographical Survey of Ireland was established on the recommendation of the House of Commons to provide a detailed six-inch scale map of the townlands of Ireland, so that the rateable value of properties could be revalued. As an extension of the Survey's brief beyond simple cartography, information about antiquities, place names, industry and geology was to be collected. From 1833, Petrie was employed by the Survey, taking responsibility in 1835 for overseeing the investigation of such elements as the orthography of the spelling of place names and the cataloguing and description of historic monuments. Working from the back parlour of his house, *TeePetrie*, at 21 North Great Charles Street, this brought him into contact with a group of Irish literary, historical and linguistic authorities including Eugene O'Curry and John O'Donovan, both of whom would subsequently be regarded as leading researchers in their fields. The development of a properly *scientific* approach to archaeological studies, which was apparently unknown in Ireland before his time, and which has been ascribed to Petrie, probably owes much to

⁹ R. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600–1972*, p. 184.

¹⁰ Graves, 'Address', p. 328.

¹¹ Stokes, *The Life and Labours*, pp. 438–9.

this period of discovery.¹² With the Ordnance Survey, archaeology moved from the domain of the lone amateur working independently to a corporate endeavour which drew on expertise from a range of disciplines and involved a more rational and less speculative attitude. Petrie was not immune to criticism about his methods, however, either during his lifetime or from more recent scholarship. Although, as Joseph Raftery observes, he espoused a truly scientific approach to archaeology, there was ‘a discrepancy between the concept and its execution’.¹³ He failed to produce the catalogue of the collection of the Royal Irish Academy that he was commissioned to compile by its Council, and his attitude to his own private collection (which he also failed to catalogue) was motivated more by an interest in quality than scholarly impartiality. For Raftery ‘the inability to recognise the “inferior” specimen as being also an essential part of the story of a people’s past detracts from the desire for scientific exactness after which Petrie, in theory, would appear to have striven’.¹⁴

Of the individuals Petrie collaborated with on the Ordnance Survey, none had a profounder influence on him than Eugene O’Curry. O’Curry (or ‘Mr. Curry’ as he invariably called him in print) shared his love for traditional music and verse, and accompanied him on a number of folk collecting trips. In his note for *Péarla an Bhrollaigh Bháin* (‘The Pearl of the White Breast’) from the present collection, Petrie describes him as ‘a gentleman who, to many of the best characteristics of a genuine Irishman, adds – that not unessential one – a love for the “dear old tunes” of his country; a love so ardent, that it has led him from childhood to gather up, and enabled him to retain in his memory, many ancient and beautiful strains peculiar to or only remembered in his native county of Clare; and which, but for that feeling, would most probably have been for ever lost to us’. O’Curry’s background was radically different from that of Petrie. Born in 1796 into a Catholic, Irish-speaking farming family who lived near Kilkee on the south-westerly tip of County Clare, he did not start to learn English until he was sixteen, under the tutelage of a local priest. At the age of thirty he moved to Limerick, working his way up to the wardenship of a lunatic asylum. O’Curry had been an avid collector of old Irish documents since his youth and his reputation as an amateur historian and antiquarian brought him to the attention of the Ordnance Survey through the offices of George Smith, the Dublin publisher of Bunting’s third volume. His work for the Ordnance Survey acted as a springboard for subsequent posts in a number of important museums and libraries, including the Bodleian and Trinity College, Dublin, libraries, and the British Museum. He was appointed Professor of Irish History and Archaeology of the recently founded Catholic University of Ireland in 1854, delivering two famous lecture series, ‘On the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History’ and ‘On the Social Customs,

¹² See, e.g. Joseph Raftery, ‘Aspects of George Petrie. I. – George Petrie, 1789–1866: A Re-assessment’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. 72, Section C (1972), pp. 153–7 for a discussion of Petrie’s contribution to the development of a scientific approach.

¹³ Raftery, ‘Aspects of George Petrie’, pp. 153–7.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

Manners and Life of the People of Erin'. O'Curry is referred to as an authority in Petrie's *Ancient Music of Ireland* on almost ninety occasions, whether as the source of a melody or Irish lyric, a translation, a textual gloss or an opinion. For Petrie, O'Curry represented a direct source to what he perceived as Irish authenticity and, as will be seen, the themes of purity, truth and essence form common threads through Petrie's commentary.

Although the first volume of *County Memoirs*, devoted to Londonderry, and containing some 350 pages of information about the topography, archaeology and economy of the county, was published in 1839 to apparent public approval, work on the *Topographical Memoir* was almost immediately terminated because of the considerable expense to the Treasury associated with it. In 1843, Peel's Conservative government established a 'Commission of Inquiry into the Ordnance Memoirs of Ireland' to reconsider the issue, and this body received evidence from a number of expert witnesses, including Petrie. It is interesting to note that among the objections to the work on the memoir was the fear that it might incite political unrest by drawing attention to earlier conditions within Ireland.¹⁵ In his evidence, Petrie refuted this proposition, remarking that

generally speaking, a work in which historical facts only were fairly stated, would, I think, have decidedly the opposite effect. I am quite sure that such a work would tend to disabuse the popular mind of a vast mass of prejudices, which are the results of false notions of the former conditions of the country, and the total ignorance of its real state from its earlier times.¹⁶

Despite the commission's recommendation that the work of the Survey should be re-established in much the same way as it had previously been carried on, this advice was ignored by parliament and no further memoirs were published. Part (around one hundred volumes) of the great treasure-trove of material it had collected subsequently passed into the hands of the Royal Irish Academy, providing a major resource for later scholarship.¹⁷

With the termination of his employment by the Ordnance Survey, Petrie returned to his earlier career as a painter in order to support himself while continuing to work on his *Inquiry into the Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, and it was not until 1849 that he was granted a pension on the Civil List, providing him with a degree of financial security.¹⁸ Meanwhile, in 1847, his contribution to archaeology and antiquarianism was marked by the conferment of an honorary Doctorate (LL.D.) by Trinity College, Dublin. In 1851, he was invited to design the monument to Daniel O'Connell in the Prospect Cemetery in Dublin. O'Connell, one of the most prominent figures in the movement for Catholic emancipation, was the hero of many Irish Catholics and was demonized by the loyalist Orange Order (for example, in the song 'Oul' Father Dan'). It seems a remarkable tribute to Petrie that, as an Anglican

¹⁵ Stokes, *The Life and Labours*, p. 106.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ The Institute of Irish Studies of the Queen's University of Belfast has, over the 1990s, edited and serially published many of the manuscript volumes held by the RIA as *Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland*.

¹⁸ Stokes, *The Life and Labours*, p. 358.

and a loyalist (albeit one who regarded himself as an Irish patriot and who despised Orangeism), he was held in such respect by the supporters of O'Connell that he was invited to plan his memorial. The monument itself does not seem to have been regarded as being particularly successful in its execution, for Petrie's design for a three-part structure consisting of church, round tower and cross was truncated to a round tower alone, with a crypt at its foot housing O'Connell's remains.¹⁹ Ironically, the use of the round tower as a sepulchre was in total contradiction to Petrie's major conclusions in his 1833 'Essay on Ecclesiastical Architecture and Round Towers of Ireland', namely that they functioned as belltowers and keeps. Petrie was characteristically mild in his criticism of the committee responsible, simply noting in a letter of 31 October 1857 to a certain Mr O'Kelly that 'as a matter of correct taste, the tower should be perfectly isolated, so as to preserve the impressiveness of its simplicity, its singleness, and its grandeur'.²⁰

The Society for the Preservation and Publication of the Melodies of Ireland

In the formation of the Society for the Preservation and Publication of the Melodies of Ireland (henceforth, SPPMI) in 1851, the antiquarian approach that underpinned Petrie's work found its way into the domain of music. Aloys Fleischmann's groundbreaking *Sources of Irish Traditional Music c. 1600–1855* has demonstrated not only the enormous quantity of Irish music that was published in the two and a half centuries up to Petrie's *Ancient Music of Ireland*, but also the largely commercial motivation of most of the collections other than Edward Bunting's three volumes of 1796, 1809 and 1840.²¹ Published Irish music largely took the form of 'favourite' or 'admired' country dance tunes, presumably to be played in the parlours of the urban bourgeoisie. For the SPPMI, and for Petrie in particular, however, there was a moral and intellectual imperative in bringing the music to the educated public's attention. In a letter to his friend Lord Adare, Petrie writes on 15 February 1855:

I do not know whether you sympathize with me as to the importance of preserving this greatest but most dilapidated monument of our national character – the clue to so many traits for which we have been distinguished. Indeed I rather fear that you do not – and simply because you have not given to it the same amount of consideration. But, it is my deliberate conviction that we possess nothing of the past so honourable to our national character, or – viewed as a branch of our archaeology – of greater importance to the history of the great Celtic race of mankind, to which we chiefly belong. And I would further add that, of all the national music of the world, which I have known, there is none which exhibits so little of savagery, and so large an amount of variety and beauty, together with artful construction.²²

¹⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 369–70.

²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 371.

²¹ Edward Bunting, *A General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music* (London, Dublin, 1796), *A General Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland* (London, 1809), *The Ancient Music of Ireland Arranged for the Pianoforte* (Dublin, 1840).

²² Stokes, *The Life and Labours*, p. 373.

The approach to be taken by the SPPMI in its operation was analogous to that of the museum curator: music was to be collected (and thereby preserved for posterity), classified and codified, and placed in the public domain by means of regular publication. In the SPPMI's advertisement, printed in the front matter of the second edition of Petrie's *Ancient Music of Ireland* (1882), it is stated that the aim of the publication is to draw on manuscript materials of every type of *pure* Irish music, and 'every Irishman, and every Irishwoman too' is invited to send any materials they have in their possession to one of the Honorary Secretaries (John Edward Pigot and Robert B. Lyons) 'who will immediately submit all airs sent them to the Committee charged with their arrangement and preservation'.

The structure of the SPPMI had Petrie as President, ten Vice-Presidents, most of whom were either peers or members of the gentry, a Council of twenty-three members and a Committee of Publication whose membership was drawn from the Council. It levied an annual membership subscription of one pound, for which members were to receive a copy of every volume published during the year, each to contain some 150 to 200 airs. To the early subscriber this might have seemed good value, for it was indicated in the advertisement that there was sufficient material in hand for at least five volumes, and that Petrie's collection alone (at that stage exceeding four hundred airs, though at his death it would contain more than two and a half thousand melodies) would fill three volumes. In fact, Petrie's 1855 volume was the SPPMI's one and only publication, and the society was disbanded. It is not entirely clear why the SPPMI's efforts were so largely unsuccessful, for its Council included a number of Ireland's leading intellectual figures. Among its twenty-three members were sixteen Irish Royal Academicians, including Charles Graves, Eugene O'Curry, Henry Hudson, John Edward Pigot, and Petrie's biographer William Stokes. A particularly influential figure was Benjamin Lee Guinness of the famous brewing dynasty, who was elected Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1851, the year of the SPPMI's inception. According to a letter written by Petrie to Lord Adare on November 3 1855, however, he had received little help or encouragement from the council of the SPPMI. He was already engaged on a second volume of his collection and had been suffering from some unspecified illness. He remarks to Adare that:

Yet I have worked, and still work, without a cheering word from mortal, and despite of an apathy on the part of those who urged me into the labour, enough to make the most ardent man hopeless. Need I say more than that the last part of the first volume has been finished these six months, and it is not offered to the subscribers yet!²³

The establishment of the SPPMI had followed in the wake of two particularly momentous events in the previous decade: the devastating Great Famine of 1845–9, and the establishment of the Young Ireland movement and the subsequent abortive 1848 rising. Petrie acknowledges the effect of the Famine in his Introduction, and his moving and heartfelt remarks bear repetition here:

²³ *ibid.*, p. 374.

I could not but feel that what must have been, at no distant time, the inevitable result of the changes in the character of the Irish race which had been long in operation, and which had already almost entirely denationalized its higher classes, had been suddenly effected, as by a lightning flash, by the calamities which, in the year 1846–7, had struck down and well nigh annihilated the Irish remnant of the great Celtic family. Of the old, who had still preserved as household gods the language, the songs, and traditions of their race and their localities, but few survived. Of the middle-aged and energetic whom death had yet spared, and who might for a time, to some extent, have preserved such relics, but few remained that had the power to fly from the plague and panic stricken land; and of the young, who had come into existence, and become orphaned, during those years of desolation, they, for the most part, were reared where no mother's eyes could make them feel the mysteries of human affections – no mother's voice could sooth their youthful sorrows, and implant within the memories of their hearts her songs of tenderness and love – and where no father's instructions could impart to them the traditions and characteristic peculiarities of feeling that would link them to their remotest ancestors. The green pastoral plains, the fruitful valleys, as well as the wild hill-sides and the dreary bogs, had equally ceased to be animate with human life. 'The land of song' was no longer tuneful; or, if a human sound met the traveller's ear, it was only that of the feeble and despairing wail for the dead. This awful, unwonted silence, which, during the famine and subsequent years, almost everywhere prevailed, struck more fearfully upon their imaginations, as many Irish gentlemen informed me, and gave them a deeper feeling of the desolation with which the country had been visited, than any other circumstance which had forced itself upon their attention; and I confess that it was a consideration of the circumstances of which this fact gave so striking an indication, that, more than any other, overpowered all my objections, and influenced me in coming to a determination to accept the proposal of the Irish-Music Society.

Of the members of the SPPMI, three names in particular deserve further comment from the point of view of Irish nationalist politics – William Elliot Hudson, his brother Henry Hudson, and John Edward Pigot – for these three provide a direct link to Thomas Davis and the Young Ireland movement. Thomas Davis, the son of a Protestant English military surgeon, was a regular contributor to the newspaper the *Citizen* (which was financed and edited by William Hudson), helped establish the journal *Nation*, which campaigned for the repeal of the 1800 Act of Union, and was a founder and leader of the Young Ireland movement until his untimely death in 1845 at the age of thirty-one. Young Ireland began as a non-sectarian and largely middle-class movement, bringing together Protestants and Catholics much as the United Irishmen had attempted to do fifty years earlier, and it promoted a national vision based on equality and the common good. In the words of Charles Gavan Duffy, it advocated the view that

Ireland must aim to be Irish, not Anglo-Irish; because vigour, and health, and great achievements belong to men and nations which follow their nature, not to those broken to a foreign mould. But Irish must no longer mean Celtic; from whatever stock they sprung, Celtic, Norman, or Saxon, if men loved and served the country they were Irish. Hereditary spirit was an *ignis fatuus* in a country where the lineal descendants of the O'Neills, O'Briens and O'Connors were Unionists and where Philpot Curran, Wolfe Tone, and Theobald Matthew sprang from Cromwellian soldiers.²⁴

²⁴ C. G. Duffy, *Young Ireland: A Fragment of Irish History, 1840–1850*, pp. 155–6.

Davis was a close friend of George Petrie, as can be seen from his commentary to the song *An Buachaill Caol Dubh* in the present volume, where he writes of the three settings: 'of these sets, the first and second were obtained in Munster, and are, consequently, the most likely to be the best, as they certainly appear to me the most beautiful: and when I state that they were given to me by my lamented friend, the late Thomas Davis, they will, with many, derive an additional interest from that fact.' As a means of disseminating its message, the *Nation* regularly printed 'national ballads' written by Davis, Duffy and numerous other contributors, Davis supplying some fifty songs to the *Citizen* and the *Nation*, including, perhaps most famously, what subsequently became a republican anthem, 'A Nation Once Again'. Duffy's discussion of the use of ballad poetry in the *Nation* warrants extended quotation:

The imagination of a Celtic race is an appetite almost as imperious as hunger, and in an old bardic land song had always been a common enjoyment of the people. Adepts can determine the date of Irish music by its pervading tone; the airs which have come down from the contests of the middle ages sound like a roar of battle choked with sobs, while in the Penal Times they wail with the subdued sorrow of hope long baffled and postponed. Moore had mastered both moods of the national harp, and his songs were sung in the drawing rooms of Dublin and Cork, and in mansions and presbyteries; but at fairs and markets, at wakes and weddings, in forges and *shebeens*, where the peasants recreated themselves, they were nearly unknown. The songs sung among the people were written originally by Hedge Schoolmasters, and had a tendency to run into classic allusions, and abounded in sonorous 'purple words' without much precise meaning, but which seemed to move the lively imagination of an Irish audience like music. The 'Groves of Blarney' is not a very extravagant parody on the Hedge Schoolmasters' songs. The plain and vigorous old *Shan van Voch* [*sic*], however, and some stray remnants from the Gallic songs of '98 also maintained their ground; and there were everywhere to be met a multitude of rude street songs in honour of O'Connell. The young poets struck a different key. Historical ballads of singular vigour and dramatic power made the great men and great achievements of their race familiar to the people. The longings of the present time and the hopes of a triumphant future, were sung in verse where the cataract of coloured words with which they were long familiar were replaced by genuine passion, or sometimes by the studiously simple rhetoric of good sense:

The work that should to-day be wrought, defer not till to-morrow,
The help that should within be sought scorn from without to borrow.
Old maxims these, yet stout and true, they speak in trumpet tone
To do at once what is to do, and trust Ourselves Alone. [*Nation*, No. 8]²⁵

William Hudson was a confidant of Davis; he composed the melody for John Kells Ingram's song 'The Mourning of the Dead' (better known as 'Who Fears to Speak of '98') and encouraged the journalists of the *Nation* to collect Irish melodies. From Duffy's description of Hudson in his 'Office Agenda' of 1846, it seems that he epitomized the spirit of Young Ireland, working disinterestedly in the service of his country, and fostering 'native literature and art'.²⁶ In fact, the Hudson family had given support at various times to figures such as Wolfe

²⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 164–5.

²⁶ C. G. Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History, 1845–1849*, p. 79.

Tone and Thomas Moore, and William's father had apparently been a United Irishman. A member of the Committee of Publication on the SPPMI's formation, William Hudson, died in June 1853, too soon to play a full part in the production of Petrie's volume. His younger brother, Henry, a Dublin State dentist, was an amateur musician who collected (or in some cases, it seems, composed) seven volumes of melodies totalling some 870 items, a number of which were published in the *Citizen*, or its successor the *Dublin Monthly Magazine*.²⁷ Petrie does not include any melodies collected by either Hudson brother in the *Ancient Music of Ireland*.

The barrister John Edward Pigot (1822–71) was the son of David Pigot, an O'Connellite MP who was by turns Solicitor-General, Attorney General and Chief Baron of the Exchequer. J. E. Pigot was one of Thomas Davis's closest friends and was a fervent nationalist, writing in 1847 to Smith O'Brien, leader of the abortive insurrection of 1848, that

Before Duffy, Mitchel or Meagher – before yourself – before even Thomas Davis – had come over to the opinions now called of Young Ireland, I had begun to work in my own way to gain others to that side. This matter of nationality has been to me from childhood a sacred religion; and I mean the word in its highest sense.²⁸

Pigot wrote on military matters in the *Nation*, including articles on guerrilla warfare, and was only prevented from taking part in O'Brien's rebellion by his father's interjection.²⁹ He was also an avid collector of folksongs, some 156 of his melodies posthumously appearing in Patrick Joyce's 1909 collection *Old Irish Music and Songs*.³⁰ Petrie alludes to the name of Pigot on nine occasions in *The Ancient Music of Ireland*, printing five of his melodies and almost invariably referring to him as 'my friend'.

In his biography of Petrie, Stokes avoids detailed discussion of Petrie's political views, describing him, as has already been noted, as both a loyalist and a patriot, and remarking that

In the choice of his friends he was uninfluenced by political considerations, or any other narrow feeling of sectarianism, a quality which none but those who love Ireland can sufficiently admire or estimate. Loving his country and feeling for her wrongs, he was a liberal in politics, though from its angry passions he ever held aloof. . . . His was a patriotism that while it placed historic truth before the country, awakened no angry passions, sought to do holily that which it would do highly, and while it laboured for the moral and intellectual advancement of the people dear to it, inculcated the respect of order and of law.³¹

Bearing in mind the previously quoted remark from Petrie's manuscript journal about the exultation that would occur when Ireland was free, can we square this with Stokes's picture of him as a practically apolitical individual? It is easy to imagine that he might have been sympathetic to the ideals of Davis

²⁷ F. Vallely (ed.), *The Companion to Irish Traditional Music*, pp. 191–2.

²⁸ D. Gwynn, *Young Ireland and 1848*, p. 112.

²⁹ R. Pine and C. Acton (eds.), *To Talent Alone*, p. 61. It will be noted that The Right Hon. The Lord Chief Baron was one of the Vice-Presidents of the SPPMI.

³⁰ Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 61.

³¹ Stokes, *The Life and Labours*, pp. 394–5.

and could have subscribed to Young Ireland's notions of a non-sectarian Irish nationality. However, his childhood experience of his father's arrest for supposed membership of the United Irishmen movement is certain to have cautioned him to the dangers of overt political activity. It is conceivable that Petrie would have supported an Ireland with a much greater degree of political autonomy, albeit within the British Empire, but without further evidence, this must remain speculative.

In *The Keeper's Recital*, Harry White remarks that 'in Petrie, the consolidation of music as a fundamental of sectarian culture is almost complete'.³² By this he means that the music collected and edited by Petrie 'consolidated the *perception* of Irish music as a resource from the Gaelic past' – a pure and unchanging source that had withstood the ravishes of time and invasion by alien culture.³³ Petrie notes in his Introduction that 'I have availed myself of every opportunity in my power to obtain the *purest* settings of the airs, by noting them from the native singers, and more particularly, from such of them as resided, or had been reared, in the most *purely* Irish districts' (my emphasis), and he repeatedly condemns the 'corruption' of melodies, whether by instrumentalists or collectors.³⁴ For Petrie, a self-proclaimed Irishman (despite his Scottish descent) in pluralistic nineteenth-century Dublin, Irish identity was most strongly encoded by the 'purest' melodies found in the Gaelic-language songs of the, often dispossessed, Catholic peasantry. Might not a more appropriate music to be espoused by 'a patriot and a loyalist' have been the syncretic music which resulted from the cross-fertilization of Gaelic melody and English-language song rather than the music which most clearly demarcated difference in Irish society? In fact he does extensively discuss just such a repertoire in *The Ancient Music of Ireland*, noting for example that

It would be strange if, during the last seven centuries, in which our island has been so largely planted from England, no melodies should have been introduced amongst us which had sufficient beauty to insure their perpetuation, even after they had been forgotten in the country in which they had their origin: and it would be equally strange if the incorporation of the two races did not give birth to a class of melody indicative of the mixed character so produced, and to which the term Anglo-Irish might with propriety be applied. That there are airs of both classes, and particularly of the latter, still remaining in Ireland, I cannot entertain a doubt; and as there is now, unfortunately, no other evidence respecting their origin to be found, but that derived from their own peculiar characteristics, I shall, as I have done in the present instance, direct attention to such evidence as often as it may seem proper to do so, rather than exclude such airs from this collection.

However, Petrie undoubtedly regarded the oldest Gaelic music as being the most *significantly* Irish. His convictions about Irish music were formed in his early years, and we find him, in the prose of the nineteenth-century romantic idealist, declaring in the *Dublin Literary Gazette* in 1816 that 'if melody be the

³² White, *The Keeper's Recital*, p. 64.

³³ *ibid.*, n. 50, p. 184. My emphasis.

³⁴ It is worth noting that in the Ordnance Survey memoirs of Londonderry and Antrim, the word 'Irish' is virtually synonymous with 'Catholic'.

breathing of nature – the language of sentiment and feeling – and such we believe it – what country has displayed so large a portion of these divine gifts in its airs; so much variety, mingled with such exquisite sensibility; and what might not be expected, under a wise and liberal policy, from a people so peculiarly and so happily gifted with so great a capacity for the enjoyment of those pleasures that soften and humanise!³⁵ In a manuscript journal quoted by Stokes, he writes of the ‘natural strength and freedom and tenderness that belonged to man in his simpler, and his less artificial state, and which he has expressed in his works’.³⁶ Thus, the ‘ancient’ Gaelic music was most important to Petrie, not simply because it was the expression of an underclass whose social and economic conditions required improvement (though undoubtedly he would have supported this), but because it invoked a pre-civilized Arcadia; it symbolized an idealized state of grace in which man was at one with nature. It could be argued that it was Petrie’s dissatisfaction with modernity, progress and technology, which led him to devote so much of his time to the study of the ancient world. He was driven simultaneously in two directions by his research, however – as an artist he wished to immerse himself in the aesthetic experience of the artefact, but as a positivist antiquarian, he needed to understand it – and the difficulty he found in completing major enterprises, such as the cataloguing of the RIA museum and his own collection of antiquities, and, indeed, the publishing of Irish melodies, may have been, at least in part, the outcome of his not being able to fully resolve these competing states of mind.

Before moving to a consideration of the methods by which Petrie collected material, one further question must be addressed, namely the relationship of his and Bunting’s collections, in particular, to the colonial experience. Although the scholarship which arose from the work of institutions such as the Royal Irish Academy was later put to the use of the nationalist cause, its membership was largely drawn from the Protestant ascendancy. The collection and classification of the artefacts of Ireland can be seen as a stage in the redefinition of the cultural ownership in the colonial context. When they collected songs and dance music, Bunting and Petrie took words and melodies from a largely oral tradition and placed them within a literate one, thereby establishing norms for the airs and lyrics against which other performances and transcriptions could be judged as more or less pure. With the translation to printed form, an element of ownership passed to the transcriber, so that it was now possible to talk about ‘Petrie’s “ploughmen’s whistles”’ or ‘Bunting’s “Eileen Aroon”’. Through the provision of piano accompaniments, the arrangements became performable in the front parlours of the bourgeoisie, who, reassured by the reification of the artefact, were able to sing and play what they could now regard as ‘their’ national music. Of course, it is simplistic to regard traditional music as stemming entirely from an oral tradition. As Breandán Breathnach has noted:

³⁵ Stokes, *The Life and Labours*, p. 310.

³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 315.

Musical literacy among traditional players was more frequent than one might expect, a fact attested by the many manuscript collections that have survived. In some cases this ability to read music has been acquired when the scribe had served as a bandboy in some regiment in the British Army.³⁷

Here the adoption of western notation within the autochthonous tradition was simply a convenience for the training of other musicians, the score providing a schematic aide-memoire for students and teachers rather than a fixed cultural artefact.

One can discern two competing strands in the colonial relationship from the perspective of the colonizer: on one hand there is the desire to dominate a culture and impose upon it the standards of the 'centre', and, on the other, there is the urge to be absorbed and assimilated within it (and potentially become 'more Irish than the Irish', as the so-called 'Old English' had done). I would suggest that it was largely the latter attitude that prompted Bunting and Petrie to collect and publish the music of Ireland, rather than an attempt to adapt it to the norms of metropolitan England.

Collecting the Ancient Music of Ireland

It has already been remarked that Petrie began collecting melodies during his teenage years. From all accounts, he had developed as a competent violinist and flautist in his youth, and had a catholic taste in music, ranging from the works of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven (of which Haydn was his favourite) to military band music.³⁸ His first published writing on music, a review of volume one of Alexander Campbell's *Albyn's Anthology*, a collection of Scottish traditional songs, appeared as early as 1816 in the *Dublin Examiner*. During the following forty years he collected melodies when sketching, while working for the Ordnance Survey, or on holiday. In a moving discussion of a collecting trip on which he accompanied Petrie two years after the publication of *The Ancient Music of Ireland*, Stokes describes his methods in some detail:

In the autumn of 1857 it was the writer's privilege to spend a fortnight in the Islands of Aran along with Petrie and several of his friends, when he often accompanied him in his search after the old Irish music, of which not less than twenty-eight airs were collected. It will be well to describe the method by which the airs were obtained. Inquiries having been made as to the names of persons 'who had music', that is who were known as possessing and singing some of the old airs, an appointment was made with one or two of them to meet the members of the party at some cottage near to the little village of Kilonan, which was their head-quarters.

To this cottage, when evening fell, Petrie, with his manuscript music-book and violin, and always accompanied by his friend O'Curry, used to proceed. Nothing could exceed the strange picturesqueness of the scenes which night after night were thus presented. On approaching the house, always lighted up by a blazing turf fire, it was seen surrounded by the islanders, while its interior was crowded with figures, the rich colours of whose dresses, heightened by the fire-light,

³⁷ B. Breathnach, *The Man and His Music* (Dublin: Na Piobairí Uilleann, 1996), pp. 92–100.

³⁸ Stokes, *The Life and Labours*, pp. 307–8.

showed with a strange vividness and variety, while their fine countenances were all animated with curiosity and pleasure. It would have required a Rembrandt to paint the scene. The minstrel – sometimes an old woman – sometimes a beautiful girl, or a young man – was seated on a low stool in the chimney-corner, while chairs for Petrie and O'Curry were placed opposite; the rest of the crowded audience remained standing. The song having been given, O'Curry wrote the Irish words, when Petrie's work began. The singer recommenced, stopping at a signal from him at every two or three bars of the melody to permit the writing of the notes, and often repeating the passage until it was correctly taken down, and then going on with the melody, exactly from the point where the singing was interrupted. The entire air being at last obtained, the singer – a second time – was called to give the song continuously, and when all corrections had been made, the violin – an instrument of great sweetness and power – was produced, and the air played as Petrie alone could play it, and often repeated. Never was the inherent love of music among the Irish people, more shown than on this occasion; they listened with deep attention, while their heartfelt pleasure was expressed, less by exclamations than by gestures; and when the music ceased, a general and murmured conversation, in their own language, took place, which would continue until the next song was commenced.

Before the publication of *The Ancient Music of Ireland*, Petrie seems to have collected around 450 songs and in the SPPMI's advertisement it is noted that the Council had enough material at that point for at least five volumes with 150 to 200 songs in each (suggesting a total of between 750 and 1000 melodies held by Petrie and the Committee by 1855). At Petrie's death, eleven years later, this had risen to the 2,068 melodies which are contained in three handwritten volumes held by the manuscripts section of the National Library of Ireland in Dublin, and more than 450 in MSS 3562–3 in the Trinity College, Dublin, Library (most of which are duplicates of those in the National Library collection, though perhaps the most famous melody of all, the so-called 'Londonderry Air' is among them). The three volumes in the National Library collection contain a total of sixteen separate manuscripts bound as follows:

Volume	Manuscripts	Pages
I	3 MSS (1–3)	1–306
II	2 MSS (4–5)	307–76
III	11 MSS (6–16)	377–862

Manuscript 3562 of the Trinity College, Dublin, collection has two envelopes of separate sheets of melodies (labelled Petrie's Papers 1–78 and 79–106, respectively) and contains 200 tunes. Manuscript 3563 is a bound volume of 125 pages and contains 200 tunes.³⁹

In most cases, the songs and dances in the National Library manuscript collection appear on piano staves, the treble staff containing the original melody in pen, and the harmonization – of those songs for which it had it been completed – usually appearing in pencil under the melody and in the bass staff (though the piano accompaniments are not always identical in detail to

³⁹ M. Deasy, *New Edition of the Airs and Dance Tunes from the Music Manuscripts of George Petrie*, LL.D., pp. 29 and 34.

those published in the 1855 collection). The melodies in the 1855 volume are taken in the main from MSS 2 and 15, though some are also from MSS 3, 4, 5 and 6.⁴⁰ There are many pencilled markings (for example 'second setting') and the melodies are numbered in pencil starting at 1 at the beginning of each manuscript. The complete collection was numbered in green ink by Veronica Kennedy as part of the compilation of a catalogue in 1954.⁴¹ A variety of types of manuscript paper is to be found and the handwriting is not consistent throughout the three volumes. There is, in general, little further detail and texts are rarely supplied. It was this set of three volumes that was passed to Sir Charles Villiers Stanford by one of Petrie's daughters, from which the so-called *The Complete Collection of Irish Music as Noted by George Petrie* was edited and published in 1902–5.⁴²

Although only the first volume of *The Petrie Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland* was actually published for the SPPMI by M. H. Gill at the University Press, Dublin, Petrie seems to have carried on sending sheets to the publisher for some time. Petrie's reliance on the help of O'Curry in the process of editing the melodies is clearly revealed in a letter he wrote to him on 28 August 1855:

I am getting on with the second volume; that is to say, between ourselves, as well as I can, without having you beside me. But in truth, except in the way of preparation, I can do nothing of consequence till I have you again to aid me.⁴³

In 1882, a posthumous second edition was published which included the forty-eight extra sheets which are described as the second volume. These finish abruptly, part of the way through the Gaelic text of the song *Tamall dá rabhas sul d'iompaigh an mámh orm* and before the appearance of the tune. In the present volume, the melody for this song is taken from Stanford's *The Complete Collection of Irish Music as Noted by George Petrie*. It is conceivable that further pages were sent by Petrie to the printer, but these were lost in the years between 1855 and 1882.

Characteristics of Irish Melodies Identified by Petrie

In the SPPMI's advertisement, an 'introductory dissertation upon the history, antiquity, and characteristic structure of Irish music', to be written by Petrie, is alluded to. Further down, it is noted that the dissertation is in preparation, but will not be published until Petrie has completed his editorial work. This dissertation, which does not seem to have been completed, was clearly distinct from the Introduction to the published volume, which is, in the main, an explanation for, and justification of, Petrie's acceptance of the task of editing the collection. Petrie's views must therefore be largely taken from the copious and detailed notes he supplies to the individual melodies. However, he does

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² Donal O'Sullivan suggests that this was probably Judith, the last survivor of Petrie's four daughters. O'Sullivan, 'The Petrie Collections of Irish Music', p. 1.

⁴³ Deasy, *New Edition of the Airs and Dance Tunes*, p. 97.

address one specific and important issue in his Introduction, that of the variation and development of melody, and he takes Bunting to task for his bizarre notion, expressed in his 1840 volume, that ‘a strain of music, once impressed on the popular ear, never varies’. While this is undoubtedly the case, he proposes an equally problematic stance in his concept of a ‘pure’ source of a melody which is subject to corruption.⁴⁴ According to Petrie, traditional melody, in its purest form, was bound to the original Gaelic text for which it was composed and was subject to corruption by singers, instrumentalists or poets writing new verses, in its subsequent transmission. Aloys Fleischmann has challenged this view, remarking that it is not supported by the evidence, for many texts were written to existing melodies throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, their musical contours being adapted to fit to the characteristics of the new verses.⁴⁵ However, Fleischmann’s criticism is based on an overstatement of Petrie’s position, for he observes that Petrie implies that ‘the majority of song airs were composed for existing verses’.⁴⁶ To be fair to Petrie, he does not make such an extreme claim, and throughout the 1855 volume he demonstrates the reuse of song airs by subsequent poets. In his discussion of *An Buachaill Caol Dubh* (The Black Slender Boy), for example, he remarks that

Of an air so extensively disseminated, and – as usual in such cases – sung to words differing in character in the various localities where it is known, it should naturally be expected that there would be a great diversity in the forms which it would assume, and such I have found to be the fact. So great indeed are those varieties, that, except in the essential notes and general structure, they have often so little else in common that the native of one province would probably find it difficult to recognize this popular melody in the form which it has assumed as sung by the native of another. In such instances, therefore, it will be often difficult to determine which version of a melody is the most correct one; for, though a knowledge of the structure of Irish tunes and an acquaintance with the words sung to them will determine the true rhythm and accents, still their general sentiment, and the choice of their less important notes, can be determined only by the taste and judgement, and hence the set of a tune which to one will seem the best, will not be deemed so by another.⁴⁷

The reliance on taste as the final arbiter here is not suggestive of the application of a rigorous scientific methodology to the provenance of melodies, and one must admit that Petrie did seem to imagine that there was a ‘correct’, Ur, form of a melody, almost in the Platonic sense of an ideal form, to which the various manifestations observed in the field more or less closely approximated.

Fleischmann also remarks that in Petrie’s commentary ‘there is an assumption that the changes produced by the passage of a tune through an oral tradition must *always* be for the worst’ (my emphasis). This again overstates Petrie’s position, for he is willing to allow that beautiful melodies have sprung

⁴⁴ See Aloys Fleischmann’s discussion in ‘Aspects of George Petrie. IV. – Petrie’s contribution to Irish music’ in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. 72, Section C (1972), pp. 195–218.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 204.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁷ See also his discussion of *Bliain is an Taca so a Phós Mé* (This time twelve months I married), p. 182, and *Caitilín Ní Uallacháin* (Katty Huallaghan), p. 222.

from a parental stock, for example in his discussion of *Cearc agus Coileach a D'imigh le Chéile* (A cock and a hen went out together) and 'The Monks of the Screw'. Undoubtedly, however, Petrie did believe that instrumentalists tended to introduce variations which were detrimental to the musical character and architecture of vocal melodies when extemporizing for public show and approval. The embellishment of slow airs is a deeply ingrained element of traditional music-making in Ireland, and Petrie's prejudice against instrumental performance of vocal melodies is, as Fleischmann notes, curious, given that he was a violinist himself, and that he played such melodies for the entertainment of his family and friends.⁴⁸ Equally odd is the fact that he fails to discuss performance technique, whether vocal or instrumental, in terms of ornamentation and local style. In fact, the whole issue of the status of the text in an oral tradition is avoided and the written text is accorded the same status as the live performance.

In terms of cataloguing the melodies, Petrie's approach does not, perhaps, exhibit the scientific rigour one might have expected of an antiquarian. He does identify a number of discrete types of melody, however, including narrative airs, Anglo-Irish airs, lullabies, *caoinés*, ploughmen's whistles and various instrumental dance forms. Perhaps the most important class of these melodies is that containing the narrative airs. These are, as Petrie notes in the commentary for *An Cailín Bán*, melodies of 'a narrative, or excited discoursing character – animated and energetic in their movement, yet marked with earnest tenderness and impassioned sentiment – more or less tinged with sadness, yet rarely, if ever, as in the *Caoinés*, sinking into tones of extreme or despairing melancholy. They are, in short, pre-eminently the love melodies of the Irish.' Narrative airs are, in general, sixteen bars in length in 3/4 metre, have an *aaba* structure (or variant thereof), and usually begin each phrase on the fourth quaver of a bar. The *a* sections are, according to Petrie, subdued, while the *b* section is more animated and impassioned. The songs attached to these melodies have sixteen lines (each four-line grouping relating to one of the four sections of the melody) with a syllabic structure of 5554 in each quatrain. The final two syllables of each of the first three lines of every quatrain rhyme and have a trochaic (long – short) rhythm, and there is an assonantal rhyme between the fourth line of each quatrain.

As an example, here are the first four quatrains from *An Buachaill Caol Dubh*:

Nuair theim ar aonach
 Ag ceannach éadaigh,
 Is bíonn an éirneis
 Agam im láimh,

Síneann taobh liom
 An buachaill chaol dubh,
 Is do chuir a chaolchrobh
 Isteach im láimh:

As gearr 'na dhéidh sin
 Go mbím dom éagcaoin,

⁴⁸ Fleischmann, 'Aspects of George Petrie', p. 209.

Gan puinn dem chéill
 Is mé ar cheann an chláir,
 A díol na n-éileamh
 Do bhíonn dom chéasadh,
 Seacht mí gan léine,
 Is an fuacht dom chrá.

In terms of Irish prosody, this syllabic metrical form can be described as *Ochtfhoclach Bec*.⁴⁹ Petrie does not discriminate other Gaelic verse forms, though as Ó Boyle notes, he offers an example of the accentual *amhránaíocht* metre, which involves five stresses per line, in *An Cáná Droighean Éille*.⁵⁰

It has already been observed that, although Petrie is most interested in what he perceives as the oldest Irish melodies, he does offer a place for what he sees as more recent Anglo-Irish airs. By this, he means the syncretic melodies which, while fundamentally similar in construction to, say, the narrative airs, bear some hallmarks of English song. For instance, in 'O Nancy, Nancy, don't you remember', otherwise comparable to a narrative air, he draws attention to the cadential points of each line, where the first, second and fourth phrases have the figure 8 – 7 – 8 in A_b major (A_b – G – A_b), implying a conventional Ic – V – I cadential figure. Similarly, in 'The Token', we find a melody characterized by a three-quaver upbeat figure and a 5554 underlying metre in each phrase, but the form of the song is *abb* rather than the customary *aaba* of the narrative air. An example of what Petrie sees as Anglo-Irish melody in instrumental music can be found in the tune 'Kitty Magee'. Petrie does not explain why he takes this to be Anglo-Irish, but it will be noted that this tune displays the widescale use of arpeggiations of common chords (fundamentally I and V of B_b major), suggesting that it was written against the backdrop of diatonic harmony.

Other categories of melody that Petrie identifies and discusses in some detail include the *caoine* or funeral chant, and the ploughman's whistle, both of which, without any particularly solid evidence, he regards as being among the most ancient examples of Irish music. In his discussion of the ploughmen's whistles, for instance, he remarks that he believes them to be 'as ancient as the race of people who introduced into Ireland the use of the plough', and yet further on he notes that 'to state all my reasons for this belief would extend this notice to an unreasonable length, and some of them, as resulting from individual feeling, would not, perhaps, be generally understood'. Ultimately, without more empirical data from the historical record – which, given that the songs are taken from a primarily oral tradition, and given that there are few notated musical records from before 1600, Petrie would have been unable to obtain – we must take statements relating to their antiquity such as the following, from the same note (to *Fead an Airinh* or 'The Ploughman's Whistle'), more as intuition than verifiable fact: 'these plough-tunes, as well as the funeral *caoinés*, breathe the very soul of a primitive race, who have been ever remarkable for a singular depth of feeling.'

⁴⁹ See Ó Boyle, *The Irish Song Tradition*, pp. 25–7.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 23.

When reading Petrie's *Ancient Music of Ireland*, we must bear in mind that the author was a classically trained musician who did not come from a Gaelic-speaking region of Ireland: the music was, for him, part of a culture which he stood largely outside. In placing the songs and dance tunes into the grid system of western musical notation in his (and his daughter's) piano arrangements, he often forced them into a rhythmic and tonal strait-jacket. Despite his sensitivity to the concept of modality beyond the 'modern' major and minor system (see, for example, the discussion in the note to *An Ceo Draíochta*), he does often alter pitches from the manuscript collection for harmonic reasons,⁵¹ and his tunes have relatively little in the way of ornamentation (the lifeblood of *sean-nós* performance).

Notwithstanding these failings, Petrie's collection must be regarded as of the greatest importance, for not only does it contain an array of extremely beautiful melodies, but also a treasure-trove of information about traditional music-making in the nineteenth century and before, and its wider cultural context. We should not judge Petrie by the standards of twenty-first century ethnomusicology or cultural studies: with the benefit of hindsight, we may see his shortcomings and prejudices, his romantic idealism and essentialism, but beyond this we see a man who brought scholarship, enthusiasm and the love of the amateur to the study of what was widely seen as barbaric and uncivilized music. While Moore had offered the public highly polished and sanitized versions of the 'national' music of Ireland, Petrie gave respectability to something which much more closely approximated to the peasant experience of music. In so doing he inscribed an 'authenticity' onto the music and song which had a profound effect on the future history of the island, for Gaelic culture, validated by the scholarship of Petrie, O'Curry, O'Donovan and others, became the defining feature of Irish nationalism. Exactly fifty years after Petrie's death, in 1916, came the decisive moment after which the simultaneous patriotism and loyalty he espoused became no longer sustainable.

⁵¹ I would like to thank an anonymous referee for making this point.

Editorial Notes

Petrie's English language commentary

Petrie's English language material is substantially unchanged from the original. Occasional words have been modernised in their spelling, and Petrie's, by today's standards, rather convoluted punctuation, which frequently involves the use of dashes after colons, semicolons and full stops, has been simplified to improve readability.

Editing the Irish Text

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In editing the Irish texts, the aim has been to present clear and uncluttered versions, easily accessible to reasonably competent readers of Modern Irish. Consequently, I have adopted the orthographic conventions outlined in *Gramadach na Gaeilge agus Litriú na Gaeilge: An Caighdeán Oifigiúil* (Dublin, 1958), and also *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla* (Ó Dónaill, Dublin 1977). In this regard the changes *g*>*c*, e.g. *sgáird* > *scaird* and *d*>*t*, e.g. *aisde* > *aiste*, were made throughout. Redundant consonants were also changed accordingly, e.g. *d'imthigh* > *d'imigh*, *dúthchas* > *dúchas*, and *saoghal* > *saol*, although in the latter case, the word may occasionally be pronounced as a disyllable, *causa metri*. *Atá* in a non-relative position has been changed to *tá*; *ag* as part of the verbal noun has sometimes been represented by *a'*.

Accents were also brought into line with modern practice. The distinction between *nach* as a negative with verbs and *nách*, the negative of the copula has been retained. These particles have been left without eclipsis in accordance with the norms of Southern Irish. The preposition *re* has been changed to *le* in all cases, while *fá* and *fé* have been left unchanged. *De+a* > *dhá* or *dá* have been uniformly changed to *á*. Apostrophes in the combinations *dem'*, *dom'*, *'am*, *dham' im'*, *id'* have been erased and the forms *dem*, *dom*, *im* and *id* used in all cases. The use of the hyphen has been altered to suit modern convention. *Sé* and *sea* have been preferred to the standard *Is é* and *Is ea*, although *s* = 'and' has been written *is* throughout. I have not observed the *Caighdeán Oifigiúil* in all respects, however. I have changed *is iomdha* to *is mó* to reflect Munster usage. *Muar* has sometimes been left instead of *mór causa metri*. Other forms that reflect dialectal

usage have also been retained. The changes made should render the texts as a useful guide to those wishing to sing the songs, many of them still popular at Irish language singing sessions in one form or another. Habitual singers of Irish songs should be personally consulted regarding uncertainties where possible, or, where this is not possible, recordings of their singing (the leading publisher of traditional unaccompanied Irish singing is *Cló Iar-Chonnachta*, Indreabhán, Co. Galway, <http://www.cic.ie>). In this manner an authentic pronunciation and singing style may be more easily acquired. It should be noted that Petrie's original spelling of the titles appears in footnotes.

Music

Petrie's, or in most cases, his daughter's, piano accompaniments have been removed from the melodies. Above, or in some cases within, the melodies, points of divergence from the 1855 collection found in the manuscripts (whether those found in the National Library of Ireland or Trinity College, Dublin, Library) are noted. These editorial markings take several forms:

Changes of the pitch of a single note or a small group of notes in a passage, without any change in rhythm, are marked with a letter and a subscript number identifying the note and octave. For example, C₄ represents middle C, C₅ the note one octave higher, and C₃ the note one octave lower.

Changes of rhythm are indicated with symbols identifying the appropriate alterations. The pitches of the individual notes remain the same. For example, in bar 2 of the following melody, F₄ appears as a quaver, and G₄ and A₄ as semiquavers in the manuscript collection.



More substantial differences are displayed in reduced size musical notation above the melody (for example, see bars 6, 7 and 10 of the illustration above).

Features which do not appear either in the original manuscripts, or in the Stanford edition (generally grace notes), are either surrounded by round brackets in the melody, for example (×), or marked with double-ended brackets (□□).

Editorial suggestions (usually for accidentals) appear within square brackets, for example [b].

A short line cutting through a tie indicates that the tie was not present in the manuscript.

Petrie's tempo markings

Petrie gives a tempo marking in terms of the length of pendulum for each item. His original note 'How to find the Time in which Each Air is to be Played' explains these markings as follows:

The time of each air in this volume is marked at the head by reference to the stroke of a pendulum of a certain length. Persons not provided with a metronome may easily ascertain for themselves the true time in which any air is to be played, by the following simple rule. Take a cord of the length in inches assigned to the pendulum at the head of the tune. To one end of the cord attach a small weight, and, holding it by the other extremity, let the weighted cord, thus converted into a temporary pendulum, swing gently backwards and forwards. The oscillations of a pendulum of a given length are always constant, and measure exactly equal portions of time; and thus each beat of the pendulum of the length required – the motion from right to left constituting one beat; that from left to right another – marks the time during which the crotchet, dotted crotchet, quaver, or other note used to measure the time, is to be sounded. A proportionate time is to be given to every other note according to its musical value. A little practice will very soon enable any one to perceive, almost involuntarily, the accordance in time between the beats of a pendulum and the proper duration of the notes of an air.

As metronomes are now more readily available than they were in Petrie's day, it has been decided to convert the pendulum lengths to metronome markings. The period of a pendulum (the length of time it takes for the pendulum to complete a full cycle forwards and backwards) can be calculated from the following equation:

$$T = 2\pi \sqrt{\frac{l}{g}}$$

where T is the time in seconds, l is the length of the pendulum in inches, and g is the strength of gravity (c. 32 feet per second). A full cycle of the pendulum represents two beats of a metronome (both a forward and a backward stroke), and thus the tempo in beats per minute can be calculated by dividing 60 (the number of seconds in a minute) by T/2 (because T equals two beats). The result of the calculation has been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number and placed at the start of the music.

Modality

In a few cases Petrie has given what is clearly a modal melody a key signature which suggests that it is actually in a minor key. For example, 'Banish Misfortune' is presented in D minor, although it is clearly in the Dorian mode. In such cases the decision was made to restore Petrie's setting to the appropriate key signature for the mode.

Key signature

Modern collections of traditional music tend to restrict the range of key signatures used to one or two sharps. By contrast, many of the melodies in Petrie's collection are written in flat key signatures (particularly those of F, B \flat , and E \flat major). It has been decided to retain these original key signatures in this edition, but a digital version of the melodies is also available from the editor, which allows the simple transposition of the melodies to the 'standard' keys.

Sources of the Melodies

Aloys Fleischmann's excellent resource *Sources of Irish Traditional Music c. 1600–1855*, which was brought to print by Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, offers the reader a very detailed conspectus of the printed repertoire up to the publication of Petrie's collection. Readers are strongly encouraged to consult this volume for details of the publication history of melodies that appear in the 1855 or 1882 collection. A table at the end of this volume cross-references the melodies with Stanford's edition (which in most ways is identical with the manuscripts held by the National Library of Ireland) and those held in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.

The Ancient Music of Ireland
Volume 1 (1855)

George Petrie's Introduction

Though aware that, in works not of a purely scientific nature and which will be chiefly opened with a view to amusement, a Preface receives but little attention from the majority of readers; yet I cannot refrain from availing myself of the old privilege accorded to Authors and Editors to offer a few prefatory remarks on the occasion of presenting to the public this first volume of a collection of Irish Tunes, which I have edited under the patriotic auspices of the 'Society for the Preservation and Publication of the Melodies of Ireland'.

In the first place, I feel it due to that Society, and more particularly to some of the most zealous members of its Committee, to state that, but for their solicitation and warm encouragement, it is not at all likely that I should have entered on the compilation of a work requiring, necessarily, not only a great devotion of time and labour, but also an amount of varied talents and powers of research, scarcely to be hoped for in any single individual, and to the possession of which I, at least, could make but little pretension.

A passionate lover of music from my childhood, and of melody especially – that divine essence without which music is but as a soulless body – the indulgence of this passion has been, indeed, one of the great, if not the greatest, sources of happiness of my life. Coupled with a never-fading love for nature, and its consequent attendant, an appreciation of the good and beautiful, it has refreshed and reinvigorated my spirits when depressed by the fatigues of mental labour. In the hours of worldly trials, of cares and sorrows, I have felt its power to soothe and console; to restrain from the pursuit of worthless and debasing pleasures – of soul-corrupting worldly ambitions, destructive of mental peace; and to give contentment in an humble station.

But though I have been thus for my whole life a devoted lover of music, and more particularly of the melodies of my country – which are, as I conceive, the most beautiful national melodies in the world – neither the study nor the practice of this divine art has ever been with me an absorbing or continuous one, or anything more than the occasional indulgence of a pleasure, during hours of relaxation from the fatigues of other studies, or the general business of life. It was in this way only that I acquired any little knowledge or skill which I may possess in the practice of the musical art; and, until lately, it was in this way only that I gradually formed the large collection of Irish melodies of which a portion is now submitted to the public. From my very boy-days, whenever I heard an air which in any degree touched my feelings, or which appeared to me to be either an unpublished one, or a better version of an air than what had been already printed, I never neglected to note it down; and my summer ramblings through most parts of Ireland, for objects more immediately

connected with my professional pursuits, afforded me opportunities, for a long period almost annually, for increasing the collection which so early in life I had felt a desire, and considered it as a kind of duty, to endeavour to form.

In making such collection, however, I never seriously thought of giving even any portion of it to the public in my own name. The desire to preserve what I deemed so worthy of preservation, and so honourable to the character of my country, was my sole object and my sole stimulus in this, to me, exciting and delightful pursuit: and hence I was ever ready to encourage and aid, to the utmost of my ability, all persons whom, from their professional talents as well as their freedom from other occupations, I deemed better qualified than myself to give such collection to the world.

Thus, as early as 1807, or 1808, I communicated, through my friend the late Richard Wrightson, Esq., M.A., a number of airs to the poet Moore, some of which subsequently appeared, for the first time, in his *Irish Melodies*; and shortly afterwards I gave a much larger number to my then young friend the late Francis Holden, Mus. Doc., and which were printed in his collection; and amongst these were many airs – such as ‘Lough Sheelin’, ‘Arrah, my dear Eeeleen [*sic*]’, and ‘Luggela’ – on which time has stamped her mark of approval, and which have carried the deepest emotions of pleasure to thousands of hearts in almost every part of the globe. For it was from this collection, which – with the exception of Bunting’s three volumes – has been the only published collection of our melodies of any importance worthy of a respectful notice, that Moore derived many of those airs which his poetry has consecrated and made familiar to the world. And I may further state, that my contributions to Mr Moore’s admirable work, as well directly as indirectly, did not end here; for, subsequently to the publication of Frank Holden’s volume, I again supplied the poet, through his Irish publisher, Mr William Power, with several other airs, which found a place in the later numbers of his ‘*Melodies*’, and among these was that beautiful one called ‘Were I a clerk’, but now better known as ‘You remember Ellen’.

In thus imparting to others the results of my young enthusiasm for the preservation of our melodies, I never asked, and so never obtained, even the acknowledgement, to which I might have felt myself justly entitled, of having my name coupled with those airs as their preserver: nor is it from any vain or egotistical feeling that I state such circumstances now, but as simple facts in the history of the preservation of our music that might be looked for hereafter, and which, without such statement, would be looked for in vain.

But to resume: retaining, with even an increasing zeal, my ardour in collecting the melodies of Ireland, I found in the course of a few years that my gatherings had mounted to a number but little short of two hundred as yet unpublished airs; and, with a view to their being secured to the public with suitable harmonies, I presented them to a lady, now long deceased, who to other varied accomplishments added a sound professional knowledge of music, and who possessed a true feeling for Irish melody. The lady to whom, with a grateful reminiscence, I thus allude, was the late Mrs Joseph Hughes, the daughter of Smollet Holden, the most eminent British composer of military music in his time, and the sister of my young friend, Dr Francis Holden, to

whose published collection of Irish melodies I have been, as already stated, so large a contributor. But the untimely death of this most estimable lady prevented the accomplishment of this project, after some progress had been made in preparing the work for publication.

Still adding to my collection, however, and indulging in the expectation that an opportunity for giving it publicly would sooner or later occur, I thought such expectation likely to be realised when, at a later period of my life, I formed a close intimacy with the late Mr Edward Bunting. This intimacy, which had its origin in, at least, one common taste, occurred shortly after the publication of the second volume of that gentleman's collection; and with the double object in view of giving my airs publicity, and, still more, of stimulating him to the preparation of a third volume for publication, I freely offered him the use of the whole of my collection, or such portions of it as he might choose to select. Such offer was, however, accompanied by one condition, namely, that in connection with such tunes as he chose to accept from me, he should make an acknowledgement in his work that I had been their contributor. This condition, however – which I thought a not unreasonable one, but rather suggestive of a course which, in all similar cases, as supplying a sort of evidence of authenticity, should have been followed – had the effect of preventing the accomplishment of my wish that Mr Bunting should be the medium through which my collection of airs should be given to the public. After the acceptance of some five and twenty or more airs – of which, however, he printed only seventeen – my friend sturdily refused to take even one more; assigning as his reason that, as he should acknowledge the source from which they had been derived, the public would say that the greater and better portion of the work was mine. In my primary object, however – that of stimulating him to the preparation and publication of his third volume – I had the satisfaction of believing that I had been more decidedly successful. The threat, put forward in playful insincerity, but which was taken rather seriously, that if he did not bestir himself in the preparation of his work, I might probably, by the publication of my own collection, anticipate him in the printing of many of his best airs, coupled with Mrs Bunting's, as well as my own continual goadings – and which he was accustomed to say had made his life miserable – had ultimately the desired effect of exciting into activity a temperament which, if it had ever been naturally active, had then, at all events, ceased to be so from the pressure of years, and of a state of health which was far from vigorous. After the devotion of his leisure hours for several years to the collecting together of his materials, and the patient elaboration of his harmonic arrangements of the airs, Mr Bunting gave to the world the third and last volume of his collections; and I confess that its appearance afforded me a more than ordinary pleasure, not only on account of the many very beautiful melodies which it contained, but also from a feeling that my zeal in urging on their publication had been instrumental, to some extent, in their preservation. For it was Mr Bunting's boast, that, with the exception of those airs which had been drawn from previously published works, the settings of his tunes would be wholly worthless to any other person into whose hand they might ultimately fall; and this I knew to have been not altogether an idle boast; for those settings were –

as it would appear intentionally – but jottings down of dots, or heads of notes, without any musical expressions of their value with regard either to key, time, accent, phrase, or section – so that their interpretation would necessarily have been a matter of uncertainty to others, and probably was often so even to himself.

I have thus endeavoured to show, by a statement which I trust will not be deemed wholly without interest, or irrelevant to the purpose of the present work, that though I have been, during the whole course of my life, a zealous collector of Irish melodies, I have been actuated in this pursuit by no other feelings than those of a deep sense of their beauty, a strong conviction of their archaeological interest, and a consequent desire to aid in the preservation of remains so honourable to the national character of my country, and so inestimable as a pure source of happiness to all sympathetic minds to whom they might become known. And though, when I had long despaired of finding anyone qualified, according to my ideas, to give to the public in a worthy manner the collection which I had formed, I may have occasionally contemplated the possible production of such a work myself, as a delightful and not over laborious occupation of my declining years, it is most probable that, like my friend Bunting, if the stimulating pressure of friends had not been applied to me, I should have gone on to the end, absorbed in the completion of works of a different nature, and to which my studies had long been more particularly directed. Such a stimulus was supplied on the formation, in Dublin, of the ‘Society for the Preservation and Publication of the Melodies of Ireland’; and it was strengthened, not only by the honour which that Society conferred on me in electing me their President, but still more by the flattering proposal and expression of their desire to give precedence to my collection in the publications of the Society.

But though this proposal was entirely free from any conditions which I could for a moment hesitate to accept; and though, moreover, I was sincerely anxious to promote the objects of the Society by every means in my power, I confess that I was startled at a proposal so unexpected on my part: and it was not till I had given the matter a very ample consideration that I could bring my mind to agree to it. For, on the one hand, I could not but feel doubtful of my ability to accomplish, without a greater previous preparation, a work of so much national importance, in such a manner as might not seriously lower whatever little reputation I had acquired by the production of works of a different nature; and disappoint, moreover, the partial expectations of the Society and those friends that had pressed me to the undertaking: and I also felt that if I did venture on such a work, with the desire to accomplish it not unworthily, it would necessarily require for its production the exclusive devotion of many years of a life now drawing towards its close; and the consequent abandonment of the completion of other works on which I had been long engaged, as well as of the practice of that art which is so productive of happiness to its lovers, and so suited to the peaceful habits of declining years. And lastly, as I cannot but confess, I could not suppress a misgiving, that, let a work of this nature possess whatever amount of interest or value it may, there no longer existed amongst my countrymen such sufficient amount

of a racy feeling of nationality, and cultivation of mind – qualities so honourable to the Scottish character – as would secure for it the steady support necessary for its success, and which the Society, as I thought, somewhat too confidently anticipated. In short, I could not but fear that I might be vainly labouring to cultivate mental fruit which, however indigenous to the soil, was yet of too refined and delicate a flavour to be relished or appreciated by a people who had been, from adversities, long accustomed only to the use of food of a coarser and more exciting nature. May this feeling prove an erroneous one! On the other hand, however, I could not but be sensible that, viewed in many ways, the object which the Society had taken in hand was of great importance; that, with an equal hope of success, such an effort might probably never again be made; and that it was a duty, at least of every right-minded Irishman, who might have it in his power to contribute in any way to its support, to allow, if possible, no cold calculations of a selfish prudence, or an unmanly fear of critical censure, to withhold him from joining ardently in such an effort. I considered too, that if, as Moore perhaps somewhat strongly states, ‘We have too long neglected the only talent for which our English neighbours ever deigned to allow us any credit’, our apparent want of appreciation of the value of that talent was, at least to some extent, an evidence of the justice of such limited praise. I called to mind that, but for the accidentally directed researches of Edward Bunting – a man paternally of an English race – and the sympathetic excitement to follow in his track which his example had given to a few others, the memory of our music would have been but little more than as a departed dream, never to be satisfactorily realized; and that, though much had been done by those persons, yet that Moore’s statement still remained substantially true, namely, that ‘our national music never had been properly collected’; or, in other words, that it had never been collected truly and perfectly, as it might and should have been, and that it cannot be so collected now. I could not but feel that what must have been, at no distant time, the inevitable result of the changes in the character of the Irish race which had been long in operation, and which had already almost entirely denationalized its higher classes, had been suddenly effected, as by a lightning flash, by the calamities which, in the year 1846–7, had struck down and well nigh annihilated the Irish remnant of the great Celtic family. Of the old, who had still preserved as household gods the language, the songs, and traditions of their race and their localities, but few survived. Of the middle-aged and energetic whom death had yet spared, and who might for a time, to some extent, have preserved such relics, but few remained that had the power to fly from the plague and panic stricken land; and of the young, who had come into existence, and become orphaned, during those years of desolation, they, for the most part, were reared where no mother’s eyes could make them feel the mysteries of human affections – no mother’s voice could sooth their youthful sorrows, and implant within the memories of their hearts her songs of tenderness and love – and where no father’s instructions could impart to them the traditions and characteristic peculiarities of feeling that would link them to their remotest ancestors. The green pastoral plains, the fruitful valleys, as well as the wild hill-sides and the

dreary bogs, had equally ceased to be animate with human life. 'The land of song' was no longer tuneful; or, if a human sound met the traveller's ear, it was only that of the feeble and despairing wail for the dead. This awful, unwonted silence, which, during the famine and subsequent years, almost everywhere prevailed, struck more fearfully upon their imaginations, as many Irish gentlemen informed me, and gave them a deeper feeling of the desolation with which the country had been visited, than any other circumstance which had forced itself upon their attention; and I confess that it was a consideration of the circumstances of which this fact gave so striking an indication, that, more than any other, overpowered all my objections, and influenced me in coming to a determination to accept the proposal of the Irish-Music Society.

In this resolution, however, I was actuated no less by a desire to secure to the public, by publication, the large store of melodies which I had already collected, than by the hope of increasing that store, during the progress of the work, by a more exclusive devotion of mind and time to this object than I had ever previously given to it. I felt assured that it was still possible, by a zealous exertion, to gather from amongst the survivors of the old Celtic race, innumerable melodies that would soon pass away for ever; but that such exertion should be immediate. For, though I had no fear that this first swarm from the parent hive of the great Indo-Germanic race would perish in this their last western asylum; or that they would not again increase, and, as heretofore, continue to supply the empire with their contribution of fiery bravery, lively sensibility, and genius in all the aesthetic arts – yet I felt that the new generations, unlinked as they must be with those of the past, and subjected to influences and examples scarcely known to their fathers, will necessarily have lost very many of those peculiar characteristics which so long had given them a marked individuality; and, more particularly, that among the changes sure to follow, the total extinction of their ancient language would be, inevitably, accompanied by the loss of all that as yet unsaved portion of their ancient music which had been identified with it.

To this task I accordingly applied myself zealously, and with all the means at my disposal; feeling that I could not render a better service to my country: and of the success which followed my exertions some correct idea may be formed from the volume now presented to the reader; in which it will be seen that of the airs which it contains, nearly a moiety has been collected within the last two or three years. In truth, that success has gone far beyond any expectations which I might have ventured to indulge; for, aided, as I am happy to confess I have been, not only by my personal friends, but by the voluntary exertions of several young men of talents who have sympathized in my object, I have been enabled, within these years, to obtain not only a great variety of settings of airs already printed, or in my own collection, but to add to that collection more than four hundred melodies previously unpublished, and unknown to me.

Having premised thus far in reference to the motives and feelings which influenced me in undertaking a work of this nature, I feel it necessary to make a few remarks in reference to the objects which I proposed to myself during the

progress of its compilation, and which I have kept in view, as far as it was in my power to do so.

Independently, then, of the desire to collect and preserve the hitherto unpublished melodies of Ireland, these objects may, in a general way, be stated as having a common end in view, namely, to fix, as far as practicable, by evidences, the true forms of our melodies, whether already published or not; and to throw all available light upon their past history. By a zealous attention to such points, Mr Chappell, in his collection of national English airs, has ably, as well as enthusiastically, asserted the claims of his country to the possession of a national music; and, with an equal zeal and ability, Mr G. Farquhar Graham has illustrated Scottish music in the valuable Introductory Dissertation and Notes which he has supplied to Wood's work, *The Songs of Scotland*. For the illustration of the national music of Ireland, however, but little of this kind has been hitherto attempted, and that little, I regret to say, is not always of much value or authority. Such as it is, however, it is wholly comprised in the remarks upon a few of the tunes printed in Bunting's first publication, and his remarks upon some fifty of these given in his third and last volume; and even these latter remarks, together with the statement of names and dates authenticative of the airs comprised in that volume, were only made at my suggestion and on my earnest solicitation. But I confess that I found those remarks to be far inferior in copiousness, interest, and value, to what I had hoped for from one who had far greater facilities for gathering the varied knowledge necessary for the illustration of our music than can be obtained now; and whom I knew to have been possessed of all the oldest printed, as well as many MS settings of a large number of our airs, together with an extensive collection of the Irish songs sung to them, and other materials now difficult, if not impossible, to procure; but of which, strange to say, Mr Bunting made scarcely any use. To the use of all printed authorities, or such as could be tested by reference, Mr Bunting, indeed, appears to have had a rooted aversion; and, in all cases, he preferred the statement of facts on his own unsupported authority to every other. Nor would such authority have been without value if we had every reason to believe it trustworthy. But what reliance can we place on the statements of one who, in reference to that strange musical farrago – compounded no doubt of Irish materials – called 'The Irish Cry as sung in Ulster', given in his last volume, tells us that it was procured in 1799 'from O'Neill, harper, and from the hired mourners or keeners at Armagh; and from a MS above 100 years old?' – or who gravely acquaints us that he obtained the well-known tune called 'Patrick's Day', in 1792, from 'Patrick Quin, harper'; as if he could not have gotten as accurate a set of it from any human being in Ireland that could either play, sing, or whistle a tune; and though he knew that the air had been printed – and more correctly too – in Playford's 'Dancing Master', more than a century previous. Thus, in like manner, he refers us to dead harpers as his authorities for all those tunes of Carolan, and many others, which he printed, nearly all of which had been already given in Neal's, and other publications of the early part of the last century.

The truth is indeed unquestionable, that not only has our music never as yet been properly studied and analyzed, or its history been carefully and

conscientiously investigated; but that our melodies, generally, have never been collected in any other than a careless, desultory, and often unskilful manner. For the most part caught up from the chanting of some one singer, or, as more commonly was the case, from the playing of some one itinerant harper, fiddler, or piper, settings of them have been given to the world as the most perfect that could be obtained, without a thought of the possibility of getting better versions; or of testing their accuracy by the acquisition, for the purpose of comparison, of settings from other singers or performers, or from other localities; and the result has often been most prejudicial to the character of our music.

If indeed we were so simple and inconsiderate as to place any faith in the dogma of the immutability of traditionally preserved melodies, so boldly put forward by Mr Bunting in the Preface to his last work, it would follow that all such labour of research, investigation, and analysis, was wholly unnecessary; and as we are fairly authorized to conclude that he took no such useless labour upon himself, it will, to a great extent, account for the imperfections which may be found in many of his settings of even our finest airs.

This strange dogma of Mr Bunting's is thus stated: "The words of the popular songs of every country vary according to the several provinces and districts in which they are sung; as, for example, to the popular air of *Aileen-a-roon*, we here find as many different sets of words as there are counties in one of our provinces. But the case is totally different with music. A strain of music, once impressed on the popular ear, never varies. It may be made the vehicle of many different sets of words, but they are adapted to *it*, not it to *them*, and it will no more alter its character on their account than a ship will change the number of its masts on account of an alteration in the nature of its lading. For taste in music is so universal, especially among country people, and in a pastoral age, and airs are so easily, indeed in many instances, so intuitively acquired, that when a melody has once been divulged in any district, a criterion is immediately established in almost every ear; and this criterion being the more infallible in proportion as it requires less effort in judging, we have thus, in all directions and at all times, a tribunal of the utmost accuracy and of unequalled impartiality (for it is unconscious of the exercise of its own authority) governing the musical traditions of the people, and preserving the native airs and melodies of every country, in their integrity, from the earliest periods' (*Ancient Music of Ireland* – Preface, pp. 1–2).

The irrationality and untruthfulness of this dogma, as applied to national melody generally, has been well exposed by Mr G. Farquhar Graham, in his 'Introduction' to *Wood's Songs of Scotland*; and, as applied to the melodies of Ireland, abundant proofs of its unsoundness will be found in the present and succeeding volumes of this work. I shall only, therefore, state here, as the result of my own experience as a collector of our melodies, that I rarely, if ever, obtained two settings of an *unpublished* air that were strictly the same; though, in some instances, I have gotten as many as fifty notations of the one melody. In many instances, indeed, I have found the differences between one version of an air and another to have been so great, that it was only by a careful analysis of their structure, aided perhaps by a knowledge of their history and the

progress of their mutations, that they could be recognized as being essentially the one air. And thus, from a neglect of, or incapacity for, such analysis, Moore, in his *Irish Melodies*, has given as different airs *Aisling an Óighfhir*,¹ or 'The young man's dream', and the modern version of it known as 'The groves of Blarney', and 'Last rose of summer'; *Sín síos agus suas liom*,² or 'Down beside me', and the modern version known as 'The Banks of Banna'; *An Cailín Deas Donn*,³ or 'The pretty brown-haired girl', and Shield's inaccurate setting of it, noted from the singing of Irish sailors at Wapping. Nor has Bunting himself, from whom more accuracy might have been expected, been able to avoid such oversights; for, in his last volume, he has given us as different airs:

1. The well-known tune called *Bean an Fhir Rua*,⁴ or, 'The red-haired man's wife' – or as he calls it, 'O Molly dear' – and a barbarized piper's version of it, which he calls *An Cailín Deas Rua*,⁵ or 'The pretty red-haired girl'; the first of these settings, as he states, having been obtained from Patrick Quin, harper, in 1800, and the second from Thomas Broadwood, Esq. (of London), in 1815.

2. The very common air called 'The rambling boy', and a corrupted version of it, with a fictitious second part, which he calls *Do Bhí Bean Uasal*,⁶ or 'There was a young lady' – obtained, as he states, from R. Stanton of Westport, in 1802.

And 3. The very popular old tune of *Tá Mé i mo Chodhladh*,⁷ or 'I am asleep', and a modified version of it, which he calls *Maidin Bhog Aoibhinn*,⁸ or 'Soft mild morning'; both of which, he tells us were noted from the playing of Hempson, the harper of Magilligan, the first in 1792, and the second in 1796.

Harpers and other instrumentalists are indeed Bunting's most common authorities for his tunes, whenever he gives any; but I must say that, except in the case of tunes of a purely instrumental character, I have found such authorities usually the least to be trusted; and that it was only from the chanting of vocalists, who combined words with the airs, that settings could be made which would have any stamp of purity and authenticity. For our vocal melodies, even when in the hands of those players whose instruments will permit a true rendering of their peculiar tonalities and features of expression, assume a new and unfixed character, varying with the caprices of each unskilled performer, who, unshackled by any of the restraints imposed upon the singer by the rhythm and metre of the words connected with those airs, thinks only of exhibiting, and gaining applause for, his own powers of

¹ *Aisling an oighfear*.

² *Sín síos agus suas liom*.

³ *Cailín deas donn*.

⁴ *Bean an fhir ruadh*.

⁵ *Cailín deas ruadh*.

⁶ *Do bí bean uasal*.

⁷ *Tá me mo chodhladh*.

⁸ *Maidin bog aoibhinn*.

invention and execution, by the absurd indulgence of barbarous licenses and conventionalities, destructive not only of their simpler and finer song qualities, but often rendering even their essential features undeterminable with any degree of certainty.

It is, in fact, to this careless or mistaken usage of Mr Bunting and other collectors of our melodies, of noting them from rude musical interpreters, instead of resorting to the native singers – their proper depositories – that we may ascribe the great inaccuracies – often destructive of their beauty, and always of their true expression – which may be found in the published settings of so many of our airs. For those airs are not, like so many modern melodies, mere *ad libitum* arrangements of a pleasing succession of tones unshackled by a rigid obedience to metrical laws, they are arrangements of tones in a general way expressive of the sentiments of the songs for which they were composed, but always strictly coincident with, and subservient to, the laws of rhythm and metre which govern the construction of those songs, and to which they consequently owe their peculiarities of structure. And hence it obviously follows that the entire body of our vocal melodies may be easily divided into, and arranged under, as many classes as there are metrical forms of construction in our native lyrics – but no further; and that any melody that will not naturally fall into some one or other of those classes must be either corrupt or altogether fictitious. Thus, for example, if we take that class of airs in triple time which is the most peculiarly Irish in its structure, namely, that to which I have applied the term ‘narrative’, in the numerous examples given in the present volume, a reference to the words sung to those airs would at once have shown that the bar should be marked at the first crotchet, or dotted quaver, after a start, or introduction, of half a measure, so that the accents throughout the melody would fall on the emphatic words as well as notes; whereas, by a neglect of such reference, even Mr Bunting in his settings of such tunes has very frequently marked the bar a full crotchet, or two quavers sooner – thus falsifying the accents and marring the true expression of the melody through its entirety, and rendering it incapable of being correctly sung to the original song, or to any other of similar structure that had been, or could be, adapted to it. I should add, moreover, that this rhythmical concordance of the notes of the melody with the words of the song must, to secure a correct notation, be not only attended to in the general structure of the air, but even in the minutest details of its measures. Thus, in Mr Bunting’s setting of the beautiful melody called *Droighneán Donn*,⁹ or ‘The brown thorn’, given in his first collection – and which is one of the class here alluded to – though the tune throughout is correctly barred, yet, from a neglect of such attention, the rhythm is violated in the third phrase of the second strain, or section, by the substitution of a minim for a crotchet followed by two quavers; and this rhythmical imperfection, trivial as it might be deemed – for the time is still perfect – had the effect of constraining the poet Moore, in his words to this melody, to make the

⁹ *Droighneann donn.*

corresponding phrase in each stanza of his song defective of a metrical foot. As thus:

‘For on thy deck – though dark it be,
A female form – I see’.

In offering these remarks, which have been necessarily somewhat critical, on the errors of preceding collectors of our music – and which I confess I have made with great reluctance as regards the labours of Mr Bunting, whose zealous exertions for the preservation of our national music should entitle his name to be for ever held in grateful remembrance by his country – I must not allow it to be inferred that I consider myself qualified to give to the public a work in which no such imperfections shall be found. Whatever may be the value of the qualifications necessary for doing so which I possess, the means necessary to ensure such an end have been, to a great extent, wanting. Like my predecessors, I have been, and am, but a desultory collector, dependent upon accident for the tunes which I have picked up; not always, as I would have desired, obtaining such acquisitions from the best sources; but sometimes from pipers, fiddlers, and such other corrupting and uncertain mediums; sometimes from old MS or printed music books; and often, at second-hand, from voluntary contributors, who had themselves acquired them in a similar manner. And though the airs thus acquired have but rarely borne the stamp of unsullied purity, they have often retained such an approach to beauty as seemed to entitle them to regard, and as would not permit me willingly to reject them as worthless.

But I may, perhaps without presumption, claim the merit of an ardent enthusiasm in the prosecution of this undertaking; and of a reasonable share of industry in endeavouring to qualify myself to accomplish it with, at least, some amount of ability. I have availed myself of every opportunity in my power to obtain the purest settings of the airs, by noting them from the native singers, and more particularly, from such of them as resided, or had been reared, in the most purely Irish districts; and I have sedulously endeavoured to test their accuracy, and free them from the corruptions incidental to local and individual recollections, by seeking for other settings from various localities and persons: and whenever, as has often happened, I found such different settings exhibit a want of agreement which has made it difficult to decide upon the superior accuracy, and perhaps beauty, of one over others, I have deemed it desirable to preserve such different versions. And as the true rhythm of traditionally preserved airs can often be determined only by a reference to the songs which had been sung to them, or from their strict analogy to airs whose rhythmical structure had been thus determined, I have endeavoured, in all instances, to collect such songs, or even fragments of them; and though these songs or fragments are not often in themselves valuable, and are even sometimes worthless, I have considered them not unworthy of preservation as evidences of, at least, the general accuracy of the settings of the airs, as well as being illustrative, to some extent, of their history; and in all cases I have truly stated the sources and localities from which both tunes and words have been obtained. Finally, I have endeavoured carefully to

analyze the peculiarities of rhythm and structure found in the airs, as well as in the songs sung to them; and I have thus, as I conceive, been enabled to lay a solid foundation for a future general classification of our melodies, which must be free from error, and be of great value in illustrating the origin and progress of our music.

That I have been at all times successful in these efforts, or that the settings of the airs now first published, as well as of those intended to follow them, are always the best that could possibly be obtained, is more than I would venture to arrogate, or perhaps than should be expected. My whole pretensions are limited to the accumulation of a greater and more varied mass of materials for the formation of a comprehensive and standard publication of our national music than has previously existed; including, as a necessary contribution towards the accomplishment of such a desideratum, corrected or varied versions of airs already printed, as well as settings of airs previously unnoticed.

The value of these efforts may, however, be fairly estimated from the volume now presented to the public; for, should it meet support, and a few years of life be spared me, to enable the Society to bring the work to completion, this volume will be found to be a fair specimen of the materials of which the others shall consist. For though, by a selection of the finest airs in my possession, it would have been easy to have made this volume one of far higher interest and value, I have abstained from doing so, as the consequent deterioration in the quality of the matter in the succeeding volumes would create a just cause of complaint, and, indeed, I have been so studious in taking these tunes in such relative proportions, as to merit and variety of character, as would afford an average measure of the materials which remained, that I would fain hope, should any difference hereafter be found between them, it will not be unfavourable to the character of the latter.

In like manner, I might have made this volume one of far higher musical pretensions, and probably, popular interest, by intrusting the harmonization of the airs to professional musicians of known ability, many of whom I am proud to rank amongst the number of my friends. But I knew of none, at least within the latter circle, who had devoted any particular study to the peculiarities of structure and tonalities which so often distinguish our melodies from those of modern times; and I consequently feared that harmonies of a learned and elaborate nature, constructed with a view to the exhibition of scientific knowledge, as well as the gratification of conventional tastes, might often appear to me unsuited to the simple character and peculiar expression of the airs; and require me either to adopt what I might not approve; or, by the exercise of a veto, which would have the appearance of assumption, involve me in collisions which I should desire to avoid. From such feeling only, and not from any vain desire to exhibit musical knowledge which I am conscious I do not possess, I determined to arrange the melodies as I best could, to satisfy my own musical perceptions of propriety; and this determination I should have carried out through the present volume, and its successors, but that I soon found that my beloved and devoted eldest daughter, possessing a sympathizing musical feeling, and actuated by an ardent desire to lighten my

labours by every means in her power, soon qualified herself by study and practice, not merely to give me an occasional assistance, but, as I may say, to take upon herself – subject of course to my approbation – the arrangements of the far greater portions of the airs which the volume contains. In order, however, to secure our arrangements from grammatical errors or other glaring defects, I have, in most instances, submitted them to the correction of my friend Dr Smith, Professor of Music in the University of Dublin; and he has given me the aid of his deep scientific musical knowledge, with a zeal and warmth which entitle him to my most grateful acknowledgements.

Yet – as in matters of taste the judgement is usually more influenced by accidental associations, than by the aesthetic sense of the intrinsic beauty which may be inherent in the objects subjected to it – I am far from indulging the expectation that the general estimate formed of the worth of the airs in the present volume will be at all as high as my own. The young Subaltern will, most probably, consider the last new galop or polka, to which – intoxicated with the charms of his fair partner – he has skipped or cantered round the ball-room, superior in beauty to the finest melodies of Rossini or Mozart. The thoughtless, impulsive Irishman of a lower social order will prefer the airs of ‘Patrick’s Day’, or ‘Garryowen’, to all the lively melodies of his country. The popular public singer has it in his power to make an air ‘the tune of the day’, which, however high its merits, might have remained unknown but for his patronage. The people of every different race and country will not be persuaded that there is any national music in the world equal to their own; for it is expressive of their own musical sensations, and is associated with the songs and recollections of their youth. And thus the finest of our Irish melodies have obtained their just appreciation far less from any immediate estimate of their merits, than from their accidental union with the lyrics of Moore and others, which had taken a hold on the popular mind.

The airs presented to the public in this work have no such accidental associations, and no such interpreters of their meanings, to recommend them to general favour: and hence, they will have not only to encounter the prejudices of those who believe that all the Irish melodies worthy of preservation have been already collected – an opinion fostered in the public mind by Moore and Bunting – but the still greater danger of disappointing the expectations of those who believe that airs presented to their ears for the first time, and without words, should at once take possession of their feelings, and give as much delight as those which had been embalmed there by various extrinsic associations.

But, though it is only natural to conclude that, as the best melodies of every country would, at least generally, be the most popular, and therefore the first to present themselves to notice and be appropriated by early collectors, those which remain to reward the industry of subsequent collectors – gleaners on an already reaped field – would be of an inferior quality; yet I cannot but indulge the belief that the airs in this work, will, on the whole, be found to possess as great an amount of variety and excellence as belong to those which have preceded it; and that, should the support necessary to its completion be

awarded to it, it will afford a valuable and enduring contribution to the store of simple pleasures necessary to minds of a refined and sensitive nature, and greatly add to the respect which Ireland has already obtained from the world from the beauty of her national music.

GEORGE PETRIE

67, Rathmines Road

1st May, 1855

*An Cailín Rua*¹⁰ (The Red-Haired Girl)

The name of this beautiful air will be familiar to all the readers of Gerald Griffin's deeply interesting tale of 'The Collegians'. They will remember how in the twenty-third chapter of that work, the author, with admirable fidelity to nature, has depicted Lowry Looby, the low comic Irishman of the story, as amusing himself – while waiting for admission to the cottage of the unfortunate Eily – by singing in a low voice, outside the window, a few verses of the odd ballad now united to this melody – the oddities being made more laughable by giving the words occasionally, not according to their true orthography, but so as to convey the peculiar pronunciation given to them by the singer. The words of 'The Colleen Rue' are, in truth, a fair example of a class of lyrics not, probably, to be found in any country but Ireland. They are the rude attempts of a people not wholly illiterate, to express their thoughts in a language with which they had but an imperfect and recently-acquired acquaintance; or to translate into it the effusions which had previously given them pleasure, as the exponents of airs they loved, and would not willingly cease to sing. Viewed, therefore, merely as curiosities – great 'curiosities of literature' – they are not unworthy of notice, or perhaps, in some instances, of preservation. But they possess other features of interest not less remarkable; they illustrate in no small degree the history of the peasant mind of Ireland during the last two centuries – in times of peace breathing of love, or sorrow, or conviviality; in times of war or trouble, of secret treason and longings for revenge. Thus, during the war of the Revolution, and as long after it as hope for the fallen dynasty survived, the sentimental or love songs of the seventeenth century, and of earlier ages, were generally thrown aside to give place to Jacobite songs, which expressed the newly-engendered thoughts and wishes of the people; and although, in some instances, and chiefly by the women, the former were preserved in wild and secluded spots, those earlier songs have, in a great measure, been irrecoverably lost. But though the old songs thus perished, the tunes still remained; and during that comparative lull of the popular feelings which, for a considerable portion of the last century, was only disturbed by agrarian conspiracies and their sad consequences, the Jacobite songs were in their turn discarded and the old melodies of the country were again applied to their original purpose, as a help to the expression of the better feelings of the human mind. The sentimental airs had new words adapted to them, breathing the successful or unhappy results of affection – the more sorrowful ones gave vent to lamentations for the unfortunate Defender, Whiteboy, or Leveller, and the livelier airs and spirit-stirring marches of the old clans were generally converted to the uses of the dance; and it is to the songs written during this period that we owe the preservation of so vast a mass of our national melody. It is quite true that these songs rarely, if ever, had any pretensions to literary merit, and were, moreover, too often disfigured by dashes of licentiousness – the too common and disgraceful characteristic of the times, and which are never found in the earlier lyrics of the country. Still,

¹⁰ *An cailín ruadh.*

however, mere doggerel as they were, they led to results which songs of a higher order could never have accomplished, because they would have been unintelligible to the understandings, and foreign to the tastes, of a then uneducated people. Whether written in Irish, for the counties in which the native language still generally prevailed, or in English, for the counties where that language was becoming general, or, as often happened, in a compound of the two tongues, where both were still spoken, such songs had to Irish ears the important merit of a happy adaptation of words that would run concurrently with the notes and rhythm of the airs for which they were intended, and were, happily, thus the means of preserving the tunes in all their integrity. As an example of this rhythmical adaptation, I am tempted to give a stanza or two – for more than a specimen would scarcely be tolerated – of this characteristic ballad of the last century.

As I roved out on a summer's morning,
 A-speculating most curiously,
 To my surprise I soon espied,
 A charming fair one approaching me.
 I stood a while in deep meditation,
 Contemplating what I should do,
 'Till at length, recruiting all my sensations,
 I thus accosted fair *Colleen Rue*.

This, it must be confessed, is but sad doggerel, but in the following stanza will be more distinctly seen that attempt to transfer to the English language the constantly recurring assonantal or vowel rhymes of the original Irish songs; and also of the pedantic classical allusions, in which this class of Anglo-Irish ballads so ludicrously abound, and of which so good an imitation has been given by the late Mr Milliken of Cork, in the popular song of 'The Groves of Blarney'.

Kind sir, be easy, and do not tease me,
 With your false praises most jestingly,
 Your dissimulation of invocation
 Are vaunting praises seducing me.
 I'm not Aurora or beauteous Flora
 But a rural female to all men's view,
 That's here condoling my situation,
 My appellation is the *Colleen Rue*.

The circumstances under which I obtained the air of this characteristic Irish love song had a curious accordance with the sentiment of the song, which may not be unworthy of notice. While residing in the village of Dalkey during the summer of 1815, I was one evening surprised by hearing, from a small neighbouring tavern, a strain of melody which appeared to me to be unmistakably Irish – not, however, sung as I had always heard such airs, by a single voice, but by several voices united so as to produce a very pleasing and not incorrect stream of harmony. So unusual an occurrence naturally excited in my mind a strong desire to ascertain the name of a melody not previously

known to me, and how it came to be thus sung in parts; and having felt assured that I had accurately committed the air to memory, I went into the house to question the hostess – the well-known and worthy Mrs Shearman – on these points, and also as to what she knew of her musical guests. Her reply was to the effect that the singers consisted of two respectable country girls from the south, and their sweethearts, two Englishmen, corporals in a regiment then quartered in Dublin – to whom they were shortly to be married. As, however, she could not give me the more essential information which I desired, I gladly availed myself of her offer to introduce me to the singers – from whom I learned that the air, which was sung by the girls, was truly Irish and called ‘The Colleen Rue’, and that the harmony of tenor and bass combined with it was the result of musical instruction which the Englishmen had obtained as singers in the choir of their parish church. I should add that this was the only occasion on which I have ever heard this beautiful and once popular melody.



In connection with the preceding melody and words, it should, perhaps, be observed that, as amongst the Irish, in many instances, innumerable songs have been adapted to a favourite tune, so it often happens that a ballad which had become popular is united to an air different from that for which it was written. In illustration of this usage I have selected the following melody, which is more commonly known in the county of Cork as ‘The Colleen Rue’ – being the tune sung in that county to the ballad so called; though to adapt it to the latter, the air must be sung twice to each stanza.



*Rí an Rátha*¹¹ (The King of the Rath, or Ree Raw)

This march tune – together with many other airs of great beauty which will be given in the course of this work – was sent to me by Mr James Fogarty, a farmer of more than ordinary cultivation of mind, who, previously to the spring of 1852, had resided in the parish of Tibroghney, county of Kilkenny, but, from the depression of the times, was then compelled to emigrate to America. According to his statement, this tune, which was peculiar to his own locality, was believed to be of the greatest antiquity, and was a vocal war and festive march, which the people of Tibroghney had been accustomed to sing on their way to the May festivals which so late as the commencement of the last century were celebrated with great pomp at the spring fair of Fiddown. He also states that, as sung at the period above alluded to, after each performance of the air in marching measure, the movement was suddenly quickened to that of a lively jig or battle tune called *Rí an Rátha*, or 'King of the Rath'; but which, corrupted to the name *Ree Raw*, has acquired the meaning of uproar, confusion, or boisterous merriment. This etymology of a popular phrase now received into the English language, at least in Ireland, is certainly curious, and seems likely to be well founded, for I find the term similarly applied to other ancient Irish marches of the same antique structure and character; and, if correct, it would refer such tunes to that remote time when the clans were still subject to the rule of their chief, or king of the rath. Further, as this is the first example which I have selected of the hitherto unpublished military tunes of the Irish now in my possession, I deem it proper to state that all such airs, amongst the Irish, were of a lively or quick-step character, the slow march of England and other nations being unknown to or at least unused by them; and that all such strains are, of course, in common time, or that compound form of it consisting of two triplets, and known as six-eight measure. I should further state that these ancient tunes



¹¹ *Rígh an ratha.*

appear to me to be still very extensively preserved in Ireland as jig tunes, of which – when not, as they often are, in triple time – they may be regarded as the parents, if indeed, as is most probable, these marches were not originally applied to both purposes.

*An Cleasaí Fir Óig*¹² (The Cunning Young Man)

This beautiful and highly characteristic melody was taken down in 1815 from the singing of a fisherman's wife named Archbold, or Aspull, as the name was locally pronounced, in the then strikingly romantic village of Dalkey, near Dublin. The air was sung with a touching sweetness for the purpose of soothing the irritability of a sick child; and, as the singer subsequently informed me, it was from the singing of her mother, under similar circumstances for herself, that she had learnt it in her own childhood. The words which she sang to it were English, and of the ordinary ballad kind, but the melody belongs to a class peculiar in character and structure, which, as I have shown in the Dissertation prefixed to this work, there is every reason to believe to be of a very early antiquity.



*An Ball Síodúil*¹³ (The Silken Article)

A set of this tune, given as a jig, was first published in 1806 by my friend the late Francis Holden, Mus. Doc., in a valuable collection of Irish melodies to which I was a large contributor, this air being one of the number. It was given to me in early youth by a lamented friend, the late Edward Fisher of Merginstown in the county of Wicklow, by whom it had been taken down from the playing of a fiddler in that county. It is probable, however, that this air, like many other of our jig tunes in triple time, was originally a vocal one, as the

¹² *An cleasaidhe fir óig.*

¹³ *An ball síodamhail.*

present set was noted down as a song tune united to Irish words of a playful character, and the melody thus sung was extremely pleasing. This version of it was set while on a visit in 1837 at Rathcarrick House, the seat of my friend R. C. Walker, Esq., QC, from the singing of a woman named Biddy Monahan, who had been reared in that gentleman's family, and was, from her love for music, a rare depository of the melodies which had been current in her youth in the romantic peninsula of *Cuil Iorra*. I regret to add that I have forgotten the Irish name by which the melody was known in that district.



*Ní Ólfaidh Mé Níos Mó ar na Bóithre seo Shligigh*¹⁴ (**I Will Drink No More on these Roads of Sligo**)

For this beautiful and, as it appears to me, very ancient melody, I am indebted to my friend Mr Eugene Curry, on whose memory it was fixed in early youth from the singing of his father: and to the latter it had become familiar so far back as about the year 1760, together with words which were then considered ancient, and which the old man treasured in his memory until his death, in the year 1825, at the age of eighty-one. Of those words, however, Mr Curry unfortunately can only remember a small portion; but this is valuable as indicating the Connaught county to which the melody – though preserved in Clare – most probably belongs, as will be seen from the first line of the following stanza, which is the only perfect one that Mr Curry remembers:

Ní ólfaidh mé níos mó ar na bóithre seo Shligigh,
 Agus tógfaidh mé mo sheolta fá bhord na coille glaise;
 Ólfaidh mé mó dhóthain Dé Domhnaigh is bead ag mire,
 Mar shúil is go bhfaighinnse póigín óm stóirín bláth na finne.

I will drink no more on those roads of Sligo,
 And I will raise my sails to the border of the green wood,
 (Where) I will drink enough on Sunday, and will be merry,
 In hopes that I may get a kiss from my *stóirín*, the blossom of
 whiteness.

Standing alone, it may appear to many that these lines have but little pretension to poetical merit, but in two lines of another stanza – which are all

¹⁴ *Ní olfa mé níos mó ar na bóithre seo Shligigh.*

of it that Mr Curry can recollect – there are indications of a poetical feeling which might lead to a regret that the whole of this old song has not been preserved. These lines are:

Tá an bláth bán ar na móinte agus an fómhar ag filleadh;
Is cé gur lách lách an rud é an pósadh is dubhach deorach a d'fhág
sé mise.

The white blossom is on the bogs, and the Autumn is on the return;
And though marriage is a pretty pretty thing, it is sorrowful and
tearful it has left me.



Péarla an Bhrollaigh Bháin (The Pearl of the White Breast)

For this beautiful melody and its accompanying words I have a great pleasure in acknowledging myself indebted to the kindness of my valued friend, Mr Eugene Curry, a gentleman who, to many of the best characteristics of a genuine Irishman, adds – that not unessential one – a love for the ‘dear old tunes’ of his country; a love so ardent, that it has led him from childhood to gather up, and enabled him to retain in his memory, many ancient and beautiful strains peculiar to, or only remembered in, his native county of Clare; and which, but for that feeling, would most probably have been for ever lost to us. The melody is given exactly as noted down from Mr Curry’s singing of it, and as he had learnt it from the singing of his father in his native home, upon the ocean-beaten cliffs of the southern extremity of the lands of the *Dal Cass*. But, as my friend informs me, though the air and words connected with it have been long popular in that wild district, they probably do not owe their origin to it, but rather to some one of the Connaught counties, among which so many melodies of a similar character yet remain. I confess, however, that in my own musical researches in those counties I have never heard it, nor have I found a set of it in any collection either in print or manuscript. It is true, indeed, that an air bearing the same name is found in the first of the valuable collections given to the world by my friend, the late Mr Edward Bunting – that published in 1796; and this air re-appears under the same appellation but with some unimportant changes, and united, not very happily, to English words, in the

collection of Irish melodies published by the late Mr George Thomson of Edinburgh, in 1814. And as I have alluded to this collection, I cannot forbear in passing to observe that it was deserving of a far higher appreciation and a more extensive popularity than – in Ireland, at least – it ever received, being enriched with symphonies and harmonies which, if not always strictly appropriate, are, at least to a cultivated ear, at all times fascinating, from the exquisite refinement, the vigorous power, the mystical romanticism, and poetical inspiration which they exhibit, and which their author – the divine Beethoven – could alone display. But to resume: as this air – which, perhaps, would be considered by many as one of greater beauty than that now presented – is, however, of a rhythm, time and general construction so different that it could never have been united with the words of the old song, it is very probably misnamed, as many of the airs in Bunting’s collections often are; or, if not so, it must be the melody of a different song having the same name.

As a very general, but most erroneous, impression has been fixed in the public mind – through the writings of persons having but a limited acquaintance with Irish music – that the slow tunes of Ireland are all marked by a sorrowful expression, it may not be improper to direct the attention of readers to the character of this air as an evidence of the fallacy of such opinion. ‘The Pearl of the White Breast’ is a melody strongly marked as belonging to the class of airs known among the Irish as sentimental, or love tunes. Its cadences are all expressive of an imploring and impassioned tenderness; and although they express nothing characteristic of levity or gaiety, they are equally wanting in those expressions of hopeless sadness or wailing sorrow with which the *caoines*, or elegiac airs, are so deeply stamped. And although it may not have a claim to so high a place in Irish melody as some other airs of its class, it is, as I conceive, a melody of no ordinary beauty – perfectly Irish in the artful regularity of its construction, and deeply impressed with those peculiar features which would give it a claim to a very remote, though, like most of our fine airs, an unknown and undeterminable antiquity.



With respect to the words now sung to this air, it should, however, be observed that they are by no means of so remote an age as the melody itself –

though they are older than most of the songs now sung to our finest tunes, which have rarely an antiquity anterior to the beginning of the last century. It is the opinion of Mr Curry that this song is probably at least as old as the early part of the seventeenth age; and as, for a peasant song, it is not wanting either in naturalness of thought or appropriate simplicity of expression, I have considered it as not unworthy of preservation, as well in its original language as in a nearly literal versified translation, which I have attempted with a view to convey to the reader some idea of a very usual metrical structure in Irish lyrical compositions. I need scarcely add that it has no pretension to notice but as such an example.

1

Tá cailín deas dom' chrá,
 Le bliain agus le lá,
 Is ní fhéadaim a fáil le bréagadh;
 Níl aiste chlis le rá,
 Dá gcanaid fir le mná,
 Nár chaitheamair gan tábhacht léise:
 Don Fhrainc nó don Spáinn,
 Dá dtéadh mo ghrá,
 Go raghainnse gach lá dá féachain,
 Is mura bhfuil sé i ndán
 Dúinn an ainnir chiúin seo d'fháil,
 Och! Mac Muire na nGrás dár saoradh.

2

Is a chailín chailce bhláth,
 Dá dtugas searc is grá,
 Ná tabhairse gach tráth dom' éaradh;
 Is a liacht ainnir mhín im dheáidh,
 Le buaibh is maoin 'na lámh,
 Dá ngabhamais i t'áitse céile:
 Póg is míle fáilte,
 Is barraí geal do lámh,
 Is é a n-iarrfainnse go bráth már spré leat:
 Is muran domhsa taoi tú i ndán,
 A Phéarla an Bhrollaigh bháin,
 Nár thí mise slán ón aonach.

1

There's a colleen fair as May,
 For a year and for a day
 I have sought by ev'ry way – Her heart to gain.
 There's no art of tongue or eye,
 Fond youths with maidens try,
 But I've tried with ceaseless sigh – Yet tried in vain.
 If to France or far-off Spain,

She'd cross the wat'ry main,
 To see her face again – The seas I'd brave.
 And if 'tis heav'n's decree,
 That mine she may not be,
 May the Son of Mary me – In mercy save.

2

Oh, thou blooming milk-white dove,
 To whom I've given true love,
 Do not ever thus reprove – My constancy.
 There are maidens would be mine,
 With wealth in hand and kine,
 If my heart would but incline – To turn from thee.
 But a kiss, with welcome bland,
 And touch of thy fair hand,
 Are all that I'd demand – Wouldst thou not spurn;
 For if not mine, dear girl,
 Oh, Snowy-breasted Pearl!
 May I never from the Fair – With life return!

*Planxstaí nó Pléaraca le Ó Cearbhalláin*¹⁵ (**Planxty, or Plearaca by O'Carolan**)

For the following beautiful *Planxty*, now for the first time published, I am indebted to my friend, Mr John Kelly, assistant to Mr Griffith on the Ordnance Valuation of Ireland, by whom it was copied at Listowel from a MS book of Irish tunes written by Mr John Shannon, or Shanahan, of that town, who obtained it from Roche, a distinguished fiddler of the county of Kerry. The name of the tune, or in other words, the name of the person in whose honour, according to Carolan's custom, it was composed, yet remains to be discovered; but there can be no uncertainty as to its being a genuine composition of our last distinguished minstrel; and, however it may be estimated by others, I confess that it appears to me to be one of the finest examples preserved to us of his peculiar genius in this class of graceful and spirit-stirring tunes. I may add that, considering how extensively the compositions of Carolan have been preserved, and particularly those of the sportive or planxty class, it is not a little singular that a tune so full of animation and vigour should have hitherto escaped the notice of the collectors of our music; and I can only attempt to account for it by the supposition, which appears to me a probable one, that it was composed during Carolan's visit to the south-western counties of Munster, where he was necessarily separated from those who, in his own Connaught region, were taught by him to commit his compositions to memory, and who had the further advantage of hearing them frequently repeated. At all events, certain it is that many of the tunes that Carolan is known to have composed for persons in those

¹⁵ *Planxstaídh nó pléaraca re Ó Cearbhalláin.*

south-western counties – as, for example, those for Dean Massey of Limerick and his lady – have never been identified by names, and, if they have yet escaped oblivion, they must be sought for in the localities in which they had their origin.



As the preceding specimen of the class of tunes known by the term *planxty* – or *plansty*, as it is written in Burke Thumoth's publication of Carolan's compositions – is the first appearing in this work, and will be followed during its progress by other as yet unpublished tunes of the same character, it may be desirable to offer in this place a few observations on the characteristics and origin of this class of melodies in Ireland; and also on the signification and etymology of the name by which such tunes are, or have been, commonly designated.

The *planxty*, then, is a harp tune of a sportive and animated character, not intended for, or often adaptable to, words; and – with the exception of three or four tunes to which possibly the term has been incorrectly applied – it moves in triplets, with a six-eight measure. In this last characteristic, as to time, it is similar to that most common in the Irish jig, or *rince*;¹⁶ but the *planxty* differs from that more ancient class of tunes in its having less rapidity of motion – thus giving a greater facility for the use of fanciful or playful ornamentation – and also in its not being bound, as the jig necessarily is, to an equality in the number of bars or beats in its parts. For the *planxty*, though in some instances it presents such an equality, is more usually remarkable for a want of it; the second part being extended to various degrees of length beyond that of the first, so that it would be thus equally unfitted for a dancing movement, as, from the irregularity of its cadences and the unlicensed compass of its scale, it would be unadaptable to a singing one. Indeed this difference in tunes which have often

¹⁶ *Rince*.

so many other features in common appears to have been well understood by Carolan; for in all those tunes which he has himself called jigs, though differing in other respects but little from those called planxties, he has taken care never to violate the law of equality in the length of their parts or movements.

A still closer affinity, however, than that now noticed as connecting the planxty with the jig, is found in the characteristics of the planxty and the *pléaráca*¹⁷ – an affinity so close, indeed, that the difference seems to me to be only in names which are convertible, and are so used in a collection of Irish tunes, chiefly of Carolan's composition, which was published in Belfast by Mr John Mulholland in 1810, the term planxty being there given as the English name, and *pléaráca* as the Irish one of the same tune. But be this as it may, the tunes called planxties, as well as those called *pléarácas*, owe their origin, if not, as I believe, their names to Carolan, and are to be regarded as a class of festive harp tunes composed in honour of his patrons or hospitable entertainers, and as such only differing from his other airs composed for the same purpose in the greater gaiety and playfulness of their movements. It is true, indeed, that the harpers immediately preceding Carolan – as Rory O'Kane, the two O'Connallons, and, no doubt, others – had already introduced, both in Scotland and in Ireland, the custom of composing, as offerings of gratitude to their patrons, tunes of a purely instrumental character, and which had usually but little of the simplicity and regularity of structure of the vocal and dance tunes of more remote times; and such compositions were known simply by the names of the persons in whose honour they were composed – as 'Lady Iveagh', 'Miss Hamilton', etc. – or with the Irish word, *port* (which signifies a tune), prefixed to such name, as 'Port Athol', 'Port Gordon', 'Port Lennox', etc., and in the composition of such tunes, therefore, Carolan only trod in the footsteps of his predecessors. But in the construction of his planxties and *pléarácas*, he must be considered as an innovator on the time-established features of his country's music, for I have not been able to find any example of this class of tunes of an age anterior to his time, and such tunes appear to owe their origin to an ambition on their composer's part to imitate, and perhaps rival, those allegro movements called *gigas*, which occur in the contemporaneous sonatas of the Italian composers, Corelli, Geminiani and others, of whose works, then popular in Ireland, Carolan became so ardent an admirer that in nearly all his compositions the results are more or less apparent. It is, however, in his planxties that we find the most successful efforts of his imitative genius. Wanting, as he obviously did, the requisite knowledge of the laws of harmony so conspicuous in the works of those great masters, his more ambitious attempts at imitation are often ludicrously rude and abortive; while in his planxties, which required less scientific ability, he usually trusts more to his fine natural genius for melody. And of these compositions, it may not perhaps be saying too much that, if they want the deep gravity of thought and the scientific progressions of harmony found in the *gighe* of his renowned originals, such wants are often amply atoned for by a display of imaginative and graceful sportiveness – touched frequently too with sentiment drawn from his own Irish

¹⁷ *Pléaráca*.

nature – which even those great masters might well admire, and would probably have vainly attempted to rival.

As it thus appears that the airs called *planxties* and *pléarácas* owe their origin to Carolan, we should naturally expect that those terms have a no higher antiquity than that of the tunes they were intended to designate – and such appears to be the fact. Neither of these terms are found in Irish writings of an earlier age, nor does the Irish language possess any verbal roots from which either of them could have been formed; and hence, as regards the term *planxty*, or *plansty*, as I have found it written, I was for some time disposed to believe that it might possibly have been formed from the English word ‘prance’, in its sense of springing or bounding motion; or the word ‘prank’, in its sense of a wild flight, in either of which senses the term *prancy*, or, by a natural corruption, *planxty*, would be very expressive and applicable to the motions of such tunes. But my friend, Mr Curry, has supplied me with another derivation, equally English, which, if not more satisfactory, has at least a contemporary authority to support it, namely that of the bard’s own friend and brother poet and harper, Charles MacCabe. It occurs in a Gaelic lampoon, or satirical poem, which the latter addressed to his friend in revenge, not only for a practical joke which Carolan had played upon him – namely having him put into a sack while in a state of helpless intoxication, at the public house of a man named William Eglis, at Mohill in the county of Leitrim, where the brother bards had been boozing for a day together – but for the additional mortification which Carolan had inflicted by writing some caustic verses in ridicule of MacCabe for taking the matter too seriously. The language of the poem, as Mr Curry states, is not inferior to that of the best Irish poetical compositions of the seventeenth century, and a literal translation of it will scarcely fail of amusing the reader, from the mixture of truth which gives such effect to its satire:

There is not a man with two horses, from Galway
To Down Patrick,
That you have not put under contribution,
And, O*****! what are the claims for it?

The claim is comical – it is very fortunate –
[It is] because you smoke a pipe,
And that you prefer not brandy, wine, or ale,
To a drink of the Guile.
It matters not which of them, you pledge your faith,
That you are satisfied,
With a capacious cup, full of mash,
With shouts and clamour.

There is not a five-groat man from Ballinrobe
To Ballyshannon,
That has not given three pennies into your fist
To you for a *Flaxaráí*.

An old grey woman gave you, below in Leitrim,
 For your *Pléaráca*,
 A pair of stockings, and she toothless –
 And you were satisfied.

The music is better that you play for a little woman
 Of sportive habits,
 Than for the high blood of the Lord Dillon,
 For three Moidores.

It can scarcely admit of doubt that the word *flaxaraí* – pronounced flaxaree – in this poem is intended to designate the class of tunes now known by the term *planxty*, and therefore, that it must either be the original form or a very blundering corruption by the transcriber, of that generally-adopted word. But, as Mr Curry remarks to me, there exist strong objections to the adoption of the latter assumption, as: first, that the manuscript in which this form of the word is found, was written as early as the year 1729 – nine years previous to the death of Carolan – by Hugh O’Mulloy, one of the best Irish scholars and scribes then in or about Dublin, and who, as such, was employed by the celebrated Doctor John O’Fergus to make that fine transcript of the first volume of the *Annals of the Four Masters* which is now preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. Secondly, that as Carolan was known to and even patronized by Doctor O’Fergus – a fact proved by the bard’s having composed a *planxty* in his honour – it is scarcely to be doubted that Carolan was also known to the Doctor’s Irish scribe, and consequently, that it is in the highest degree improbable that such scribe would, or could, have written in a vulgar or incorrect form a word that must at the time have been generally known and understood in most parts of Ireland; and the more particularly, as we find that in the transcription of the other newly-coined word – *pléaráca* – his orthography of it was strictly correct. As to the correct transcription of the word *flaxaraí*, therefore, there can be but little doubt; but of its etymological origin there yet remains a great difficulty, which Mr Curry has, with much ingenuity, endeavoured to remove by the remarks which follow: ‘The word *flaxaraí*’, he writes, ‘will be immediately recognized as implying something relating to flax. Now, in Carolan’s time it was a universal custom – still continued in many districts – when a number of young women were collected together for the purpose of spinning, either within a house, or, in fine weather, at the road-side, if a gentleman, a pedlar, or a musician, approached the place, he was stopped by a thread which the girls drew across it; or, if he entered the house, by winding it around him, and at the same time greasing his boots or shoes with their oily wool, if that were the material in hand. This fragile obstruction it was considered disgracefully ungallant and churlish to break, and the permission to pass on was only to be obtained by the gift, from a gentleman, of some money, from a pedlar, of some small article of woman’s wear – as a ribbon, or brass finger-ring – and, from a musician, of *lots* of frolicsome dancing tunes, which would set the girls in motion. And as it will be easily understood that Carolan, in his peregrinations, must have frequently – and probably not unwillingly – found himself involved within the inviolable

web of the Connaught mirthful spinners, it seems more than possible that it was such occurrences that suggested to him a name, derived from the material of their occupation, for a class of tunes which was so peculiarly expressive of the gaiety and wild extravagancies which so often attended scenes of this kind.'

With respect to the word *plé-ráca* – or *pléa-ráca* – its meaning, at least, if not its etymology, is better understood. In the rather free translation, by Swift, of the words written to Carolan's *Pléaraca na Ruarcach*,¹⁸ by Hugh Mac Gowran, a poet of the county of Leitrim, at the beginning of the last century, it is rendered by the word 'feast'; but the Irish lexicographer, Edward O'Reilly, in his *Irish Writers*, better conveys its meaning by the words 'revelry', and 'revel-rout', as 'The Revel-rout of O'Rourke'; and by a metonymy the term was applied to designate the class of tunes composed for such revels, or in commemoration of them – as the words 'dance' and 'march' are applied to designate the tunes fitted to such movements. And an example of this application of the word occurs in Mac Gowran's song, where the words rendered by Swift,

'Come, harper, strike up,
But first by your favour,
Boy, give us a cup;
Ay! this has some savour',

should, if translated literally, be given as follows:

Spreag ar an gcláirsigh linn,
Seinn an Pléaraca sin,
Prap dúinn scaird don digh sin:
Is í seo, an choirm chóir.

Strike up that harp,
Play that *Pléaraca*;
Quick, hand us a bumper of that drink;
Ay – this is the fine ale!

'Wherever', writes Mr Curry, 'the word *pléaraca* occurs in any Irish song or rhyme of the last hundred years, it is in the sense of an abandonment to drinking, dancing, singing, or love-making, etc., carried out in all imaginable riotous and reckless gaiety, and was, no doubt, looked upon as the Ball of the times then passing. John O'Huaneen, or Green, a country gentleman who lived near Ennistimon in the county of Clare, about the year 1760, wrote a comical and sarcastic Irish song on a *pléaraca* given at Coad, near Corofin, in the same county, by Edward O'Brien and his wife Una, at which the poet was himself a guest; and from this song it can be clearly seen that the *pléaraca* was an entertainment given by O'Brien to the neighbouring gentry. And thus, too, in a song in praise of whiskey, written by Thomas O'Meehan, a witty poet of the

¹⁸ *Plearaca na ruarcach*

county of Clare, about the year 1770, the word *pléráca* is used as designating a dancing contest attended with riotous music and singing; and he calls the tents at fairs and races, at which such scenes were enacted, *Both-Rucu*, i.e., a Raca-booth, or hut.' And with respect to the etymology of this term, Mr Curry states that 'as the word *ráca* is not known to be an original, or old Irish word, it is, probably, but a Hibernicized form of the English word 'rake', as in like manner the prefix *plé* is but a corrupt form of the English word 'play'; and so conjointly giving the sense of a raking entertainment'.

These etymological conjectures of Mr Curry's I have thought it right to submit to the consideration of the reader, although as regards the compound *plé-ráca*, the general philologist might, perhaps, be disposed rather to derive its primary vocable from the ancient Irish word *fleadh*, which signifies a 'feast', or 'entertainment'; and it must be confessed that such derivation would seem obvious but from the fact that, according to the best Irish authorities, no example has been found of a change of the consonant *f* into *p*, while on the contrary, the change of *p* into *f* is very common in the grammatical inflections of the language.

*Ní Thréigfidh mo Ghrá Go Deo Mé*¹⁹ (My Love Will Ne'er Forsake Me)

For this fine air, together with many others of no less beauty, I have to express my grateful acknowledgments to Mr P. J. O'Reilly of Westport in the county of Mayo, by whom they were noted down from the singing of the peasantry in the wild mountain districts of that picturesque county. I regret, however, to have to add that Mr O'Reilly has not increased the value of his gift by some detailed notices of the sources and localities from which the tunes were obtained, and that though acquainted with the Irish language vernacularly, he did not feel himself competent to take down the songs to which the melodies were sung, as, in that peculiarly Irish part of Western Ireland, it might be hoped that words of a higher antiquity and deeper interest would be preserved than those current in districts in which, from the commingling of races differing in origin and language, the primitive manners and traditions have been obliterated. Without some such knowledge of the character of the ancient songs, we have no clue to the sentiments which the melodies were intended to convey, but that, sometimes – as in the present instance – derived from its name; for the words 'My love will ne'er forsake me' appear to me most happily expressive of the triumphant and manly tone of feeling which pervades this air to a degree not often found amongst the melodies of Ireland. So strongly, indeed, does this feeling appear to me to preponderate, and so different from that of our tunes in general is the structure which was necessary to produce it, that, had this air come to me from any questionable authority, I should have been inclined to doubt its Irish origin; or had it been shown to me as an ancient Gothic or Scandinavian air, such I should have very readily believed it. Such affinities and peculiarities are not, however, very uncommon amongst the multitude of our melodies, and if we were allowed to indulge in conjecture as to the

¹⁹ *Ní thréigfidh mo grádh go deóidh mé.*

probable origin of them, we might perhaps ascribe it to the long occupation of our island by the Danes and Northmen, or even not impossibility, to the blending of Teutonic races with the Celtic in ages more remote.



*Mártan Dubhach*²⁰ (Melancholy Martin)

This air, which is both a song and dance tune, was set in 1837 from the singing of a peasant in the parish of Banagher, county of Londonderry, and it probably belongs to that county. Though of sufficient merit to deserve preservation, it is not apparently an air of much antiquity, nor one strongly marked with Irish sentiment, but on the contrary, as it appears to me, with a sturdy English one, and particularly in its closing cadences. Its structure, in nine-eight time, is, however, peculiarly Irish, as the two or three airs in this time recently claimed as English seem to be much more probably ours; and the one or two tunes in this time claimed by the Welsh are better known in Ireland as Irish, than they are known in Wales as Welsh tunes. It would be strange indeed if none of our innumerable airs in this time had never passed into England or Wales and become naturalized in those countries, as many of our airs in other measures certainly have; and there being so few of them claimed in either, can only perhaps be accounted for by the assumption that their lively character was alien to the musical sensation of the Teutonic and Cimbric races in those countries.

²⁰ *Martan dubach.*



*An Buachaill Caol Dubh*²¹ (The Black Slender Boy)

It is a strange circumstance, and one which may strikingly show how imperfectly our melodies have been hitherto collected, that the air commonly called the *Buachaill Caol Dubh* has escaped the notice of former collectors, as there is not, perhaps, in the whole range of Irish melody an air more generally known throughout Ireland, or one more admired for its flowing beauty. I have myself heard it sung in each of the four provinces, but it is in Munster – to which it properly belongs – that it is best known and most esteemed, being, as my friend Mr Curry tells me, there ranked as one of the finest tunes they possess, if not the very finest one, and I confess that in this opinion I feel strongly disposed to concur. Of an air so extensively disseminated, and – as usual in such cases – sung to words differing in character in the various localities where it is known, it should naturally be expected that there would be a great diversity in the forms which it would assume, and such I have found to be the fact. So great indeed are those varieties, that, except in the essential notes and general structure, they have often so little else in common that the native of one province would probably find it difficult to recognize this popular melody in the form which it has assumed as sung by the native of another. In such instances, therefore, it will be often difficult to determine which version of a melody is the most correct one; for, though a knowledge of the structure of Irish tunes and an acquaintance with the words sung to them will determine the true rhythm and accents, still their general sentiment, and the choice of their less important notes, can be determined only by the taste and judgement; and hence the set of a tune which to one will seem the best, will not be deemed so by another.

From these considerations, I have not limited myself to the one set of this melody which appears to me the most pleasing, but have selected, from some forty or fifty settings of the air in my possession, three versions which appear to me to be the best amongst them, and to contain the most marked varieties of cadence which they present, except such as are not obviously of a vulgar and erroneous nature, so that others can determine for themselves their relative degrees of truthfulness and beauty. Of these sets, the first and second were obtained in Munster, and are consequently the most likely to be the best, as they certainly appear to me the most beautiful; and when I state that they were

²¹ *An buachaill caoldubh.*

given to me by my lamented friend, the late Thomas Davis, they will, with many, derive an additional interest from that fact. The third set was taken down by myself from the singing of the late Patrick Coneely, the Galway piper, and it may perhaps be regarded as the Connaught version of the air, in which province it is generally known by the name of *An Casaideach Bán*,²² or 'White Cassidy', from a song so called to which it has been united.

It is greatly to be regretted that the old words sung to this beautiful melody are lost, or at least have not hitherto been recovered, as the various songs now sung to it – and they are numerous – are quite unworthy of being associated with such a fine melody. The best of these songs which Mr Curry has met with is one composed about the year 1760 by John O'Seanachain – or, as the name is now Anglicized, Shannon – a native of Tulla, his ancestral patrimony, in the county of Clare. O'Seanachain had received some education and was endowed with a rich vein of native humour and playful fancy, but these qualities were unhappily blended with such an eccentricity of character, as to acquire for him the soubriquet of *Seán Aerach* – Airy John – or, in colloquial English, Flighty Jack. Leaving his native county, he crossed the Shannon to Glin in the county of Limerick, where he became the guest and follower of the hospitable Knight of the Valley, Thomas Fitzgerald, on whom, and on whose children, he composed many pleasing rhymes in his native language, which are still preserved. His words to the *Buachaill Caol Dubh* are characteristic of the qualities of his mind, and, as we may well suppose, indicative of their effects upon his course of life. Adopting a fancy suggested by the old name of this beautiful love tune, or perhaps of its original words, he allegorizes as the Black Slender Youth, the whiskey bottle which had been the cause of all his misfortunes and from which he has not still the power to separate himself. But, as an example of the metrical structure of these words, and their agreement with the melody, I shall let the poet speak in a stanza or two, in his own tongue:

Nuair théim ar aonach
 Ag ceannach éadaigh,
 Is bíonn an éirnis
 Agam im láimh,
 Síneann taobh liom
 An buachaill caol dubh,
 Is do chuir a chaolchrobh
 Isteach im láimh:
 Is gearr 'na dhéidh sin
 Go mbím dom éagcaoin,
 Gan puinn dem chéill
 Is mé ar cheann an chláir,
 A díol na n-éileamh
 Do bhíonn dom chéasadh,
 Seacht mí gan léine,
 Is an fuacht dom chrá.

When I go to the fair
 To buy me some clothes,
 And I have the earnest
 In my band,
 Up struts beside me
 The Black Slender Boy,
 And puts his slender hand
 Within my hand:
 In a short time after
 I am a maniac,
 Without a particle of my senses,
 Over the board,
 Paying the demands
 Which ever teaze me,
 Seven months without a shirt,
 And the cold freezing me.

²² *Cassiodach bán.*

Do casadh Aoibheall,
 Na Craige Léithe orainn,
 Ag gabháil na slí;
 Is do ghaibh liom báigh,
 Is dúirt dá ngéilleadh
 An buachaill caol dubh,
 Go dtabharfadh céad fear
 Dó suas im áit:
 Do labhair an caolfhear
 Go gonta géar léi,
 Is dúirt ná tréigfeadh
 A charaid ghnáith;
 Gur shíúil sé Éire
 Trí choillte is réitigh,
 Le cumann cléibhe,
 Is le searc, im dheáidh.

We met Aoibhell*
 Of Craig Leith,
 A-going the way;
 And she took my part,
 And said, if the Black Slender Boy
 Would resign me,
 She would give him an hundred men
 Up in my place:
 Spoke the slender man
 Cuttingly said sharply to her,
 And said that he would not forsake
 His constant friend;
 That he had traversed Erinn
 Through forests and plains,
 With heartfelt love
 And affection, after me.

*Aoibhell of Craig Liath, according to the Munster Legends, was the guardian Fairy Queen, or *Bean-sídhe* (Banshee), of Thomond, but more particularly of the O'Brien family. She appeared to Brian Boru on the battlefield of Clontarf, and informed him of the fate of the battle and his death. She appeared also to Dubhlaing O'Hartagain, a famous warrior of the Dalcassians, on the night before the battle, and as she could not dissuade him from going to the fight, where he was destined to meet his death, she gave him an enchanted cloak which, as long as he wore it, would render his person invisible. Dubhlaing, or Dulaing, went to the battle on the next day with the cloak on, and took his usual stand at the back of Morogh, the son of Brian; and, when the battle raged, Morogh, surprised that he could not see his faithful back-man, soon cried out that he could hear Dulaing's heavy blows, but could not see him. Dulaing, overhearing this, said that he would never wear any disguise that prevented Morogh from witnessing the faithful discharge of his duty towards him. He threw off the cloak, and was shortly after slain by the Danish warriors. Craig Liath, or the Grey Crag, the residence of Aoibhell, is a remarkable rocky hill overhanging the Shannon, about a mile and a half above Kilaloe, on the Clare side (See *Battle of Clontarf*, Ir. MS). [Petrie is presumably referring to the manuscript *Cath Chluana Tarbh*.]

This is enough, and perhaps too much. The song called *An Casaideach Bán*, or 'White Cassidy', which is sung to the *Buachaill Caol Dubh* in the province of Connaught, is still less appropriate to the sentiment of the melody, and is, moreover, of such a nature as will not allow even a specimen of it to be translated.

First Setting

Musical score for the First Setting, featuring four staves of music in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The score includes a tempo marking of quarter note = 68, a 9-measure rest, and triplet markings.

Second Setting

Musical score for the Second Setting, featuring four staves of music in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The score includes a tempo marking of quarter note = 68 and a 9-measure rest.

Third Setting

Musical score for the Third Setting, featuring four staves of music in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The score includes a tempo marking of quarter note = 76 and a 9-measure rest.

*Ag an mBóithrín Buí*²³ (**At the Yellow Little Road**)

The following melody, together with the Irish words still sung to it, was noted down during the present year from the singing of Teige Mac Mahon, a county of Clare peasant, now unhappily blind and pauperized, but whose memory is still a rich depository of the fine tunes of his native county. The words have but slender merit, but as a peasant composition they are not wanting in delicacy of feeling, and though apparently of no great antiquity, yet as an example of a metrical structure very common in Irish lyrics, they have appeared to me not unworthy of preservation, and I have endeavoured to convey their sense in an English rhythmical translation of similar structure and as closely literal as perhaps the different idioms of the languages will allow.

Ag an mbóithrín buí
 Atá rún mo chroí
 'Na luí ar leabain 'na haonar;
 Gach ribe dá dlaoi,
 Mar ór buí an rí,
 Do scaipeas an drúcht don fhéar ghlas.
 Fear de Chlainn Taidhg mé,
 Bhíos dá coimhdeacht,
 Is mé i ngalar an bháis dá héagmais:
 Is a chumainn gheal is a stór,
 Ná bíodh ortsa brón,
 Ag sin buachaill deas óg dod bhréagadh.

Dá bhfaighinnse mo rún,
 Do dhéanfainn di cúirt,
 Ba deise dar dúradh in Éirinn;
 Is do bheadh aici an barr,
 Choíche is go brách,
 Ó fhearaibh is ó mhnáibh ar fhéile.
 Mar is id bhrollach geal bán,
 Tá solas gach lá,
 Is ní áirímse clár geal t'éadain;
 Is dá bhféadainn a rá
 Gur tusa mo ghrá
 Níorbh eaglach mé ar dháil an éaga.

At the yellow boreen
 Is my heart's secret queen,
 Alone on her soft bed a-sleeping;
 Each tress of her hair,
 Than the king's gold more fair,
 The dew from the grass might be sweeping.

²³ *Ag an mbóithrín buidhe.*

I'm a man of Teige's race,
 Who has watch'd her fair face,
 And away from her, ever I'm sighing:
 And oh! My heart's store,
 Be not griev'd evermore,
 That for you a young man should be dying.

Should my love with me come,
 I would build her a home,
 The finest e'er told of in Erinn;
 And 'tis then she would shine,
 And her fame ne'er decline,
 For bounty, o'er all the palm bearing.
 For in your bosom bright,
 Shines the pure sunny light,
 As in your smooth brow, graceful ever;
 And oh! – could I say
 You're my own – from this day
 Death's contest should frighten me never.

With respect to the melody to which these words have been united, I should perhaps remark that it appears to me to be a good example, both in its structure and in its tone of sentiment, of a class of tunes which are very abundant in the county of Clare, and which, to some extent at least, may be considered as peculiar to the ancient territory of Thomond. They are usually of that compound structure known as six-eight measure, have an animated movement, and, even when blended with cadences of tenderness or sorrow, breathe a manly buoyancy of spirits, in a high degree characteristic of a vigorous race, and such as it might be expected would emanate from, and be



expressive of, the feelings of the great warlike and unconquered tribe of the Dal Cais.

*Fead an Airimh*²⁴ (The Ploughman's Whistle)

Amongst the numerous classes of melodies which a people as music-loving as the Irish invented to lighten the labour and beguile the hours devoted to their various occupations, there is, perhaps, no one of higher interest, and certainly no one that I have listened to with a deeper emotion, than that class of simple, wild and solemn strains, which the ploughman whistles in the fields to soothe or excite the spirits of the toiling animals he guides, as well as to fill his own ear with sounds expressive of peaceful and solemn thoughts. The accompanying songs of the birds are scarcely so pregnant with sentiment – so touching to a sensitive human soul; and it would be difficult, if not impossible, for a mind not closed to the sense of beauty, to hear such strains without feeling a glow of admiration for the character of a people amongst whom, whatever may be the faults engendered by untoward circumstances, the primeval susceptibility to the impressions of melody was yet, despite of all destructive influences, so generally retained, and which susceptibility has preserved to us so many indigenous airs, which, in their fitness for the purposes for which they were employed, no mere intellectual *art* could rival.

Of the airs of this class, however, we have had, unfortunately, but two specimens hitherto preserved – unfortunately, as I say, because from the changes now in progress amongst the agricultural classes in Ireland – in a great degree the consequences of the calamities of recent years – such airs are now rarely or never to be heard; and if we would seek for them, it should be in those new-world homes of the Celts, in which, possibly, they may be for a time retained as heart-touching reminiscences of the green fields which their fathers had for so many ages toiled in, and which their sorrows could not make them cease to love.

The first of the two airs to which I have alluded was originally published in 1786 in Mr Joseph Cooper Walker's *Memoirs of the Irish Bards*. It is a plaintive air of great sweetness and beauty, but very inaccurately noted, as to time, in that work; and the Editor has neglected to inform us of the locality in which it was procured. In 1821 it was reproduced, with some necessary changes, by our poet Moore, in the eighth number of the *Irish Melodies*, in which, united to the words 'Oh! Ye Dead!' it will be familiar to the reader. And lastly, it has been again published by Mr Edward Bunting, in that last splendid volume of *Irish Melodies* which was given to the world in 1840. As arranged, however, by that able musician, the original simple form of the air will hardly be recognized, the time being changed from common to triple; and its refined sentiment is sadly obscured, if not altogether lost, by an attempt to convey the bird-like kind of warbling which Mr Bunting deemed characteristic of the Irish whistler. Had he heard it whistled, and not – as he states in his Index – played by a harper, he would hardly have fallen into an error so egregious.

²⁴ *Fead an oirimh*.

The second published example of these airs is also given in Mr Bunting's last volume of Irish music, the melody having been communicated to that gentleman by the writer of this work, by whom it was set in the summer of 1821 at Doon in the King's County, while on a visit to its most estimable proprietor, the late Thomas Enright Mooney, Esq. The whistler was an aged man, who had been from his youth a ploughman in the service of that gentleman's family, and who had learned it from the whistling of his father and grandfather, who had been ploughmen on the same estate; so that it may be properly ranked as the Ploughman's Whistle of that county. In Mr Bunting's arrangement of this air, he has taken the same liberties as with that taken from Walker's *Memoirs* – namely, he has endeavoured to imitate what he supposed, but most erroneously, the manner in which it had been whistled; and he has changed the time from common – that is, two-four, or six-eight – to triple time. In this, however, as in the former instance, the change of time is erroneous; and to effect it he has been obliged to throw into the melody notes which were not in my setting of it. Had he reflected that airs of this class should be ranked as a sort of slow-march tunes, he would at once have perceived that, though they might have been suited in triple time to the movement of three-legged animals, they could never have been marched to by animals who were either two or four-legged. And hence, as I conceive, it may be taken as a rule that all this class of melodies as yet or hereafter to be recovered, should be written in common time, or that variety of it having two triplets in a bar, and known as six-eight measure. Further, in connection with these two tunes, it appears to me very desirable to correct some errors into which Mr Bunting, or his literary assistant, has fallen in the notices given of them. First, in the set of the King's County Whistle, it is called 'Queen's County'; and the same error occurs in the index to the English names of the tunes, in which the acknowledgement is made that I had given it to him. In the index to the Irish names it is, however, properly named as the 'Ploughman's Whistle, King's County'. These errors are, indeed, of but little moment; but those which occur in the literary notices of this and the other Ploughman's Whistle – though no doubt accidental – are of greater consequence, as they are calculated to mislead the reader altogether. He writes: 'xxii. (no. 126 in the collection) *Feaduidhil an Airimh*, "The Ploughman's Whistle". This curious melody is given in Walker's *Memoirs of the Irish Bards*; but, from its being set there in common, instead of triple time, it is difficult to be understood. It is given here *as whistled by the ploughman*, and nearly in the acute sounds of the whistler, to imitate which the tune must be played very slowly and with the utmost expression. The second part bears a strong resemblance to the primitive air sung by the boatmen on the rivers in China, both melodies having the same cadence, and the only difference is in the time, the Chinese being in common, and the Irish in triple time. It may be observed here that in many instances there is a remarkable coincidence between the Hindostanee airs published by Bird, and the Irish melodies, proving the strong resemblance which exists amongst the primitive strains of all nations.' (p. 96).

Next he writes: 'xxiii. (no. 137 in the collection) "*Feaduidhil an Airimh Condae an Righ*", "Ploughman's Whistle of the King's County", is of a more plaintive character, having a very melancholy and tender expression. It is considered by

the Editor as belonging to the most ancient class of melodies. It may be performed an octave lower with the best effect; but as the higher octave in which it is set agrees best with the shrill high sound made in whistling it is arranged accordingly.' (*Ib.*).

If then, on perusing these remarks, the curious reader should, as most probably he would, turn to the tunes themselves as directed, he would suppose that the first, no. 126, was the Ploughman's Whistle as given by Walker, and the second, no. 137, that of the King's County, as given by myself. But this is not the fact – the air numbered 126 being in reality the Ploughman's Whistle of the King's County, and, vice versa, that numbered 137 the one given by Walker. I should also observe that, while I differ wholly with Mr Bunting in some of his observations on these two airs, with others I entirely concur. The coincidence observable between many of the Hindostanee airs and the Irish melodies has often surprised and interested me, and examples of it in the latter will be pointed out to the reader in the course of this work. But I cannot concur in the conclusion that such coincidences prove 'the strong resemblance which exists amongst the primitive strains of *all* nations'. I also agree with Mr Bunting, that the Ploughman's Whistle of the King's County should be considered as belonging 'to the most ancient class of melodies'. I believe them to be as ancient as the race of people who introduced into Ireland the use of the plough; and that their immigration was of a remote era may be inferred from the fact that plough coulters and socks of *stone* are not very unfrequently found; so that, even if such implements should be regarded as but rude imitations, by an uncivilized people, of metallic articles, introduced by a comparatively civilized race, they were, at least, imitations by those who had been the primeval predecessors of the race who had become their instructors. To state all my reasons for this belief would extend this notice to an unreasonable length, and some of them, as resulting from individual feeling, would not perhaps be generally understood. Thus, I believe those airs to be of the most remote antiquity, because I perceive and feel in them – in all of them – a like tone of sentiment and perfect similarity of structure to the *caoinés*, or funeral chants, which must, as I believe, have been brought into Ireland by the earliest tribes of people, be they Celtic, as no doubt these were, or Teutonic, as, probably, were some of the later immigrations. And to whichever of these immigrations the introduction of agriculture may be ultimately shown to belong, it must at least have been at a very remote time; and these plough tunes, as well as the funeral *caoinés*, breathe the very soul of a primitive race who have been ever remarkable for a singular depth of feeling.

I have been led into these remarks, partly because I wish to incorporate in this work my own notation of the Ploughman's Whistle of the King's County,



as I find it written in my notebook, as given below; and partly because I have it in my power to add a few more specimens of the ploughmen's tunes to the two already published.

The specimen which follows I may call the Ploughman's Whistle of the county of Kilkenny, as it was from that county it was procured. It was sent to me, together with many other unpublished airs, in the course of the last year, by Mr James Fogarty, late of Tibroghney; and it was, as he stated, learnt by him in his boyhood 'from the whistling of his grand-uncle, driving four horses'. As an example of this class of melodies it is remarkable in having three strains, or periods, of which the last should be played a little faster, and with more animation, than the two others:



To the preceding specimens of the plough tunes I venture to add in this place another of perhaps still higher interest, as having been occasionally sung with words when the ploughmen and their assistants became somewhat impatient for their call to dinner. The tune annexed, as well as the Irish stanza, was noted down from the whistling of Teige Mac Mahon, a county Clare peasant; and the interesting notice of the words which follows was given me by Mr Curry, who had become familiar both with the melody and words in early youth:

To understand fully the meaning of these words, a few remarks are necessary. Down even to our own well-grown boyhood, it was usual in Ireland to have three men engaged at the plough with the one set of four or six horses. One man (*Iománaidhe*) drove the horses at their head; another, called the Tailsman (*Aireamh*), stood in the fork, to guide and manage the plough; and the third man (*Triomhadh fear*) leaned on the head of the plough with a crutch – which was called the Third-man's stick – to keep it down, as the tendency of the short chain of the hinder horses was to pull it up. It was the Tailsman that delivered the above charge to his fellows – first to the driver, to behave either kindly or unkindly to the horses, as the hospitality or the churlishness of the employer might deserve; and, secondly to the Third-man – as the man who leaned on the crutch was called – desiring him to take his crutch out of the socket at the head of the plough, to put his foot in its place, and look up to see if their dinner was coming. When the housewife of the employer happened to be a careless woman who delayed the dinner and perhaps supplied it scantily, the Third-man gave a very unfavourable account of the prospect of the coming repast, and so at intervals the strain would be thus repeated – the Tailsman singing and addressing the driver, and the Third-man speaking:

Broid is buail is tiomáin,
 Láirín rua na drochmhá,
 Cos ar an gcéacht, a Thomáis,
 Is féach an bhfuil ár ndinnéar ag teacht.

Tá sé á bhuain.
Broid is buail is tiomáin, &c.

Tá sé á bhualadh.
Broid is buail is tiomáin, &c.

Tá sé á cháitheadh.
Broid is buail is tiomáin, &c.

Tá sé á chruachan.
Broid is buail is tiomáin, &c.

Tá sé á mheilt.
Broid is buail is tiomáin, &c.

Tá sé á chriathrú.
Broid is buail is tiomáin, &c.

Tá sé á fhuineadh.
Broid is buail is tiomáin, &c.

Tá sé á imfhuineadh²⁵
Broid is buail is tiomáin, &c.

Tá sé ag teacht.
Hób, a Héin, is tiomáin,
Láirín rua na dea-mhná,
Scoir na capaill, a Thomáis,
Anois tá ár ndinnéar ag teacht.

Tailsman. – Goad, and strike, and drive,
The bad woman's little brown mare;
Put your foot on the plough, O Thomas,
And see if our dinner is coming.

Third Man. – It [i.e., *the corn for it*] is a-reaping.
Tailsman. – Goad, and strike, and drive, etc.
Third Man. – It is a-threshing.
Tailsman. – Goad, and strike, and drive, etc.
Third Man. – It is a-winnowing.
Tailsman. – Goad, and strike, and drive, etc.
Third Man. – It is a-drying.
Tailsman. – Goad, and strike, and drive, etc.
Third Man. – It is a-grinding.
Tailsman. – Goad, and strike, and drive, etc.
Third Man. – It is a-sifting.
Tailsman. – Goad, and strike, and drive, etc.
Third Man. – It is a-kneading.
Tailsman. – Goad, and strike, and drive, etc.
Third Man. – It is a-baking.
Tailsman. – Goad, and strike, and drive, etc.
Third Man. – It is a-coming.

²⁵ *Imaine* > *iomhfuineadh*. The English text gives 'a-baking' as translation, but it is more accurate to translate it as 'thoroughly kneaded'.

Tailsman. – *Hób, and Héin,** and drive,
 The good woman's little brown mare:
 Unyoke the horses, O Thomas,
 Now that our dinner is coming.

'All then repeat, merrily, these last lines, as a chorus in unison.'

* *Hób* and *Héin* are expressions of endearment and encouragement addressed by drivers or guides to their horses, but sometimes have the meanings of *off* and *on* the ridge.

It should be observed that these words are sung to the latter half of the melody only, beginning at the fifth bar, the words of the preceding half being but a repetition of the words *Hóbo, hóbobobó*, applied as an encouragement to the horses.



*An Filleadh Ó Fhine Gall*²⁶ (The Return from Fingal)

The following wild and spirited martial air is one of the many ancient march-tunes still traditionally preserved in Ireland, and which are assumed to belong to the great Munster King, Brian Boru, or to his time. It is the tune known amongst the pipers as 'The Return from Fingal', from being supposed to be the march played, or sung, by the Munster troops on their return home from the glorious, but dearly-bought, victory at Clontarf, A.D. 1014 – and as expressive of the mixed feelings of sorrow and triumph which had been excited by the result of that conflict. How far this assumption of the remote antiquity of the tune can be relied on, there cannot now, of course, be any evidence to determine; but from its structure and character, there can be little doubt at least of the antiquity of the strain as an Irish march; and the tradition connected with it should not, perhaps, be too lightly rejected.

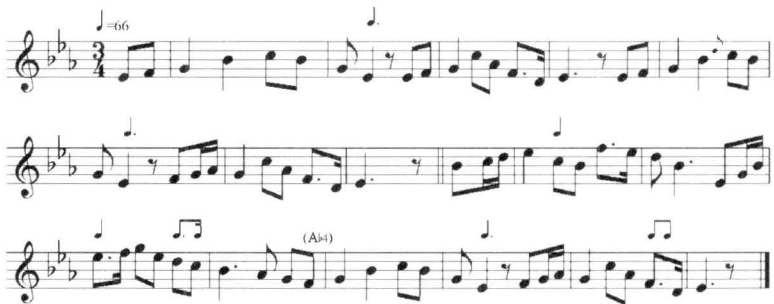
It should perhaps be remarked that the pipers now usually play this air without strictly attending to the minor mode to which it obviously belongs, and so give it a barbarous character, destructive to the air, and with which it would be impossible to combine any harmony of a correct nature. By playing the first part, however, in the major mode, the similarity of the first section to that of Auber's March in *La Muette de Portici* will be more immediately recognized.

²⁶ *An fillleadh ó Fhine Gall.*



Popular Ballad Tune

The following air was taken down about forty years ago from the singing of the Dublin ballad singers, by whom, at that period, it was very commonly applied to the street ballads of the day. I regret that I have long forgotten the name by which it was best known, and, therefore, cannot now identify it with any of the popular ballads of that time.



A Shinéad, Thug Tú an Chlú Leat (O Jenny, You Have Borne Away the Palm)

The following air will probably interest the lovers of our national music, as being the original vocal melody on which the popular reel or dance tune known as 'Pease upon a Trencher' has, apparently, been formed or founded, and which, in that form, has been used as a song and chorus by O'Keefe, in his musical farce of *The Poor Soldier*, and by Moore as a song in his *Irish Melodies*, connected with the playful lyric beginning with the words 'The time I've lost in wooing'. Such adaptation of the older vocal melodies, in slow or moderate time, to the purposes of dance music – by such changes in time and cadence as would give them the necessary liveliness – is of frequent occurrence, and may be considered as the cause of the sentimental character which pervades so

many of our reel and jig tunes, and which renders them easily reconvertible into song-tunes of a more serious nature.

This – as I conceive – original form of the melody was set in the parish of Bannagher, county of Londonderry, in the year 1836, and has never been hitherto published.



*Cormac Spáinneach, nó An Drumadóir*²⁷ (**Cormac Spaineach, or The Drummer**)

This fine air will be familiar to many of my readers as one of the Irish tunes first, as far as I am aware, introduced to the English public by O’Keeffe, the dramatist, in his once highly popular musical farce of *The Poor Soldier*, in which it is sung to the silly words ‘Good Morrow to your Nightcap’. A different and less correct version of the tune – the accents being wholly changed – has also been given by Dr Arnold in his musical farce of ‘Peeping Tom of Coventry’; and this latter version has been seized on as Scottish property by Mr George Thomson of Edinburgh, in whose collection of Scottish melodies it has been published as harmonized by Haydn, and with words written expressly for it by the poet James Hogg. As, however, this air has not, that I can find, been hitherto incorporated in any of the published collections of our melodies, nor has its name been preserved, or its Irish origin and antiquity established, I have deemed it desirable – in accordance with the plan of this work in such cases – to give it a place in this collection.

This tune is known by the name *Is Gorta Chúghatsa*, or ‘And hunger to you’ – and perhaps by many others – in the province of Connaught; but it is in Munster, to which it owes its origin, that it is best known, and particularly in the counties of Cork and Kerry, being, as Mr Curry finds reason to believe, the clan march of the princely tribe of the Mac Carthys, anciently located in those counties. Of the various songs written to it, the best which Mr Curry has found, and of which I annex a stanza, is a laudatory and warlike one, written for Cormac Mac Carthy *Spáineach*, of Carrig-na-var, and Tanist of Muscry, in the county of Cork, by Shane Claragh Mac Donnell, a distinguished Irish Jacobite poet, who was a native of Charleville in the same county, and – according to Dr O’Halloran, the historian – died there in the year 1751.

²⁷ *Cormac Spáineach, nó An drumadóir.*

Dia na bhfeart dod chumhdach, gan bhrúiteacht, gan bhrón,
 gan mhilleadh,
 Cian id cheap le clú chirt, i ndúchas an tsinsir mhóir;
 I dtiarnas treabh go trúpach, le teannbhriseadh treon gan
 time,
 Is a riar na Ranna chiumhais chluthair, chumhra, cois Laoi
 na seol;
 Gliaire gardach, grianda grámhar, iain, álainn ionamhain²⁸,
 Gan rian a ráite riala, is bráthair iarla Blarnan gile sibh;
 Maise marcraí Múscraí, an Cú Roí gan ceo ar a chine,
 Is Charraig na bhFear na bhfionnlaoch, ná cumhdaíonn
 a lón.

The God of Power protect you from affliction, grief, or injury,
 Long as the renowned stem in the patrimony of the great race,
 As the chief of troopful tribes to crush the daring foeman,
 And to rule the happy *Rinn* [*Ring-Rone*] down by the side of Lee;
 A valiant champion, of shining parts, generous, by all beloved,
 To whom reproach from no one comes – the lord of Blarney’s
 kinsman –
 The pride of Muscry’s heroes – the Curoi [*Mac Daire*] of the
 race untamed –
 And of Carrig-na-var, of the brave men who hoarded not
 their wealth.

In a satirical song written to this air by Thomas O’Meehan, a poet of the county of Clare, and preserved in a MS of the year 1780, as well as in a song on the battle of Carthage written by Thomas O’Gleeson, a poet of the county Limerick, the tune is called ‘Jack the Drummer’, by which name – no doubt derived from some popular ballad of the day – it was, as we may assume, best known at that time in Munster. Of this song, however, I have met with no copy, though it would appear to have been well known throughout the southern counties. But, with a setting of the melody sent to me by Mr James Fogarty, late of Tibroghney in the county of Kilkenny, he gives the following notice of Irish words there sung to it, which may possibly be a version of those entitled ‘Jack the Drummer’ by the Munster poets. Mr Fogarty writes thus: ‘This is an Irish song, in which is carried on a dialogue, verse for verse, between a big-drummer and a farmer’s daughter to whom he paid courtship. The drummer complains of her coldness, and with bitterness expresses a hope that she may become the wife of a rake, who will treat her with unkindness and neglect. But she replies that her choice shall be a fine hearty fellow, who will carry her to church on horseback, seated on a pillion behind him, whilst *his* poor girl will have to trudge there through puddle up to her knees, and he before her violently beating his drum.’ Be this, however, as it may, the two following stanzas, which

²⁸ *Ionúin* is the standard spelling, which is disyllabic. The metre, however, requires it to be pronounced as a trisyllable, hence the retention of the spelling *ionamhain*, pron. ion-av-ain.

have been recently obtained from Teige Mac Mahon, the Clare peasant, are obviously a portion, however varied, of the song sung to this air in Kilkenny, according to Mr Fogarty:

Is a chailín deas, na gcoacán cas,
 Ná fuil snó ná dath na gréine ort,
 An dtiocfá liom don tír ó dheas,
 A' féachain seal dár ngaolta.
 Thug mé grá agus taitneamh duit
 Gan fhios don tsaol bhréagach,
 Mar shúil is go dtiocfá abhaile liom,
 Is go mbeifeá agam mar chéile.

Is a dhrumadóir cad thuigtear dhuit
 Nách reanagád sa tír thú,
 Is ní hé sin féin is measa liom,
 Ach ná feadair mé cér díobh thú.
 Do chraiceann gabhair á ghreadadh agat,
 Is olc an bia do mhnaoi é
 Ag siúl na mbóithre fada leat,
 Is lathach uirthi is ríobal.

O pretty girl of the curling locks,
 On whom the colour or hue of the sun is not,
 Will you come with me to the southern country,
 To visit for a while our relations?
 I have given you love and affection
 Unknown to this false world,
 In hope that you would come with me,
 And that you would be mine as my wife.

And O, Drummer-man, what think you!
 Are you not a *Renegade* in *this* country?
 And this even is not what I think worst of,
 But that I know not what family you are of.
 Your *goat-skin*, a-beating by you,
 It is bad feeding for a wife
 Walking the long road after you,
 Bemired with mud and puddle.

It should be remarked that the words adapted to this air by Mac Donnell and O'Meehan require a repetition of the first strain, and also a return to that strain as a conclusion. But such repetitions, by causing the first strain to be played three times in succession, while the second strain would be played but once, would obviously soon fatigue the ear, and be at variance with the universal usage in, at least, all *old* march-tunes.



*An Cána Draighean Éille*²⁹ (The Blackthorn Cane with a Thong)

The following air – which appears to be the original form of the tune called ‘The Old Head of Denis’, to which Moore wrote his beautiful song on ‘The Meeting of the Waters’ – is one of many sweet melodies which I noted down from the singing of Biddy Monaghan [Monahan] – of whom I have already spoken at page 46 – while on a visit to my friend Mr R. Chambers Walker, QC, in the summer of 1837, at his seat, Rathcarrick, county of Sligo. I regret, however, to add that I have forgotten the name by which the air was known in that county, and I have therefore given it that by which Mr Curry tells me it is now generally known throughout Munster, both as a song tune and as a jig. The song which has given it the above name in Munster was written by Owen Roe O’Sullivan, whom I have already mentioned as a scholar and Irish poet of some eminence, and who died from the effects of reckless dissipation about the year 1785; but of this song Mr Curry only remembers the three following stanzas.

In the following versification of these stanzas I have endeavoured to give a correct idea of their metrical structure, without any departure from their literal sense.

Ní slaitín bhog bhaoth, ná géag den chuileann chas chuar,
 Bhí agamsa féin, ach gléas mo choinnithe suas;
 Mo chána draighean éille, bhí éadrom innealta cruaidh,
 Do goideadh óm thaobhsa ar aonach Thulacha Ruaidh.

Do thug mise an sceimhle úd oíche dhorcha, dhubh,
 Ón Mullach don Scríb is ní bhínnse salach ná fliuch:
 Dá dhoirche an oíche is ón ndraighean bhíodh solas agam,
 Is ná creidfinn ón saol nách soilse maidne bhíodh liom.

Do shiúlainnse coillte, maighne, cathracha, is cnoic,
 Ó Chorcaigh go hAidhne, is ó Laighean go Daingean ar muir;
 Gan scilling im adhairc, gan feidhm ar charaid ná ar chion,
 Is le heagla an draighin, do gheibhinne cothrom is cuid.

²⁹ *An cána draigheann éille.*

'Twas no soft silly switch, nor a twig of knobb'd holly so short,
That I myself had, but one that would give me support –
My blackthorn cane with a thong, light ready and true,
Was stolen from my side at the fair of Tullacha rue.

This ramble I made on a night that was dusky and black,
From Mullach to Screeb, without drizzle or dust on my back:
Tho' dark was the night, yet my blackthorn gave me such light,
That I would not believe the world but 'twas morning bright.

Through ports, plains, and cities, I soon would track out my way,
From Cork into Aidhne, from Leinster to Dingle Bay;
Without claim to regard – or even a groat in my horn,
Yet good cheer I'd receive from fear of my trusty blackthorn.

Many other songs have been written to this air in the South of Ireland, and amongst them one of considerable merit by John Fitzgerald, son of the Knight of Glin, on Mary, the daughter of O'Connor Kerry, about the year 1670.



Tá mo Ghrása ar an Abhainn,³⁰ (**My Love is upon the River**)

This beautiful and, as I believe, most ancient melody, is another of the many fine tunes communicated to me by Mr James Fogarty, late of Tibroghney, of whom – as a contributor to this work, of many valuable melodies, which, most probably but for him would have been for ever lost – I have already more than once had occasion to make mention. Of the Irish song usually sung to it during the last century, Mr Fogarty, unfortunately, could give me but the following stanza. 'It was', as he writes, 'a beautiful love-song for a person crossing the seas', and, as he believed, 'it was also political' – that is, in other words, Jacobite; for this guise of a love song put on to conceal treason – and which has been so skilfully adopted by Moore in some of his finest lyrics – was an ordinary one amongst the Irish, as well as the Scotch, immediately after the Revolution. This stanza is, however, valuable, as most probably preserving the original, or at least the more ancient name of the melody, and also as preserving the words of the incongruous chorus tacked to it, no doubt from some other song, and which had obviously suggested to O'Keefe his popular song known as 'The Cruiskeen Lawn'.

³⁰ *Tá mo grádhsa ar an abhainn.*

Tá mo ghrása ar an abhainn,
Is é a luascadh ó thonn go tonn;
Crann gan duille as a cheann,
Is cé b'áil lem ghráin ar fiarán ann.

Ólfaimid an crúiscín is bíodh sé lán,
Ólfaimid an crúiscín lán, lán, lán,
Ólfaimid an crúiscín,
Sláinte gheal mo mhúirnín,
Is is cuma liom a cúilín dubh nó bán.

My Love is upon the river,
And he a rocking from wave to wave;
A tree without foliage over his head,
And what does my love want a-straying there?

Let us drink the *cruiskeen*, and let it be full;
Let us drink the *cruiskeen* – full, full, full!
Let us drink the *cruiskeen*,
The bright health of my *murneen*,
And I care not if her *cuilín* be black or white.

The musical score is written in G minor (one flat) and 2/4 time. It begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 62. The melody is presented on a single staff with a treble clef. The score includes several ornaments: a mordent over the first note of the first line, a mordent over the eighth note of the second line, a mordent over the eighth note of the third line, and a mordent over the eighth note of the fourth line. A double bar line is placed after the second line. The word "Chorus" is written above the staff at the beginning of the third line. The notes of the chorus are marked with "(B+)" and "(E-)" above them. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fourth line.

Lady Wrixon – A Planxty by O'Carolan

Among the numerous planxties of Carolan's still preserved, there are many of greater playfulness, spirit, and more graceful melody than the following, but there is scarcely one more thoroughly Irish in its structure and tone of sentiment. In this we have no inequalities in the time of the parts; and none of

the ambitious, wandering, imitations of the Italian *gigas*, so common in his compositions of this class. From the name of this tune, we may assume that it was composed during Carolan's sojourn in the southern counties – which was apparently before the year 1720 – as I do not find that any of the Wrixon family had property out of the county of Cork, where the name of its representative has now merged into that of Wrixon Beecher, and has received a more lasting lustre from the genius of the present Lady Wrixon Beecher than any it was in the power of the Irish minstrel to confer upon her distant predecessor. Of Carolan's 'Lady Wrixon' I have found no account; but she appears, pretty certainly, to have been the wife of Benjamin Wrixon, Esq., of Ballygibblin, the head of the Wrixon family, and ancestor to Sir W. Wrixon Beecher. This Benjamin Wrixon was the elder of four brothers, and the most considerable personage of the name. He died about 1733.

The tune has been taken from that very rare publication of Carolan's compositions, published by O'Neill of Christ Church Yard, Dublin, about the year 1721, and as it has never received a place in any of the subsequent general publications of Irish tunes, I have deemed it desirable to reproduce it in this work in the hope of giving it a permanent existence.



*Máire Ní Mhac Aodha*³¹ (Molly Hewson)

My acquisition of the following melody, as in so many instances already noticed, was the result of an accident, but for which it would most probably have perished with many others of greater excellence. It is one of many tunes noted down about forty years since, from the singing of a now aged lady – a near connection of my own – those airs having been learned in her child-days from the singing of an old woman who was frequently brought in to assist in washing in her father's house. And as those tunes had been similarly learned by the washerwoman in her youth, an antiquity of nearly two centuries may fairly be assigned to them, with the probability of a far more remote origin. The singer, who was named Betty Skillin, was one of those characters that would

³¹ *Maire Ní Mhac Aodha*. It seems evident from Hewson, the English rendering of the name, that *Ní Mhac Aodha* is what is intended here. However, my colleague Seosamh Mac Muiri has suggested that it may be *Ní Mhacadhá*, which would be rendered Mackey.

not, perhaps, have been easily discovered out of Ireland. A nearly illiterate peasant girl, but possessed of singular beauty and a very sensitive nature, she had been led from the path of virtue in her youth, and became the mistress of the ancestor of the noble family of Blessington – the celebrated Luke Gardiner, who died at Bath in July 1753. But though supported in splendour and treated with a devoted affection, she was not happy; she sighed to be an honest woman, and became so as the wife of one of her own chairmen [*sic*]. She had a fine voice, and was a passionate lover of the airs she had learned in her childhood, and which she never ceased singing while employed at her humble occupation.

Of the song sung by her to this air – which was a doggrel ballad one – I have only obtained the following half stanza, which was sung to the second strain of the melody.

Molly's mild, modest, kind, chaste, divine – a beauteous maid,
Humble, meek, soft, discreet, it is by her my heart's betray'd.



*Lán-Bheo*³² (All Alive)

This tune – together with many others – was obtained through the kindness of a friend from a neatly written MS music book of the middle of the last century, which contained about three hundred of the dance tunes at that period apparently the most popular amongst the higher classes of society in Ireland. In its style it exhibits an affinity to that of the jigs and planxties of Carolan, rather than to that of the older and more purely Irish dance music of the country; and it may fairly, perhaps, be regarded as a composition of that great composer's time, if not, as possible, one of his own numerous productions. For it is certain that, amongst the as yet unedited melodies of Ireland, there are a great number, and particularly of the lively class of airs, that should obviously be attributed to Carolan's prolific genius; while, on the other hand, there have been many airs of a tender and sentimental character ascribed to him without reason, as they can be proved to be compositions of a much earlier period.

³² *Lán bheódha*.



*Cois Cuain Mhúdhorna*³³ (Along the Mourne Shore)

The beautiful shore of the barony of Mourne in the county of Down, has suggested a theme to more than one peasant English ballad writer, and, consequently, given a name to several of our melodies to which they have been adapted. Of these melodies, the following – which is, perhaps, one of the most pleasing – was, with many other beautiful airs, noted down from the singing of the late Mr Joseph Hughes of the Bank of Ireland, who had learned them while a boy in his native county of Cavan, and preserved them in his memory during life with an undiminishable affection.

Of the ballad words which he sang to it I have retained no recollection; and the older Irish name of the melody I have never been able to discover.



³³ *Cois cuain Mhughdhorna.*

*Is Trua gan Peata an Mhaoir Agam*³⁴ **(I Wish the Shepherd's Pet were Mine)**

The following playful melody, with its words, was obtained in the course of the summer of 1853 from the blind county of Clare peasant, Teige Mac Mahon, already spoken of. The words, though of no high poetic merit, are not without interest, from their natural simplicity, and as an illustration of the thoughts of Irish peasant life.

Is trua gan peata 'n mhaoir agam,
 Is trua gan peata 'n mhaoir agam,
 Is trua gan peata 'n mhaoir agam,
 Is na caoire beaga bána.
 Is ó gairim, gairim thú
 Is grá mo chroí gan cheilg thú,
 Is ó gairim, gairim thú
 Is tú peata beag do mháthar.

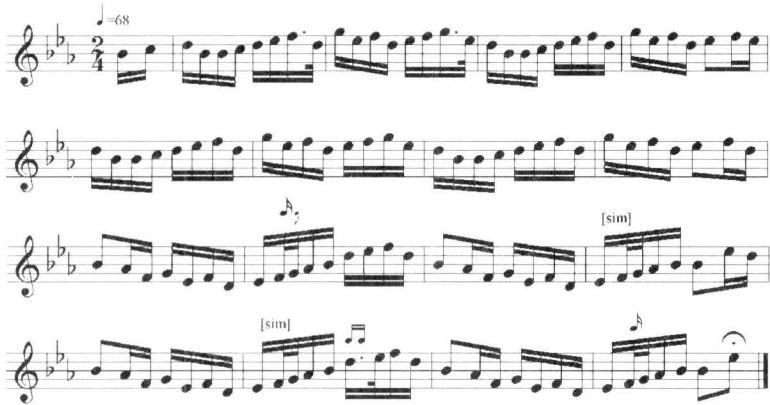
Is trua gan bólacht bainne agam,
 Is trua gan bólacht bainne agam,
 Is trua gan bólacht bainne agam,
 Is Cáitín ó na máthair.
 Is ó gairim, gairim thú
 Is grá mo chroí gan cheilg thú,
 Is ó gairim, gairim thú
 Is tú peata geal do mháthar.

I wish the shepherd's pet were mine,
 I wish the shepherd's pet were mine,
 I wish the shepherd's pet were mine,
 And her pretty little white sheep.
 And oh! I hail, I hail thee,
 And the love of my heart for ever thou art,
 And oh! I hail, I hail thee,
 Thou little pet of thy mother.

I wish that scores of kine were mine,
 I wish that scores of kine were mine,
 I wish that scores of kine were mine,
 And Katey from her mother.
 And oh! I hail, I hail thee,
 And the love of my heart for ever thou art,
 And oh! I hail, I hail thee,
 Thou fair pet of thy mother.

³⁴ *As truagh gan peata an mhaoir agam.*

The musical reader will perceive that this melody has very much the character of a reel tune, and, with its time quickened, it is used as such in the county of Clare.



*D'imigh mo Ghrá – Tá mo Chroí Tinn*³⁵ (My Lover has Gone – My Heart is Sore)

The very pleasing melody which follows is one of those obtained from the county of Mayo, through the kindness of Mr P. J. O'Reilly of Westport, and for which I have already expressed my grateful acknowledgement in connection with the beautiful air *Ní Threigfidh mo Ghrá Go Deo Mé*, or, 'My Love will ne'er forsake me', given at page 56. Of the words sung to it I have no remark to offer, as they have not been transmitted to me. But in reference to the melody, it should perhaps be observed that its construction is, like many others from the same locality, somewhat peculiar, particularly in the second strain or part, which commences like a repetition or variation of the corresponding phrase of the first part, but, in the phrase following, surprises the ear by a graceful progression into the relative minor, and then returns, by a skilful transition in the succeeding phrase, to the usual close, as found in the first part.



³⁵ *D'imthigh mo ghrádh, tá mo chroidhe teinn.*

An Cailín Bán (The Fair Girl)

This beautiful melody was noted down in the summer of 1839 from the singing of the late Patrick Coneely, a Galway piper of more than average ability, whose memory was richly stored with the unpublished music of his country, and of whom I gave some account in the *Irish Penny Journal* for the year 1840. Of the words which Coneely sang to it – an Irish love-song – I neglected, unfortunately, at the time, to secure a copy, and I have never since been able to obtain one. It is probable, indeed, that both the song and air, which were learnt by Coneely from the singing of his father and grandfather, were only known amongst the peasantry of the mountain districts of Galway and Mayo, as I have never been able to trace a familiarity with either in any other part of Ireland.

The *Cailín Bán* may be regarded as a good specimen of a large class of melodies most peculiarly Irish in their construction and general character, as, with the exception of Harry Carey's air of 'Sally in our Alley', I have not found, amongst the old melodies of England, Wales, or lowland Scotland, a single air having similar features. In a general way, these melodies may perhaps be described as of a narrative or excited discoursing character – animated and energetic in their movement, yet marked with earnest tenderness and impassioned sentiment – more or less tinged with sadness, yet rarely, if ever, as in the *caoines*, sinking into tones of extreme or despairing melancholy. They are, in short, pre-eminently the love melodies of the Irish, giving 'a very echo to the seat where love is throned', and bringing before us, more vividly than is done by any other class of our airs, those characteristics of the music of Ireland which excited the admiration of Giraldus Cambrensis, and of which he has given us so admirable an account.

These melodies are all in triple or three-four time, and consist of two parts, or strains, of eight bars each, and the same number of phrases, divided into two sections. Of these sections the second of the first part is, generally, a repetition – sometimes, however, slightly modified – of the section preceding; and the second section of the second part is usually a repetition of the second section of the first part – sometimes also modified in the first, or even the first and second phrases – but, as usual in all Irish melodies, always agreeing with it in its closing cadence.

In their expression of sentiment these melodies are similarly marked by an artful symmetry in design; the phrases in the whole of the first strain having, usually, a subdued tone, while those in the first section of the second strain rise into impassioned energy, as if the singer were excited by harrowing recollections, and then returning, as if exhausted, to their preceding quietness, sink gently down to their final close. Of the class of melodies which I have thus, as I fear, feebly attempted to analyze, I have already given examples in the preceding pages – as in the *An Cailín Rua*, p. 41; the *An Cleasaí Fir Óig*, p. 45; the *Buachaill Caol Dubh*, pp. 58–61 – and numerous other examples will be given in the progress of this work.

Referring now to the songs sung to a class of melodies so peculiar in their structure, it will be at once apparent that such songs should exhibit a similar peculiarity, and an equally artful regularity in their rhythmical formation; and

indeed it will scarcely admit of doubt, that it is to this peculiarity of rhythmical structure in the songs that the melodies owe their origin. These songs consist of double stanzas of eight lines each, or sixteen in the whole, to complete the sense, and thus correspond with the two parts of the melody, and the sixteen phrases of which it is composed. Of these lines, every four correspond to a section of the melody, and consist of three quinto-syllabic lines, having a rhyming agreement in the two last syllables, of which the first must be a long, and the second a short one, or in other words a trochee; and these are followed by a quarto-syllabic line terminating with an iambic foot, which must rhyme with the corresponding fourth line of the second section. Such a structure of versification would obviously appear to be one of great difficulty, and in the English language the difficulty is almost insurmountable – as the rhymes must be consonantal as well as assonantal; but in the Irish poetry – as in that of many other ancient languages in which the rhymes are only assonantal, there is no such difficulty, and consequently it became one of very general adoption, particularly for love songs. Of the few attempts of our educated poets to compose stanzas of this structure for Irish melodies, Milliken's burlesque ballad of 'The Groves of Blarney' may be referred to as an example; but the best is that called the 'Deserter', written by the celebrated John Philpot Curran, a specimen of which will serve to illustrate the preceding remarks:

If sadly thinking,
 And spirits sinking,
 Could more than drinking
 My cares compose,
 A cure for sorrow
 From sighs I'd borrow,
 And hope tomorrow
 Might end my woes.

But since in wailing
 There's nought availing,
 And fate unfailing
 Must strike the blow;
 Then for that reason,
 And for a season,
 We will be merry
 Before we go.

Excellent, however, as this adaptation is, and it sings perfectly to the melody, it will be seen that it is not a perfect example of the Irish structure, as the line preceding the last has no corresponding rhyme.

In the lyrics of our national poet, Moore, we find no example of the adaptation of a stanza of this structure to any of the *Irish Melodies*, with the peculiar structure and sentiment of which, in truth, he had a far inferior intimacy than that possessed by the great Irish orator. Indeed Moore appears even to have avoided the selection of melodies of this class as subjects for his

Muse; and in the very few of them to be found in his work – however happy in the expression of their sentiment – he has in every instance failed to convey their proper native rhythm. And in one instance, that of his words to ‘The Groves of Blarney’, or, properly, ‘The Young Man’s Dream’, so well known as ‘The Last Rose of Summer’, though he had before him the example of the tolerably correct rhythm of Milliken’s song to that air, he did not hesitate to change the accents and character of the melody to suit it to words which could not otherwise be sung to it.



*D'imigh Sé agus D'imigh Sé*³⁶ (He's Gone, He's Gone)

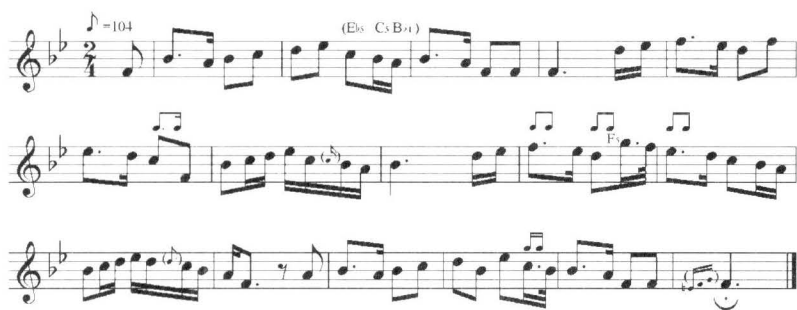
The very pleasing and characteristic melody which follows was obtained in the parish of Dungiven, county of Londonderry, in the summer of 1837; and it may perhaps be considered as one of the many ancient tunes which had their origin and are now only to be found amongst the Irish race in that beautiful county. Its original, or at least its old Gaelic name is, I fear, irrecoverably lost, as the Irish language has ceased to be a spoken one in that county, and the name which I have given to it above is borrowed from the first lines of a local English peasant ballad now sung to it, and to which it probably owes its preservation. These lines run thus:

He's gone, he's gone, young Jamie's gone,
Will I never see him more.

To the musical reader who has adopted, or may feel disposed to adopt, the strongly asserted theory of Mr Bunting as to the grand characteristic of Irish melody – a theory to which I have felt it necessary to express a qualified dissent in the Dissertation prefixed to this work – it may be proper to direct his attention to this melody as an example – and by no means a solitary one – of an air essentially Irish in its construction as in its tone of feeling, in which such

³⁶ *D'imthigh sé 'gus d'imthigh sé.*

grand characteristic does not appear. I allude to the positive and emphatic presence of the tone of the submediant, or major sixth, of which Mr Bunting thus speaks: ‘The feature which, in truth, distinguishes all Irish melody, whether proper to the defective bagpipe, or suited to the perfect harp, is not the negative omission, but the positive and emphatic presence of a particular tone; and this tone is that of the submediant, or major sixth, in other words, the tone of E in the scale of G. This it is that stamps the true Scotie character (for we Irish are the original Scoti) on every bar of the air in which it occurs, so that the moment this tone is heard, we exclaim, “That is an Irish melody.”’ That such tone is indeed a characteristic one, both of Irish and Scottish melodies, I by no means deny; but I cannot concur with Mr Bunting that it is an essential, or even the most characteristic feature of a true Irish melody.



*Cailín an Tí Mhóir*³⁷ (The Girl of the Great House)

This air, which appears to me to be a very characteristic specimen of the true old Irish jig, is a very popular dance tune in the counties of Cork, Kerry and Limerick, in all of which it is considered to be very ancient, and to have been originally used as a march. It is known amongst the Irish-speaking population of these counties as the *Cailín an Tí Mhóir*, or, literally, the ‘Girl of the Great House’; but in English it is called ‘The Housekeeper’. The set of the air here given has been selected as the truest from a variety of versions of it obtained from those southern counties, and of which three have been communicated to me by Mr Patrick Joyce, and one by the Revd Father Walsh, the present kind-hearted old parish priest of Iveragh in Kerry. Amongst these versions of the tune there are, however, no essential or important differences.

As this tune is the first well-marked example which I have selected for publication of the dance-music of Ireland – a large class of our airs which has received from preceding collectors but a very small amount of attention, as if such airs were considered of little value, but which I think of equal interest to those of any other class of our melodies – it appears to me to be desirable that I should offer some remarks, not upon the antiquity of this class of music in Ireland, which will be found treated of in the preliminary Dissertation, but

³⁷ *Cailín a'tighe mhoir.*

upon the various forms or subdivisions under which the innumerable airs of this class may be arranged, and upon the characteristic features by which they are to be distinguished and denominated. I shall also, in connection with a specimen of each subdivision or varied form of these tunes, offer some descriptive remarks upon the mode in which they were danced, a subject not hitherto, as I believe, in any way illustrated, and which I should be unable to treat of but for the kindness of Mr Patrick Joyce, who has communicated to me his knowledge of the subject, and whose words I shall in every instance use; for though his observations, which have been formed on his intimacy with the dances of the Munster peasantry, are applied only to them, they are, as I have every reason to believe, equally applicable to the dances of the other provinces of Ireland.

The dance music of Ireland may then be described as of several kinds, of which the principal are: the common, or 'double jig'; the 'single jig'; the 'hop jig'; the 'reel'; the 'hornpipe'; 'set dances' of different kinds; and various 'country dances'. Of these dances I shall at present only notice the common, or 'double jig', of which the tune that follows is an example.

The common, or 'double jig', is a dance tune in six-eight time, usually consisting of two parts of eight measures each, each of these measures usually presenting two quaver triplets throughout the tune, and each part being always played twice. In these general features, this most common variety of our dance tunes only differs from the great majority of the old clan marches in the somewhat greater rapidity of time in which they are generally performed; and I have already expressed my conviction that very many of these common jigs were originally marches, and were anciently used for both purposes; but on this point the reader will find more in the preliminary Dissertation.

'The common or "double" jig', as Mr Joyce writes, 'is generally danced by either four or two persons, but the number is not limited. The dance to this, as well as to every other kind of dance tune, consists of a succession of distinct movements called "steps", each of which is usually continued or repeated during either four or eight bars of the tune. Every step is danced at least twice in succession, first with the right foot, and after with the left. If the step extend to four bars or measures only, it is danced twice with each foot, in order to extend it over the whole of one part of the tune played twice. Every "step" has corresponding to it what is called its "double step", or "double", or "doubling", that is, another similar step which extends to double the time of the former; and in relation to this, the original on which the double is founded is called the "single step". After a single step has been danced, it is "doubled"; that is, its double step is danced immediately after with right and left foot in succession.

'A movement, or as it is called in Munster, a step, is always danced in one place – a promenade round the room is never called a step.

'All steps are formed by the combination of certain elementary movements or operations, which have got various names expressive of their character, such as "grinding", "drumming", "battering", "shuffling", "rising", "sinking", "heel and toe", etc. A few of the most important of these may be described.

'The dance of the jig always commences with what is called "the rising step", in which first the right foot is *raised* pretty high from the floor, and thrown

forward – then the left – and lastly the right; which three movements correspond with the first three bars of the tune, and the fourth bar is finished by either “grinding” or “shuffling”. Grinding is performed by striking the floor quickly and dexterously with the toes of each foot alternately, six times during a bar, corresponding with the six notes of the two triplets forming the bar, and requires much practice from the learner. Grinding, when performed with nailed shoes, is of all the dance steps by far the most woefully destructive to the floor – especially if an earthen one. Instead of grinding, however, shuffling is often substituted, which latter is a lighter movement, and as its name imports, is performed by giving each foot alternately a kind of light *shuffling* motion in front of the other.

‘After the rising step follow various other steps of a light and skipping kind, and comparatively easily performed, until a certain stage of the proceedings, when all the dancers move round the room, while one part of the tune is played, i.e. during the playing of sixteen bars. This movement is commonly called “halving” the jig, for it usually occurs about the middle of the dance, and the steps after it are generally of a very different kind from those used before. After halving comes the really hard work, when battering, drumming, and all the other contrivances for making the greatest possible quantity of noise, come into requisition. Battering is of several kinds, according to the kind of tune. In a jig it is called “double battering”, or simply “doubling”. This is done by first leaning the whole weight of the body on one foot; the dancer then hops very slightly with that foot, and throws forward the other, drawing it back instantly again, and striking the floor with the ball of the foot twice – once while moving it forward, and again when drawing it back. Thus the floor is struck three times, and these strokes must correspond with the three quavers forming one of the two triplets in a bar. Frequently this is done twice with one foot and twice with the other, which corresponds with two musical bars, and so on to the end of that part of the tune; but generally, battering is intimately blended up with various other evolutions, and not continued for any length of time by itself. The term “doubling” has been applied to this kind of battering from the double stroke given by the foot that is thrown forward; and from this the jig in six-eight time came to be called the “double jig”.

‘In grinding and battering, the toes only are used. Drumming is performed by both toes and heels, and is perhaps the most noisy of all the operations in dancing. In drumming also, the triplets of the jig are timed, and it is sometimes continued for a considerable time, but is more commonly united with other movements.

‘The movements I have described under the above names are only a very few out of the number of those in use, the rest having either no names at all, or names which I never knew. No description can give an idea of the quickness, the dexterity and gracefulness with which these various movements are performed by a good dancer; and notwithstanding their great variety and minute complication, scarcely a note in the music is allowed to pass without its corresponding stroke. There are few movements of the human body that require so much skill, dexterity and muscular action, all combined; and, for my part, I must confess that I have never seen any exhibition of manly activity that

has given me such a sense of pleasure as a double jig danced by a good Munster dancer.'

To the preceding remarks of Mr Joyce I may add that the jigs of this class are also popularly known, at least in Munster, by the appellation of *Móinín* (pron. *Moneen*) jigs – a term derived from the word *Móin*, a bog, grassy sod, or green turf, and which, according to Mr Curry, is also an ancient name for a sporting place, somewhat in the same sense as the English word 'turf' is now applied to a race-course: and hence the application of its diminutive, *Móinín*, to this kind of jig, because at the fairs, races, hurling matches, and other holiday assemblages, it was always danced on the choicest green spot, or *Móinín*, that could be selected in the neighbourhood.



*B'fhearr liomsa Ainnir gan Gúna*³⁸ (**I Would Rather Have a Maiden Without a Gown**)

For the following beautiful air, as well as for the preceding, and many other melodies of equal value, I have to express my very grateful acknowledgements to Mr Patrick Joyce, formerly of Glenasheen in the county of Limerick, but now of Dublin – one of the most zealous and judicious of the collectors of Irish music who have voluntarily given me their aid in the prosecution of this work. Like most of the airs in his collection, this tune was procured in Munster, and it very probably belongs to that still singularly musical province. It was learnt by Mr Joyce from the singing of his brother, Mr Michael Joyce of Glenasheen, who had it from his father. Of the Irish song sung to it, Mr Joyce says that his brother can now only remember the annexed fragment; but the subject of it was a comparison drawn by a young man between two women, one of them old and ugly, but very rich – possessed of large herds of cattle, and to whom he was importuned to get married – the other, a young and blooming girl, but entirely fortuneless; and he contrasts the riches and ugliness of the former with the poverty and beauty of the latter, whom he finally determines to prefer. The fragment above alluded to is as follows:

³⁸ *B'fhearr liomsa Ainnir gan Gúna.*

Seacht bhfichid bó bhainne, gan amhras,

* * * * *

Dhá sheisreach chapall do threabhach,
Dhá sheacht bhfichid donn-droimfhionn óg;
Do b'fhearr liomsa ainnir gan gúna
Ná smíste do ramharchaille chrón.

Seven score milchers, without doubt,

* * * * *

Twice six ploughing horses to plough with,
Twice seven score young dun heifers;
I would rather have a maiden without a gown
Than a stump of a fat, swarthy woman.



In reference to the construction of the preceding air, it should perhaps be observed that it is one which characterizes, and is peculiar to, a large class of Gaelic melodies, and which may be described as airs in triple time, consisting of two strains, or parts, in each of which there are two sections, and in each of these, again, two extended or irregular phrases. Such melodies, therefore, when written in three-four time – with a view to enable the performer to mark the time and accents more readily – as in the example above, will have the seemingly irregular number of twelve bars, or measures, in each part; whereas, if considered as properly in six-four, or nine-eight time, the parts will consist of but four bars in each part, or eight in all – as in the example of the well-known air of this class called *Cailín Deas Crúite na mBó*,³⁹ or 'The Pretty girl Milking the cow', which has been always so written.

Further, with respect to the rhythm of melodies of this class, I may remark that the two phrases in each of their four sections consist in each of three accented, or emphatic notes, each of which is preceded and followed by an unaccented one, with this exception, that every second phrase closes upon the accented note; or, using the terms of Grecian rhythm, the first phrase of each section consists of three amphibrachs, and the second of two amphibrachs and an iambus. Hence it follows that the stanza suited to such melodies should consist of eight lines, corresponding to the eight phrases of the tune, the lines

³⁹ *Cailín deas g-cruidadh na mbo.*

alternately containing nine and eight syllables, having their accents in accordance with those of the melody; and as a very happy example of such metrical adaptation of English words to a melody of this class, I may instance Moore's song, 'The Valley Lay Smiling Before Me', written for the Irish melody of *Cailín Deas Crúite na mBó*, or 'The Pretty Girl Milking the Cow', as above referred to.

Lastly, I would remark that it appears to me in the highest degree probable that it is to this class of the ancient Irish or Gaelic vocal melodies we should ascribe the origin of that class of our dance tunes in nine-eight time, popularly known in Munster by the name of 'hop jigs'. Such dance tunes – as I have already stated in a preceding notice at page 57 – are certainly very peculiar to Ireland; though I have found an interesting specimen of a dance tune, very similar in construction, in the Introduction to Wood's recent valuable work, *The Dance Music of Scotland*, where it is given, amongst the examples of the old dance tunes of continental countries, as a 'Song for dancing; of Sarlat, in the ancient province of Perigord, now in the Department of Dordogne, in the south-west of France'. It is written in three-four time; and as an interesting illustration of the preceding remarks, I have taken the liberty of inserting it here.



Ó 'Bhean an Tí nach Suairc é sin⁴⁰ (O Woman of the House, Is Not That Pleasant!)

If we were disposed to take the widely spread popularity of an Irish tune as an evidence of its antiquity – and we believe that such an inference would, in most cases, be a correct one – the following air might be considered as of no recent origin, for it has long been a favourite in most, if not all, parts of Ireland. But be that as it may, it is a melody of considerable interest, as well on account of its strongly marked Irish character, as of the uses to which it was applied by the peasantry of Ireland in troubled times.

To those who have inconsiderately, if not flippantly, expressed an opinion that the melodies of Ireland are wanting in variety of character, that they are tiresomely uniform in their expression of an unmanly despondency, or, in more poetic phrase, that they are 'the music of a people who had lost their liberty',

⁴⁰ *O bhean an tighé, nach suairc é sin.*

and so forth – and such opinions are still very generally expressed – this air, as well as numberless others still preserved, may be cited in proof of the fallacy of such hasty assumption. It is true indeed that in this, as well as in most of our old lively tunes, whether vocal or instrumental in character, there is a blending of tones not in themselves mirthful or enlivening; for, as the poet Moore writes, ‘Even in their liveliest strains we find some melancholy note intrude – some minor third or flat seventh – which throws its shade as it passes, and makes even mirth interesting.’ But such tones are only like the judicious touches of dark colour in a bright picture, which instead of darkening, serve to increase its brilliancy, while they add to its substance and vigour.

Again. [*Sic*] To those who value a national melody on account of the historical associations which may appertain to it, this air will possess an interest independent of any intrinsic merit it may lay claim to, from the fact that it has been chosen by the Whiteboys and other illegal combinations of the southern peasantry as their choral song and night march; and to men of their temperament a very inspiring march and song tune it must have made. And hence, it naturally followed that this melody should have become the medium for the dissemination of a large amount of excitement to disaffection, in the shape of Irish ballad songs, more remarkable for the daring boldness of the feelings they expressed than for the display of any metrical skill or poetic merit.

Such rude ballads, however, are not without a certain degree of interest, as expressive of the popular mind during periods of its excitement, and their preservation would not be without value to the historian, but unfortunately they are now most difficult to be procured, and particularly those which are the most worthy of preservation, namely, the ballads in the Irish language, which were never committed to print, and rarely even to manuscript – so that they can now only be sought for in the dim and nearly forgotten traditions of the people. Of the many songs of this class which Mr Curry heard in his youth, he has been only able to remember a few stanzas, and as they are all very much of the same character, the following one will suffice as an example:

Do chualasa scéal aniar is anoir,
 Go raibh Corcaigh dhá dó fá dhó aige’n mob,
 General Hoche is a chlaíomh chinn óir,
 Ag réiteach an róid do Bonaparte –
 Agus ó ’bhean an tí nach suairc é sin!

I have heard news from the West and the South,
 That Cork has been burned twice by the mob,
 General Hoche, with his gold-hilted sword,
 And he clearing the road for Bonaparte –
 And, O woman of the house, is not that pleasant!

In a melody so generally known in most parts of Ireland, it might naturally be expected that there would exist a great variety of local forms, from amongst which it might be difficult to select any one as the most pleasing or original, and such I have found to be the case. I have, therefore, chosen as deserving of

publication two notations of the tune procured from different provinces of Ireland, which embody the most striking differences the melody assumes – leaving it to the reader to determine their relative merits. The first of these settings may be regarded as the Munster version of the air, as it was noted from the singing of the Clare peasant, Teige Mac Mahon, and corroborated by that of Mr Curry.



The setting which follows may be regarded as the Connaught form of the air. It was set in that province by a talented musician, the late Mr William Forde of Cork, during a tour – made for the purpose of collecting Irish melodies – in the western counties, in the years 1846–7, and has been kindly communicated to me by my valued friend, Mr John E. Pigot.



In connection with the preceding air, I have yet a remark to offer relative to the peculiarity of its construction. This peculiarity – which it shares with a class of airs which may be considered as exceptional in their form, and of which this air is a good example – consists in the odd number of its sections, namely five, while in the great mass of our tunes, the number is an even one, or, as usual, four; and I may add that such tunes are usually in common time, or that compound form of it having a six-eight measure. The cause of this peculiarity of structure will be at once obvious, namely, the necessity for a fifth section in airs composed for stanzas having a repetition of their fourth line, or a fifth added as a burden.

Since the preceding notice was placed in the printer's hands, I have accidentally discovered another Irish song, or rather fragment of one, which had been obviously written to this air, and which, though modern, I have much pleasure in adding to the other fragment already given, as exhibiting one of the better and abiding traits of the Irish peasant nature, in strong contrast to those partially acquired and temporary ones which had been superinduced by untoward circumstances, happily not likely again to occur. I found it in an interesting little volume, entitled *Irish Popular Songs, with English Metrical*

Translations, etc., by [the late] Edward Walsh – Dublin: James McGlashan, 1847. I give his own metrical version of the song, which very well preserves the rhythm of the original.

Ar maidin inné roimh ghréin go moch,
Do dhearcas an bhé ba niamhdha cruth;
Sneachta agus caor bhí ag caismirt 'na scéimh
Is a seangachorp séimh mar ghéis ar sruth;
Is a chuisle mo chroí! Créad í'n ghruaim sin ort?

Ba bhinne guth caomh a béil le sult
Ná Orpheus do léig go faon na toirc;
Bhí a ramhar-rosg réidh mar chriostal na mbraon
Ar ramhairghlais fhéir roimh ghréin go moch;
Is a chuisle mo chroí! Créad í'n ghruaim sin ort?

Before the sun rose at yester-dawn,
I met a fair maid a-down the lawn;
The berry and snow to her cheek gave its glow,
And her bosom was fair as the sailing swan –
Then, pulse of my heart! What gloom is thine?

Her beautiful voice more hearts hath won
Than Orpheus' lyre of old had done;
Her ripe eyes of blue were crystals of dew,
On the grass of the lawn before the sun –
And, pulse of my heart! What gloom is thine ?

*Suigh Annsó, a Mhuirín, Láimh Liom*⁴¹ (**Sit Here, O Murneen, Near Me**)

The following air is an example of a large class of old Irish melodies which, leaving but one strain, have not hitherto been deemed by collectors as worthy of notice. They are, however, the only airs suited to the ancient Irish short ballad quatrain; and although, when in triple time, they usually present but four phrases in so many bars or measures, yet they often exhibit the characteristics of Irish melody quite as much as airs of greater length and variety. This tune was noted from the singing of Teige Mac Mahon – but the words are unfit for publication. The air should be repeated with greater force as a chorus.



⁴¹ *Suig annsó, a mhúirín, láimh liom.*

Name Unknown [**Londonderry Air**]⁴²

For the following beautiful air I have to express my very grateful acknowledgment to Miss J. Ross, of [Newtown]-Limavady, in the county of Londonderry – a lady who has made a large collection of the popular unpublished melodies of that county, which she has very kindly placed at my disposal, and which has added very considerably to the stock of tunes which I had previously acquired from that still very Irish county. I say still very Irish; for though it has been planted for more than two centuries by English and Scottish settlers, the old Irish race still forms the great majority of its peasant inhabitants; and there are few if any counties in which, with less foreign admixture, the ancient melodies of the country have been so extensively preserved. The name of the tune unfortunately was not ascertained by Miss Ross, who sent it to me with the simple remark that it was ‘very old’, in the correctness of which statement I have no hesitation in expressing my perfect concurrence.



Loch Aillinne (**Lough Allen**)

The following air – which is one of the class known by the name of reel – has been a very popular dance tune in the county of Leitrim, in which, as may be inferred from its name, it most probably had its origin; and it was obtained, with other dance tunes, from an itinerant fiddler of that county.

The reel tune, as the national dance music of Scotland, must be so familiar to the reader that any description of it may, perhaps, be deemed unnecessary, the features of the tune in Ireland being identical with those of the sister country. In both, the reel is a tune in common time, consisting of two parts of eight bars each, or – to speak more accurately – of four bars, which are twice played, but usually with some change in the melody on the repetition, in the second part, of the two concluding measures; and in the reel of both countries, the bars usually present the same uniform succession of eight quavers – or

⁴² The so-called ‘Londonderry Air’.



semiquavers, if written in two-four measure – in each bar throughout the tune. There is, however, as it appears to me, this difference between the reel tunes of Scotland and of Ireland, that while the former are, perhaps, more marked by a sunshine of mirthfulness, the latter have usually more melody and expression of sentiment. I may further state that the Scottish variety of the reel, known by the name of Strathspey, the distinguishing peculiarity of which is the succession of long and short, or short and long notes, or, as it has been termed by Dr Burney, ‘the check’ – a peculiarity which, as I have been informed by intelligent Scottish gentlemen, was introduced into the Highlands by gipsy fiddlers, and which has, unfortunately, as I conceive, been very generally extended to the lowland song tunes – has not as yet found acceptance in Ireland, and I trust that our melodies may never be subjected to its corrupting influence. Further, it may be worthy of remark that the reel, though now and for a long time regarded as the national dance of Scotland proper, was anciently known only to the Irish, and Hiberno-Scotic, or Highland people, and that it does not appear to have ever been common to, or adopted by, the Anglo-Saxon people of England, or the Cimbric people of Wales.

The reel as danced in Scotland is, as might be expected, essentially the same as it is danced in Ireland, and a very curious account of the former will be found in the Introduction prefixed to Wood’s *Dance Music of Scotland*. There are, however, as it would appear, some distinguishing features in the reel dance of Ireland, or at least in that of the Munster peasantry; and to those who take an interest in the history of the ancient customs and pastimes of the Scoto-Celtic race, the following remarks by Mr Joyce on the reel as danced by the peasantry of the counties of Limerick and Cork, will not appear to be wanting in value:

The reel dance is of several kinds, of which the most in use are the eight-hand reel, and the common reel.

The manner of dancing the common reel bears some resemblance to that of the jig, but in several respects they differ. In the jig the dancers remain stationary, and dance part after part consecutively without ceasing – occasionally moving round the room for relaxation; but in the reel, they dance only every alternate part – moving round the room while the other parts are played. Thus, the first eight bars

are danced – the movement round the room, or promenade, occupies the next eight; and as this alternate succession continues usually to the end of the dance, the reel is, therefore, much less fatiguing than the jig. As in the latter also, the reel is ‘halved’, and in a similar manner; and, as usual, the most difficult and fatiguing portion of the dance follows.

The reel promenade is performed in this way: the dancer first steps forward with the right foot – the left immediately follows, but is not placed beyond the right, and the body leans on it for an instant, while the right foot is raised one or two inches off the floor, and let fall again with a slight sound, taking the weight of the body, and leaving the left free to be moved forward as the right was moved in the beginning. Thus the dancer steps forward with each foot alternately, and each step occupies half a bar, or four quavers. This movement is sometimes continued all round the room, and at other times is varied, in the middle of the promenade, with other movements.

I may also observe that in the reel as well as in the different kinds of jig, the dance is not commenced immediately; there is always a preliminary movement that occupies one part of the tune – sometimes two. The partners on first coming out stand side by side – the woman to the left of the man – and generally allow the first part of the tune to be played without moving. They then, hand in hand, move, first forward and then backwards, keeping strict time to the tune, and lastly separate to their respective places to commence the dance. The whole is concluded by a similar movement.

‘Battering’, as applied to a reel, is called ‘triple battering’, or more commonly ‘thribbling’. It differs, however, from the battering of the jig, the floor being struck four times, corresponding with the four quavers forming half a bar of common time, instead of three, as in the jig – once by the foot on which the body leans, and three times by the foot thrown forward; and it is from this latter circumstance it derives its name.

‘Drumming’, too, is employed in the reel, and is generally sounded in triplets, i.e., there are three strokes to correspond with two quavers. The dance of a common reel is always commenced with ‘the side step’, in which the dancers move lightly on tiptoe from left to right, and from right to left, alternately, during the first two or three parts of the tune.

The eight-hand reel is, as its name indicates, danced by eight persons – four men and four women. They first stand in a circle round the room, and then go through a regular series of complicated evolutions, somewhat like the figures of quadrilles, but much more animated, as all are continually in motion. In these movements there are regularly recurring pauses, during which the women stand still, while the men exercise themselves to their hearts’ content in ‘thribbling’, taking particular care, during these intervals, however short, never to allow a single bar or note of the music to go waste.

In connection with the preceding notice, the following remarks by Mr Joyce, though not strictly in accordance with the object of this work, so truly illustrate one of the interesting characteristics of the Irish race, that I cannot willingly deny myself the pleasure of subjoining them.

It is an object with the musician to procure the recurrence of the eight-hand reel as frequently as possible, for the men who dance it always pay him. After it is concluded, and a minute or two allowed for rest, four of the dancers – of whom two are women – stand up and dance a common reel, a jig, or a hop jig, according to the choice of ‘the girls’. These are followed by the other four. On first standing out after the eight-hand reel – which passes off without any immediate payment, this being reserved for the dance succeeding – each man puts a piece of money into the hands of his partner, who hands it to the musician. This payment varies from a penny up to a shilling, but seldom goes above two pence, as the same person may have to pay

several times during the same evening. The payment, however, of a shilling, or any large sum in the commencement, exempts the person from further charge. Among the poorer class of peasantry, each man pays one penny – seldom more – every time he dances a reel. The woman frequently increases the offering by an addition of her own, but this is an act of generosity from which, if she please, she may always exempt herself.

The men of the Irish peasantry have a peculiar respect for the delicacy and modesty of the other sex, and their mode of paying the musician at a dance illustrates this feature of their character. The woman, after receiving the money from her partner, places it in the musician's hand, generally unseen by the company, so that they remain in ignorance as to whether she has increased it or not. The men may pay if they choose at any particular dance, but they must, in general, pay after every eight-hand reel, at the risk of being considered shamelessly penurious, unless in the case of a person paying a large sum in the commencement, or paying very frequently. And I may in this place remark that the payments are all voluntary.

The dance of the women is generally of a lighter and less fatiguing kind than that of the men: they seldom use battering, drumming, grinding, or any other of those heavier operations performed by the men. In this respect, however, there is a great difference between the usage in the counties of Limerick and Cork – as far at least as I have been able to observe. In Cork, the women endeavour to emulate the men in all the various and difficult movements, with few exceptions, while in Limerick this, for a woman, is considered unbecoming; I have seen them dance repeatedly in both counties, and were I to pronounce judgement, I should feel inclined to coincide with the opinion of the Limerick folk. My knowledge in this matter is, however, confined to a very limited extent of locality.

Sligo Air

The air which follows is another of the tunes which I noted at Rathcarrick House, near Sligo, in 1837, from the sweet singing of Biddy Monahan, a peasant woman of that county, of whom I have already spoken at page 46. Of the words sung to it – an Irish love song – I neglected to make a record, and having forgotten the name by which, as she told me, the melody was known in her native county, I have never since been able to ascertain it.



Hop Jig

For the following dance tune I have, unfortunately, no name. I found it as I give it, in a valuable manuscript collection of the dance tunes popular in Ireland about a century back, and of which I made mention in a preceding notice. It is a pleasing specimen of the class of Irish jigs, in triple, or nine-eight time, known in Munster by the name of 'hop jig', and also 'slip time'; and, as I have already remarked, I consider such class of tunes as very peculiar to Ireland. I may further observe that in such jigs we often find, instead of triplets, a succession of long and short, or crotchet and quaver, notes throughout the parts – a peculiarity of structure which is also often found in the jigs in common, or six-eight, measure, which are known by the name of 'single jigs'.



In reference to the kind of dance adapted to this description of jig, Mr Joyce writes as follows:

The dance of the hop jig is the most pleasing, airy, and graceful of all the Munster dances that have come under my observation. It is generally danced by four persons – of whom two are females – but the number is not limited. As in the reel, only the alternate parts of the tune are *danced*; during the other parts the dancers move round the room. In the reel, however, this movement is little more than a mere walk, though performed in a systematic way; but in the hop jig the dancers skip lightly round, keeping perfect time with the music – which is played very quickly – and arrive in their respective places in time to commence the 'step' to the next part of the tune.

The 'steps' of a hop jig are quite unlike those of any other dance – they all consist of light and graceful skipping – most exciting, and not at all so fatiguing as the steps of a reel or a double jig. In general the floor is struck, or rather, tipped lightly, three times during every bar of the tune; and from this description, the appropriateness of the names 'hop jig' and 'slip time' will be at once apparent. Occasionally, however, the heavier steps of the double jig dance are applied to this also; but from the greater quickness with which it is necessary to perform them, the exercise is excessively fatiguing.

Blow the Candle Out

I have been unable to ascertain the original, or any other old Irish name, to the following air, though Mr Curry acquaints me that in his youth he had heard more than one Irish song sung to it, but which he has now forgotten. I have therefore been obliged to apply to it the name of a very objectionable street ballad to which it was unhappily united, and which appears to have had a very extensive popularity in the Munster counties during the latter half of the last

[18th] century, and is still not wholly forgotten. The only notation, however, which I have procured of the tune is that here given, which was set about forty years ago from a near connection of my own, to whom I have already more than once alluded, and who had learned it long before from the poor woman named Betty Skillin.



I'll Be a Good Boy, and Do So No More

The following air, with many others of equal beauty, was noted down about forty years ago from the singing of the late Mr Joseph Hughes of the Bank of Ireland, of whom I have already made mention in a preceding notice; and it was learned by him in his boyhood in his native county of Cavan, where it was sung to an English street ballad named as above. I have no reason, however, to assume that the melody was peculiar to that or any other of the northern counties, for Mr Curry acquaints me that he has often heard it sung in the counties of Clare and Limerick, to the same English song – of which I have in vain endeavoured to procure a copy.



Tatter the Road

The dance tune which follows will serve as an example of that species of jig tune, known, at least in Munster, by the term 'single jig'. Like the common or double jig, it is a tune in six-eight time, and having eight bars, or measures, in each of its two parts. But it differs from the former in this, that the bars do not

melodies to which I have above alluded, is a fact which I state with regret, though its own characteristics will leave no doubt as to its Irish origin. It is one of the many fine tunes which, as I have already stated, were sent to me by Mr James Fogarty, late a farmer at Tibroghney in the county of Kilkenny. He states that the words which he had heard sung to it were a martial, or festive song, but that he believes they are now irrecoverably lost. The second part of the air was sung in chorus, accompanied by the beating of the singers' feet – a mode of giving effect to such movements, which some, at least, of my readers may remember to have been common amongst 'the gods' at the Dublin Theatre, during the singing by Jack Johnstone of many of his exciting songs.



*Cá Rabhais anois, a Chailín Bhig?*⁴³ (Where Have You Been, My Little Girl?)

The very spirited and characteristic air which follows was given to me by Mr P. Joyce, who learnt it in his native county of Limerick, where it is still a popular favourite. It is now usually sung to an Irish song, supposed – but erroneously, as Mr Curry believes – to have been written for it by the clever but licentious Limerick poet of the middle of the last century, named Andrew Magrath, or, as he is better known, by the cognomen derived from his calling, the *Mangaire Sugach*, or Jolly Merchant or Pedlar. As a whole, this song is unfit for publication, but its first stanza may be given as an example of the rhythmical construction suited to the melody.

Ca rabhais anois a chailín bhig?
 A dúirt mo mháthair liomsa:
 Bhíos amuigh is an oíche 'sioic,
 Ag faire mo réad beag abhrais.
 Sing Tow-row-row, etc.

Where have you been, my little
 girl?
 My mother of me questioned:
 I was abroad this freezing night,
 Watching my bit of spinning.
 Sing Tow row-row, etc.

⁴³ *Cá rabhais anois, a chailín bhig?*



*Déanfadh dom Ghrá Geal, Ucht Scátháin Glan*⁴⁴ (I'll Make my Love a Breast of Glass)

The following is another, and, as I consider, a very beautiful example of that peculiarly Irish class of tunes on the construction of which I have already made some remarks at pp. 82–84, in connection with the air entitled *Cailín Bán*, or 'The Fair Girl'. It is one of the many airs which, as I have stated in p. 77, I noted down from the singing of the old lady there alluded to, and which had been learnt by her in her youth from the poor woman Betty Skillin, of whom also some notice is given in the same place. The English words sung to it were those of a street ballad of the early part of the last century, and probably – as the poetical thought in the first line would indicate – was a translation of an older Irish song; but neither I nor the lady from whom I obtained the tune can now remember more than that first line, which I have used as a name for the melody.



Scorching is this Love

In connection with the following air I have only to observe that it is one of the many original melodies obtained from the wild, but beautiful shore of 'the kingdom of Kerry', through the kindness of the Revd Father Walsh of Iveragh, and that I have reason to believe it a tune peculiar to that still very Irish district.

⁴⁴ *Déanfadh dam' ghrádh geal, ucht sgatháin ghlan.*

The name given to it – which is a translated one from the original Irish – indicates the character of the love song to which it had been applied as an exponent. Like most of our finer airs, however, it is probable that this tune may have been known by various names derived from different songs adapted to it; and in the extensive collection of such airs formed by Mr John E. Pigot, I find one named *Is maith an duine thú*, or, ‘You are a good man’, which was obtained from the county of Cork, and which appears to be but a different version of this melody.



When She Answered Me her Voice was Low

With regard to the following air I have only to remark that it was obtained about forty years ago from the late Mr J. Hughes, who had learnt it in the county of Cavan.



Name Unknown

I regret that I have been unable to ascertain the name of the very original and pleasing air which follows. It is one of the many fine tunes sent to me by Mr James Fogarty, late of Tibroghney in the county of Kilkenny, by whom it was learnt in his childhood from the singing of his uncle and other old persons in that place. The song sung to it was an Irish one and, as he supposed, of a warlike or military character – but he had lost all remembrance of it, and there were no persons remaining in the locality from whom it could be obtained.

Jig

The following jig tune was sent to me by Mr James Fogarty, late of Tibroghney in the county of Kilkenny, as a very ancient air, and a much admired one in that and the neighbouring counties. It is a good example of the class of dance tunes termed 'single jigs', and which are characterized by a pendulum or swinging movement; and it appears to be the more ancient or original form of the double-jig tune now so well known by the name of 'The Washerwoman', and which, under that appellation, has been for at least a century a very popular dance tune in Ireland. I regret to add that I have not been able to ascertain the name of this older form of the tune.

D.C. al Fine

B'fhuiris Domh Aithne Nach Bhfaca Tú Róise Riamh ⁴⁵ (**'Tis Easily Known that You Never Saw Rosy**)

The following air – which I consider a very characteristic and ancient one – was first noted down about thirty years ago under circumstances which at the time made a deep impression upon me. A gray-headed old man of most respectable appearance, with an interesting child, his granddaughter, were, on a wet day, singing it to obtain charity, while slowly passing along the centre of one of the streets at the north side of Dublin; and such was the power of their chanting – coupled, no doubt, with the interest which their appearance created in their favour – that notwithstanding the unfavourable state of the weather, they were followed silently by a large crowd, who expressed their commiseration, as well as their gratitude for the pleasure given them, by an unusual outpouring of liberality. These strange singers were, as I ascertained, from the north of Ireland and, as I subsequently found, their touching melody was a well-known one in the counties of Derry and Tyrone, if not, as probable, in the northern counties generally, for I find a version of it – very corrupt indeed – called 'Cavan O'Reilly', amongst the tunes collected by the late William Forde, and now in the possession of my friend Mr J. E. Pigot. The setting of the air here given is, as I believe, a very correct one, for it has been verified by several others variously acquired, and particularly by one obtained in 1837 from Paul M'Closkey of the Bennada Glens in the county of Derry, in which romantic, and very Irish, district it was then sung to an old Irish love song, from the first line of which I have derived the name above given to it. As this melody does not appear to be known in the Munster counties, it may perhaps be fairly considered as one of an Ulster, if not, as possible, a Connaught origin.



*Seo Hú Leó*⁴⁶ (**An Irish Lullaby**)

The following melody, together with the Irish song which accompanies it, were recently taken down from the singing of Mary Madden, a poor blind peasant

⁴⁵ *B'fhuiris tú aithne na facha tú Róisi riamh.* Another possibility for this might be *B'fhurasta aithne nach bhfaca tú Róise riamh.* The Northern origin of the singers suggests that the *tú* might more properly represent *domh*, realized with a [u] sound in Northern Irish. This would then mean 'I could easily recognize . . .'

⁴⁶ *Seo hu leo.*

woman from Limerick, now resident in Dublin; and both tune and words appear to me to possess a high degree of interest; the tune, as a beautiful and, as I believe, a very ancient example of that one of the three classes of music said to have been introduced into Ireland by that heroic or mythological race called the Tuatha de Dananns, namely, the *suantraidhe*, or sleep-disposing music; and the fairy legend embodied in the words, as preserving to us a valuable illustration of the nature of the superstitions connected with the same mysterious race, and which, despite of every counteracting influence, have so long retained their hold on the belief of the people. Further, with reference to this air, I would observe that its strong affinity to the lullaby tunes of Hindostan and Persia will scarcely fail to strike the investigators of national melody; and connected as it thus is with a fairy legend, this affinity must be regarded with interest by those who trace such superstitions to an Eastern origin.



1

A bhean úd thíos ar bhruach an tsrutháin,
 Seó hú leó, seó hú leó,
 An dtuigeann tusa fáth mo ghearáin,
 Seó hú leó, seó hú leó,
 Is gur bliain is an lá inniu fuadaíodh mé dhem ghearrán,
 Seó hú leó, seó hú leó,
 Is do rugadh isteach mé i lios an Chnocáin,
 Seó hú leó, seó hú leó.
 Seó hín, seó hín, seó hín, seó hín,
 Seó hú leó, seó hú leó,
 Seó hín, seó hín, seó hín, seó hín,
 Seó hú leó, seó hú leó.

2

Seo é anso mo theach mór maiseach,
 Seó hú leó, seó hú leó,

Is mó⁴⁷ leann úr agus leann sean ann,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Is mó mil bhuí agus céir bheach ann,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Is mó seanduine ar a nasc ann,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Seó hín, seó hín, seó hín, &c.

3

Is mó buachaill cúldonn cas ann,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Is mó cailín cúlbuí deas ann,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Tá dhá bhean déag ag iompar mac ann,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Tá an oiread eile lena n-ais ann,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó.
 Seó hín, seó hín, seó hín, &c.

4

Abair lem chéile teacht amárach,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Is an choinneall chiarach a gcroí a dhearnan,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Scian choise duibhe a thabhairt a dhearnain,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Is an capall tosaigh do bhualadh sa mbearnain,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Seó hín, seó hín, seó hín, &c.

5

An luibh a bhuain tá i ndoras an leasa,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Mar shúil le Dia go raghainn leis abhaile,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Nó mar a dtige sé fán tráth sin,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Go mbeadsa im bainrín ar na mná so,
 Seó hú léó, seó hú léó,
 Seó hín, seó hín, seó hín, &c.

1

O woman below on the brink of the stream,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,

⁴⁷ *Iomdha*, pronounced *mó* in Munster and spelled accordingly here. The standard spelling *iomaí* would not reflect this pronunciation.

Do you understand the cause of my wailing?
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 A year and this day I was whipt off my palfrey,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 And was carried into *Lios-an-Chnocáin*,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Sho-heen, sho-heen, sho-heen, sho-heen,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Sho-heen, sho-heen, sho-heen, sho-heen,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo.

2

Here is here my beautiful great-house,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Abundant is new ale there and old ale,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Abundant is yellow honey and bees' wax there
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Many is the old man tightly bound there,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Sho-heen, sho-heen, sho-heen, etc.

3

Many is the curling brown-haired boy there,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Many is the yellow-haired comely girl there,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo.
 There are twelve women bearing sons there,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 And as many more are there besides them,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Sho-heen, sho-heen, sho-heen, etc.

4

Say to my husband to come tomorrow,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 With the wax candle in the centre of his palm,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 And in his hand bring a black-hafted knife,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 And beat the first horse out of the gap,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Sho-heen, sho-heen, sho-heen, etc.

5

To pluck the herb that's in the door of the fort,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,

With trust in God that I would go home with him,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Or if he does not come within that time,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 That I will be queen over all these women,
 Sho hoo lo, sho hoo lo,
 Sho-heen, sho-heen, sho-heen, etc.

As a somewhat necessary illustration of the still existing superstitions detailed in the preceding legendary ballad, I have been favoured by Mr Curry with a commentary, which, as coming from one who from his childhood had the amplest opportunities of becoming acquainted with those superstitions and the extent to which they were believed in, must be regarded as of great value. And although the subject may be considered as not strictly in accordance with the primary purpose of this work, I trust that few of my readers will object to my securing in this place remarks of so much interest – and more particularly as they tend to prove not only the antiquity of the poem, but the probably still greater antiquity of the hushaby melody to which the poem had been adapted. I give Mr Curry's observations in his own words:

The preceding rare and remarkable poem contains, I am bold to say, more of authentic fairy fact and doctrine than, with some few exceptions, has been ever before published in Ireland. The incident here clearly narrated was believed at all times to be of frequent occurrence. It was for the last sixteen hundred years at least, and is still, as firmly believed in as any other fact in the history of this country, that the Tuatha de Dananns, after their overthrow by the Milesians, had gone to reside in their hills and ancient forts or in their dwellings in lakes and rivers, that they were in possession of a mortal immortality, and that they had the power to carry off from this visible world men and women in a living state, but sometimes under the semblance of death. The persons taken off were generally beautiful infants, wanted for those in the hills who had no children, fine young women, before marriage, and often on the day of marriage, for the young men of the hills who had been invisibly feasting on their growing beauties – perhaps from childhood; young men in the same way for the languishing damsels of fairyland; fresh, well-looking nurses for their nurseries. The usual mode of abduction was by throwing the object into a sudden fit or trance, and substituting in its place an old man or woman, or sickly child, as the case might require; but apparently there was no exchange. At other times the object died to all appearance, and was buried in the usual way; but people generally guessed whether it was a real death or not. In other cases the person was whipt off the brink of a river, lake, or the sea, by a gust of wind, and apparently drowned and lost but had only been taken, down to some noble mansion and plain over which the water was but a transparent atmosphere.

They had also the power of inflicting corporal punishment and prostration of energy of body and mind on the mortal objects of their hatred or jealousy; and this was generally done by fairy women to remarkable men whom they had not been able to carry off.

The poem tells its own story fully and clearly. The allusions to the luxuries of the fairy mansion carry it back to a period anterior to the general use of the more modern inventions of wine and whiskey, etc. Now whiskey, or *Uisce Beatha*, is known to have been commonly used in Ireland for three hundred years; and if it had been an ordinary luxury at the time of writing this poem, there can be no doubt that it would be included in the list of good things of fairydom.

It may be further observed that the poem is not written in the language of the poets of the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, and that there is not one corrupt word or Anglicism in it, defects from which very few Irish poems of the last two hundred years are free. The abducted person in this poem seems to have been a married woman, and a nurse. She also appears to have been snatched off her horse, probably under the semblance of a fall and death; and that her rank was respectable is shown by her having ridden her own palfrey. She sees from within *Lios an Chnocáin*, or the Fort of the Hillock, a woman, probably a neighbour, standing on the brink of a stream which passes by the fort, and in the intervals of her *Seó hú léó*, or hushaby, for her new nurseling, she contrives to convey to the listener her wishes line after line to the end of each stanza, and then, in order to gain time for further thought, and see if she was still unobserved within, she finishes with a more prolonged and endearing *Seó hú léó*, addressed to her infant.

The old men tied in fetters, in the second stanza, are men who had been formerly carried off in the prime of life, but were kept to be substituted for other young men when carried off from their young wives or friends.

The bit of wax candle which her husband was to carry securely in the palm of his hand was – in more modern times – a candle blessed on Candlemas-day, and with which no house in Ireland was unprovided. The black-hafted knife was the only formidable mortal weapon in fairy warfare – a single thrust or stab from it was fatal, but a second rendered the first one harmless. As an illustration of this belief, I may mention that there is an old fort on the brink of the little ford of Bel-Atha, between Kilkee and Dunbeg, on the western coast of the county of Clare, where some years ago a large stone still remained on the northern side of the ford, which for ages had been looked upon with awe and reverence by the people of all that country, as the seat of *Cailleach Bhéal Átha*, or the Hag of Belatha, although the hag herself had disappeared many score years before. Her custom was to take her seat on this stone after nightfall, and to watch the men who crossed the ford, and when she found a man to her taste to jump on him, clasp him in her arms, and whip him into the fort; so that few wished to pass the spot at a late hour. It happened that a gentleman of the powerful Mac Mahon family of Carrigaholt Castle, on the Lower Shannon, was riding home late one night from the northern parts of the country, and, impelled by urgent business or by a spirit of daring, he rode up rapidly to the ford, saw the hag, and thought by the fleetness of his steed to spring past her; but just as he entered the ford, the hag sprang up behind him on the horse, and clasped him around in her arms. He pulled out of his left-hand waistcoat pocket, with his right hand, his black-hafted knife, and plunged it into her left side behind him. '*Tarraing is sáigh áris*' – 'Draw and plunge again', said the hag. Mac Mahon, however, neither answered nor drew his knife, but rode on, and immediately the hag fell off the horse and disappeared. Mac Mahon rode to the nearest house, told his story, and remained there for the rest of the night, and at daylight next morning returned with several persons of the neighbourhood to the ford, where they found the black-hafted knife stuck in a small lump of jelly, resembling what the peasantry call a fallen star. There is a small cave in the inside of the wall, or mound of the ford, which is believed to have been the hag's prison. I was in it, but not as a prisoner, in the year 1820. The hag never appeared since, and her request to Mac Mahon remains, I believe, still a common saying in that country – *Tarraing is sáigh aris mar a dúirt Cailleach Bhéal Átha* – 'Draw and thrust again, as the Hag of Bel-Atha said'.

The use of the black-hafted knife in our poem appears to have been to strike the leading horse of the woman's fairy chariot when going out through the gap or door of the fort the next day, by which the magic veil which concealed her would be destroyed; and the possession of the herb which grew at the door of the fort was to guard her from all future attempts at her recapture. Her urgent request for an immediate release was in accordance with the belief that fairy captives are redeemable within a year and a day, but after that they are lost for ever.

The belief in fairy influence, and in the ordinary means of counteracting it by the

agency of herb-men and herb-women, was not confined to the votaries of one form of Christianity. I remember when Father Matthew Molony, parish priest of Moyarta and Kiballyowen, was drowned in crossing on horseback at *Bealbunadh*, the inlet of Oystercove, or Skeagh, on the lower Shannon, Clare side, about three miles below Kiltrush, his mother, and his brothers, who were sensible and well-informed men, continued not only for a year and a day, but for seven years, to put in action all the available anti-fairy force of the whole province of Munster for his recovery, and this with a confidence that was sickening to my father and mother, who were the only people I ever knew in that country who were total unbelievers in such doctrines. It is hardly necessary to say that poor Father Molony never came back. About the same time (say 1812), Mr William O'Donnell, a very fine, popular man, and a black Protestant, was drowned in the same place. I was, as a boy, at his funeral at the old church of Kilferagh, and I do not believe that there was among the hundreds of Protestants and Catholics that followed him with deep sorrow to the grave, one person, excepting the Revd Irvine Whitley, his parish minister, my father, and myself and brothers, who did not believe he was carried off by the fairies, and entertain hopes of his recovery. The identical means used by the Molonys were used by the O'Donnells, and of course had the same results; but the belief remained.

The popular belief in the abduction of fine healthy young women to become fairy nurses, which is the subject of this little poem, is so well known that it scarcely requires an illustration; yet, as an example of the tenacity with which the Irish peasantry still cling to this superstition, I may relate an occurrence which came within my own knowledge, though it has been already given to the public in Mr Wilde's *Popular Superstitions of the Irish Peasantry*. I well remember that in the year 1818, Mary, the wife of Daniel Kelly, a bouncing, full, auburn-haired, snow-white-skinned woman, about twenty-eight years of age, died suddenly on a summer's day while in the act of cutting cabbages in her garden. Great was the consternation throughout the entire parish of Moyarta, in the south-west of Clare, at this sad event, the more particularly as several persons who were in a westerly direction from her at the time declared that they had seen and felt a violent gust of wind pass by and through them in the exact direction of Kelly's house, carrying with it all the dust and straws, etc., which came in its way. This confirmed the husband and friends of the deceased in their impression that she had been carried off to nurse for the fairies. Immediately Mary Quinn, alias 'The Pet' (*Máire an Pheata*), and Margaret M'Inerheny, alias 'Black Peg', two famous fairy women in the neighbourhood, were called in, who for three days and three nights kept up a constant but unavailing assault on a neighbouring fort, or rath, for the recovery of the abducted woman. But at the end of that time it was found that the body, or what in their belief appeared to be the body, of Mary Kelly, could not be any longer kept over ground, wherefore it was placed in the grave, but still with a total unbelief of its identity. Her bereaved husband and her brothers watched her grave day and night for three weeks after; and then they opened it, in the full conviction of finding only a birch broom, a log of wood, or the skeleton of some deformed monster in it. In this, however – I need scarcely add – they were grievously mistaken, for they found in it only what they had placed there, but in a much more advanced state of decomposition.

The Advice

This very characteristic air is one of the many interesting tunes sent to me during the last year by Miss Jane Ross, of Newtown-Limavady in the county of Derry, and which were collected by that lady in that and the adjacent counties. The melody is most probably a northern one.



I Once Lov'd a Boy

For the following beautiful air, I have to acknowledge myself indebted to the kindness of my valued friend Miss Holden, the youngest surviving daughter of the eminent composer of military music, the late Mr Smollet Holden. The melody was noted down from the singing of a servant girl by Miss Holden's sister, the late Mrs Joseph Hughes – a lady whose virtues and varied attainments can never be forgotten by those who had the happiness to enjoy her friendship.

I regret that I have been unable to ascertain the older Irish name of this fine melody, and trust that it may hereafter be discovered. The name given above is that of an English street ballad which had been sung to it, and which, from the number of copies of it that I have seen, would appear to have been very popular – at least in Dublin – towards the close of the last century, for such copies usually bear the imprint of the great Dublin balladmonger, Bartle Corcoran. Like most songs of its class – though in its ideas less than usually objectionable – it makes but slight pretensions to poetic merit. It assumes to be the song of a slighted maiden, who, however, does not abandon herself to despair as some maidens foolishly do, but takes the matter very wisely, as shown in the concluding stanza, which, as well as the first two, I venture to reprint.

I once lov'd a boy, and a bonny, bonny boy,
 Who'd come and go at my request;
 I lov'd him so well, and so very very well,
 That I built him a bower in my breast –
 In my breast,
 That I built him a bower in my breast.

I once lov'd a boy, and a bonny, bonny boy,
 And a boy that I thought was my own;
 But he loves another girl better than me,
 And has taken his flight and is gone –
 And is gone,
 And has taken his flight and is gone.

The girl that has taken my own bonny boy,
 Let her make of him all that she can,
 For whether he loves me or he loves me not,
 I'll walk with my love now and then –
 Now and then,
 I'll walk with my love now and then.



Good Night, and Joy Be With You

The name of the following air is common to several tunes of a similar character, and indicates the purpose to which they were applied, namely, as farewell dance, or march tunes, played on the breaking up of festive meetings; and I believe that this is, or perhaps was, the tune commonly played on such occasions in the province of Connaught. It was noted in the summer of 1839, from the playing of the Galway piper, Patrick Coneely, by whom it was considered to be a pipe march tune of the olden time. The tune commonly used on such festive occasions in the province of Leinster, and known by the same name, will be given during the progress of this work.



Allan's Return

I have not been able to find any older or other name for the following air than that above given, which is the name of a street ballad that was sung to it, and

which was very popular in Dublin during the early part of the present century. The melody, though pleasing and worthy of preservation, is not very Irish in its character, being rather of a class which I would term Anglo-Irish, and in this instance, probably not very old.



*Glugar an Mheadair*⁴⁸ (The Splashing of the Churn)

The following dance tune – which is of the class known in Munster by the term hop jig – was given to me by Mr James Fogarty, late of Tibroghney in the county of Kilkenny. It is, no doubt, a Munster tune, and in the opinion of Mr Fogarty, ‘a grand old jig’.



The Forlorn Virgin

This truly characteristic air, which I believe to be very ancient, was set in the summer of 1839 from the singing of Anne Buckley, a poor woman, the wife of a tailor, who had been born and was then living in that curious suburban village of Galway commonly known as the *Claddagh*, or seashore, and which is almost wholly inhabited by fishermen and their families. To a collector of our melodies, this poor woman – who was no less remarkable for her intelligence and matronly beauty than for her musical perceptions and fine vocal powers – was a rare treasure to fall in with, for her memory was richly stored with little known and perhaps local airs, which she sang with a rarely to be heard sweetness and truthfulness; and it is to the accident of my meeting with her that I owe the acquisition of some of the best airs which it may be in my power

⁴⁸ *Gluigir a'mhadir*.

to preserve in the present work. I add, with regret, that I neglected to obtain the words which she sang to this air – vainly trusting that I should have an opportunity of doing so on some future occasion.



Maileó Léró, is Imbó Néró (A Spinning-Wheel Tune)

As I have already remarked in a preceding notice – p. 64 – of the numerous classes of airs into which the ancient music of Ireland may be divided, there are perhaps in an historical point of view – as exhibiting the universal love for melody which characterized the Gaelic race – none of a higher interest than those short and simple airs which were invented and employed to lighten their various employments, and which, in a general way, may be designated as song tunes of occupation. From the number of melodies of this class which even yet remains, it would appear certain that there was no sort of occupation or labour, whether indoor or outdoor – save such as was of too noisy a nature to allow of it – [in which] the use of song was not resorted to, as a sustainer of the spirits and a lightener of the toil. And perhaps it is not too much to aver that such was the purpose for which that inestimable gift of the Omnipotent – the sense of melody – was granted to man. Of the airs of this class, whistled or sung by the ploughmen while labouring in the fields, I have already given a few specimens. They are of a plaintive and solemn character, suited to the quietness and solitariness of such an occupation. I have now to give a place to one or two airs of a lighter and more mirthful kind – specimens of the sort of tunes usually sung by the girls and women while engaged at their cheerful indoor occupation of spinning, etc. Of such tunes, three very interesting specimens have been already given to the public in Mr Bunting's last published volume of *The Ancient Music of Ireland*; and as that gentleman has only given as his authority for those airs the name of a 'Miss Murphy, Dublin, 1839', I am glad to have it in my power to verify his statement, and to add to its distinctness as to the locality from which they were derived, by now stating from my own knowledge that the person so named was a young girl from the county of Mayo, then in the service of a lady in Dublin. Mr Bunting, who ranked these airs amongst those of the second class in point of antiquity, states that such tunes are known in Ireland by the name of *loobeens*; and in reference to them he writes as follows:

The *loobeen* is a peculiar species of chaunt, having a well marked time, and a frequently recurring chorus or catch-word. It is sung at merry-makings and

assemblages of the young women, when they meet at 'spinnings' or 'quiltings', and is accompanied by extemporaneous verses, of which each singer successively furnishes a line. The intervention of the chorus after each line gives time for the preparation of the succeeding one by the next singer, and thus the *loobeen* goes round, until the chain of song is completed. Hence its name, signifying literally 'the link tune'. Of course there is a great variety of words, and these usually of a ludicrous character, such as might be expected from the *crambo* verses of rustics. The airs themselves bear all the appearance of antiquity' (p. 98).

To the above descriptive notice I have, in a general way, nothing to object. But to Mr Bunting's statement that tunes of this class are known in Ireland by the name of *loobeens*, I have to remark that the two best Irish scholars in the country, my friends Dr O'Donovan and Mr Curry, consider this statement as wholly erroneous. They state that the word *loobeen*, or, properly, *lúibín*, which is a diminutive of the word *lúb*, a loop, etc., and figuratively, cunning, craft, etc., is only known in Ireland as signifying a handsome woman, that is, one having fine curled or ringleted hair, or as signifying a crafty person. And certainly no authority could be adduced for the somewhat strained figurative meaning which Mr Bunting has assigned to it. But the word *lúibín* as applied to signify a handsome woman is of common occurrence in Irish songs; and as some particular spinning-wheel song may, therefore, have been so called from its frequent recurrence in it, Mr Bunting may possibly have supposed the term to apply to such tunes generally. But however this may be, it would appear certain that if the term were ever understood as a name for spinning-wheel tunes, such use of the word must have been very local.

Tunes of this class are also, as might be expected, very common in the Scottish isles and Highlands, where they are known by the name of *luinigs*, or properly, *luinniochs*, signifying cheerful chorus music; and by this term also it is certain that they were anciently known in Ireland. And they form a very considerable portion of the Revd Patrick McDonald's collection of Highland vocal airs published in 1781, and are thus spoken of in the preface to that work: 'A considerable number of the airs contained in this first division are what the country people call *luinigs*, and are sung when a number of persons are assembled either at work or for recreation. They are generally short: their measure is regular, and the cadences are distinctly marked. Many of them are chorus songs. Particular parts of the tune are allotted to the principal singer, who expresses the significant words: the other parts are sung in chorus by the whole company present. These pieces being simple and airy, are easily remembered, and have probably been accurately preserved.'

I must say, however, that the Highland *luinigs*, as published, seem to me very inferior in point of melody to those of Ireland – very possibly from their being unskilfully noted; for I have myself found that the Highland airs, as sung by the people, were generally far superior in beauty to any publications of them hitherto produced; and though, very probably, in a general way, the Highland melodies may not have been so well preserved as the Irish, I cannot but retain on my mind an impression that they have not as yet had full justice done to them. But be this as it may, the account given by Mr McDonald of the Highland *luinigs* is equally applicable to the Irish tunes of the same class; and in

connection with the following specimen I am enabled by Mr Curry to give an accurate example of the manner in which the words were adapted to them. The tune itself was noted down from the singing both of Mr Curry and Teige MacMahon. And I should observe that the air is also known in Clare by the name of *Lúra, Lúra, ná dá Lúra*.



As a preface to the extemporaneous words sung to this tune in the county of Clare, Mr Curry writes as follows:

It will be seen from the discussion on the word *planxty* at p. 50 of this volume, that it was of old, as it continues to be still, the practice of the Irish peasant girls to come together in groups when engaged in the preparation of wool and flax for the loom, either for domestic purposes or for sale. Sometimes the group consisted of the daughters of the house, and neighbouring poorer girls, who were engaged for hire at – say in 1816 – three pence a day each. Sometimes it was the *Comhar*, or reciprocal co-operation of the daughters of two or more neighbouring families; but, in all cases, the work – particularly wool-spinning – was carried on with an accompaniment of singing. Sometimes the girls sang, in turn, a popular song; but more generally they sang, two at a time, extemporaneous verses to peculiar airs, to none of which I ever heard songs or verses of any other kind. The following is the most popular of some four or five specimens of those airs and verses, as sung in the county of Clare. It will be seen that the words of the lines beginning ‘Mallo lero’ have no definite signification, but are merely musical accented sounds – something like ‘High diddle diddle’, and serve simply as starting and resting points for the dialogue.

The first girl here starts the song, as it were, out of a reverie, and as if giving unconscious expression to a deep internal feeling – she has ‘traversed the wood when day was breaking’. What for? The cause is well understood, and interpreted by the second girl, who is quite well acquainted with the direction of the first girl’s inclinations, but designedly mentions a name that she knows will not be accepted, for the purpose of making a line to the verse, and sometimes of gratifying a small bit of secret spleen against the person proposed, whom, it will be seen, she takes good care to praise as a husband worthy of the pettish girl who rejects him. The first girl begins again, and, since the ice has been broken, requests her companion to find for her the man she really loves, and this being always done, she accepts him, and so the verse ends with the usual prayer from the second girl for their happy union.

The second girl’s turn comes now, and she, without any reserve, calls on the first to go westwards and eastwards, and find her lover for her. Here a nice spring of pride and jealousy is most delicately touched by the first girl, who proposes to her companion a man on whom she knows her to have had some fruitless design; and thus she brings out two secrets as to the state of O’Flaherty’s mind, or heart, which the second girl had taken pains to be acquainted with, namely, that it was unfavourable to herself and favourable to Johanna O’Kelly – facts not known to any other girl present, unless Johanna O’Kelly herself happened to be of the

number, which was often the case. So far the two secrets are out, to the great satisfaction of all present, the second girl excepted; but she has her revenge in her proud rejection of the advice to contest the hand of a man whom she admits to be worthy, but whose equal, at least, she can find in the *grove* of young men about her.

And thus the song, the wit, and the fun, go on among the girls, two at a time, until they have all played their part, to their own great pleasure, as well as to the pleasure, or displeasure, of the group of young men who are present – generally at night work – according as they find themselves accepted or rejected by their laughing tormentors.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Shiúil mé an choill le heirí an lá mhoich,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Ar Sheán Ó Cearbhaill a thug tú an réim sin,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Gad ar a chom is é a' treabhadh na hÉireann,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
A thoice gan mhúineadh bhí do sháith de chéile ann,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Is cuma liom, fág é, faigh mo ghrá féin dom,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Tomás Ó Madagáin gaibh is bhí réidh leis,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Gabhaim is gairim is go maire mé mo chéile,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Soir ná siar nár ghabha sibh ó chéile,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Gaibh siar, gaibh aniar, agus faigh mo ghrá féin dom,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Dónall Ó Flaitheartaigh gaibh is bí réidh leis,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Siobhán Ní Cheallaigh do bhuailfeadh sa mbéal me,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Más fiú an fear é ná lig léi é,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Maileó léró, is ím bó néró,
Níl crann inna choill ná faighinn a leithéide,
Maileó léró, is ím bó bhán.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
I traversed the wood when day was breaking,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
For John O'Carroll you wandered so early,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
With gads begirt, let him plough through Erinn,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
You mannerless girl, he's your match for a husband,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
I care not – leave off – get me my own love,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
Thomas O'Maddigan, take and be pleased with,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
I take and hail, and may I well wear my husband,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
To the east or the west may you never be parted,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
Go westward, go eastward, and find me my own love,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
Donnell O'Flaherty take and be pleased with,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
It's Joan O'Kelly that would strike me in the face,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
If the man is worth it, don't let her take him,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

Mallo lero, and eembo nero,
There is no tree in the wood that I could not find its equal,
Mallo lero, and eembo bawn.

*Sin Binn Babaró*⁴⁹ (A Spinning-Wheel Tune)

The following air is another and, in point of melody, a more pleasing specimen of the Irish spinning-wheel tunes, but I regret to add that I am unable to give any notice of the words sung to it, which, however, were no doubt of a

⁴⁹ *Sin binn bubbaro*.

somewhat similar nature to those given in connection with the air preceding. The tune was taken down in the summer of 1839 at the Galway Claddagh from the singing of Anne Buckley – of whom I have already spoken – accompanied, in chorus, by most of the young girls inhabiting that singular locality. It is also, as I subsequently found, a popular spinning-wheel tune in the county of Clare, and is, very probably, such in the other western counties.



Blackwater Foot

The following reel tune is a very popular one in the southern counties, but is probably of no great age. It is obviously a violin air, and formed on the old balad of 'Ally Croker'.



Nóra an Chúil Ómra (Nora of the Amber Hair)

The following beautiful and, as I believe, very ancient melody, appears to have been a very generally admired one – at least throughout the Munster counties – for, under different names derived from various songs written to it, I have obtained sets of it from several southern localities; and as such sets of a traditionally preserved melody, however similar in rhythm and general structure, almost necessarily present a diversity in their cadences and phrases, I have deemed it desirable to select from amongst them two settings in which such diversities are most strikingly exhibited. Of these two settings, that which immediately follows, and which I am disposed to consider the better, as well as the simpler one, has been copied from a manuscript book of Irish tunes, written in 1785 by Mr Patrick O'Neill, a respectable farmer on the Bessborough estate, and of which book, as well as of several others of the same kind, I was allowed

the use for the present work, through the kindness of Mr William R. Blackett, of Ballyne in the county of Kilkenny.

I should observe that the name given to this set of the melody in the O'Neill MS was *Péarla an Chúil Ómra*, or 'The Pearl of the Amber Hair'; but as I have found the air to be more generally known as *Nóra an Chúil Ómra*, I have thought it best to adopt it.



Of the old love song which has given its prevailing name to this melody, three stanzas, with metrical translations by the late Mr Edward Lawson, have been printed by Mr Hardiman in his *Irish Minstrelsy*, and these have been again printed in the *Irish Popular Songs*, etc., by the late Edward Walsh. But, as Mr Curry assures me, of these stanzas, the first and second only properly belong to the old song, the third being a fragment of a different one; and even in the former there are some corruptions which are injurious to their character. The true reading of these stanzas, according to Mr Curry, should be as follows:

A Nóra an chúil ómra,
 Is é mo bhrónsa ná féadaim,
 Lámh a chur fád cheannsa,
 Nó ar bhrollach do léintín,
 Is tú d'fhág mo cheannsa,
 Gan unsa ar bith céille,
 Is go n-éalóinn thar toinn leat,
 A rúin ghil dá bhféadfainn.

A Vailintín chroí na páirte,
 Cé go ndearnais liom bréag,
 Is gur gheall tú mé phósadh,
 Gan feoirling bó spré,
 Do shiúlfainn an drúcht romhat,
 Is ní bhrúfainn an féar;
 Is go mbuaí Rí na nDúl leat,
 A lúibín na ggraobh.

O Nora of the amber hair,
 It is my grief that I cannot

Put my arm under your head,
 Or over thy bosom's vesture;
 It is thou that hast left my head
 Without a single ounce of sense,
 And I would fly over the waves with thee,
 O my fair loved one, if I could.

O my heart-loved valentine,
 Tho' to me thou hast told a falsehood
 And that thou hast promised to marry me,
 Without a farthing of any kind of fortune,
 I would tread the dew before thee,
 And would not press down the grass;
 And may the King of all creation speed thee,
 Thou of the branching ringlets.

*Is Aoibhinn do na hÉiníní*⁵⁰ (**How Happy for the Little Birds**)

The set of this air which follows was also obtained from the county of Kilkenny, having been sent to me by Mr James Fogarty from Tibroghney, together with a stanza of the song which had been sung to it in that district, and of which, unfortunately, it was all that he could remember. This song Mr Fogarty describes as 'a pensive song or lament of one who was forced to leave home and the object of his affection', and he adds: 'I only remember a few verses which I think very good poetry. It is said to be more than two hundred and fifty years old; but the age of the air is beyond any reach of tradition.' The verses above alluded to, and which form a stanza, have been, as I have found, more accurately remembered by Mr Curry, whose recollection of them I gladly insert as a specimen of the older and now rarely to be recovered Irish love song; and I have no doubt that the superior harmony of the language and adaptation of rhythm to the melody which this stanza exhibits as compared with the words of the later song, will dispose the Irish reader to regret that I have only the means of preserving this fragment.

Nách aoibhinn do na héiníní
 Dh'éiríonn go hard,
 Is thuirlingíonn le chéile
 Ar aon chraoibh amháin;
 Ní mar sin do dhéinim
 Is mo chéad míle grá,
 Ach is fada ó na chéile,
 Bhíos ár n-éirí gach lá.

How happy for the little birds
 That rise up on high,
 And alight then together
 On the one single branch:
 It is not so that I do
 And my hundred thousand times
 loved one,
 But it is far from each other
 We arise every day.

⁵⁰ *Nach aoibhinn do na h-éiníne.*

Between the set of the air already given and that which follows, the musical reader will hardly fail to perceive an important difference, namely, the omission in the latter of the interval of the fourth of the diatonic scale, while in the former it appears as an emphatic note, and – together with the more frequent recurrence of the flat seventh – adds considerably to the Irish character of the air.



Besides the fragments given above of Irish love songs to this air, there has been also a song written to it by another Munster poet, which has been preserved in its entirety. It is the production of a poet of the last century named Joseph Roberts, and is called *Réidh chnoc mná [bean] síghe*, or 'The Benshee's [*sic*] Smooth Hill'; but as it has been very correctly printed, with a harmonious metrical translation by the late James Clarence Mangan, in the *Poets and Poetry of Munster* – a very interesting little work edited and published by John O'Daly, of Anglesea Street, Dublin – it will not be necessary that I should insert in this work more than a stanza of it as a specimen, with, however, a literal prose translation.

Is fada mé ag gluaiseacht
 Ar thuirisc mo ghrá,
 Ar fuaid ghleannta dubha
 uaigneach',
 Dom ruaigeadh le fán;
 A tuairisc ní bhfuairesas,
 Cé gur chuartaíos a lán,
 Ó Chaiseal go Tuamhumhain,
 Is go bruach geal na Má.

Long am I wandering
 In search of my love,
 Through dark, lonely valleys
 I am driven to roam;
 No account have I found of her,
 Though far have I searched,
 From Cashel to Thomond,
 And the banks of fair Maige.

I should further notice that a set of this melody – differing a good deal from those which I have selected for publication – will also be found in Mr O'Daly's volume, and immediately following the words of Roberts's song written to it; but, by some strange mistake, it is given as the air *Bean dubh an ghleanna*, and in connection with the words of the old song so called, to which it could not, by any possibility, be sung. The true melody of *Bean dubh an ghleanna* – properly *Moll*, or *Poll dubh an ghleanna* – is very well known, and has been given by

Bunting in the earliest volume of his publications of Irish melodies, and will be familiar to most readers as the air to which Moore wrote the first of his Irish songs, 'Go where Glory waits thee'.

Black Cloaks to Cover Bobby, or The Lament for Gerald

The following air, with several others hitherto unpublished, was given to me more than forty years ago by a young friend named O'Sullivan, who was then a medical student in Dublin, and who, having subsequently obtained an appointment in the army, left Ireland, and, as I fear, never returned. Of this, as well as of most of the other airs so given to me by Dr O'Sullivan, I have only to state that they were learnt by him during his boyhood in the county of Kerry, of which he was a native.



The Hunt

The following dance tune – which is, or rather was, a very popular one in Munster, and for which I am indebted to Mr Patrick Joyce – belongs to the class of dance tunes commonly known by the term 'set dances'. Such tunes may have a general character in common with those of any of the other classes of



dance tunes, as the double jig, reel, or hornpipe, but are usually distinguished by some inequality in the length of their parts, or some other irregularity of structure, which necessarily requires a particular dance to be appropriated to each of them, and which is never danced to any other tune. Thus, as will be seen in the present tune – which has essentially the hornpipe character – while the first part presents the usual number of eight measures, the second has the unusual number of twelve. And hence the dance for such a tune was called a ‘set’ for it, or ‘the set’ of it. Set dances – as Mr Joyce informs me – were generally, but not always, danced by one person.

*Róis Gheal Dubh*⁵¹ (The Fair-Skinned, Black-Haired Rose)

In the entire range of Irish melodies, there is, perhaps, scarcely one of more widely-spread popularity amongst the Irish peasantry than the air called *Róis Gheal Dubh*, and sometimes *Róisín Dubh*, the first signifying the ‘Fair, or white-skinned, black-haired Rose’, and the second the ‘Black haired little Rose’. But though the air, as I conceive, is one of great beauty, it probably owes at least as much of its celebrity to the old love song associated with it, as to the excellence of the tune itself; for I find this song – in the province of Connaught more particularly – as often, if not oftener, united to a different and, as I think, an inferior air. I should observe, however, that this different air is usually known as the *Róisín Dubh*, while on the other hand the air now presented to the reader is as usually known as the *Róis Gheal Dubh*. And it appears to me that such adaptations of the same words to different melodies affords a strong evidence that the tunes are of an antiquity anterior to the words. Of the air commonly known as the *Róisín Dubh*, two settings have been given by Bunting in his last publication, and I shall probably give another setting myself in the course of this work. That this latter air is, as it is generally deemed to be by the people, a very ancient one, I see no reason to doubt; and that it is so, to the extent of a considerable antiquity, we have evidence in the fact that this tune is essentially the same (though more ancient in its structure) as the very popular melody called ‘Margaret Roche’, to which a song had been written on a lady of that name, who was executed in Ennis for the murder of her husband some time in the seventeenth century.

The air usually known by the name of *Róis Gheal Dubh* is, I am satisfied, at least equally ancient, and as a tune generally known throughout Ireland, I cannot but wonder that it should not hitherto have found a place in any of the published collections of our music. Two sets of it have, however, been recently printed in Mr O’Daly’s *Poets and Poetry of Munster* – but they have obviously been noted from the playing of some piper or fiddler, and are wanting in Irish vocal character. In both these settings the air is written as if in the minor mode, and I have several MS settings of it similarly noted. But I have never heard it sung so, at least strictly; and though to some ears it might seem more pleasing in that mode, I am of opinion that it is in the Major mode only that its character can be truly rendered. Of the various settings of this melody which I possess, I

⁵¹ *Róis geal dubh*.

have therefore chosen one written in that mode, and which best agrees with my own impression of the air, as I have heard it sung. This setting of it was obtained from Mr Fogarty, late of Tibroghney, who, in the memorandum which accompanied it, calls it the tune of a sweet and celebrated old love song, and adds an expression of deep regret that he could find no copy of that song in his neighbourhood, or amongst the 'old stock of the country', from whom he had often sought for it, but sought in vain.

Of the old Irish song which gave the name of *Róis Gheal Dubh*, or *Róisín Dubh*, to this and other tunes, two versions have been printed, one in Mr Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy*, with a very free metrical translation by the late Thomas Furlong, and the other in Mr O'Daly's *Poets and Poetry of Munster*, with an almost equally free translation by the late J. Clarence Mangan. These versions differ very much from each other, and Mr Curry assures me that they are equally corrupted by interpolations from other songs, with a view to give them a political bearing, and to convert poor *Róisín Dubh* into an allegorical personification of unhappy Ireland in the reign of Elizabeth. Heaven knows we have political lyrics enough – both allegorical and palpable – without adding to their number the older genuine love songs of the country, of which we have too few remaining; and that this old song has been so tampered with will be perfectly obvious on a perusal of the following genuine fragmentary verses with which I have been favoured by Mr Curry:

1

Tá lionn dubh ar na triúcha,
 Agus ceo ar na cnoic;
 Tá fraoch ar na sléibhte,
 Is ní hionadh sin;
 Do thaoscfaínn an tréanmhuir
 Le plaosc an uibh,
 Dá bhféadainn bheith réidh leat,
 A Róis gheal dubh.

2

A ghrá geal, ná bíodh cás ort
 Trínar éirigh duit;
 Táid bráithre dhúinn thar sáile,
 Agus a dtrial thar muir;
 beidh do phárdún ó Phápa,
 Na Róimhe againn,
 Is céad sláinte i bhfíon Spáinneach
 Dom Róis gheal dubh.

3

Do shiúlfainn an Mhumhain leat,
 Is barr gach cnoic,
 Mar shúil is go bhfaighinn rún uait,
 Is cairdeas suilt;

A chraobh chumhra, a dúirt liom
 Go raibh grá agat dom,
 Is tú plúr na mban múinte,
 Mo Róis gheal dubh.

1
 There's black grief on the plains,
 And a mist on the hills;
 There is fury on the mountains,
 And that is no wonder;
 I would empty out the wild ocean
 With the shell of an egg,
 If I could but be at peace with thee,
 My Róis gheal dubh.

2
 O my loved one, be not gloomy
 For what has happened to thee;
 We have friends beyond the sea,
 And they're returning o'er the tide;
 Thy pardon from the Pope
 Of Rome we shall have,
 And a hundred healths in Spanish wine
 To my My Róis gheal dubh.

3
 I would travel all Munster with thee,
 And the top of each hill,
 In the hope to gain thy favour,
 And a happy share in thy love;
 O sweet branch, who hast told me
 That thou hadst love for me,
 Thou art the flower of accomplished women,
 My Róis gheal dubh.

That the above stanzas are a portion – if not the whole – of a genuine love song, written upon some real incident which occurred to persons of respectable station, there can, I think, be little doubt; and it is to be regretted that all knowledge of the occasion of its being written, and the period of its composition, are now, it is to be feared, irrecoverably lost.

As Mr Curry observes: 'It will be seen that the subject of these verses is love, but a love the course of which evidently ran with more than ordinary unsmoothness. It would appear – indeed it does appear – that the love was mutual, but that it was indulged under some difficulties caused either by consanguinity or religion. The parties must have been within the forbidden

degrees of relationship, or the woman restrained by particular vows. Cases of both kinds are to be found in our history, and have been, for a long time at least, dependent on a papal dispensation for their final issue. And the allusion to this fact here is so clear that it requires no argument to prove it.'

As usual with most of our finer melodies, this one of *Róis Gheal Dubh* has, as it appears, been adapted to many other songs, as well in English as in Irish, besides that older one from which it has derived its best known name; but of these songs I have only obtained a copy of one, which has been commonly sung in the Munster counties. It is a peasant love song in English, and would hardly be worthy of notice but for its first stanza, which is clearly the work of a different hand from that of the writer of the rest. This stanza, however, as will be seen below, is but a different, and probably less correct version of the well-known English nursery song on the cuckoo, published by Chambers, in his *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*, and by Halliwell, in his *Nursery Rhymes of England*.

The cuckoo's a fine bird,
She sings as she flies;
She brings us new tidings,
And tells us no lies.
She sucks pretty flowers
To make her voice clear;
And the more she sings 'Cuckoo!'
Sweet summer draws near.

English Version:

The cuckoo's a fine bird,
He sings as he flies;
He brings us good tidings,
He tells us no lies.
He sucks little birds' eggs
To make his voice clear;
And when he sings 'Cuckoo!'
The summer is near.



I have found that the above old melody is also now known in the counties of Kerry, Clare and Limerick, by the name '*A óigfhir ghroí choraigh*', or 'O brave, generous young man', a name derived, as Mr Curry informs me, from a popular song written about the year 1806 by Mary Harman of Ardfer, a beautiful and intelligent girl of a respectable but reduced family. In this song she assigns her reasons for refusing to elope with a lover and expresses, in pleasing language, her horror of any immoral or disreputable conduct.

Sir Patrick Bellew's March

I found the following old march tune many years since in a MS music book, written about the middle of the last century. It is obviously a bagpipe tune, and is a good specimen of the kind of march music prevalent in Ireland during the civil wars of the seventeenth century, but which, in its general character, if not in its age, was probably of a much earlier antiquity, as all the distinguished families had from an indefinitely remote time some march tune peculiar to themselves.



I am unable to determine with any certainty who the *Sir Patrick Bellew* was whose name has been connected with this old tune. The name Patrick has long been a common one in that noble Anglo-Norman family in Ireland, but the only Patrick amongst them during the seventeenth century whom I have found entitled to the knightly prefix, Sir, was Sir Patrick Bellew of Bellew Mount, or Barneath, in the county of Louth, from whom the present Patrick Lord Bellew descends. This Sir Patrick was the son of Sir John Bellew, knight, of Willystown in the same county, who was the son of Patrick Bellew of Lisrane and Willystown, who, again, was the son of John, *second* son of *Sir* John of Bellewstown, the ancestor of the Lords Bellew now extinct Sir Patrick, who was an adherent of King James the Second, was advanced through the interest of the Earl of Tirconnell to the rank of a baronet in April 1687. But he does not appear to have taken part, or served in any military capacity, in the war which so soon after followed his elevation, and his estates were not confiscated – so that it is very unlikely that his was the name connected with this tune. Looking earlier, however, into the history of the family, we find a Patrick, who was the grandson of Sir John Bellew of Bellewstown, by his third son, Richard of Verdantstown; and to this Patrick I think the name of the march may, with the largest amount of probability, be assigned; for he was a captain of the forces raised in the county of Louth for the Confederate Catholics during the civil war of 1641, and was one of those excepted from pardon for life and estate by Cromwell's Act of Parliament for the settlement of Ireland, passed in August 1652, by which he lost an estate of between five and six thousand acres. It is true I have not found that he was ever knighted, but such fact is not impossible, and at all events, it was a popular usage amongst the Irish to apply to men of rank titles which had been borne by their ancestors.

Nancy the Pride of the East

When I gave the following air to be put in type, I had no idea that there could be any doubt of its being what its characteristics strongly indicate, a genuine Irish one. But though I have recently found that our right to it may be somewhat questionable, and though I feel it but fair to make this acknowledgment, I do not consider the proofs of its foreign origin sufficiently conclusive to require me to exclude it from a place in this work – and the more particularly as, though it should appear that its origin was not Irish, it would still be interesting and perhaps instructive as an example of the changes which a national melody may assume – so as almost to obliterate its original character – on its adoption by another people who had a native music differing from it in style and feeling.

This melody has long been a very popular one in the southern and midland counties of Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Clare, Tipperary and Kilkenny, from most of which I have obtained settings of it; and certainly the people of those counties have now no notion that its Irish origin can be doubted. In all those districts it is now generally known by the name of ‘Nancy the Pride of the East’, or ‘West’, as in some localities – a name derived from the burden of a ballad song in English, which was very popular about the close of the last [18th] century. But, as Mr Curry acquaints me, in MS copies of some older Irish songs, and particularly in all the copies which have come under his notice, of a well-written elegy, by the Irish poet John O’Toomey, on the death in 1754 of his brother bard John Mac Donnell *Claragh*, he cannot remember one in which it is not set down as to be sung to the *fonn Albanach*, or Scottish tune, called ‘The banks of the Tweed’; and, as it is to the air here published that he has heard all those older songs sung, he supposes that this tune must be the *fonn Albanach* just spoken of, and, therefore, not Irish.

The fact thus made known to me by Mr Curry necessarily led me at once to such an investigation of authorities as appeared likely to throw light upon the question, and I soon ascertained that there was a tune named ‘The Banks of the Tweed’, which, as far as I know, first appeared in *Johnson’s Musical Museum* (Edinb. 1787). But on a comparison of this air with our ‘Nancy the Pride of the East’, I found they had nothing whatsoever in common, and further, that we had the high authority of Robert Burns that the tune given by Johnson was not Scottish, but the ‘attempt of an English composer to imitate the Scottish manner’ (*vide Burns’ Works*, Eighth Edition, Vol. V., London, 1814). A comparison, however, of our air with the old and beautiful Scottish melody called ‘Tweedside’ led to a very different result, as the two airs were found to be so perfectly similar in their general construction and rhythm that verses written for the one would be equally suited to the other. It was found also that in the first bar of the second strain there is a similarity of melody in both airs; but this is the only melodic agreement which they exhibit, and the candid musical reader will judge for himself how far this perfect similarity in construction, and partial agreement in melody, will authorize the conclusion that our air is a corruption of, or founded on, the Scottish one. Without, however, being conscious of any prejudice to bias my judgement, and actuated

solely by a desire to elicit the truth, I cannot hesitate to declare that I do not see any sufficient grounds to warrant such a conclusion; and, moreover, I am strongly of opinion that such similarity in the construction of the two airs – if not wholly accidental – would rather make it probable that ‘Nancy the Pride of the East’ was the parent of ‘Tweedside’, than that the Scottish air was the parent of it; for the construction found in these airs is the same as that to which I have adverted in p. 89, as one peculiar to a large class of Irish and Highland melodies; and I may now add that on a recent examination of Woods’ *Songs of Scotland*, so ably edited by Mr George Farquhar Graham, and which is the latest collection published of Scottish music, I have found in the whole collection but five airs so constructed, and of these Mr Graham acknowledges one, ‘Leezie Lindsay’, to be a Gaelic melody, and a second, ‘Queen Mary’s Lament’, to be a modern composition – thus reducing the number to three, and of these three I shall hereafter prove one to be unquestionably Irish.

Seeing, then, that tunes of this construction constitute a very numerous class common to Ireland and the Gaelic Highlands, while on the contrary scarcely a well-authenticated example of an air so constructed can be found amongst the melodies of England, Wales, or the Scottish Lowlands, the inference would appear to be unavoidable that the air called ‘Tweedside’, however modified by modern musical refinement, had most probably a Highland, if not an Irish, origin – or was derived from a melody common to both countries. It is true, indeed, there is authority to prove that ‘Tweedside’ was known in Scotland in the early part of the last century; but the Leyden MS in which it appears, and which proves this, proves nothing more, as that MS is not confined to Scottish tunes, and has in it tunes of undoubted Irish origin. And though it may be conceded as possible that Toomey’s elegiac song on the death of Mac Donnell *Claragh*, adverted to by Mr Curry, may have been originally written to the Scottish ‘Tweedside’, it is in the highest degree improbable that the peasantry of so large a portion of Ireland could have become familiarized with it, or – if such did happen – that they should all have adopted a form of the melody which retains scarcely a vestige of the features of that beautiful air.

Amongst the various settings of our Irish melody, which I have obtained from various parts of Ireland, there is a more than usual agreement. The most graceful, however, of those settings is that here presented to the reader, and which was communicated to me by Mr Fogarty of Tibroghney in the county of Kilkenny. In the memorandum which accompanied it, he describes the air as ‘a very ancient love song, the words of which are most beautiful’, and as being also ‘mixed with patriotism or politics – complaining that he [the lover] will fly to France or Spain, and never return’. He adds: ‘There was, or is, an English translation of this song to the air, and called ‘Nancy the Pride of the East’. I regret that I have been unable to procure a copy either of the original Irish song or of the translation of it to which Mr Fogarty alludes.

Many other songs, as well in English as in Irish, appear to have been adapted to this air by the Munster poets, and, as usual, such songs have given names to it, known in proportion to their popularity. Of these songs, the most celebrated is the Irish one called *Ar Éirinn ní neosainn cé hí*, or, ‘For Ireland I would not tell who she is’. This song has been printed, with a metrical translation, in the *Irish*



Popular Songs, by the late Mr Edward Walsh, and in reference to it he makes the following statement in a note: 'The author of this beautiful love song is unknown, but it would seem that he was a native of the county Kerry, as this is the most popular song in that part of Munster. Tradition attributes it to a young man who fell violently in love with the affianced bride of his own brother.' Tradition, however, is often found to be a cloak for fanciful inventions, and Mr Curry, who has long known this song, and the general opinion of the peasantry as to its origin, acquaints me that its author was not a young lover of his brother's affianced bride, but an old schoolmaster of the county of Kerry, named Finneen, or Florence, Scannell – and that it was written about forty years ago upon some imaginary Beauty, for the purpose of exciting the curiosity and hostility of contemporary bards. Amongst the English street ballads written to this air, one, of which Mr Curry has favoured me with a copy, would appear to have been suggested by, if it did not itself suggest, the Irish song just alluded to. It is not worth printing *in extenso*, but I venture to give a couple of stanzas of it as an illustration.

I am a disconsolate rake,
 That spent my estate most free,
 In frantic and frolicksome freaks
 'Mongst the fair sex of ev'ry degree.
 I was never subdued by a maid,
 Nor ever intended to be,
 Till Cupid my poor heart betrayed,
 And her captive I now must be.

It happened one morning in May,
 As the flowers sweet odour disclosed,
 Through Milltown I happened to stray,
 Where the goddess of beauty reposed.
 Her shape was exquisitely rare,
 When under a green shady tree,

To mention her name I'll forbear,
But style her sweet *Stóirín mo chroí*.

Another Irish song to this melody will be found in Mr O'Daly's *Poets and Poetry of Munster*: it is written in praise of

The spreading Lee that, like an island fayre,
Encloseth Corke with his divided flood,

by a Munster poet named Eoghan, or Owen (the small-fingered) Mac Carthy, and is not wanting in beauty. Mr O'Daly has also given in the same work a setting of the melody, but though it is quite similar in its rhythmical and general construction to the air now published, yet, being written in the minor mode, it has consequently a far deeper expression of sadness, and has in other respects so little resemblance, that the identity of the two airs may possibly be questioned.

Last Saturday Night as I Lay in my Bed

The following air, which was given to me by my friend Mr James M. O'Reilly, now of Rathmines, was learnt by that gentleman in the county of Carlow, where, as well as in some of the adjacent counties, it was commonly sung to a street ballad, the first line of which I have adopted as a name for the air, having been unable to ascertain its true one.

The words of this ballad, though rude, are less objectionable than usual in songs of its class; and as a historical memorial of one of the latest of the agrarian combinations which for so long a period disturbed so many parts of Ireland, its preservation may perhaps be desirable – and the more particularly as it indicates the objects for which such combination was formed, and points out the localities in which it was most active. The association to which I allude was that known by the appellation of Carders – a name derived, as Mr Crofton Croker informs us, 'from their inhuman practice of inflicting punishment on the naked back with the wool card'; and their objects appear to have been confined to 'the punishment of informers, or those who took or let lands at a high rent'. Such, at least, are the objects named by themselves in the following song:

Last Saturday night as I lay in my bed,
The neighbours came to me, and this 'twas they said:
Are you Captain Lusty? – I answered them – no!
Are you Captain Carder? – Indeed I am so.

Get up Captain Carder, and look thro' your glass,
And see all your merry men just as they pass;
The clothing they wear, 'tis rare to be seen,
With their Liberty jackets bound over with green.

Success to Moll Hayden, and long may she reign,
 For instead of cold water, she gave us pure cream,
 To put strength in our bodies, and speed in our feet,
 And make us be able to *whale the black sheep*.

Here's luck to Kilkenny, and sweet Ballyroan –
 As for Timahoe town, we may call it our own;
 In Timahoe town we may march up and down,
 And at Billy Dunne's corner we'll make them lie down.

Success to the Whitefeet – there's few of them here;
 We'll toast their good health in both whiskey and beer;
 And long may they reign over country and town,
 For they are the boys that *keep land jobbers down!*



David Foy, or Remember the Pease-straw

During the palmy days of the Dublin street ballad singers – when their calling was not only a lawful or permitted, but even a somewhat respectable and lucrative one – the following air was, for a considerable time, one that might be heard warbled, daily and nightly, in every thickly inhabited and very Irish part of the city. I allude to a period, looking backwards at least forty years, when I first heard this and many other airs which became fixed in my memory – little thinking at the time that the task should ever devolve on me of thus endeavouring to rescue them from oblivion. In subsequent years, however, I found that the melodies periodically employed to give circulation to the new ballads of the day, were those of which the merits had been long tested in the service, and that, under various names, they had usually travelled from the provinces to the metropolis, to do duty for a while and then be forgotten. And so it has been with this air, which was sung to a street ballad called 'David Foy' or 'Remember the Pease-straw', and of which I have been unable to find a copy in Dublin; but the melody is still a well-known one, at least in some of the Connaught counties, from which, most probably, it originally emanated.

It will be seen that in this air there is a departure from the ordinary construction observable in melodies of its class – namely, that of its four sections, the third one is not, as usual, a repetition, however modified, of the second, or preceding one.



The Gobby O

The following melody appears to have been a very popular dance tune during the greater part, if not the whole, of the last century; but, as its plaintive sentiment would suggest, it is most probably formed from some vocal air of an earlier age in slower time, and it is still used by the pipers as an andante theme for variations. A setting of the air as a dance tune has been already printed in O'Farrell's *Pocket Companion for the Irish or Union Pipes*; but that now given – which has been copied from one in the old MS book of dance tunes already often referred to – is, I think, a better as well as an older one.



Dá dTéinn go Cóbach⁵² (If I Should Go to a Clown)

The following beautiful and, as I believe, very old melody, is one of a considerable collection of unpublished airs, made in the county of Wexford by Mr Robert Fitzgerald of Enniscorthy, the whole of which he has very kindly placed at my disposal. It is to my friend Mr Curry, however, that I am indebted for the old Irish name which I have given to this melody, this name being the first line of a very ancient love song which Mr Curry had always heard sung to it in the county of Clare, but of which, unfortunately, he cannot now remember perfectly more than the following half stanza:

⁵² Dá d-téidhin go cóbach.

Dá dtéinn go cóbach,
 A mbeadh bruscar bó aige
 Is cailín óg deas
 Le tabhairt amach;
 Do b'éagla mhór liom
 Gur diúltú gheobhainn;
 Mar nách eól dóibh
 Mo shinsear ceart.

If I should go to a clown,
 Who had a herd of cows
 And a pretty young girl
 To give away;
 It is much I fear
 That 'tis a refusal I'd get
 Because they know not
 My right descent.

The air was only known to Mr Fitzgerald as one of several tunes of the same class which have been popularly sung in the county of Wexford to a peasant ballad commemorative of the insurrectionary conflicts of '98 in that county. Of this ballad Mr Fitzgerald has obtained for me a copy, but though it may have some value in a historical point of view, it has no merit, either of thought or expression, that could make it desirable to give even a portion of it in this work.

It will be perceived that this tune belongs to that most peculiarly Irish class of our melodies which I have ventured to term 'narrative', and which I have attempted to analyze, in connection with a tune of the same class – *The Cailín Bán*, or 'Fair Girl' – which will be found at page 82.



Dá dtÉinn go Cóbach (If I Should Go to a Clown)

The musical reader will at once perceive that the following is but a varied setting of the preceding air; but as in its points of difference it is so truly Irish, and as a whole is so parallel in beauty to the other that it may be doubted which form of the melody is the truer one, I have on every account considered its insertion desirable. Like the former setting, it was noted by Mr Fitzgerald in the county of Wexford, where it was sung to the same '98 ballad – the first line of which I now give, in order that, should it ever be printed as a historical memorial, its identification with these melodies may be secured:

Some treat of David, that valiant hero, who slew Goliath, and so won the field.



The Old Woman Lamenting Her Purse

The following Munster dance tune was obtained from Mr James Fogarty. It does not appear to me to be a tune of much antiquity, but it is strongly marked with Irish character, and, like many airs of its class, is defective in the fourth of the scale.



The Monks of the Screw

As the melody of the charter song of that singular social union of wit and talent which existed in Dublin from the year 1779 to the close of the year 1785, and was called 'The Monks of the Order of St Patrick', but commonly known as 'The Monks of the Screw', the following air will possess an interest, from its historical associations, independent of, and probably greater than any which might be derived from its intrinsic originality and beauty. Few of the readers of this work will require to be informed that this well-known charter song was written for the society by its prior, the late John Philpot Curran, but it has not been hitherto known that the music selected by the gifted poet as a fit medium for his serio-comic verses was a gay Irish melody, arrayed in a mock solemnity, and which, no doubt, he had learnt in his own loved county of Cork. It would

appear indeed that under its assumed gravity of character, its Irish origin was never suspected, for it is spoken of by Mr Phillips in his amusing work, *Curran and his Contemporaries*, as a 'droll kind of recitative'; and even Mr Wm. Henry Curran, to whose kindness I have to acknowledge myself indebted for the notation of this tune, had no notion that it was other than, as he described it, a wild sort of ecclesiastical chant, which did not strike him as having in it anything indicative of an Irish melody. With regard, however, to Mr Curran, it should be observed that he never had the advantage of having heard it sung by his father, and though Mr Phillips, as he states, often heard its author 'repeat it at his own table', it is not to be wondered at that one who describes the effect upon himself of Curran's enthusiastic performance on the violoncello to have been such as 'to render gravity painful, if not impossible', should have failed to discover that what he considered to be only a 'droll kind of recitative' was one of those Irish melodies which Curran so dearly loved, and felt such intense enjoyment in playing. Certain it is, however, that all persons were not affected by Mr Curran's performances in a manner similar to that described by Mr Phillips, for I, who have frequently had in my early days the great pleasure of hearing Mr Curran's performances, was never otherwise affected by the indications of absorbed and impassioned feeling which accompanied them, than in a way the farthest removed from any excitement of the sense of the ludicrous; but, on the contrary, there has been left upon my mind a solemn impression of the depth of sensibility to melody which, combined with so many other of his higher mental qualities, rendered Mr Curran one of the most brilliant examples of a character in all its bearings so thoroughly, so unmistakably, and – may I not add? – so admirably Irish.

But however this may be, the air is not only one of widespread popularity in Ireland, but is one also found under various names, and assuming various forms, both in the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland. In Ireland it is sometimes sung in moderate time and in the minor mode, but more generally as a lively air and in the major; and a setting of it in the latter is given in Bunting's last volume of *The Ancient Music of Ireland*, under the name of 'I will pay them yet'. This setting, however – which, as Mr Bunting states, was procured from a lady at Oranmore in the county of Galway – is a very incorrect one. In Scotland, on the contrary, such settings of the air as I have met with are given in the minor mode, though, as in Ireland, some are set as andantes, and others as allegros. Of these settings, two, differing much from each other, appear in Fraser's *Airs and Melodies peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles* (Edinburgh, 1816). They are both given as slow airs: one is called *Iomain nan gamhna*, or 'Driving the Steers', and the other, *Gur mis 'tha gu craiteach o' n' uiridh*, or 'What pain I've endured since last year'; and like most of the tunes in that work, they are very incorrect or corrupted settings. In Johnson's *Scots' Musical Museum* (Edinburgh, 1787), the tune is given as a lively one, and is called 'Gae to the ky wi' me, Johnny', which is the burden of an old Lowland song; and hence it would appear that the air had passed from the Highlands into the Lowland plains, at a time not very recent. This setting of the tune, though more in accordance with the Irish versions than those given by Captain Fraser, is still but an indifferent one; it is, however, of interest from its being,

obviously, the parent of the beautiful melody bearing a similar name, subsequently published by Mr George Thomson in his *Select Collection of Scottish Airs*, and which, as Mr Thomson states, Mr Shield, the celebrated English composer – in whose Appendix to his *Introduction to Harmony* it first appeared – appreciated so highly as to think it sufficient to enhance the value of the most voluminous collection.

It is scarcely necessary to observe that in the notation of the melody, as sung by the Monks of the Screw, now presented to the reader, there is given to it a character not strictly Irish, consequent upon the adaptation to it of Mr Curran's words. But this peculiarity consists chiefly in its emphatic accentuation, for in every other way the setting of the melody is essentially the same as that of one sung as a slow air to a ballad called 'The Cove of Cork', and of which I made a notation more than forty years ago. I have not, therefore, deemed it necessary to give any second setting of it in slow time and in the minor mode, but I have thought it desirable to add a setting as a lively air in the major mode, in which form it is now more generally sung and played in Ireland. This setting, which was sung to a ballad called 'The Groves of Blackpool', was also noted about the same time as that to which I have already alluded.

As the words of the charter song have been already published by Mr W. H. Curran, in his excellent *Life* of his father, a stanza of it, as a specimen of its rhythmical adaptation to the melody, will be sufficient in this place:

When Saint Patrick our order created,
And called us 'The Monks of the Screw',
Good rules he revealed to our Abbot,
To guide us in what we should do.

But first he replenished his fountain
With liquor the best in the sky;
And he swore, on the word of his saintship,
That fountain should never run dry.

I find it difficult to close this notice without observing that it has afforded me a no ordinary pleasure to have had it in my power, by the publication of this air, to add even one ray of light to the history of that remarkable phase of society which existed in Dublin towards the close of the last century – a phase of society which is so interesting, from the varied talents and public virtues which it exhibited, and to which – as it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find a



parallel at any earlier period of our history – there is, perhaps, but little probability that a similar one will ever be seen again. The *words* of this song enabled us to bring before the mind that striking feature which characterized this state of society, namely, the indulgence of a playful and exuberant mirthfulness by men distinguished for their graver intellectual qualities: we could imagine them attired in their grotesque costumes, chanting, with ludicrous gravity, the burlesque verses furnished by their primest wit and humorist; but to enable us to realize the scene more vividly, the actual musical sounds by which these verses were made audible were still wanting – and these are now supplied.

The Groves of Blackpool

As I have stated in the preceding notice, the following different setting of the air just given is that now usually sung and played in Ireland, particularly in the county of Cork, where it is generally known by the name of ‘The Groves of Blackpool’ – a locality formerly so called, and which now, divested of its trees, forms an extensive suburb on the northern side of Cork city. The name thus given to the tune, if not derived from some older song, owes its origin to a ballad called ‘The Groves of Blackpool’, or ‘De Groves of de Pool’, by the late Richard Alfred Milliken, the well-known author of the burlesque words called ‘The Groves of Blarney’, and which, as Mr Crofton Croker acquaints us, ‘was intended to depict the return or as he humorously calls it the “advance back again”, of the “gallant Cork City Militia”, after the rebellion of 1798, and their reception in “de groves” which had sheltered the infancy of “dose Irish heroes”’. As the whole of this song has been printed by Mr Croker in his amusing volume, *The Popular Songs of Ireland*, I do not deem it necessary to give any portion of it in this work. Indeed, with all due respect to the memory of ‘honest Dick Milliken’, I confess that I feel but little admiration for the productions of that class of writers of whom he was one of the most distinguished, and who, following in the wake of Lord Wharton, the author of ‘Lilliburlero bullen-a-la’ – but without the excuse of a political object, which that English nobleman had in view – have endeavoured to gain celebrity by attempts, usually stupid enough, to turn their countrymen into ridicule, thus giving some sad truth to the old saying that if one Irishman is to be roasted, another will always be found ready to turn the spit. It is greatly to the honour of England and Scotland that they have produced, and would tolerate, no such class of writers.

There have been, as I understand, many other street ballads adapted to this air, but I have only met with one of them, and of this a stanza will be a sufficient specimen.

I am a rakish young fellow,
That now leads a comical life;
My mind it will never be easy
Until I am tied to a wife.

Chorus

With my wattle, my pipe and tobacco,
 I'll go out as clean as I can;
 And if I'm rather fond of the girls,
 Sure that's no bad sign of the man.

Those seven long years I am courting,
 And sporting my cash like a man;
 I oftentimes pay the whole reckoning,
 For such things I don't care a d-n.

It should be observed that all these street ballads have a chorus which requires a *Da Capo*, or return to the first strain of the tune.

**O Nancy, Nancy, Don't You Remember?**

In giving a place in this collection – which I confess I should be sorry to deny – to the fine old melody which follows, I feel it but a duty to state that in its construction it appears to me to have perhaps as much of an English as of an Irish character; and that, if it be not, as it possibly may be, an air imported into, and naturalized in, our country, it is at least, and with more probability, one of Anglo-Irish origin. The musical critic will at once perceive that the English character to which I allude is chiefly found in the closing cadence of each phrase; the general construction, as well as the tone of sentiment of the air, being truly Irish. It would be strange if, during the last seven centuries, in which our island has been so largely planted from England, no melodies should have been introduced amongst us which had sufficient beauty to insure their perpetuation, even after they had been forgotten in the country in which they had their origin; and it would be equally strange if the incorporation of the two races did not give birth to a class of melody indicative of the mixed character so produced, and to which the term Anglo-Irish might with propriety be applied. That there are airs of both classes, and particularly of the latter, still remaining in Ireland, I cannot entertain a doubt; and as there is now, unfortunately, no other evidence respecting their origin to be found, but that derived from their own peculiar characteristics, I shall, as I have done in the present instance, direct attention to such evidence as often as it may seem proper to do so, rather than exclude such airs from this collection.

This melody was noted nearly fifty years ago from the singing of it by a

servant girl to a street ballad, of which I have long ceased to retain in my memory more than the first two lines.

Oh! Nancy, Nancy, don't you remember
The protestations that you made to me?



Name Unascertained

If I ever heard the name of the following air, I regret that I have long since forgotten it. It is one of a large number of tunes which I noted from the singing of the Dublin street ballad singers more than forty years ago, and though the tune is not very Irish in its character, nor probably very old, its spirit and flow of melody appeared to me to entitle it to a place in this collection.



One Sunday after Mass

The peculiarities of construction in the following air would, I think, lead to the conclusion that it is not a very ancient or purely Irish one, but its pleasing flow of melody appeared to me to give it a fair claim to preservation. It was noted more than forty years ago from the singing of a near connection of my own, and the serio-comic words sung to it were obviously not the production of a peasant or ordinary writer. But though at the period to which I have alluded, this song, like others of its class, was a favourite one at the dinner or supper

table, even in good society, I can only venture to give a stanza of it as an illustration in this work. I may, perhaps, add that such songs were not uncommon in Ireland during the latter half of the last century, and they were usually the compositions of men not only of good education and talents, but, frequently, of a distinguished position in society.

One Sunday after Mass,
As young Colin and his lass
Through the green wood did pass,
All alone, and all alone:
Chorus. All alone, and all alone:

He asked her for a *póg* [kiss],
And she called him a rogue,
And she beat him with her brogue,
Och hone, and och hone!
Chorus. Och hone, and och hone!



The Pipe on the Hob

The following dance tune is one of the most popular of the old Munster jigs, but, unfortunately, its Irish name has been forgotten by Mr Joyce, to whom I am indebted for the setting of it, and I have been hitherto unsuccessful in my



many other such allegorical impersonations in the Irish Jacobite songs – such as ‘Kathleen ni Oulaghan’, ‘Kathleen Triall’, ‘Graine Waile’, ‘The Blackbird’, etc. – it was, most probably, suggested by the name of some older song which had been applied to this ancient air, and by which it was, at the time, most popularly known; for I cannot entertain a doubt that the melodies to which those Jacobite songs were written are of an antiquity long anterior to those troubled times.

A dhroimfhionn donn dílis,
 Is a fhíorscoth na mbó,
 Cá ngabhann tú san oíche,
 Is cá mbíonn tu san ló?
 Bímse ar na coillte,
 Is mo bhuachaill dom chomhair,
 Is d’fhág sé siúd mise
 Ag sileadh na ndeor.

Níl fearann níl tíos agam,
 Fíonta na ceol,
 Níl flaithibh dom choimhdeacht,
 Níl saoihe na sló;
 Acht ag síoról an uisce,
 Go minic san ló,
 Agus beathuisce is fíon
 Ag mo naimhdibh ar bord.

* * * * *

Dá bhfaighinnse cead aighnis,
 Nó radharc ar an gcoróin,
 Sasanaigh do leadhbfainn,
 Mas do leadhbfainn seanbhróg,
 Trí bhogaigh trí choillte,
 Is trí dhraighneach lá ceo;
 Agus síud mar do sheolfainn iad,
 Mo dhroimfhionn donn óg.

O Droimeann Donn beloved,
 O true flower of cows,
 Where do you go at night,
 And where are you in the day?
 I am in the woods,
 And my boys all around me,
 And this is what has left me
 A-shedding my tears.

I have no lands nor a dwelling,
 Neither music nor wine,
 No princes attend me,
 Neither nobles nor hosts;
 But forced to drink water,
 Ofttimes in the day,
 Whilst good whiskey and wine
 Cheer my foes on their board.

* * * * *

Could I get but leave to argue,
 Or a sight of the crown,
 Sassenachs I would *leather*,
 As I would *leather* an old brogue,
 Through bogs and through forests,
 Through thorns on a foggy day;
 And it is so I would drive them,
 My Droimeann Donn oge.

I should further mention that a ballad given as a translation of this old song will be found amongst the poems of the late J. J. Callanan, and also in Mr C. G. Duffy's interesting volume *The Ballad Poetry of Ireland*; but this ballad, if not a translation of a different original from that above given, is so freely rendered that it can hardly claim to be more than an embodiment of the leading thought in the rude song of the Irish poet. As usual, however, with Mr Callanan's translations of Irish songs, it has the rare merit of preserving the rhythmical features of the original so perfectly, that it can be sung to the old melody with a fitness not inferior to that of the Irish words.

It Was an Old Beggarman, Weary and Wet

I am indebted to my accomplished young friend, the poet William Allingham, now Comptroller of Customs at New Ross, for the very characteristic air which follows, together with the annexed fragment of the old words now sung to it. They were learnt by that gentleman in the county of Donegal, and it is most probably to that locality that both the tune and the Scoto-English words adapted to it owe their origin.

It was an old beggarman, weary and wet,
 And down by the fireside he sat;
 He threw down his bags and his oaken staff,
 And merrily he did sing.

Chorus. With his pipe in his jaw, and his jaw full of smoke,
 And his beard that hung down to the breast of his cloak,
 His bag on his back, and his staff in his hand,
 He's a jolly old beggarman, O!

My dear, said he, if I were as free
 As when I first came to this countrie,
 I'd dress you up all beggarly,
 And away with me you should gang.

Chorus. With his pipe in his jaw, etc.



Ancient Lullaby

I have already given, in page 105, a specimen of the ancient lullaby music of Ireland, and directed attention to the strong affinity which it bears to the Eastern melodies of the same class, and I think I may now point to a similar affinity in the lullaby tune which follows. The former air was obtained from the county of Limerick, and is probably peculiar to the province of Munster. The air now given has been sent to me from the county of Londonderry, and as there is every reason to assume that it is peculiar to the northern counties of Ireland, it may not be uninteresting to find such traits of Eastern character pervading airs obtained from such widely separated localities; and I have little doubt that a similar affinity will be generally found in the numerous airs of this kind which I have obtained from various parts of Ireland, and which shall, from time to time, appear in this work. The great number of airs of this class still preserved in Ireland is, indeed, a curious fact, and cannot but be regarded as an evidence, if any evidence were required, of the universal love for melody for which the Irish people were so remarkable – a love which gave birth not only to this numerous class of lullaby melodies, but to other classes applicable to all possible purposes with which the employment of melody was compatible. How far Continental countries may be able to produce similar evidences of such a universal use of melody, it is beyond my purpose, as well as my ability, to inquire; but I may remark that, except among the Scotch-Hibernian race of the Highlands, I have found no evidence to prove the existence of such pervading uses of melody in any other portion of the British islands. And – reverting to the particular class of melodies now under consideration – even amongst the Highland airs published, I can only recollect

to have met with two of such airs, one in Fraser's, and the other in McDonald's collection, and neither of these appear to me at all comparable with any of the Irish, either for beauty of melody or fitness to the object for which they were intended. Of English or Lowland Scottish lullabies, I cannot remember to have seen a single example, and among the carefully collected published tunes of Wales I have found but one – 'The lullaby song which the Welsh nurses sing to compose their children to sleep'. This melody, as far as it goes, has certainly a soothing tone, not unsuited to its purpose, but composed as it is, like the well-known air by Rousseau, on only three consecutive notes of the scale, and forming a strain of only four bars, it is as a melody still less comparable than the Highland lullabies with any – even the least beautiful – of the Irish. It may, no doubt, be objected that numerous airs of this class may possibly exist both in Scotland and England, though they have been as yet unsought for with a view to publication, and against such objection I have no desire to contend, for even in Ireland, where such melodies are abundant, one only, as far as I can recollect, has been hitherto published. In the collections of Bunting there is not an air of this class to be found.



With respect to the general characteristics of this class of Irish tunes, I should remark that they are all either in common or in six-eight time, and never in triple time, properly so called. They are occasionally composed of a single strain, but more usually of two, and in all instances the melody, however tender and soothing in its expression, is never dull or heavy, but is marked by that rapid flow which is so distinguishing a feature in Irish music.

I have only to add that I am indebted for this air to Miss Jane Ross, of Newtown-Limavady in the county of Londonderry.

Coola Shore, or When I Rise in the Morning with my Heart Full of Woe

The very characteristic air which follows is probably one of northern origin, as I have never heard it sung in either the Munster or Connaught provinces, while I have found it to be a well-known melody, in some, at least, of the counties of Ulster. It was noted about forty years ago from the singing of the late Mr Joseph Hughes of the Bank of Ireland, who had learnt it in his childhood in his native county of Cavan, where it was then sung to an Anglo-Irish street ballad, of which three stanzas have been given me by Mr Curry; but with the exception of the first line above given as a name, they are quite worthless.



*Óró Mhór a Mhóirín*⁵⁴

Of several settings which I have obtained of the following air, the oldest is one from the O'Neill MS of 1787, of which I have already more than once made mention. In that MS the name given to the melody is 'Down among the Ditches O', which, as Mr Curry acquaints me, was given to it from an old street ballad of a gay but somewhat licentious character. The following older Irish song, which was also sung to this air, is not entirely free from a similar objection, but as an illustration of the playful satire of an Irish peasant girl – among her female companions – upon a lover who had annoyed her by failing in his appointment, it is not wanting in interest. The words of this old song, which were partly remembered by Mr Curry, were obtained in a more perfect state from the Clare peasant Teige Mac Mahon.

Is deas an buachaill Páidín,
 Lá aonaigh nó margaidh;
 Is ní deise ná lá Márta,
 Ar thaobh a bháidín iomartha.
 Óró 'Mhór, a Mhóirín,
 Óró 'Mhór, an dtiocfaidh tú?
 Óró 'Mhór, a Mhóirín,
 A chúilín óir, an dtiocfaidh tú?

Dúirt sé is dúirt sé,
 Is dúirt sé go dtiocfadh sé;
 A léine bhí gan smúdáil,
 Is siúd an ní do choinnibh é.
 Óró 'Mhór a Mhóirín, &c.

Dúirt sé is do gheall sé,
 Is dúirt sé go dtiocfadh sé;
 A stocáí bhí gan úrú,

⁵⁴ *Óró mór, a Móirín.*

Is siúd an ní bo choinnibh é.
Óró 'Mhór a Mhóirín, &c.

Dúirt sé is do gheall sé,
Is dúirt sé go dtiocfadh sé;
Ach an charraig i mbéal boirne
Do buaileadh insa mullach air.
Óró 'Mhór a Mhóirín, &c.

Dúirt sé is do gheall sé,
Is dúirt sé go dtiocfadh sé;
Ach poll do bhí ar a bhriste
Is d'uadar cait a chomaise.
Óró 'Mhór a Mhóirín, &c.

Dúirt sé is do gheall sé,
Is dúirt sé go dtiocfadh sé;
Is mura dtí sé an lá a gheall sé,
Go mbáitear insa churach é.
Is óró 'Mhór a Mhóirín, &c.

Handsome is the boy Paddy,
Upon a fair or market day;
But not handsomer than on a March day,
When gliding in his rowing-boat.
Oro Mór, O Móirín,
Oro Mór now will you come,
Oro Mór, O Móirín,
O, golden-haired one, will you come ?

He said and he said,
And he said that he would come;
But, his shirt not being smoothed,
That it was that hindered him.
Oro Mór, O Móirín, etc.

He said, and he promised,
And he said that he would come;
But, his stockings were not darned,
And that it was that hindered him.
Oro Mór, O Móirín, etc.

He said, and he promised,
And he said that he would come;
But the rock that's in Beal Boirney
Was hurled upon the top of him.
Oro Mór, O Móirín, etc.

He said, and he promised,
 And he said that he would come;
 [But there was a hole in his trousers
 And the cats ate his token]
 Oro Mór, O Móirín, etc.

He said, and he promised,
 And he said that he would come;
 And if he comes not on the promised day,
 May he be drowned in the curach.
 And Oro Mór, O Móirín, etc.

On this song Mr Curry has favoured me with the following remarks:

It will be seen from the chorus to these verses that the present song is not the original one. It is addressed by a girl to a *boy*, but the chorus is addressed to a girl, named Mor (Moria), and, by way of endearment, diminished to Moirin (Moreen); and I may remark that this name, Mor, is one of historical fame and noble distinction in Ireland. It is obvious, therefore, that the writer of the present song took the old tune, and, along with it, the incongruous chorus; but this was nothing unusual. (See the *Gra ma chree do chooleen*, etc.).

It is evident, from the sarcastic bitterness of the last three verses, that the girl had suspected that Paddy's breach of promise arose from other causes than those she jocularly pretended to find for it. The language is very good, and the song appears to belong to the borders of the counties of Clare and Galway. Beal Boirney is on the Clare side of the Bay of Galway, which shows that the faithless Paddy belonged to the former county, whilst the disappointed girl must have belonged to the other.



*Sadhbh Ní Fhaoláin*⁵⁵ (Sally Whelan)

The following beautiful and characteristic melody was noted in 1839, at the Maam Hotel in 'The Joyce Country', county of Galway, from the singing of the late Patrick Coneely, the Galway piper, and also from the singing of some of the female peasants of that romantic district, to which, as it was said, the air

⁵⁵ *Sadhbh Ní Fhaeláin*.

properly belonged. Of the words sung to it – an Irish love song – I neglected then, unfortunately, to make a writing, and I have never since had an opportunity for doing so.

It will be perceived that this air belongs to that peculiarly Irish class of narrative melodies of which I have already treated, and which I have illustrated by so many previously unpublished examples.



*Cailleacha Chúige Uladh*⁵⁶ (The Hags of Ulster)

The following dance tune was notated from the playing of the late Patrick Coneely in 1839, and, as he stated, it is a tune of Connaught origin. This statement has been subsequently corroborated by other pipers, as well as fiddlers from that province.



Name Unascertained

The following is one of the many airs which, in my boy-days, I noted from the singing of the Dublin street ballad singers, and of which I often – as in the

⁵⁶ *Cailleacha Chúigídh Uladh*. *Cailleach* is usually translated 'hag', but in Ulster the word can also mean something like 'lad' or 'fellow'. It may also be used disparagingly of men.

present instance – neglected to record their ballad names, considering such names as recent, and, from the usual worthlessness of the songs from which they were borrowed, of no value.



*Óró a Chumainn Ghil*⁵⁷ (**Oro Thou Fair Loved One**)

Having at page 115 already treated at some length of the ancient spinning-wheel tunes, of which very many are still preserved in the western and southern counties of Ireland, I have but little to remark in connection with the following simple melody, which is one of the same class, but of a somewhat less lively character than the airs of this kind already given. One remark, however, I would fain offer, namely, that I am not unaware that to the mere musician, such very simple ancient airs can possess but little, if any, interest, and that a single specimen of the class would, by most persons, be deemed sufficient for the purpose of illustration. But I trust it has been already perceived that my object in the prosecution of this work has not been limited to the preservation of melodies of sufficient beauty to extort the admiration even of minds trained into, and confined by, conventional predilections; but on the contrary, that it has been my anxious desire to preserve in all classes of our melodies such airs as might, in any way however slight, serve to illustrate the peculiar nature of the Irish mind, and the history of the Irish race in bygone times. And though the finer melodies of my country, from their singular depth of feeling and beauty of construction, must necessarily always possess a higher and more universal interest, yet the simpler, and perhaps more ancient, melodies, designed to lighten the burden of daily labour and to give joy to life, can never be deemed of little value by the enlightened investigator of the history of the human race, or be felt of little interest by the sensitive and philosophical lover of national melody.



⁵⁷ *Óró a chumain ghil.*

I have already remarked that this spinning-wheel tune is of a less lively character than the specimens previously given – indeed, I might have added, than the generality of such tunes – and the words sung to it have a corresponding character. The melody is, in fact, one used as a medium for carrying on the ordinary chit-chat or gossip of the girls or women at their occupation. In the mode, however, of carrying on such gossip, there is but little, if any, difference from that of the livelier example already given – as will be seen from the annexed words supplied to me by Mr Curry, and which, together with the melody, have been partly obtained from the singing of the Clare peasant Teige Mac Mahon. In both, a dialogue is carried on extemporaneously, but regulated by an established formula and controlled by a necessary attention to rhythmical structure; and the formation of the verses is facilitated by a constantly recurring burden, or chorus, in which the company can join, and which allows time to the solo singer to prepare or compose the verse necessary to the completion of each stanza or strain. But as will be seen there is one striking peculiarity in these words, and this occurs in the concluding stanza, namely, that the singer continues to compose and sing on for a considerable length of time, attentive, indeed, to the rhythm of the verses, but wholly regardless of the length of the tune, the middle phrase of which she has to repeat, over and over, till her inventive or descriptive powers are exhausted.

Óró a chumainn ghil, is íoró a ghile gil,
Cé hí an bhean óg do pósfar an Inid seo?
Óró a chumainn ghil, a uain is a ghrá.

Óró a chumainn ghil, is íoró a ghile gil,
Máire Ní Chléire, do réir mar do thuigimse.
Óró a chumainn ghil, a uain is a ghrá.

Óró a chumainn ghil, is íoró a ghile gil,
Cé hé an fear óg inar buaileadh an sonas air?
Óró a chumainn ghil, a uain is a ghrá.

Óró a chumainn ghil, is íoró a ghile gil,
Seán Ó Cinnéide, do réir mar a thuigimse.
Óró a chumainn ghil, a uain is a ghrá.

Óró a chumainn ghil, is íoró a ghile gil,
Cad í an chóir pósta raghaidh ar an lánúin?
Óró a chumainn ghil, a uain is a ghrá.

Óró a chumainn ghil, is íoró a ghile gil,
Tocht dhá chéad déag, fá chlúmh geal go himeallaibh,
Brait gheala lín, agus suim de ghealphluideanna;
Cuilce den tsíoda, is daoire tá i Luimneach;
Coinnleoirí óir ann, ar bordaibh ag glioscarnaigh;
Airgead is ór maith, i bpóca gach nduine acu;
Cuideachta shaoite, ina dtimpeall gan uireasa,

Is guímse go buan, is go mbuaitear an cluiche leo
Óró a chumainn ghil, a uain is a ghrá.

Oro thou fair loved one, and ioro thou fair dear one,
Who's the young woman that's to be married this Shrovetide?
Oro thou fair loved one, thou lamb and thou love.

Oro thou fair loved one, and ioro thou fair dear one,
Mary O'Cleary, according as I understand.
Oro thou fair loved one, thou lamb and thou love.

Oro thou fair loved one, and ioro thou fair dear one,
Who's the young man that is struck at so luckily?
Oro thou fair loved one, thou lamb and thou love.

Oro thou fair loved one, and ioro thou fair dear one,
John O'Kennedy, according as I understand.
Oro thou fair loved one, thou lamb and thou love.

Oro thou fair loved one, and ioro thou fair dear one,
What nuptial suit shall be found for the couple?
Oro thou fair loved one, thou lamb and thou love.

Oro thou fair loved one, and ioro thou fair dear one,
A twelve-hundred tick, with white feathers filled;
White linen sheets, and white blankets abundant;
A quilt of fine silk, the dearest in Limerick;
Candlesticks of gold upon tables a glistening;
A plentiful board, and a cheerful gay company,
And I fervently pray that they gain the victory.
Oro thou fair loved one, thou lamb and thou love.

It should be remarked that in such songs as the above, when the young woman named for marriage is not approved by the leading singer, she puts the interrogatory as to the young man in the following words:

Cé hé an fear óg, ionar buileadh andonor air?
Who is the young man that is struck with misfortune?

*Mo Ghrása an Jug Mór is é Lán*⁵⁸ (**Dear to Me is the Big Jug, and It Full**)

The characteristics of the following beautiful, and in my opinion, very ancient melody, sustain, as I think, very strongly the traditional belief connected with it, namely, that it is an air of Connaught origin, and more particularly,

⁵⁸ *Mo ghrádh-sa an jug mór is é lán.*

belonging to the pre-eminently musical county of Mayo. It was noted during the summer of 1839 from the singing of the Galway piper, the late Patrick Coneely, who sang it to Irish words very little expressive of the tender and impassioned sentiment of the melody – as may be gathered from the line above given, which I have been constrained to preserve as a name for the air.



A Double Jig, Name Unascertained

The fine old dance tune which follows was noted in 1852 from the playing of Patrick Hurst, a fiddler from the county of Leitrim, to which locality, as he assured me, the tune properly belongs. Unlike the great majority of the dance tunes of the Munster counties, which are obviously bagpipe compositions, this melody, as its characteristics clearly indicate, had a harp or fiddle origin, and it would be wholly unsuited to the peculiar nature and powers of the national wind instrument; in truth, it is very much in the style of Carolan's best jigs and planxties, and may very possibly be a work by that prolific composer. The name of this tune was unfortunately unknown to, or forgotten by, the fiddler from whose playing it was noted.



*Preab san Ól*⁵⁹ (Spring into the Drink)

The following is another of the beautiful melodies collected in the county of Mayo by Mr Patrick J. O'Reilly of Westport, and which, as I have already stated, have been kindly placed at my disposal by that gentleman. It will be seen that it belongs to that numerous class of narrative airs of which I have already given so many examples, and also that it bears a strong general resemblance to the melody called 'The Young Man's Dream', and now better known as 'The Groves of Blarney', or 'The Last Rose of Summer'.



Name Unascertained

For the graceful melody which follows, as well as for many other airs of equal beauty, I am indebted to the kindness of my respected friend Mrs Close, the relict of the estimable and deeply lamented J. S. Close, Esq., Q.C. The air was learnt by that lady many years ago in her native county of Galway, but unfortunately she cannot now remember its name, which was an Irish one.



⁵⁹ *Preab anns an ól.*



Name Unascertained

The following melody, which is strongly marked with a hymnal character, was noted in my boy-days, but unfortunately I neglected to preserve its name, and have now no recollection as to how or where it was procured.



*Bímis ag Ól, ag Ól, ag Ól*⁶⁰ (Let Us Be Drinking, Drinking, Drinking)

The lively and very characteristic melody which follows was noted last year from the singing of the Clare peasant Teige Mac Mahon, and it was remembered by Mr Curry, to whom I am indebted for a copy of the words now commonly sung to it. These words, which were written about the year 1780 by the eccentric poet Owen Roe O'Sullivan, are of little merit, but they preserve the chorus or burden of an older, and perhaps the original, Irish song; and they are not wholly devoid of interest as exhibiting the qualifications on the possession of which the hedge schoolmasters – the Irish lyrists of the last century – were, as it may be assumed, but too generally accustomed to pride themselves.

My name is O'Sullivan, a most eminent teacher;
 My qualifications will ne'er be extinct;
 I'd write as good Latin as any in the nation;
 No doubt I'm experienced in arithmetic.

⁶⁰ *Bímíd ag ól, ag ól, ag ól.*

Chorus

Is bímis⁶¹ ag ól, ag ól, ag ól;
 Is bímis ag ól is ag pógadh na mban;
 Bímis ag ól is a raince le ceol;
 Is nárbh fhearr bheith ag ól ná bás d'fháil den tart?

And let us be drinking, drinking, drinking;
 And let us be drinking, and kissing the women;
 Let us be drinking, and dancing to music;
 Is't not better be drinking than dying of thirst?

I'd write a good letter, on paper or parchment;
 I'd construe an author, and give the right sense;
 I court the fair maidens, unknown to their parents,
 And gaze on their charms without evidence.

Is bímis ag ól, etc.

I'm counted the valiant at congregations;
 I beat the courageous, and humble the bold;
 No doubt I'm descended of noble Milesians;
 By heroic fame my name is enrolled.

Is bímis ag ól, etc.

I am a proficient in bright elocution;
 By Prosody's rules I govern my tongue;
 I journalize book-keeping without confusion;
 I'm son to the Muses from Parnassus sprung.

Is bímis ag ól, etc.

⁶¹ The translation 'let us be' indicates that it is the first person plural of the imperative mood that is intended, although Petrie has given *bímis* first plural, indicative mood, 'we will be'.

In connection with the above air I may remark that vocal melodies of this spirited character would appear to have been anciently more abundant in the county of Clare than perhaps in any other county of Ireland. And if this be the fact, and viewing national melody as an exponent of national character, it is only, perhaps, such as we might naturally expect to find in the ancient territory of the eminently manly tribe of the Dal Cais, whose descendants still constitute the great majority of the people of that county.

Ploughman's Whistle

The ploughman's whistle which follows was given me by my valued friend and brother artist, Mr Thomas Bridgford, R.H.A., a gentleman who combines with his high artistic talents the not unusual concomitant of a fine musical taste. It was learnt in his boyhood from the whistling of one of his father's workmen, at his nursery gardens near Dublin; but as Mr Bridgford has no recollection as to what part of Ireland the man came from to the metropolis, I am unable to offer even a conjecture as to the county or province to which the air properly belongs.



Oh, Rouse Yourself, It's Cold You've Got

The Irish name given me for the following characteristic air I have deemed it best to suppress, and this without any reluctance, as it was obviously not its original one. The English name above given I have taken from a modern Anglo-Irish street ballad also sung to it, and quite worthless, as will be seen from the following stanza:

Oh, rouse yourself, it's cold you've got.
 And if you are sick, it's tea you want;
 Go to your bed, and keep yourself warm,
 Until you've got rid of that cold you've got.



It will be perceived that the construction of this melody is quite similar to that of the air called *A Dhonnchaidh ná bí bagarthach* – or, ‘Oh, Donogh, don’t be threatening’ – published by Bunting in his first and second collections, and now better known from Moore’s words, ‘Nay, tell me not dearest’; nor are the two airs unlike in their tone of sentiment. The air here given was set from the singing of Mary Madden, a poor blind woman from the city of Limerick.

The Strawberry Blossom

The following, which has been for a long time one of the most popular of the Irish reel tunes, is most probably of Munster origin. It is equally favourite with the pipers as with the fiddlers throughout Ireland, but its peculiar features clearly indicate a violin parentage.



Oh Johnny, Dearest Johnny

The air which follows was set in the county of Londonderry in the summer of 1837; and is very probably a tune of Ulster origin. It was sung to an Anglo-Irish peasant ballad, of which I have only preserved the following quatrain:

Oh, Johnny, dearest Johnny,
 What dyed your hands and clothes?
 He answered him as he thought fit,
 ‘By a bleeding at the nose’.



I regret to add that I have been unable to ascertain the original name of this melody, or any other one than that here given to it.

Oh, Sheela, My Love, Say Will You Be Mine?

The following air was noted above forty years ago from the singing of the Dublin ballad singers to a street ballad then popular, but of which I have been unable to procure a copy. The tune has been already printed – but very incorrectly – in O'Farrell's *Pocket Companion for the Irish or Union Pipes*.



The Irish Hautboy

There are not many Irish tunes better known than the following one, but this popularity, it is probable, is much less ascribable to a perception of its tender sweetness than to the rude enjoyment afforded by the very objectionable and ill-suited Irish song, to which for the last two centuries it has been coupled, and which has given to it the only name by which it is now known. Mr Curry, indeed, tells me that he has seen a political Irish song, which was written to it,



about the year 1770, but of which he has no copy, and can now only remember a line or two. The air has been already published, but in a very rude way, in a small collection of Irish melodies called *The Hibernian Muse*, and it has been made a popular reel tune by the Irish fiddlers.

I Wish the French Would Take Them

Though the following pleasing air has a somewhat modern and English character, it has an antiquity in Ireland of at least more than a century, and has been associated with street ballad words of unquestionably Irish origin, as their first quatrain will be sufficient to show.

I wish the French would take them
That send my love away,
And send their boats a sinking
To the bottom of the *say* [sea].

This melody is one of the many airs noted long ago from the singing of an old lady, a very near connection of my own, and which she had learnt in her girlhood from the poor woman Betty Skillin, of whom I have already frequently spoken.



*Ar Thaobh na Carraige Báine*⁶² (By the Side of the White Rock)

The beautiful melody which follows was set about forty years ago from the whistling of the late Mr Joseph Hughes, of whom I have already had occasion to make frequent mention as the source from which I have derived many of the fine airs in this collection. Like most of the tunes so obtained, this had been learnt by Mr Hughes in his native county of Cavan; but, as I have subsequently found, it is not an unknown melody in Connaught; and, in the valuable collection of unpublished Irish tunes of my friend Mr J. E. Pigot, I have met with a setting of this air, made in that province in the year 1846 or 1847, by the late Mr William Forde of Cork. This setting, however, though in its general

⁶² *Ar thaobh na carraige báine.*

features essentially the same air as my own, differs from it a good deal in some of its cadences; and, as it is equally strongly marked with genuine Irish expression, I shall also give it a place here, not only as a version deserving of preservation, but as an interesting example of the mutations to which Irish melody has been so often subjected.



The following is the setting alluded to as made by the late Mr William Forde, and in this it will be perceived that the principal differences from the setting just given occur in the second section, or part, of the air.



In connection with the two settings of this beautiful air, now for the first time printed, it should be observed that another setting of this tune, under the same name, has been published by Bunting in his last collection; but it is so different in its notation and general character, that perhaps none but an analytical musician would be likely to perceive any affinity between them. And here I might be tempted to discuss the singularly untenable theory so dogmatically put forward by Bunting in his preface to the last of his publications, namely, that 'a strain of music, once impressed on the popular ear, never varies'. But as this assertion has been already very ably combated by Mr George Farquhar Graham, both in his Introductions to *The Songs of Scotland*, and to *The Songs of Ireland* – and as its untruthfulness as regards the melodies of Ireland has been abundantly shown in the progress of this work by the different versions which I have so often deemed it desirable to give of the same tunes, I do not feel it necessary to take any further notice of a proposition so obviously fallacious, nor should I have deemed it worthy of even this passing allusion had it

emanated from a less distinguished authority. But as a further and very striking example of the unsoundness of Mr Bunting's theory, I shall here insert his setting of this melody, which, together with the harmony attached to it, I have been kindly permitted by the publisher, my friend Mr George Smith, to transfer from the last volume of the Bunting collections to this work.



Mr Bunting tells us in his Index to the names of his tunes that the setting of this air, as now given, was noted from a blind man at Westport in 1802, and assuming that the notation is a correct one, the remarkable dissimilitude in the character of the melody from that of the two previous settings must necessarily surprise the musical reader, the expression in Mr Bunting's version being abrupt and spirited, while in the other versions it is flowing and tender, such as we might expect to find in a melody which had been adapted to an impassioned love song; and it is further remarkable that, though Mr Bunting marks the air as to be played 'slow and tenderly', yet his determination of the time, by the pendulum mark of twenty-four inches to the dotted crotchet, is utterly inconsistent with his previous instruction. And hence it is not to be wondered at that Mr Horncastle – who, in his work called *The Music of Ireland* (London, 1844), has copied this air from Bunting's collection – had words written to it of a spirited character, called 'The Fisherman's Song and Chorus', and marked the air as to be sung 'lively, but not too fast'.

Of the three dissimilar settings of this melody now given, it may therefore be asked which should be considered as the most ancient and genuine, and this is a question which I should not venture to answer. Very probably, however, they are all but varied derivatives from the following simpler and, as I believe, more ancient air, which I have found amongst my settings of melodies from the counties of Clare and Limerick, noted from the singing of the peasants Teige MacMahon and Mary Madden, of whom I have already spoken; and if this opinion be well founded, it would follow that the oldest and most authentic of these three versions of the melody would be that which has the closest affinity with the parent air.

*An Cumhain leat an Oíche Úd do bhí tú ag an bhFuinneog*⁶³ (Do you Remember that Night You were By the Window?)



The song which has given a popular name to this melody has been committed to writing for me by Mr Curry, and as it is not a composition of recent date, nor wanting in interest as the love song of a peasant girl, it has appeared to me to be not unworthy of preservation, in connection with the air to which it had been adapted.

An cumhain leat an oíche úd
 Do bhí tú ag an bhfuinneog,
 Gan hata gan lámhainne
 Dod dhíon, gan casóg;
 Do shín mé mo lámh chughat,
 Is do rug tú uirthi barróg,
 Is d'fhan mé id chomhluadar
 Nó gur labhair an fhuisseog?

An cumhain leat an oíche úd
 Do bhí tú agus mise
 Ag bun an chrainn chaorthainn,
 Is an oíche ag cur chuisne;
 Do cheann ar mo chíochaibh
 Is do pháib gheal dhá seinm?
 Is beag do shíleas an oíche úd
 Go scaoilfeadh ár gcumann.

A chumainn mo chroí istigh,
 Tar oíche ghar éigin,
 Nuair luífid mo mhuintir,
 Chun cainte le chéile;
 Bheadh mo dhá láimh id thimpeall
 Is mé ag insint mo scéil dhuit
 Is gurb é do chomhrá suairc mín tais
 Do bhain radharc fhlaithis Dé dhíom.

⁶³ *An cuimhin leat an oidhche úd do bhí tú ag an bhfuinneog?*

Tá an tine gan choigilt
 Is an solas gan múchadh,
 Tá an eochair faoin ndoras,
 Is tarraing go ciúin í.
 Tá mo mháthair 'na codladh
 Agus mise im dhúiseacht;
 Tá m'fhortún im dhorn,
 Is mé ullamh chun siúil leat.

Do you remember that night
 That you were at the window,
 With neither hat, nor gloves,
 Nor coat to shelter you;
 I reached out my hand to you,
 And you ardently grasped it,
 And I remained to converse with you
 Until the lark began to sing?

Do you remember that night
 That you and I were
 At the foot of the rowan-tree,
 And the night drifting snow;
 Your head on my breast,
 And your pipe sweetly playing?
 I little thought that night
 Our ties of love would ever loosen.

O beloved of my inmost heart,
 Come some night, and soon,
 When my people are at rest,
 That we may talk together;
 My arms shall encircle you
 While I relate my sad tale
 That it is your pleasant soft converse
 That has deprived me of heaven.

The fire is unraked,
 The light unextinguished,
 The key under the door,
 And do you softly draw it.
 My mother is asleep,
 And I am quite awake;
 My fortune is in my hand,
 And I am ready to go with you.

*Ar Thaobh na Carraige Báine*⁶⁴ (Beside the White Rock)

In connection with the melody known by the above name, and of which I have just given so many settings, I should not omit to state that the song which had given it this name is also sung to, and has given name to, a different air, which is more generally known than the other in most parts of Ireland. The air to which I now allude has been already twice printed; first, as set by myself – indifferently enough, I must confess – in the collection of Irish tunes published in 1806 by my early friend, the late Francis Holden, Mus. Doc.; and, secondly, in Mr John O’Daly’s recent publication, *The Poets and Poetry of Munster*. As, however, I have now, as I think, a somewhat better setting of this air than either of those so printed, it appears to me desirable to give it a place in this collection, in company with that other melody now known by the same name, and sung to the same words.

Of the popular Irish love song to which these two melodies are sung, I have been unable to obtain any copy worthy of preservation. A version of it has, indeed, been printed in Mr O’Daly’s work, but, as Mr Curry acquaints me, it is a compilation made up from various songs, without preserving even an entire stanza of the original, and, in truth, this appears evident enough, not only from the want of connection in the thoughts, but even still more from the general want of the proper rhythm and metrical construction required in verses to be sung to any of the known versions of either of the melodies to which the song has given a name. It should, perhaps, be further noticed that this song, though printed in *The Poets and Poetry of Munster*, has a northern origin assigned to it, and this on an etymological foundation derived from its name. ‘Bruach and Carrick’, writes Mr O’Daly, ‘are the names of two townlands lying contiguous to each other on the river Bann, and forming a part of the demesne of Carrick Blacker, an ancient seat of the Blacker family, near Portadown, in the county of Armagh’; and thus it would follow that *Bruach na Carraige Báine* does not, as has been generally supposed, mean ‘The Brink of the White Rock’, but the *Bruach* and *Carrick* of the river Bann! Any comment on such an assumption is unnecessary, and I shall only remark that the true name of the song is not *Bruach na Carraige Báine*, but *Ar Thaobh na Carraige Báine*.



⁶⁴ *Ar thaobh na carraige báine*.

The Catholic Boy

For the set which I am about to give of the following Munster dance and ballad air – and which is the best of many that I have procured – I am indebted to the kindness of my most respected friend, the Lord Chief Baron of Ireland. This air is now usually known in the southern counties by the name above given, but it has an older Irish one, of which I once made a note, which, however, has been unfortunately mislaid.



*Do Chuirfinnse Féin Mo Leanbh a Chodladh*⁶⁵ (I Would Put My Own Child to Sleep)

I have already, at page 105 and at page 147, in connection with two ancient lullaby airs, directed attention to the striking affinity observable between them and the Eastern melodies of the same class; and I would apply the remarks then made to the beautiful nurse tune which I am now about to present, and which, I think, bears equally the stamp of a remote antiquity. I would, moreover, add that such affinity with Eastern melody is not confined to the nurse tunes of Ireland, but that it will be no less found in the ancient funeral *caoines*, as well as in the ploughman's tunes, and other airs of occupation – airs simple indeed in construction, but always touching in expression; and I cannot but consider it as an evidence of the early antiquity of such melodies in Ireland, and as an ethnological fact of much historic interest, not hitherto sufficiently attended to.



⁶⁵ *Do chuirfinn-si féin mo leanabh a chodhladh.*

The nurse tune now given, like the first of those already printed, was obtained from the county of Limerick. It was noted last year, by Mr Joyce, from the singing of a woman named Cudmore, now living at Glenasheen in the parish of Ardpatrick. From this woman he also obtained the first of the following Irish stanzas now sung to the melody; the second he got from a man named John Dinan in the same locality; and the third and fourth were given to me by Mr Curry, who in his youth had been familiar with the whole song, as sung in the county of Clare, but now distinctly remembers only those portions of it. I should observe, however, that the first and second stanzas, according to his recollection of them, differed a good deal from the version above given.

Do chuirfinnse féin mo leanbh a chodladh,
Is ní mar a dhéanfadh mná na mbodach,
Fá shúisín bhuí ná a mbraillín bharraigh,
Ach i gliabhán óir is an ghaoth á bhogadh.

Seó hín seó, huil léó léó,
Seó hín seó, is tú mo leanbh;
Seó hín seó, huil léó léó,
Seó hín seó, is as tú mo leanbh.

Do chuirfinnse féin mo leanbh a chodladh,
Lá breá gréine idir dhá Nollaig,
I gliabhán óir ar úrlár shocair,
Faoi bharra na gcraobh is an ghaoth á bhogadh.

Seó hín seó, huil léó léó, &c.

Codail a linbh is gur ba codladh slán duit,
Is as do chodladh go dtugair do shláinte.
Nár bhuaile treighid ná greim an bháis tú,
Galar na leanbh ná'n bholgach ghránna.

Seó hín seó, huil léó léó, &c.

Codail a linbh is gur ba codladh slán duit,
Is as do chodladh go dtugair do shláinte;
As do smaointe do chroí nár chráitear
Is nár ba bean gan mac do mháthair.

Seó hín seó, huil léó léó, &c.

I would put my own child to sleep,
And not the same as the wives of the clowns do,
Under a yellow blanket and a sheet of tow,
But in a cradle of gold, rocked by the wind.

Sho-heen sho, hoo lo lo,
 Sho-heen sho, you are my child;
 Sho-heen sho, hoo lo lo,
 Sho-heen sho, and you are my child.

I would put my own child to sleep,
 On a fine sunny day between two Christmases,
 In a cradle of gold on a level floor,
 Under the tops of boughs, and rocked by the wind.
 Sho-heen sho, hoo lo lo, etc.

Sleep, my child, and be it the sleep of safety,
 And out of your sleep may you rise in health;
 May neither cholic nor death-stitch strike you,
 The infant's disease, or the ugly small pox.
 Sho-heen sho, hoo lo lo, etc.

Sleep, my child, and be it the sleep of safety,
 And out of your sleep may you rise in health;
 From painful dreams may your heart be free,
 And may your mother be not a sonless woman.
 Sho-heen sho, hoo lo lo, etc.

In reference to the above and other lullaby songs still preserved in the county of Limerick, Mr Joyce makes the following remark: 'These songs, so far as I could learn from a pretty extensive inquiry, were many of them very similar in ideas, expression, and general character. The child was generally soothed to sleep with the promise of a golden cradle – *cliabhán oir* – rocked by the wind on a fine sunny day, under the shade of trees – a combination of circumstances in perfect keeping with the poetical character of the Irish peasantry. The verses were always followed by the burden "Shoheen sho", etc; and, when sung by a good voice, the whole melody and song must have had a powerfully soothing effect.'

*Baile Phádraig*⁶⁶ (Ballypatrick)

The following spirited festive air is one of the many fine southern melodies communicated to me from the county of Kilkenny by Mr James Fogarty, who writes to me that 'it was a great favourite with the Whiteboys about a hundred years ago', adding that he is 'certain that this martial, or festive air, is a *very ancient Irish one*', – and I have no doubt that its antiquity is indeed considerable. The name of this air would indicate it to be of Tipperary origin, Ballypatrick being a village situated on the southern side of Slieve-na-man Mountain, in the

⁶⁶ *Baile Phátraic*.

parish of Templehay, and barony of Iffa and Offa – a district which appears to have been rich in melodies of a superior character.

*An Lon Dubh is an Smólach*⁶⁷ (The Blackbird and the Thrush)

The following air was set at the Claddagh of Galway in the summer of 1840 from the singing of Anne Buckley – a poor woman of whom I have already made mention as a singularly sweet singer of our national melodies. The song which she sang to it, and which gave its name to the tune, was an Irish one, but I neglected at the time to write it down, and I have never since met with anyone by whom it was remembered.

⁶⁷ *An londubh 'san smólach.*

In the last of Bunting's collections, an air is published to which is given the same name as that of the present one, but it is in triple time, and has no affinity of any kind with the air now, for the first time, printed.

As I Walked Out One Morning I Heard a Dismal Cry

The following air is one of the collection, noted in the county of Wexford, and communicated to me by Mr Robert A. Fitzgerald, of Enniscorthy, to whose kindness in placing them at my disposal I have already acknowledged myself indebted. It was sung to an Anglo-Irish peasant ballad, the first line of which has been taken to give it a name.



O'Flinn – A Planxty by Carolan

Amongst the tunes still preserved of that very numerous class of Carolan's compositions to which the term Planxty is usually applied, there is, as I have long thought, scarcely one that better than the following illustrates the peculiarities of style, and the finer qualities of genius, which so often distinguish the works of the last composer of Ireland. In this movement we shall clearly perceive his abandonment of the regular rhythm and the peculiar tonalities which characterize the more ancient lively music of Ireland, and his imitation – as far as he was able to imitate – of the characteristics of the *gigas* of his great Italian contemporary, Corelli, with whose works, as old Charles O'Connor tells us, 'he was enraptured'. But, though his enthusiastic admiration of such works was in itself an evidence of genius, yet, as I have already stated, he never acquired the musical learning, and probably never possessed the gravity of temperament, that might have enabled him to approach the severe dignity and grandeur of style that characterize the works of that great composer; and it is only in such brilliant flashings of an exuberant liveliness, combined with a graceful and imaginative flow of melody, as the following air exhibits – qualities instinctive in, and undiscardable from, his own Irish nature – that he not only approached, but even occasionally surpassed in beauty the works of a similar class which he had chosen as a model, and not altogether unsuccessfully attempted to rival.

It is singular that Bunting, who has republished so many of Carolan's



compositions previously in print, should have passed over this fine tune, which appears in Neal's collection of the works of that composer, published in their author's lifetime; for, though that work is now one of the most extreme rarity, I have reason to believe that a copy of it was in Bunting's possession.

The simple surname, O'Flinn, prefixed to this tune in Neal's work, might lead to the supposition that it was composed in honour of the chief of the ancient Connaught sept of that name, and who, according to the old Irish usage, would be thus designated. But, as it does not appear that in the names prefixed to Carolan's tunes this usage was followed, except in two instances – 'O'Conor' and 'Mac Dermot-roe' – I cannot help thinking it at least equally probable that it was composed for William O'Flinn, the butler at Alderford House in the county of Roscommon, the seat of the family of Mac Dermot-roe, in which Carolan received his education and professional outfit, and to which, after all his peregrinations, he returned to die. As may be easily conceived, in this hospitable mansion of a generous patroness, a friendship would very naturally be formed between a man of Carolan's habits and the person who had it in his power to contribute to or control their indulgence; and such friendly companionship would inevitably inspire a feeling of gratitude in a mind so susceptible as the bard's. Nor are we without a historic evidence, indicative at the least of the existence of such a feeling in Carolan's mind. In a valuable MS volume of collections for a 'Life' of Carolan, made for Myles John O'Reilly, Esq., of the Heath House, Queen's County, and now, through the kindness of that gentleman, in my keeping, I find it stated that the bard having, immediately before his dissolution, called for a drink, it was quickly brought to him by the butler, William O'Flinn; and that having quenched his thirst, he addressed the following quatrain in a clear and distinct voice to his friendly attendant, after which he laid down his head, and immediately sank into the slumber of death:

Shiúil mé thart go ceart tré chriochaibh Choinn,
 Is fuair mé marasaigh neartmhar bríomhar ann;
 Ar bhrí mo bhaiste, ní bhfuaires riamh sa rann,
 An té choisc mo thart go ceart acht Uilliam Ua Floinn.

I have travelled round right through Conn's country,
 And I found myriads in it strong and valiant;
 But, by my baptism, I never found in any part,
 One who quenched my thirst aright but William O'Flinn.

I should not, perhaps, conclude this notice without cautioning the reader against confounding the butler of Alderford with that other butler of the same surname to whom Carolan, on being denied admittance to the cellar, addressed the following epigram, preserved by Walker in his *Memoirs of the Irish Bards*.

Mo chreach, a Dhiarmaid Uí Fhloinn,
 Nách tú tá ar dhoras Ifrinn;
 Ós tú nách léigfeadh neach ad chóir,
 In áit a mbeifeá i do dhoirseoir.

Alas, oh! Dermod O'Flinn,
 That 'tis not you who guard the door of hell;
 For 'tis you would let no one approach you,
 Wherever you would be door-keeper.

Or, as it is thus successfully rhymed in Mr Walker's work:

What pity hell's gates are not kept by O'Flinn!
 So surly a dog would let nobody in.

*Dónall Ó Grae*⁶⁸ (Donnel O'Graedh)

The following air has been taken from the very extensive and valuable collection of Irish tunes which has been made by my friend Mr J. E. Pigot, and which he has kindly placed at my disposal for the use of this work. The strong affinity which it bears to the very ancient simple melody called 'Molly Bán' – published by Bunting in his first collection – has induced me to give it a place here, as an interesting example of a result so frequently obtained by an analysis



⁶⁸ *Domhnall Ó Graedh*.

of an Irish melody – namely, that an air of a more or less ornate character is often found to have been formed – sometimes, perhaps, unconsciously – upon another of more primitive simplicity. This air was copied by Mr Pigot from a MS collection of Irish tunes belonging to Mr Hardiman, the historian of Galway, and, as I suppose, it is a tune of Connaught origin.

A Quick March, Name Unascertained

The spirited march tune which follows is one of the many airs noted in the county of Wexford by Mr Robert A. Fitzgerald of Enniscorthy, and which he has so kindly communicated to me for this work. Mr Fitzgerald acquaints me that it was – originally, as he believes – brought into that county by a Waterford person, who said it was a dance tune, and who gave it an Irish name which Mr Fitzgerald now forgets, but which he expects he shall be able to recover. Mr Fitzgerald also communicates his conviction that the tune must have been a march, and adds, with his peculiarly enthusiastic expression of feeling, that it is ‘one of the finest that ever smoothed the road to battle!’ The tune appears to me, also, to have more of a march than a dance character, but it has, most probably, been used for both purposes; for, as I have already stated, it is to such a usual transmutation that we owe the preservation of so many of our old march tunes, which were no longer required for the purpose to which they owed their origin.



It will be perceived that I have marked the above air to be played in marching time, but by quickening the time it may be played as a dance tune.

*An Bhean Óg Uasal*⁶⁹ (The Young Lady)

Amongst the numerous airs already given in this volume of that peculiar class to which I have applied the term ‘narrative’, there is not one that appears to me to be more strongly impressed with an Irish character and tender feeling than the air I have here to present to the public. Though hitherto unpublished in any form, and, indeed, apparently unnoticed by the collectors of our music, it is still a well-known and greatly admired melody in, at least, the counties of Clare and

⁶⁹ *An bhean óg uasal.*

Limerick, to either of which I have little doubt its origin should be ascribed; for of three settings of the air now, through the kindness of Mr Patrick Joyce, in my possession, two were noted by that gentleman, and the third copied by him from an old MS book of music, in the last-named county. Amongst these settings I have found the usual want of a perfect agreement, but as the differences which they present are unimportant, I have not felt it necessary to print more than the one which appeared to me to be the most authentic, and which, I think, will very truly preserve this interesting melody. This version of the air was learned by Mr Joyce from the singing of his father.



Of the words *now* sung to this air in the Munster counties, Mr Joyce has also given me a copy, as taken down by himself, but it presents such an incongruous piece of patchwork, half Irish, half English, collected, apparently, from recollections of various songs, that of the Irish portion a single stanza is as much as I can venture to select from it. This stanza, as Mr Curry acquaints me, belongs to the old Irish song which has given name to the melody, and which, though now rendered worthless by corruptions, was originally one of no ordinary interest and merit.

Bhí bean óg uasal,
Seal dá lua liom,
Is do chuir sí suas dom,
Céad faraoir géar;

Is do ghabhas le stuaire
I mbailtibh muara⁷⁰,
Is gur dhein sí cuag dhíom,
Ar lár an tsaoil.

Dá bhfaighinnse a ceann súd
Fé lia sa teampall,
Is go mbeinn arís seal
Ar m'ábhar féin,

⁷⁰ *Mór* pl. *móra*, adj. meaning 'large', pronounced 'muar' with diphthong in Munster and needed here *causa metri*.

Do shiúlfainn gleannta
 Agus beanna ramharchnoc
 Go bhfaighinn mo sheanshear
 Arís dom réir.

There was a young gentlewoman
 And I, once talked of,
 But she rejected me,
 To my sharp grief;
 And I then took up with
 A city *dasher*,
 Who made a jackdaw of me
 Before the world.

But could I get her head
 Beneath the gravestone,
 And that I once more
 Were my own free self,

I would traverse valleys
 And rough-topped mountains
 To seek again more favour
 From my old true love.

Amongst the doggrel English verses sung to this air, as taken down by Mr Joyce, there is a stanza which I am tempted to quote as an amusing example of the characteristic expression of tender sentiment, mixed with discordant levity and incongruity of thought, which are so often found in the ordinary Irish peasant love songs composed in the English language. Such incongruity, however, should, at least to some extent, be ascribed to the corruptions incident to verses having only a decaying traditional existence amongst a class of people still almost illiterate.

Kilkenny town it is well supported,
 Where marble stones are as black as ink
 With gold and silver I will support you,
 I'll sing no more till I get some drink!
 I'm always drinking, and seldom sober;
 I'm constant roving from town to town.
 Oh, when I'm dead, and my days are over,
 Come, Molly astoreen, and lay me down.

It seems sufficiently apparent that the above stanza was not composed in one of those intervals of sobriety which the writer confesses to have been with him of rather rare occurrence.

A Chúl Álainn Deas (O Thou of the Beautiful Hair)

Separated from the preceding melody, the fine and truly Irish air which I have now to place before the musical reader would probably be considered as a perfectly original one. But when brought for the purpose of comparison under immediate view with the former – though differing from it in time, rhythm, and even, to some extent, expression of sentiment – its derivative affinity will, I think, be at once perceptible, and will place it amongst the numerous airs so formed which are to be found in all parts of Ireland. And though this acknowledgement of the existence of so many derivative airs may diminish, to some extent, the number of the absolutely original melodies which might otherwise be claimed for Ireland, it should not, I think, be considered as derogatory to the musical genius of its people; for such derivative airs exhibit the singular facility which the Irish possessed in the adaptation of their favourite melodies to new songs of a form and character different from the older ones, and which enabled them to change the construction and sentiment of those airs without destroying, or often even diminishing, their beauty.

This melody, together with the annexed stanza of the Irish song sung to it, was noted by Mr Joyce in the summer of the present year –1854 – from the singing of Joseph Martin, a peasant of the parish of Ardpatrick in the county of Limerick.

A chúl álainn deas,
 Na súl claon glas,
 ‘Sé mo chumha is mo chreach
 Nach féidir
 Liom eáló leat
 Thar sál amach,
 Nó sealad ag triall
 Fá shléibhtibh:
 Tá mo chroí á shlad,
 Mar a sníomhfaí gad,
 Do chionn scarúint leat,
 Ar aon chor;
 Is go bhfaighead bás gan stad,
 Mura dtéir liom seal,
 Cois abhann na mbreac
 I t’aonar.

O thou of the beautiful hair,
 And of the glancing blue eyes,
 It is my grief and loss
 That I cannot
 Elope with thee
 Out over the sea,

Or, for a time, to traverse
 The mountains:
 My heart is being robbed,
 As a gad would be twisted,
 For parting thee,
 On any account;
 And I'll die without delay,
 If thou wilt not come with me,
 By the trout-river's bank
 Alone.



Name Unascertained

I very much regret that I have been unable to ascertain the name of the following melody, which, as I conceive, is one of no ordinary beauty; but as it appears to be still a well-known air in the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary, I trust that this want will be hereafter supplied. This melody is one of those communicated to me by Mr James Fogarty of Tibroghney, immediately before his emigration to America, and appended to it were the following remarks: 'This is the melody of a much admired ancient song, and the music is thought to be most enchanting. Several Irish songs were composed to it, bearing genuine marks of a remote antiquity; and also a love song in English, said to



have been composed by a poet of Carrick, who joined the Irish army at Limerick in the time of William the Third.' Having commented already more than once, in the preceding sheets, on the peculiarities of the interesting class of melodies to which this air belongs, I need only add the expression of my opinion that its age must be very considerable.

Lady Athenry – A Planxty by Carolan

Having already given insertion in this volume to two of Carolan's best, and yet least known, planxties, and endeavoured in connection with them to analyze the characteristic features – half imitative of Corelli, and half originating with the composer – for which they are remarkable, I now, as a further illustration of those remarks, give a place to another air of the same class – an air equally impressed with those characteristic features – and just as little known, but which exhibits a greater gravity of character, and approaches more closely to the sober dignity of Corelli's *gigas*, than perhaps any other composition of Carolan's of the same class. As happened in the instance of one of the examples now alluded to, I found this air in one of the rare collections of Carolan's tunes published during their author's lifetime, namely, that of Burke Thumoth, the date of which, according to Bunting, is 1720.

The lady in whose honour this tune was composed was, unquestionably, as I think, Mary Nugent, the wife of Francis, the twenty-first Baron of Athenry, who succeeded to the title on the death of his father in 1709, and died in 1749. This lady, who, according to Lodge, was the eldest daughter of Thomas Earl of Westmeath, was born in 1694, married in 1706, and died at Galway in 1725, about five years after the tune which bears her name had been printed.



*Bliain is an Taca so a Phós Mé*⁷¹ (This Time Twelve Months I Married)

The air which follows was set from the singing of the Clare peasant Teige Mac Mahon, and the accuracy of its notation has been sustained by a second setting made from the singing of Mr Curry. There is every reason to believe it a melody of Munster origin; and from the great number of songs which, as Mr Curry acquaints me, have been written to it, it must – at least in the southern counties bordering on the Shannon – have been, for a long period, a very general favourite. That it is a very old air may therefore be fairly inferred, and this inference will be strengthened by the fact that it seems to have been the parent of several other airs – in themselves not modern – differing from it in expression and character, but preserving such features of affinity as to leave but little, if any, doubt of their relationship. Such transmutations from parent airs, as already shown to some extent, have been of singularly frequent occurrence in Irish melody; and as the facts which they supply are of so much importance in illustration of the nature and history of our music, that, whenever discovered, they should not be left unnoticed, I shall, in immediate succession to the present air, give two examples of airs obviously derived from it. I would further remark that the air called ‘Sly Patrick’, in Moore’s *Irish Melodies*, and which is better known by the name derived from the beautiful song – ‘Has sorrow thy young days shaded’ – which he wrote for it, appears to me also to exhibit, in many points, an affinity with the present melody.



Of the various songs sung to this melody, some are unfit for publication, and of the others, with the exception of the following, which has supplied me with a name for the air, Mr Curry only remembers some fragments.

Bliain sa taca seo a phós mé,
 Is níorbh fhada liom lá ná mí,
 I mbotháinín cluthar go sásta,
 Le beathuisce ar clár gan suim;
 Seán Ó Fionnghaile láimh liom,

⁷¹ *Bliadhain 'sa taca so phós mé.*

Is é ag seinm Rí Rá a phíp';
Is dá mbeinn ann ó inniu go dtí amárach,
Gan fhiafraí cad tá le díol.

An té ag a mbíonn buaibh agus caoirigh
Bíonn sé saoihiúil suairc:
Bíonn sé i bhfhochair na ndaoine,
Is a hata mar dhíon ar a stuaic:
Faraoir ní mar sin do bhímse;
Is fá m'ascaill a bhíonn sé go buan,
An súsa nách maise le mnaoi ar bith,
Is gan orm trian den ghruaig.

Nuair a théim ar mhargadh an aonaigh,
Le gasra ghlé gan ghnó,
Mo chapall ní moltar ag léimnigh,
Is ní háirítear géim mo bhó;
Mo chaoirigh ní chluintear ag méiligh,
Is ní bhaineann dom gaoth an fhómhair;
Ólfad mo scilling le pléisiúr,
Is ní chuirfead sa tsaol speois.

This time twelve months I married,
And thought not a day or month long,
In a well-sheltered cabin quite snugly,
With whiskey unmeasured on the board;
Shane O'Finnelly near me,
A playing 'Ree Raw' on his pipes;
And if there from to-day till to-morrow,
No asking, 'How much is to pay?'

The man bless'd with cows and with sheep
Is always liberal and pleasant;
He is always among the best people,
With his hat on to cover his head:
Alas! it is not so with me;
'Tis under my arm I ever have it –
The blanket! which maid never liked –
And I having on but a third of my hair.

When I go to the market or fair,
With an idle and careless crew,
My horse is not praised for his leaping,
No lowing is heard from my cow;
My sheep are never heard bleating,
The autumnal winds pass me by;

I'll drink my shilling for pleasure,
And worldly cares never mind.

There is some philosophy in the above stanzas; in those which follow there is only love:

Nuair théim chun aifrinn Dé Domhnaigh,
Is chím na mnáibh óga ag teacht;
An uair ná feicim mo stóirín,
Go séidim fuil tsrón le reacht;
Mo ghruaig ag imeacht 'na ceo díom,
Is m'intinn tá breoite lag,
Is mí ní mhairfead ná neomat,
Muna bhfaighe mise póg óm' shearc.

Mo bhrón gan mise is an spéirbhean,
Na mílte léig ó chuan,
In oileáinín druidte na ggraobha,
Mar a dtéid éin chun suain;
An áit 'na mbeidh nead ag an féinics,
An fiolar ar ghéig is an chuach,
Is go gcuirfinn de gheasaibh ar Phoebus
Solas an lae a thabhairt uainn.

When I go to Mass on the Sunday,
And see the young maidens come up;
And when I see not my own love,
The blood from my nose quickly starts;
My hair in small fragments is going off,
My spirits are low and sad;
A month I sha'n't live, nor a moment,
Unless I can kiss my sweetheart.

Mavrone that I'm not with my goddess,
Thousands of leagues from the shore,
In a close-wooded, pretty small island,
Where birds go at night to repose;
Where the phoenix should have her nest,
The eagle and cuckoo the same branch;
And then would I conjure bright Phoebus
To take his broad day light away.

The following stanza is a fragment of a different song, but in the same strain.

Tá cion agus meas agam féin ort,
A chumainn ghil éalaigh liúm⁷²;

⁷² 'ú' sound *causa metri*

Is mura bhfaighimid ár bpósadh in Éirinn,
 Téimis le chéile anonn.⁷³
 Níl loingeas ar farraige taobh linn,
 Ná athrach saothair dhúinn,
 Ach báidín nó coite do dhéanamh,
 Do bhéarfadh sinn féin thar srúil.

It's myself that both loves and esteems you,
 O, dearest one, elope with me;
 And if we cannot get married in Erinn,
 Then let us fly to some far country.
 No ships on the sea are hard by us,
 Nor have we aught else now to do,
 But a small boat or cotty to make,
 To carry us over the stream.

*Dá gCastaí Bean Tanaraí Liomsa*⁷⁴ (**If I Should Meet a Tanner's Wife**)

This lively air – which is one of those alluded to in the notice of the preceding melody as being obviously derived from it – was set in 1853 from the singing of the Clare peasant Teige Mac Mahon. As will be perceived, its chief peculiarity consists in the substitution of an expression of reckless liveliness for that of tenderness, which marks the original, and this change of character has been chiefly effected by the close of the parts of the air on the fifth or dominant note of the scale, instead of the descent to the tonic or key note, as in the present melody. The Irish song to this air is not admissible in this work.



*Cearc agus Coileach a D'imigh le Chéile*⁷⁵ (**A Cock and a Hen that Went Out Together**)

The following melody – which is the second of the derivative airs alluded to in the notice of the melody given at page 159 – was also set from the singing of

⁷³ Spelt 'anúinn' and pronounced with 'ú' sound. See n. 70, p. 177.

⁷⁴ *Da gcastaídh bean tanaraidhe liomsa.*

⁷⁵ *Cearc agus coileach a d'imthigh le chéile.*

Teige Mac Mahon in 1853. Its changes from the parent air exhibit, however, a more correct and graceful fancy than those of the air last given; and upon the whole it is, as I think, a melody of far superior interest and beauty. The Irish song to this air is also inadmissible in this work.⁷⁶



Munster Jig, Name Unascertained

The following characteristic Munster dance tune, which is one of the class popularly termed 'common' or 'double' jigs, appears, as I think, to possess much of the old march character so often found in this class of dance tunes. It was noted during the past year from the playing of Francis Keane, a native of the county of Clare, by whom it had been learnt from the playing of his brother, one of the best professional fiddlers in the south of Ireland; and, as Keane believes, it is one of the oldest of the Munster jigs.



*Och Ochón, is Breoite Mise*⁷⁷ (**Och Ochone, It is Sickly I Am**)

The following fine old Munster air was noted some years since from the singing of Mr Curry, and though it must be still a very popular melody in the southern counties, I have never had the good fortune to meet with any other setting of it. Mr Curry considers it to be an air of considerable antiquity, but he

⁷⁶ For the text of the song with English translation see Donal O'Sullivan, *Songs of the Irish*, p. 177.

⁷⁷ *Uch uch ón, as breóite misi.*

has never met with the original, nor any older song to it than one written during the latter half of the last century by the clever, but deplorably licentious Irish poet, Andrew Magrath, or, as he was commonly called, *Mangaire Sugach*, or, 'The Merry Pedlar', and which preserves the chorus of the original, or at least some older song. Of this song – which is usually called *Slán cois Maige*, or, 'Farewell to the "Maige"' – Mr Curry has supplied me with a copy; and though I find it has been already printed, with a generally very close metrical translation, by the late Mr Walsh, I have considered it desirable to give it a place in this work, not only to identify it with the air to which it was written, and as a more accurate version of the song than that printed, but as an unobjectionable specimen of the talents and thoughts of one of the most distinguished of a class of men – usually hedge schoolmasters – who, for nearly a century, by their writings, teachings, and, too generally, reckless lives, exercised an influence over the minds and, as may be feared, even the moral feelings, of the fine-hearted but excitable peasantry of Munster, to which too little importance has been hitherto attached by the Irish historian.

Slán is céad ón dtaobh so uaim,
 Cois Má na gcaor, na gcraobh, na gcruach;
 Na stát, na stéad, na saor, na slua,
 Na ndán, na ndr éacht, na dtréan, gan ghruaim.
 Och ochón, is breoite mise,
 Gan chuid, gan chóir, gan chóip, gan chiste;
 Gan sult, gan só, gan spórt, gan spionnadh,
 Ó seoladh mé chun uaignis.

Slán go héag dá saorfhir suairc;
 Dá dáimh, dá cléir, da héigsibh sua;
 Dá cairdibh cléibh, gan chlaon, gan chluain;
 Gan cháim, gan chréim, gan chraos, gan chruas.
 Och, ochón, &c.

Slán dá éis dá béithibh uaim;
 Dá mnáibh, go léir, dá scéimh, dá snuadh;
 Dá gcáil, dá gcéill, dá gcéim, dá gcuairt;
 Da bpráisc, dá bplé, dá méin, dá mbua.
 Och, ochón, &c.

Slán thar aon don bhé dár dual,
 An bháinchnis bhéasach, bhéaltais bhuach,
 Chuir tráth chun sléibh⁷⁸ mé i gcéin im ruaig;
 Is í grá mo chléibh pé in Éirinn cuach.
 Och, ochón, &c.

⁷⁸ Pron. 'slé' in Munster Irish.

Is fánach faon mé, fraochmhar fuar,
 Is támhlag tréith, is is taomach trua;
 I mbarr an tsléibh', gan aon monuar,
 Im páirt ach fraoch agus gaoth aduaidh.
 Och, ochón, mo bhrón, mo mhilleadh,
 Iomarca óil is póga bruinneal
 'Chuir mise lem ló gan fód gan fothain,
 Is fós gan iomad fuadair.

Don tsráid nuair théim mar aon ar cuairt,
 Ní háil leo mé, is ní réid lem chluain;
 Bíd mnáibh le chéile ag plé á lua,
 Cá háit, cé hé, cá taobh ar ghluais?
 Och, ochón, &c.

Dom' cháirde im ghaobhar⁷⁹ gan téacht is trua,
 Is mé 'om' chrá 'gan saol a ngéibh sa nguais;
 Le ráithe i bpéin i gcéin ar cuairt,
 Gan ábhacht gan scléip, gan scéal, dá lua.
 Och, ochón, &c.

Ó dháil an chléir dhom céile nua,
 Cois Máighe go héag ní hé mo chuairt;
 Go brách lem' ré táim réidh lem' chuaich,
 Is le mnáibh an tsaoil 'chuir mé ar buairt.
 Och, ochón, &c.

An adieu and an hundred from this place I send,
 To the Maige of the roses, trees, and ricks;
 Of the steeds, the jewels, of the free, of the hosts;
 Of the poems, the ditties, the gloomless brave.
 Och ochone ! it is sickly I am,
 Without food, ease, company, or wealth;
 Without pleasure, comfort, sport, or vigour,
 Since I have been driven into solitude.

Adieu till death to its free pleasant men;
 To its poets, its clergy, its bards, its scholars;
 To its dear bosom friends, without perfidy or guile:
 Without fault, or blemish, waste, or penury.
 Och, ochone, etc.

Adieu henceforth to its maidens, from me;
 To all its women, to their beauty and comeliness;
 To their character, sense, their dignity, and gait;

⁷⁹ Pron. 'gaor'.

To their playful manners, dispositions and virtues.
 Och, ochone, etc.

Adieu, above all, to her to whom it is due,
 The white-skinned, accomplished, ruby-lipped maid,
 Who has caused me to fly to the mountains afar;
 She is the love of my bosom, however, my cuckoo.
 Och, ochone, etc.

I am a helpless wanderer, chilly and cold,
 Sickly, debilitated, wretched, and poor;
 In the mountain's top, and, alas! with none
 To keep me company but the north wind and heath.
 Och, ochone, my grief, my destruction,
 Too much drinking and kissing of girls
 Has sent me for ever from land and from shelter,
 And quite from all rambling pleasures.

To the town when I go, like others, to visit,
 They receive me not, nor accept my conversation;
 Whilst the women with each other arguing say –
 What is he? who is he? where did he come from?
 Och, ochone, etc.

For my friends not to visit me is indeed pitiful,
 While the world afflicts and enfolds me in peril;
 For a quarter of a year in painful exile,
 Without action, or pleasure, or telling of news.
 Och, ochone, etc.

Since the clergy have decreed me a new wife,
 The banks of the Maige shall I never again visit;
 For ever in this life I am done with my cuckoo,
 And with all the world's brain-turning maidens.
 And och, ochone, etc.



There Was a Lady All Skin and Bone

I have been unable to find any ancient or popular name for the following melody, which was noted in my boy-days from the singing of the Dublin street ballad singers, amongst whom it would appear to have been a favourite air from its easy applicability to songs of the usual octo-syllabic ballad metre. Of those songs, however, I have long ceased to retain any recollection, but as, within recent years, I have heard the air sung to the old English nursery rhyme beginning with 'There was a lady all skin and bone', I have, from want of a better, adopted that line as a name for it. I should observe, however, that this old nursery tale, as I have heard it sung, differs somewhat – as might be expected in verses preserved by tradition only – from any of the English versions of it which I have seen in print; and though it may probably be more corrupted, it is certainly not less musical, and, moreover, it will sing more smoothly to the Irish melody with which it has been associated. I am tempted, therefore, to annex it in a parallel column with the English version, as published by Halliwell in his *Nursery Rhymes of England*. In connection with this song, it may not, perhaps, be out of place to observe that the old ballad poetry of England appears to have been more generally disseminated in the portions of Ireland occupied by the English than has been hitherto suspected; but the melodies to which such ballads have been sung were usually, as in the present instance, of unquestionably Irish origin.

There was a lady all skin and bone,
 Sure such a lady was never known:
 This lady went to church one day;
 She went to church all for to pray.

And when she came to the church stile,
 She sat her down to rest a little while:
 When she came to the church-yard,
 There the bells so loud she heard.

When she came to the church door,
 She stopt to rest a little more;
 When she came the church within,
 The parson pray'd 'gainst pride and sin.

On looking up, on looking down,
 She saw a dead man on the ground;
 And from his nose unto his chin
 The worms crawl'd out, the worms crawl'd in.

Then she unto the parson said
 Shall I be so when I am dead?
 Oh, yes! oh, yes! the parson said,
 You will be so when you are dead.'

There was a lady all skin and bone,
 And such a lady was never known;
 It happened on a holyday,
 This lady went to church to pray.

And when she came unto the stile,
 She tarried there a little while;
 And when she came unto the door,
 She tarried there a little more.

But when she came into the aisle,
 She had a sad and woful smile;
 She'd come a long and a weary mile
 Her sin and sorrow to beguile.

And she walk'd up, and she walk'd down,
 And she saw a dead man upon the ground;
 And from his nose unto his chin,
 The worms crept out, and the worms crept in.

Then the lady to the sexton said –
 'Shall I be so when I am dead?'
 And the sexton to the lady said
 'You'll be the same when you are dead.'

Mr Halliwell remarks that the last line of the fourth stanza, 'slightly altered, has been adopted in Lewis's ballad of "Alonzo the Brave and the Fair Imogine"'. It will be perceived, however, that the line in Lewis's ballad is more in accordance with the Irish than with the English version.



A Munster Jig, Name Unascertained

The following old Munster jig was set by Mr P. Joyce in 1852 from the whistling of Michael Dineen, a farmer at Coolfree in the parish of Ardpatrik and county of Limerick; and it had been learnt in his youth by Dineen from the playing of James Sheedy, a celebrated Munster piper, who died, a very old man, more than thirty years ago. It is, as I conceive, a tune very strongly marked with a true old Irish character, and though probably it is only known now as a dance tune, its

emphatic gravity of sentiment, as well as its peculiar rhythmical accentuation, incline me very much to believe that, like many of our finest dance tunes, it had a march origin. I regret to add that Mr Joyce was unable to ascertain its name. As will be perceived, this air belongs to that class of dance tunes commonly known as single jigs, and of which I have given a description at page 99 of the present volume.



The Winter it is Past, or The Curragh of Kildare

The following is one of the many airs noted in my young days from the singing of a near connection of my own, and which, as I have already stated, had been learned in that lady's childhood from the singing of Betty Skillin. Other settings of the melody have been given to me in subsequent years, including one recently noted for me by Mr Joyce from the singing of Kate Cudmore, a peasant of Glenroe in the parish of Ardpatrick, county of Limerick. The settings of the air thus procured from different sources have not, as usual amongst melodies only preserved by tradition, a perfect agreement; but they present no difference of sufficient importance to make the publication desirable of any other setting than the one originally noted, and which I consider as the most genuine.



With that first setting of the tune, I also obtained from the same lady three stanzas – which were all she could remember – of the old Anglo-Irish song which had been sung, and had given name, to the melody: and Mr Joyce has favoured me with a copy – very corrupt indeed – of the whole song, as taken down by himself from the peasant Kate Cudmore.

I have been thus circumstantial in the statement of these facts, because I have found that this song has been more than once published in Scotland as a Scottish one, in connection with a melody undoubtedly of Scottish origin, but, as I think, of no great antiquity, and most probably a composition of Oswald's, in whose *Caledonian Pocket Companion* it first appeared.

This Scottish claim to a song which I had for a long period undoubtedly believed to be Irish, first became known to me on finding the first and second stanzas of it given as a fragment in *Cromek's Relics of Robert Burns*; those stanzas having been found in the poet's handwriting after his death. But, though Burns appears to have given a few touches of his own to those stanzas, it was clearly an error to ascribe to him their authorship; for those two stanzas, together with two others, given as the complete copy of the song, had been previously printed in the first edition of Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* (vol. ii. Edinburgh, 1787); and this copy of the song only differs in a few words from a stall edition of it, printed in Mr Stenhouse's notes on the songs in the Museum. There is therefore sufficient evidence to show that this song, or at least so much of it, was known in Scotland during the latter part of the last century; and it is in the highest degree probable that it was known as early as 1750, about which time the Scottish air to which it has been united, and which, in my opinion, was obviously composed for it, first appeared in Oswald's *Pocket Companion*, as already alluded to, under the name of 'The winter it is past'.

The Scottish claim to this song, as well as to the tune to which it is sung, might therefore appear to be incontrovertible. But the same song united to a melody unquestionably Irish, has been equally, if not better, known in Ireland, and for an equal, if not a much longer, period; and it appears to me that of the claims of the two countries to this song, the Irish one is decidedly the stronger; for – without attaching much weight to the fact that the Scotch have been more in the habit of appropriating the music and poetry of Ireland than the Irish have been of taking such friendly liberties – with theirs the song, as sung in various parts of Ireland for more than a century, contains stanzas which, if not somewhat unreasonably assumed to be interpolations, very clearly establish it as of Irish origin. As evidence of this fact, I here place before the reader the Scottish form of the song as given by Johnson, as well as the Irish traditional form of it, which, in some parts, is unfortunately rather imperfectly remembered. The Scottish form runs thus:

The winter it is past,
 And the summer's come at last,
 And the small birds sing on every tree;
 The hearts of these are glad,
 But mine is very sad,
 For my lover has parted from me.

The rose upon the brier,
 By the waters running clear,
 May have charms for the linnet or the bee;
 Their little loves are blest,
 And their little hearts at rest,
 But my lover is parted from me.

My love is like the sun,
 In the firmament does run,
 For ever is constant and true;
 But his is like the moon,
 That wanders up and down,
 And every month it is new.

All you that are in love,
 And cannot it remove,
 I pity the pains you endure;
 For experience makes me know
 That your hearts are full of woe –
 A woe that no mortal can cure.

The following is the Irish version of this ballad, as taken down from the singing of Kate Cudmore; but it is slightly corrected in three of the stanzas, as learned about the year 1780 from Betty Skillin, by whom the latter half of each stanza, with its corresponding music, was sung twice:

The winter it is past,
 And the summer's come at last,
 And the blackbirds sing on every tree;
 The hearts of these are glad,
 But mine is very sad,
 Since my true love is absent from me.

The rose upon the brier,
 By the water running clear,
 Gives joy to the linnet and the bee;
 Their little hearts are blest,
 But mine is not at rest,
 While my true love is absent from me.

A livery I'll wear,
 And I'll comb down my hair,
 And in velvet so green I'll appear;
 And straight I will repair
 To the Curragh of Kildare,
 For it's there I'll find tidings of my dear.

I'll wear a cap of black,
 With a frill around my neck;
 Gold rings on my fingers I'll wear;
 It is this I'll undertake
 For my true lover's sake;
 He resides at the Curragh of Kildare.

I would not think it strange
 Thus the world for to range,
 If I only got tidings of my dear;
 But here in Cupid's chain,
 If I'm bound to remain,
 I would spend my whole life in despair.

My love is like the sun,
 That in the firmament does run,
 And always proves constant and true;
 But his is like the moon,
 That wanders up and down,
 And every month it is new.

All you that are in love,
 And cannot it remove,
 I pity the pains you endure;
 For experience lets me know
 That your hearts are full of woe,
 And a woe that no mortal can cure.

Having thus placed before my readers the Scottish and Irish versions of this ballad, I shall leave it to them to determine the relative claims of the two countries to its parentage, contenting myself with the remark that if the stanzas in the latter which appear to give it a decidedly Irish origin should be considered as interpolations, they are at least interpolations of a date far anterior to the appearance of any of the Scottish versions hitherto published; and I cannot help thinking that any such assumption as to interpolation is by no means probable, and is, as far as I am aware, wholly unsustained by any examples of such a procedure as yet discovered in Ireland.

Ding Dong Didilium, Buail seo, Séid seo (The Smith's Song)

I had for many a year felt a strong desire to obtain a correct setting of the following air – which is popularly known in the southern counties of Ireland as 'The Smith's Song' – from a supposition that it was one of those tunes connected with songs of occupation which form so interesting a class of our melodies; but it was not till lately that I became possessed of a setting that appeared to me sufficiently accurate to be worthy of preservation. This setting

was noted for me by Mr Joyce in 1853 from the singing of Mary Hackett, a peasant woman of the parish of Ardpatrick in the county of Limerick.

I find, however, that I was in error in supposing that 'The Smith's Song' was



one appropriated to the occupation of this most ancient and useful trade, which is one of too noisy a nature to permit, conveniently, the habitual indulgence of song as a lightener of toil. The smith may love music, but while at his work he can but occasionally administer to that love. 'The Smith's Song' has, however, very evidently been suggested – like Handel's 'Harmonious Blacksmith' – by the measured time and varied tones of his hammers striking upon the anvil, and its melody is therefore, in my mind, one of much interest as an ancient example of imitative music. Nor is it, perhaps, less worthy of remark, that it is to this amusing imitative characteristic that it most probably owes – despite of the somewhat unfit words connected with it – its general adoption by the Munster women as a nursery song to amuse a cross or crying infant; for such has been the fact, as Mr Curry states in the following interesting notice, with which he has favoured me, of this old melody and the songs which, in his youth, he had heard sung to it:

The song and tune of '*Ding Dong Didilium, Buail seo, Séid seo*', must be one of great antiquity. I scarcely ever heard it sung but to pacify a crying or *cross* infant; and then the woman sang it with a slow swinging motion of her body backwards and forwards, and to either side, with the child in her arms, with no intention, however, to put it to sleep. Sometimes there was no swing of the body; but then the foot went down on the heel and toe alternately, but in such a measure of time as resembled, in some way, the striking of the iron on the smith's anvil, where he himself gave two blows with his *lámhord*, or hand-hammer; for every one blow that the sledge gave with his *ord mór*, or big sledge. The following is the old song which I have most commonly heard sung to it, and of which my recollection has been recently revived and aided from hearing it sung by the poor blind Limerick woman, Mary Madden.

Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;

Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;
 D'imigh mo bhean
 Leis an tailliúir aerach.
 Ní maith a chím féin
 Tua ná corrán;
 Ní maith a chím féin
 Ramhan ná sleán,
 Ó d'imigh uaim
 Mo stuaire mná,
 Le gaige trua,
 Gan bhuar gan sparán.
 Ding dong didilium &c.

Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;
 D'imigh mo bhean
 Leis an tailliúir aerach.
 A bhean úd thíos
 An bhrollaigh ghléigil,
 B'fhearr dhuit filleadh
 Is na boilg do shéideadh,
 Ná do ghabha maith féin
 Go brách a thréigean,
 Is triall leis an tailliúir
 Ar fuaid na hÉireann.
 Ding dong didilium &c.

Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;
 D'imigh mo bhean
 Leis an táilliúir aerach.
 Cá bhfuil mo bhuachaill?
 Buail seo, séid seo,
 Ca bhfuil mo neart,
 Is snas mo cheirde?
 Ca bhfuil mo radharc?
 Tá'n adharc ar m'éadan
 Ó d'éalaigh mo bhean
 Leis an tailliúir aerach.
 Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Buail seo, séid seo;
 D'imigh mo bhean
 Leis an tailliúir aéarach.
 Is ní thabharfadh mo chosa mé
 Ar sodar fad téide.

Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;
 My wife has gone
 With the *airy* tailor.
 Not well can I see
 A hatchet or reaping-hook;
 Not well can I see
 A spade or a sleaghan [a turf-spade],
 Since from me hath gone
 My stately wife,
 With a miserable *gag*,
 Without cattle or purse.
 Ding dong didilium, etc.

Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;
 My wife has gone
 With the *airy* tailor.
 Thou stray-going woman
 With the snow-white bosom,
 It were better for you return
 And blow the bellows,
 Than your own good smith
 For ever to abandon,
 And be off with the tailor
 All over Erinn.
 Ding dong didilium, etc.

Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;
 My wife has gone
 With the *airy* tailor.
 Where is my apprentice?
 Strike this, blow this;
 Where is my strength,
 And the perfection of my trade?
 Where is my sight?
 The horn is on my brow
 Since my wife has eloped
 With the *airy* tailor.
 Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;
 Ding dong didilium,
 Strike this, blow this;

My wife has gone off
 With the *airy* tailor;
 And my legs would not carry me
 Trotting a rope's length.

It may be objected that the words 'ding dong', in the burden of this song, are modern, but such is not the fact; for where the *Annals of the Four Masters* record, at the year 1015, the death of Mac Liag, poet and secretary to Brian Boru, they also record the following verse, which it would appear was the last verse the poet composed while on his deathbed, and which contains the very words in question.

A chluic atá i cind m'adhairt,
 Dot fis ní teccait carait;
 Gé do ní tú do ding dang,
 Is dít scenter an salann.

O bell, which art at my pillow's head,
 To visit thee no friends come;
 Though thou makest thy 'ding dang',
 It is by thee the salt is measured.

I have also heard the following verse sung to the same melody, at a rude play which was carried on in the winter evenings, both by men and boys. A man sat in a chair, and another man, or boy, came and laid his head in the seated man's lap, face downwards, and his hand, palm opened and turned up, across his own back. The individuals around were then named after the various implements in a smith's forge. The man in the chair sang this verse, and at the end of it one of the bystanders gave the palm of the hand on the back a slap with his own palm, as hard as he himself could bear. The man in the chair then asked the stricken man who it was that struck him. He answered, 'Big Sledge', 'Handsledge', 'Hammer' or whatever else he pleased; and the striking continued – often by the same person – until the guesser named the right person at last. Then the striker knelt down, and went through the same course; and so on all round.

Buail seo, 'Sheáin Gabha,
 Íseal is éadrom;
 Buaileam go léir é,
 Trína chéile:
 Buaileam arís é,
 Is buaileam le chéile;
 Is buailimis cuairt air,
 Go luath is go héasca.

Strike this, Shane Gobha,
 Lowly and lightly;
 Let us all strike it
 Through each other:
 Let us strike it again,
 And let us strike together;
 And let us strike all round,
 Both quickly and smartly.

To these remarks of Mr Curry I have only to add that a melody called 'The Smith's Song' was sung by the late Mr Horncastle at his excellent Irish musical

entertainments, but as he has not given it a place in the published collection of airs so sung, I am unable to speak with any certainty as to its identity with the air here printed. I well remember, however, that it was a tune of perfectly similar construction and rhythmical accent, and have but little doubt that it was at least a version of this melody.

The Melody of the Harp

For the setting of the beautiful and, as I believe, very old melody which follows, I am indebted to the kindness of my friend Mr J. E. Pigot, by whom it was obtained from a MS book of Irish songs and tunes which had been communicated to him by Mr J. Hardiman of Galway. I regret to add that I know nothing respecting the words sung to it.



The Rocky Road

The following old dance tune belongs, as will be perceived, to the class popularly known by the term 'hop jigs'. It is a very favourite tune both in Munster and Connaught, and two sets of it – very unlike each other, however – have been already printed in the Dublin monthly magazine called *The Citizen*. But as neither of these sets, nor any others that I have met with, appear to me



equal in character or correctness to the following, I have considered it desirable to give it a place in this collection. For this version of the tune I am indebted to my friend Mrs J. S. Close, a lady who in her early days had the best opportunities for learning such tunes in their most authentic forms, and who profited so well by those opportunities that she plays them with a truthfulness, a spirit, and a raciness, it would be difficult to rival, and scarcely possible to surpass.

Never Despise an Old Friend

For this beautiful and most characteristically Irish melody, I am indebted to a lady of the county of Londonderry, in which county it was noted. Unfortunately, however, I know nothing of its history, or of the Anglo-Irish song which has given it a name; but the musical reader will, I think, at once perceive its more than strong family likeness – notwithstanding the difference in its time and rhythm – to the air called ‘Sly Patrick’, in Moore’s *Melodies*, and which is now better known by the name given to it from his beautiful song ‘Has sorrow thy young days shaded’. I have already, at page 182, remarked on an affinity which in certain points the air of ‘Sly Patrick’ apparently exhibits with the air there given called ‘This time twelve months I married’, but that apparent affinity is not so decided in character as to prohibit the idea of its being accidental. Its affinity with the present air is, however, so decided as to leave no doubt of its being but a different version of the same melody – the difference in the two versions being chiefly in the time, accents and rhythm, and but slightly in the tune, of the notes themselves. Thus, the version of the air called ‘Sly Patrick’ has a six-eight time, with eight bars in each strain, while the version here given has a three-four time, with twelve bars in each strain, or if written – as it might be very properly – in nine-eight time, but four bars in each strain. And this difference between those versions in time, rhythm and number of measures, or bars, was easily produced by the simple process of converting the first and second bars of the air, as written in three-four time, into the first bar in six-eight time; and the third bar of the former into the second bar in the latter – and so with the succeeding bars throughout the melody; and vice versa, it is obvious that the air could be converted from a six-eight to a three-four time by a process equally simple. The facility with which these conversions may be made will, however, be better understood by a comparison of the following notations of corresponding portions of the two versions of the air.

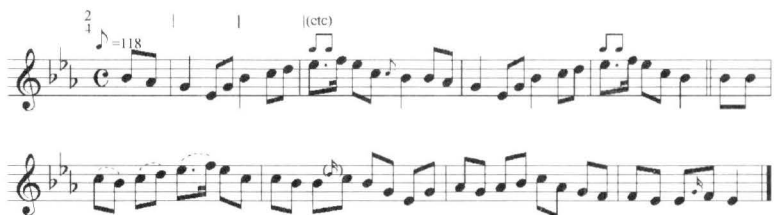


How far, however, this difference between those versions may be of an old date, or a result of the avowed license which Moore indulged of altering the tunes to please his own taste, or suit his convenience, it is now perhaps impossible to determine, as 'Sly Patrick' is one of the few airs in his collection not taken from previously printed sources with which a comparison might be instituted. In both versions the air is perfectly Irish in construction as well as in flow of melody, but in the former characteristic, as I conceive – for the reasons already adduced at pp. 89 and 130, in connection with melodies of a similar construction – the version in triple time here given is more peculiarly Irish than the other; and, upon the whole, I am strongly disposed to consider that it is the form of the air which should be regarded as the more original and authentic.



Pretty Sally

The following air was noted in my boy-days from the singing of the Dublin street ballad singers, during which time it was united to an Anglo-Irish ballad called 'Pretty Sally', which was very popular among the poorer classes of the people. The ballad of 'Pretty Sally' was probably written about that period, but the air was certainly of an older date, as it was then known to some of my young friends from the singing of their mothers, who had not been born or reared in Dublin; and I may add, as an interesting additional evidence of its antiquity, that the melody is also known as a popular Manx air in the Isle of Man, where it is sung to a Manx song called *Isbel Falsey*, or 'False Isabel'.



The Nobleman's Wedding

The following simple ballad air, independently of any intrinsic merit it may be thought to possess, has interested me, as I have no doubt it will also the majority of my readers, from having been a favourite with the late J. Philpot Curran, partly, no doubt, from his admiration of the ballad words connected with it. The setting of the melody, as sung by Mr Curran, was kindly communicated to me by his son, Mr Wm. H. Curran, together with the facts connected with it, as above stated. But, unfortunately, the latter gentleman can only now remember, and that but imperfectly, one stanza of the ballad, the fifth, according to the version which I shall presently lay before the reader. Subsequently, however, I became possessed, from other sources, of three copies of the ballad, and three other settings of the melody, all – as usual in such cases of tunes and words preserved only traditionally – differing widely from each other. Of these, both tunes and words, the first were obtained from Mr Joyce, by whom they were taken down from the singing of his brother, Mr Michael Joyce of Glenasheen in the county of Limerick; the second from my own daughters, who had learnt them in their childhood from a nursery maid at that period belonging to my family; and the third from Mary Madden, the poor blind Limerick woman of whom I have so often had occasion to make mention. Of the settings of the melody – being indisposed to express any opinion as to which should be considered the most authentic form of versions so different from each other – I have considered it proper to give the three settings which follow, namely, Mr Curran's, my daughters', and Mr Joyce's. With respect, however, to the equally differing copies of the ballad, they are all so rude and imperfect as to be unworthy of publication. But instead of them, I give insertion to a version of the ballad composed by my friend William Allingham from these various imperfect versions, with as much fidelity to their general meaning and simplicity of language as was consistent with a due attention to more correct rhythm and metre.

I once was a guest at a Nobleman's wedding;
 Fair was the Bride, but she scarce had been kind;
 And now, in our mirth, she had tears nigh the shedding;
 Her former true lover still runs in her mind.

Clothed like a minstrel, her former true lover
 Has taken his harp up, and tuned all the strings;
 There, among strangers, his grief to discover,
 A fair maiden's falsehood he bitterly sings.

'Oh! here is the token of gold that was broken;
 Through seven long years it was kept for your sake;
 You gave it to me as a true-lover's token;
 No longer I'll wear it, asleep or awake.'

She sat in her place at the head of the table;
 The words of his ditty she marked them right well;

To sit any longer this Bride was not able,
So down at the feet of the Bridegroom she fell.

'Oh! one, one request, my lord – one, and no other –
Oh! this one request will you grant it to me?
To lie for this night in the arms of my mother,
And ever, ever after to lie with thee.'

Her one, one request it was granted her fairly;
Pale were her cheeks as she went up to bed;
And the very next morning, early, early,
They rose, and they found this young Bride was dead.

The bridegroom ran quickly; he held her, he kiss'd her;
He spoke loud and low, and he hearken'd full fain;
He call'd on her waiting-maids round to assist her;
But nothing could bring the lost breath back again.

Oh! carry her softly, the grave is made ready;
At head and at foot plant a laurel-bush green;
For she was a young and a sweet noble lady;
The fairest young bride that I ever have seen.

With regard to the settings of the air which follow, I should not fail, perhaps, to remark upon the strongly marked discrepancies which they present, and to which I have already alluded, as furnishing an addition to the many heretofore given, of the changes to which airs only preserved by tradition are so frequently subjected. In these settings, as will be perceived, the strong features, or outlines, of the air only are preserved in common, and even these not perfectly, while their less essential colourings exhibit but little agreement.

First setting



Second setting



Third setting



The Hour I Prove False

Of this fine melody I have only to remark that it is one of the many airs which I noted in my boy-days from the singing of the Dublin street ballad singers, and that, like most of the tunes so noted, I have never subsequently heard it sung, or met with a setting of it. Of the Anglo-Irish ballad sung to it, I only preserved, as a name for the air, the few words above given.



The Token

For the following very pleasing ballad air I am indebted to my friend Miss Holden of Blackrock, Dublin, by whose eminently talented sister, the late Mrs Joseph Hughes, it was noted many years ago from the singing of an Irish servant; and, if I can trust my memory, it was the tune of a once popular street ballad. In its construction, however, it is not by any means a characteristic Irish



melody, but rather, like many of such street ballad airs, one belonging to that numerous class, hitherto but little noticed, to which I have applied the term Anglo-Irish.

The Lament of Richard Cantillon

This simple air, consisting of four phrases, and which I have but little doubt is very ancient, was noted last year from the singing of the blind Limerick woman, Mary Madden. Of the words sung to it, and which have given to it the above name, Mr Curry has supplied me with the following copy, transcribed from a MS in his possession. This song, as Mr Curry tells me, was written about the year 1750 by Richard *Mor* (or the big) Cantillon, of *Rath Fraoich* – now Marland – between *Ceann-a-Tochair*, or the Causeway, and Ballyheige, in the county of Kerry; and it was addressed to the beautiful Bridget O'Halloran, daughter of Maurice *Mor* O'Halloran and Catherine Mac Carthy, of the Marsud family. I should observe that as the melody has no second strain, or part, it must be sung twice to each stanza of the song; and from this circumstance I am strongly inclined to believe that it is not the air to which the song was originally adapted.

Slán leat a shiúr,
 Ní foláir dham bheith ar siúl,
 Le heagla do mhasla, is go gcaillfeá do chlú;
 Is go ndéarfaí go hard
 Gur liom 'bhí do pháirt,
 A mhodhúilbhean, do gheall dom, is do mheall mé mar chách.

Ar mo luí dhom' aréir,
 Do smaoiníos trém' néal
 Gur síofra 'chaith saighead liom, is do mhill mé go haeibh;
 Cé gheobhainn sínte lem thaobh,
 Go caoin is go faon,
 Acht brídeach na rinnrosc, ó thaoibh Locha Léin.

Do scríobhas-sa chughat,
 Go caoin is go ciúin,
 Litir faoi shéala, chun éalaithe liúm;⁸⁰
 A phéarla na lúb,
 Muna ndéanairse súd,
 Bead im shíofra i ngleannta, nó i dteampall fán úir.

Mo chreach is mo dhíth,
 Nach í Máire atá na luí,
 Agus Bríd an chúil chraobhaigh bheith taobh liom na sú;
 Gur le guth binn a cinn

⁸⁰ Pron. with 'ú' sound in stressed position *causa metri*

Thig na róinte don linn,
An fiaphoc ón gceochnoc, is an smólach den chraoibh.

Nách dubhach bocht an cás,
Bheith ag titim i ngrá
Le gile, le finne, is le boige na mná;
A chraobh úr gan cháim,
Nár thréig riamh a bláth,
Is gur as Gaeilge do léifinn do thréithe, a bháb.

Seo beannacht duit uaim,
Gan stad, siar ó thuaidh,
Ó fhágann sí Ráth Fraoigh, go dté don Chill Mhuair;
A lao ghil, is a uain,
Led théacht chugham go luath
Is gheobhair lán an tí d'fháiltíbh, is lánmhí chun suain.

Croí cráite ar gach aon
Thabharfadh náire dhúinn araon,
Is déarfadh gur bhearnaíos-sa bánchnis na gcraobh;
Is gur lánfhios don tsaol
Ná dearnas riamh léi
Ach súgradh gan tábhacht, nó gáire gan chlaon.

Farewell, my friend,
I must be away,
Lest you be defamed, or your character lost;
And that it might be said aloud
That you were partial to me,
O modest woman, who favoured, but deceived, like all others.

As I lay me down last night,
I thought in my sleep
That a fairy had shot me, and destroyed my soul;
And that I found at my side,
In her beauty reclined,
Bridget of the star eyes, from the banks of Loch Lein!

I have written to you,
Gently and timidly,
A letter well sealed, that you'd elope with me;
And if this you wont do,
Thou pearl of the ringlets,
I shall be a sprite of the valleys, or in the church's deep mould.

It's my loss and my ruin,
That 'tis not Mary that's laid low,

And Bridget of the flowing hair to be placed by my side;
 At whose musical voice
 Come the seals from the deep,
 The stag from the mist-crag, and the thrush from the tree.

What a sad and poor case,
 To be dying of love
 For the whiteness, the fairness, and the softness of the dame;
 O faultless fresh branch,
 Which never lost its blossom,
 It is in Gaelic I could trace all your graces, O maid!

Here is a blessing to you from me,
 Without delay, to the north-west,
 From its starting at Rathfree till it reaches Killmore;
 My bright fawn, and my lamb,
 That you might come soon
 To a houseful of welcomes, and a month for repose.

Sore hearts be to those
 Who would slander us both,
 And say that I sullied the white-sided maid;
 While the world well knows
 That I've done to her no more
 Than sport without meaning, or laugh without guile.

There is another stanza of this song, of which, however, Mr Curry has no perfect copy, and the fragments of it which remain are of such a nature that the loss as a whole is probably not to be regretted.



The musical reader will not fail to perceive in this air the absence, so frequent in Irish melodies, of the fourth of the scale – for though it occurs at the commencement of the air, it should be considered as unessential, and as a grace-note introduced by the singer.

Péarla an Chúil Chraobhaigh (The Pearl of the Flowing Tresses)

It was not till after the preceding melody, with the song and notice connected with it, had been in the compositor's hands, and even corrected for press, that

I discovered in my collection another and a finer melody, which, under the name above given, had been sung to the same Irish song, and as this air, having a second strain, or part, which the other wants, is much better adapted to that song, and is much more likely to be the tune to which it had been written, I have deemed it desirable to give it a place in immediate connection with the former. The setting of this melody was given me by Mr P. Joyce, who had learnt it from the singing of his father, at Glenasheen in the county of Limerick; and its correctness has been verified by a notation of the air which I made myself from the singing of the poor blind woman, Mary Madden, from the same county.



Kitty Magee

The following dance tune has been obtained from the MS book of dance music – popular in Ireland about the middle of the last century – of which I have already often spoken in connection with airs of the same class with which it has supplied me, and which have been printed in the preceding sheets of the present volume. The tune is one which I would call Anglo-Irish, and it is probably not much anterior in age to that of the MS from which it was copied.



Mo Mhúirnín Óg (My Own Young Dear)

The very beautiful air which follows, and which belongs to that narrative class of which I have so often spoken, was obtained from a lady of the county of Londonderry – an ancient principality, which, in its wild mountain districts – still chiefly inhabited by the old Irish race – has preserved a large number of our native melodies, which are often but little known beyond their respective boundaries. The name *Mo Mhúirnín Óg* sufficiently indicates the sentiment of the song which the tune was intended, or chosen, to express; but it requires no index to its character, for it breathes, in all its cadences, an expression of impassioned tenderness unmixed with melancholy, which, from its immediate effect upon the heart, no sensitive being possessed of a musical ear can for a moment hesitate to interpret. That this melody is of at least a considerable antiquity, I have but little doubt, and this opinion will probably be allowed by those theorists who consider that the absence of the seventh tone of the scale – as observable in this air – is an evidence in favour of such antiquity. But I confess that I have not been able to see sufficient reason for concurring in such a theory, and independently of any such reason, I can readily believe in the antiquity of an Irish melody, though it may not be wanting in this or any other tone of the diatonic scale.



Caoine (A Lamentation)

As the following melody is the first of a class of which no example has been hitherto given in this work, it may be expected that, in conformity with the usage which I have adopted in similar instances, I should offer some general observations on the peculiar characteristics by which such class of airs is distinguished; and when I placed this melody in the hands of the compositor, it was my intention to pursue this course. I find, however, that the very limited space at my disposal, in this last sheet of the volume, will not permit me to do so until a future opportunity, and for the present, I must be content with the simple remark that the air is one of that most ancient and peculiarly Irish class called *caoines*, or lamentations for the dead; and that it was noted from the playing of Frank Keane, a native of the southern part of the county of Clare, in

which secluded district he had learnt it from the singing of the women. Of the words sung to it, however, he has no recollection.

The Scolding Wife

The following reel tune has been taken from one of the O'Neill MSS of Irish music of the year 1787, and is most probably of Munster origin.

Name Unascertained

The following air, as will be perceived, belongs to that peculiar class of Irish melodies to which I have applied the term 'narrative', and which I believe to be, at least generally, of a considerable antiquity. Of its origin, however, I know nothing, as it is one of the many airs which I noted in my youth from the chanting of the Dublin street ballad singers, and of which I often, as in this instance, unfortunately neglected even to ascertain, or at least to record, the Anglo-Irish ballad name.



*Sagart an Bhóna*⁸¹ (The Priest with the Collar)

Of the following old air, which is both a song and a dance tune, a setting has been already printed, under the name of 'Helvick-head', in O'Farrell's *Pocket Companion*; but as that setting appears to be a much corrupted one, and is, moreover, greatly overloaded with pipers' changes upon the original theme, I gladly give insertion in this place to the following purer notation of the air, which I found in the old MS book of dance tunes of the middle of the last century to which I have already often alluded. A different form of this air, known by the Irish name *Stad, Arú Rógair, Stad, Stad*, or 'Stop, arrah Rogue, will you stop, stop', has also been printed by O'Farrell, as a different tune, and this latter form of the air has also been very popular both as a song and dance tune. And I should further remark that the fine Munster dance tune called 'The Hunt' – which I have printed at page 124 of this volume – though in a different time, has in its first strain such a striking affinity with the corresponding strain



⁸¹ *Sagart an bhónadh.*

of the present air, that there can be little doubt of the former having been suggested by the latter.

Name Unascertained

The air I have now to present to the reader is another of the many fine melodies communicated to me by Mr James Fogarty, and which he had learnt in his native parish of Tibroghney, on the borders of the counties of Tipperary and Kilkenny. I regret, however, that he has forgotten its name, and that with the tune he has only transmitted to me a brief notice, which I give in his own simple language: 'I found this air in my early youth someway enchanting to my mind. The Irish song to it I fear is lost; it was a love song, mingled with patriotism.'

The musical reader will perceive that this melody, which is perfectly Irish in structure, is one of the many airs in which the seventh tone of the diatonic scale may be considered as wanting; for though it appears as a connecting link between the third and fourth sections of the melody, it is in no way essential, and might with perfect propriety be omitted.



As a Sailor and a Soldier Were Walking One Day

In the selection of the following air as a fitting close to this volume of the 'Ancient Music of Ireland', I have been less influenced by the character of the melody – manly and flowing as it is – than by that of the Anglo-Irish ballad song which has been sung to it, and which is remarkable not only for an expression of loyalty very rarely found in such compositions, but also for the homely avowal of sentiments which – by a curious coincidence – will, at the present time, find a very general echo amongst all classes in the empire. This ballad song runs as follows:

As a sailor and a soldier were walking one day,
Says the sailor to the soldier, 'I'm just going to pray:
I am just going to pray for the good of our Queen,
And whatever, ever, I do pray for, you must answer – Amen!'

'The first thing we'll pray for, we'll pray for our Queen,
That she may live happy, and enjoy a long reign:
And where she has one man, I wish she had ten;
We should never want to stand to arms, boys': Says the
soldier – 'Amen!'

'The next thing we'll pray for, we'll pray for good cheer,
That we all may live happy, and have plenty strong beer:
And where we have one quart, I wish we had ten;
We should never want for plenty strong beer'. Cries the
soldier – 'Amen!'

With respect to the time of the composition of this song – from the references which it contains to the government of a queen, I should, with but little hesitation, ascribe it to the reign of the last queen, Anne; it could hardly, I think, be ascribed to an earlier age. And with respect to the age of the melody – which has rather an Anglo-Irish character – I should ascribe it, in its present form, to the same period. This melody, however, as I shall hereafter show, is but one of many existing modifications of an air far more ancient, and which is perfectly Irish in its construction and general character.

I have only to add that for both air and words I am indebted to Mr Patrick Joyce, by whom they had been learnt, many years since, in his native county of Limerick.



The Ancient Music of Ireland
Volume 2 (1882)

Gather Up the Money

The following old and popular Munster jig tune – which is obviously founded on the well-known vocal air called *An Páistín Fionn* – is usually played by pipers and fiddlers when they desire, through its name, to convey a significant hint to the dancers to their music that they think it time to receive some pecuniary reward for their services. It is also used as a lively song tune, and was formerly much played as a *petticotee* movement – an old dance once fashionable in Ireland, and which was usually performed immediately after the more stately movement of the minuet.

This tune was noted from the playing of my friend Mr Richard Morrison, M. D., of Dublin, and Walcot, near Bray, to whom I am further indebted for the facts above stated.



The Top of Sweet Dunmul

This air was noted in the parish of Dungiven, county of Londonderry, in 1834, and it probably owes its origin to that still very Irish-peopled district, in which it was then sung to a local ballad of no value but as serving to preserve the melody in the minds of the peasantry, and supplying it with a name. The 'Dunmul', whose sweetness this ballad records, is a basaltic mountain, well known to geologists, and situated between the rivers Bann and Bush in the adjoining county of Antrim.



*An Cumhain Leatsa an Oíche Úd?*⁸² (Do You Remember that Night?)

In the notice prefixed to the last air in the preceding volume – ‘As a Sailor and a Soldier Were Walking One Day’ and in which I confessed that the melody had rather an Anglo-Irish character, I stated that I should hereafter show that it was but one of many existing modifications of an air far more ancient, and which is perfectly Irish in its construction and general character. With this object in view, I have accordingly now selected and placed in immediate succession the three or four airs which follow, and which have been all noted by Mr Joyce in the same locality with that already printed, namely, the neighbourhood of the village of Glenasheen, in the parish of Ardpatrick and county of Limerick. The first of these airs was noted from the singing of Michael Dineen, a farmer at Coolfree in that parish, and I give it precedence as exhibiting the closest affinity with the air to which I have referred in the preceding volume. It was sung to an Irish song, said to have been composed by a young widowed bride, whose husband, after taking home his wife, was unhappily drowned in conveying her relations back in a boat across the Shannon. Unfortunately, the following stanza of this song is all that Mr Joyce committed to writing, and even of this there is a line which to Mr Curry is unintelligible. I should further remark that the want of metrical concordance between the final note in each strain of the air and the corresponding word of the song, shows that the latter is but an unskilful adaptation to the former.

An cumhain leatsa an oíche úd
 Do bhíomair san seomra;
 Bhí do cheann ar mo chuislinn,
 Agus tusa dom shíorphógadh:
 Do fúir agus cuisle,⁸³
 Do chráigh agus do bhreogh me,
 Is a bhuachaill gan chumann,
 Is tú d’fhág mo chroí brónach.



⁸² *An cumháin leatsa an oidhche úd?*

⁸³ It has not been possible to make any sense of this line.

Do you remember that night
 That we were in the chamber;
 Your head was on my arm,
 And you were embracing me:
 * * * * *
 That has distressed and sickened me,
 And, O youth without constancy,
 It is you that has left my heart sorrowful.

Name Unascertained

In its general construction the following air differs but little from the preceding one, but from its scale being in the minor mode, its pervading expression throughout is of a sadder cast. This air was noted from the singing of a Mrs Cudmore of Glenasheen, but Mr Joyce obtained no name for it.



Ceapach Dáinig (Cappa-Dainig)

In this pleasing melody, which is of the narrative class, and possibly the parent of the two preceding airs, the rhythm and accents, as will be perceived, are quite different and give to it a distinct and peculiar character, but the leading idea is obviously still the same in all. This air, together with the stanza of the Irish song sung to it, were noted from the singing of Lewis O'Brien of Coolfree; and perhaps I should add that the name Cappa-Dainig is a topographical one, but I am ignorant of its locality.

Mo mhíle slán chughat a Cheapach Dáinig,
 Anois go brách, agus go n-éagad;
 Mar is minic a d'fhágais i dtigh an tábhairne,
 Im amadán gan chéill me:
 Lá arna mhárach bhínn dubhach tinn cásmhar,
 Agus nárbh fhios dom cad do dhéanfainn;
 Nár neartaí an tArdmhac ná Rí na nGrás leat.
 Ba é súd rá mo chéile.

My thousand adieus to you, O Ceapach Dainig,
 Now for ever, and until I die;
 For 'twas often you left me in the tavern,
 As a fool without my reason:
 On the next day I'd be sick and sorry,
 And wouldn't know what best could be done;
 'May neither the high Son nor the King of Mercy give you strength',
 Was what my wife would say to me.



The Green Bushes

In the following melody the points of relationship to the three just given are less striking than those which so clearly link the former together as of the one family; yet there is, I think, in its general features such a sufficient agreement with them as to leave but little doubt of its kindred origin.

This air was noted by Mr Joyce from the singing of Joseph Martin at Kilfinnan, but the singer had no name or song for it. I find, however, that the tune is commonly known by the English appellation of 'The Green Bushes', not only in the counties of Cork, Waterford and Wexford, but also in the Connaught counties of Mayo and Galway; and, further, that the modifications of form which it, also, assumes, including a change from the major to the minor mode, are scarcely less striking than those which give such a varied character to the kindred airs now presented to the attention of the reader.



The examples now adduced of modifications of a parent strain of melody – and which occur so abundantly in Irish music – might, as I have no doubt, be multiplied if looked for; but as I fear to trespass longer on the patience of my readers, I shall for the present only direct their attention to another air in the preceding volume – ‘As I walked out one day’, p. 173 – which, though in common time, exhibits an affinity with those here grouped together, which I find it difficult to believe could have been wholly accidental.

Carolán’s Draught

The following spirited harp melody was obtained from an old MS music book sent to me by Father Walsh, PP of Sneem in the county of Kerry; and I found a second setting of it in an extensive manuscript collection of tunes made within the present century by Patrick Carew, a county of Cork piper – the use of which has been kindly allowed me by my friend Mr Richard Dowden (Richard), Alderman of Cork. Though hitherto unpublished, and apparently unknown to preceding collectors, the peculiarities of its style and of its flow of melody can leave no doubt as to its being a genuine composition of the eminent composer whose name it bears; and as it seems to be known only in Munster, it may perhaps be fairly regarded as one of the many tunes composed by the bard during his sojourn in that province, and which, like the majority of his Connaught tunes, do not appear to have been ever collected during their author’s lifetime.

The musical score for 'Carolán's Draught' is written in G major and common time. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 153$. The second staff contains a repeat sign. The third staff has a key signature change to D major, indicated by $D^5 C^3 B^4$. The fourth and fifth staves continue the melody with various ornaments and phrasing.

Caitilín Ní Uallacháin (Kitty Huallaghan)

'The Jacobite Relics' – as those metrical, but not always very poetical, effusions are called which were written by the adherents of the banished Stuart family, both in Ireland and Scotland, in the hope of conducing to their restoration – have now been very extensively given to the public; and whatever may be thought of their literary or poetic merits generally, it will not be denied that their preservation was of much importance as illustrating the peculiarities of thought and feeling which, for a long period, pervaded in common so large a portion of the peoples of the two countries. But these 'relics' possess an additional value which, as I conceive, has not been as yet sufficiently appreciated by the philosophical investigators of the history of the empire, namely, as exhibiting the great differences and peculiarities of character which, from whatever causes, distinguished the Jacobites of the two countries, and gave a strongly marked dissimilarity to the literary exponents of their feelings which they have left to us. It would, however, be inconsistent with the object of this work to touch, even delicately, this curious subject, and indeed were it otherwise, I should decline doing so. I have only to deal with the poetical remains of the Irish Jacobites as relics which, to some extent, have contributed to the preservation of many of our fine melodies, though possibly to the extinction of some of the older, and probably better songs to which they had been united.

Amongst those Irish Jacobite relics, the song called *Caitilín Ní Uallacháin* – and sometimes, but erroneously, Englished, Kate or Kitty Nowlan – is one of the best known, and, perhaps deservedly, admired. Of this song at least two versions have been already printed, and both with English metrical translations – one by the late Mr Edward Walsh in his *Irish Popular Songs*, and the other by Mr John O'Daly in his *Poets and Poetry of Munster*, the versifications in which were made by the late James Clarence Mangan. In both these works the authorship of this song is assumed, but, as it would appear, erroneously, to one of the Irish poetic celebrities of the eighteenth-century – a blind Tipperary poet named William O'Heffernan; for Mr Curry has supplied me with a copy of the song which he transcribed from a manuscript now in his possession, and which was written in the year 1780 by a distinguished Clare scribe and Irish scholar named Peter Connell, or O'Connell; and as in this MS the name William O'Hanrahan is given as that of its author, such authority is certainly superior in weight to any that has been, or probably could be, assigned for ascribing it to the Tipperary poet; for it can scarcely be doubted that Connell was personally acquainted with its true author. I should add that it will further appear from this MS that the versions of the song printed by Walsh and O'Daly – and which have but little in common – are in both instances corrupted, and in one of them more particularly, largely interpolated. I insert, therefore, the song as given to me by Mr Curry, and in reference to it I would make an explanatory remark which, at least to some of my readers, may not be wholly unnecessary, namely, that the lady addressed by the poet under the euphonious name of Uallachan, or Hoolloghan, was no less a personage than 'Old Ireland'

herself; such allegorical mode of impersonifying her, and generally in the form of a tender love song, having been a common one with the bards of the last century – not always, however, exhibiting in such effusions the exquisite felicity of expression of our late great lyrist in his beautiful song, ‘When he who adores thee’.

Is fada mílte á gcartadh síos
 Agus suas ar fán,
 Is clanna saoithe ar easpa grinn;
 Gan chluain gan stát;
 Gan chantain diagachta, gan fleá, gan fhíon,
 Gan chruas, gan cheard,
 Ag brath arís ar Chaitilín
 Ní Uallacháin.

Ná measaigí gur caile chríon,
 Ná guaireachán
 Ná caillichín an ainnir mhín,
 Tais, bhuacach, mhnáúil;
 Is fada arís ba bhanaltra í,
 Is ba mhór a hál,
 Dá mbeadh mac an rí ag Caitilín
 Ní Uallacháin.

Ba dheas a gnaoi, dá mairimis,
 Le ruagairt namhad,
 Is brataibh síoda ag tarraingt gaoithe,
 Agus bua don bháib;
 Pleaid go groí ó bhaitheas cinn
 Anuas go sáil,
 Ag mac an rí ar Chaitilín
 Ní Uallacháin.

Níl fear sa tír do ghlacfaimis
 Don stuaire mná,
 Gí chaitheann luí le Sacsainín
 ‘Nar fuar a chnámha.
 Is fada an mhoill ar an bhfaraire aoibhinn,
 Uasal ard,
 Do b’fhearra linn bheith ag Caitilín
 Ní Uallacháin.

Screadaimid le hachainí
 Chun Uain na nGrás,
 Do cheap na tíortha, talamh troim,
 Agus cruachaibh ard’;

Do scaip 'na dtimpeall farraigí,
 Gealchuanta is trá,
 Ag cur malairt críche ar Chaitilín
 Ní Uallacháin.

An té tharraing Israel tarsna taoide
 Rua, ón namhaid,
 Is do bheathaigh daoine dá fhichid geimhreadh
 Anuas le harán;
 Do neartaigh Maoise i measc a naimhde;
 Ag fuascailt trá,
 Is ag tabhairt dín do Chaitilín
 Ní Uallacháin.

Long have thousands been hurled down
 And up a-wandering,
 And the sons of nobles without mirth;
 Without field or estate;
 Without divine chaunting, feast, or wine;
 Without valour, or science,
 Hoping again for Caitilín
 Ní Uallacháin.

Suppose not ye that a decayed slut,
 Or a hairy crone,
 Or a puny hag, is the maiden soft,
 Wild, towering, womanly;
 Long yet would she be a nurse,
 And numerous her race,
 Were the king's son but Caitilín
 Ní Uallacháin's.

How charming her face, did we but live
 To see the foemen routed,
 And silken banners on the breeze a-floating,
 With victory to the dame;
 And a royal plaid from her crown descending
 Down to her heels,
 By the king's son placed upon Caitilín
 Ní Uallacháin.

There is no man in the land that we would accept
 For the stately woman,
 Though she is forced to live with a *Saxoneen*,
 Whose bones are cold.

Ah! how long delays the cheerful hero,
 Noble and illustrious
 Whom we would prefer to be Caitilín
 Ní Uallacháin's.

Now let us raise aloud our prayer
 To the Lamb of mercy –
 Who created the countries, the ponderous earth,
 And the lofty mountains;
 Who scattered around them seas,
 Fair harbours, and strands –
 To bring a change of state to Caitilín
 Ní Uallacháin.

He who brought Israel across the Red
 Sea, from the foe,
 And who fed the people forty winters
 From above with bread;
 Who strengthened Moses among his foemen –
 May (He) relieve in time,
 And give protection to Caitilín
 Ní Uallacháin.

Of the melody most commonly sung to this old song, a setting was first published in Holden's collection of Irish melodies in 1807. This setting was noted by Cody, alias Archdeacon, an ingenious piper who, at different times, collected airs in Connaught for Bunting, Holden, and William Power, one of the proprietors and publishers of Moore's *Irish Melodies*. It is a fine bold air, and the general accuracy of its notation is proved by a number of settings now before me, which were subsequently obtained from the Connaught counties, and of which three were made by the late Mr William Forde in the counties of Leitrim and Mayo in 1846. A setting of this air, differing widely from all these, has, however, been printed more recently under the name of 'Kitty Nowlan' in Mr Bunting's last volume, and that setting has had some authority given to it by its being again printed in connection with the version of the original song in Mr Duffy's *Poets and Poetry of Munster*. But whatever may be the merits of this setting as a harmonized instrumental air – and Bunting tells us it was obtained from Byrne, a harper, in 1806 – there is great reason to doubt its accurate notation as a vocal one; for its accents and peculiarities of rhythm will not permit it to convey to the ear, with any amount of smoothness, the words of the old song which the air was either composed for, or, as more probable, chosen as a fitting medium to express. I have, therefore, deemed it desirable to give a place in this collection to a setting of the melody which a comparison of all the copies now before me authorizes me to consider a more correct one than either of those already printed; and I also give, in immediate succession to it, another air of at least equal beauty – not hitherto published – which bears the same name, and is sung to the same words, but which, as will be perceived, has

scarcely any affinity with the former. Of these airs the first, which is that most generally known in connection with the old song, is most probably that to which the song was originally written or adapted; and as this song is one of Munster origin, so, probably, is the tune to which it is thus united – and indeed it appears to be but a modified form of the popular old Munster melody called *Cad é sin don té sin, nac mbaineann sin dó*, or ‘What is that to him whom it does not concern’. The second air is, I believe, only known in Connaught, or possibly, in the counties of Galway and Mayo, from which the settings of it were obtained, and it is therefore probably an old melody of that most musical region. Of these settings, one was noted from the singing of the Galway piper Patrick Coneely in 1839; but the more accurate one which I have printed was noted more than twenty years previously.



Second setting



The Blackberry Blossom

Among the innumerable reel tunes current in Ireland, there are few, if any, more generally known and admired than the following – and unquestionably it is a very old dance tune of its class. It will be observed that this tune, like many other Irish and, of course, Scottish airs, begins in a major key and ends in its relative minor, a third below or a sixth above the tonic; and indeed,

though in a different time, it bears some affinity in the flow of its melody to the well-known Scottish air named 'Woo'd and Married and a' – a tune, however, which, under various names, as 'Ride a Mile', 'The Time of Day', etc., is equally known in Ireland as a jig tune, and of course considered to be an Irish one. For the setting of this tune here given I am indebted to my friend Mr Richard Morrison of Dublin, and Walcot, near Bray.



*Ar Lorg na nGamhan do Chuireas-sa mo Leanbh*⁸⁴ (To Seek for the Calves I Have Sent My Child)

In the Introduction to the preceding volume of this work, I deemed it necessary to direct attention to the very erroneous theory, advanced by the late Mr Edward Bunting, with respect to the immutability of national melodies, generally, which have been preserved by tradition only, but more particularly those of Ireland; and, in the course of that volume, numerous examples of varied existing forms of the one air have been adduced in illustration of the fallacy of that assumption. An equally striking illustration of such fallacy will be found in the setting of the beautiful and, as I think, very ancient melody which I have now to present to the reader; for though in its time, rhythm, and even the general procession of its tones, it differs but little from a form of the air which must be familiar to most of my readers, yet its expression of sentiment is so essentially different that if attention were not directed to the affinities which mark their original identity, but few, perhaps, would be likely to recognize it. The air to which I allude is that spirited old march tune called 'The Boyne Water', and sometimes 'The March of the Boyne' – names applied to it from its union with, or adaptation to, the two old Anglo-Irish ballads written to commemorate that eventful combat which established the Revolution in England, and led to the fall and ultimate extinction of the ancient dynasty of the empire.

Of these old ballad songs – both of which have been printed by Mr Charles Gavan Duffy in his valuable and interesting little volume of *The Ballad Poetry of Ireland* – the first, at least, must be of an age nearly contemporaneous with the important event which the ballads describe; and assuming, as we justly may, the air to be of an earlier date, the martial character which it was constrained

⁸⁴ *Ar lorg na ngamhan do chuireas-sa mo leanadh.*

to assume may fairly be referred to the same period. There is, indeed, an evidence remaining of the early union of the tune with these songs, in a setting of it called 'The Boyne Water' which is found in the Leyden MS – a collection of Scottish and other tunes, set in tablature for the Lyra-viol, and supposed to have been written about the close of the seventeenth, or early in the eighteenth century; and of which a transcript has been made by Mr George F. Graham, which he presented to the Library of the Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh, in 1847. Nor is it wholly impossible that the tune may have been shaped into this form at even an earlier period, to suit the sentiment of some lost martial Irish song, or to serve the purpose of a march tune, thus preparing it for a prompt adaptation to the Anglo-Irish ballads above alluded to. But be this as it may, it will, as I think, scarcely permit a doubt that the form of the melody which I now print is not one of Anglo-Irish origin, and that it is as much more ancient, as it is more beautiful and truly Irish, than that better known form which it has been forced to assume, on its appropriation to a service uncongenial to its original nature. For – not to dwell upon the obvious improbability that the native Irish-speaking people should have converted to the use of a pastoral love song a melody of a bold character – and which, besides, must have been distasteful to them from its association with sentiments so widely differing from their own – this form of the air, in its superior purity of expression, and in its passionate depth of feeling, affords intrinsic evidence of an original intention, and consequent priority of antiquity, which will not be found in that which I consider the derived form of it called 'The Boyne Water'.

Of the old Irish song sung to this melody, Mr Curry has heard many versions, but all of them more or less corrupted, and otherwise unfit for publication. A version of it has, however, been printed, with an English metrical translation, in the late Mr Edward Walsh's *Irish Popular Songs*; but, as Mr Curry tells me, – and the song affords internal proofs of the fact – this version is altogether a garbled and dressed-up one, and of no authority. I annex, however, a stanza of the song as sung in the counties of Limerick and Clare, as it is not without some value in illustrating the state of society in Ireland during the greater portion of the eighteenth century. And from the reference in this stanza to a Turlogh *Láidir* (O'Brien), who was a well-known character in the county of Tipperary about the year 1770, Mr Curry supposes the song to have been written in that county about that period.

Ar lorg na ngamhan
Do chuireas-sa mo leanbh,
Is ceann ní bhfaighidh
Go lá dhíobh;
Tá Toirealach Láidir
I gciumhais na coille,
Agus Peadar Ó Béara
Láimh leis;
Atáid siúd riamh
I ndiaidh na mbruinneal,
Is srian níl le cur

To seek for the calves
I have sent my child,
But one of them this night
She'll not find;
Turlogh the Strong
Is on the skirt of the wood,
And Peter O'Beary
Beside him;
These have been ever
After the girls,
Nor bridle shall ever

Go brách leo;
 Acht má tá dlí le fáil,
 Amárach is dearbh,
 Go mbainfeadsa díol
 Im ghrá dhíobh.

Restrain them;
 But if there is law to be had,
 On tomorrow it is certain
 That I'll make them pay
 For my darling.

The setting of this melody here given was noted in 1853 from the singing of Mary Madden, the poor blind Limerick woman of whom I have already made frequent mention in the preceding volume; and its accuracy has been corroborated by settings previously noted from the singing of Mr Curry, and the Clare peasant Teige Mac Mahon. I annex, however, a second set of the air, which is slightly different, and which was given to me many years since by my friend Mr James Hardiman, now Librarian of the Queen's College, Galway. This setting, which may perhaps be considered as the Connaught version of the melody, as it was noted in that province, presents a somewhat closer agreement with the form of it known as 'The Boyne Water' than any of the settings obtained from the Munster counties.

($\frac{2}{4}$ ♩ ♪ ♪ ♪ etc)

Second Setting

*Maidin Fhómhair, nó, Cailín Péacach*⁸⁵ (**The Harvest Maiden, or Sprouting Maiden**)

This characteristic melody of the narrative class was noted in my boy-days, at which period the song of 'The Shining Daisy', then adapted to it, was a very productive one to the pockets of the veteran street vocalists of Dublin. Yet, if a few lines of its first stanza, which are all that I can now remember – and I have long sought in vain for a copy of the ballad – be taken as a fair specimen of its quality, its poetical merits did not rise much above the ordinary standard in such effusions. These lines run thus:

Sweet shining daisy,
I loved you dearly;
When I was really
But very young:

Rude, however, as these lines are, the poet has better caught up the rhythm of the melody than many poets of a higher order in adapting words to airs of the same class.



From old MS setting of Irish tunes, I have subsequently found that this air was also known by the names of *Maidin fhómhair*, or 'Harvest Maiden', and *Cailín péacach*, or 'Sprouting Maiden' – names which, no doubt, were derived from some older Irish song, or songs, which had been previously adapted to it; but hitherto I have been unable to procure copies of those songs. Such songs, however, were probably, like 'The Shining Daisy', only adaptations to this fine old tune, as I find the name *Maidin fhómhair* given to an air of the same class in Bunting's first collection of Irish music, and to which the Irish song so called was, doubtless, sung.

Consider Well, All Ye Pretty Fair Maids

The following beautiful melody of the narrative class is one of the many airs noted in the county of Wexford, and forwarded to me as a contribution to this

⁸⁵ *Maidin fhómhair, nó Cailín péacach.*

work by my young friend, Mr Robert A. Fitzgerald of Enniscorthy. Writing to me with his usual characteristic enthusiasm and fine perception of the various expressions of sentiment found in our melodies, he remarks: 'This is a splendid air. There is a lingering regret expressed in it which I know will charm you.'

And again, in reference to the words sung to this air, and concerning which I had wished for some information, my clever correspondent playfully writes as follows: 'Now about "Consider well, you pretty fair maids" – in the first place it is very scarce: I never heard it but with one person, and that person has left this place, so that I can give only a small portion of the song which I happen to remember. It is a warning song addressed by a deserted maiden to all the unforsaken specimens of her class. "Consider well", etc., was the first line, and I remember none of it from that till the last verse – and even of this I forget the first two lines. All I know is that they contain a wish on the part of the maiden to be (for the greater facility of locomotion) transformed into one of three or four birds, ending with a dove; for which last she certainly had scriptural authority. It is a melancholy instance of the intellectual faculties being impaired by excessive grief, that her selection of the remaining birds appears to have been made more with reference to the sound of their names in verse, than from any fitness recognized in them by natural history as yet, to undertake the fatiguing journey which she desired, by the aid of their ill-chosen wings, to accomplish. I am glad now that I can give the lady an opportunity of speaking for herself – an opportunity of which, as a lady, she is no doubt anxious to take advantage. In the event of her pagan desire for metempsychosis being indulged, she proceeds to throw some light upon the line of conduct likely to be pursued by her in her new career. She says:

I would fly from these lands of sorrow,
 And light at once upon the house I love.
 When he would speak, oh! I would flutter,
 And fly about with my little wings;
 'Tis then I'd ask him how could he flatter,
 And say so many deluding things.

'This is all that I know of the words. The air is tender and expressive, with that power of not "o'erstepping the modesty of Nature", which is so peculiar to Irish music.'



The Petticottee Jig – an Ancient Munster March and Jig Tune

This fine old air of its class was noted in Dublin from the playing of Frank Keane by whom it was learnt in his native county of Clare, in which it was formerly a popular jig, and more anciently, as he believes, a march tune. In this opinion I am strongly disposed to concur, for as I have already stated in a preceding notice, I consider our oldest jig tunes to have been often originally composed for such purpose. And I would now add that knowing as I do how much more intelligible, inspiriting, and delightful from their associations such tunes would be to Irish soldiers, than the German or other foreign marches – whatever may be their musical merits – now usually played for them, I cannot but believe it would be a wise as well as a kindly tribute to their national tastes and feeling, if the officers of the purely Irish regiments would have their bands instructed to perform such march tunes generally, in preference to any others.

I regret to state that Frank Keane was unable to recollect the name by which this tune was known in Clare, but as I find it called ‘The Petticottee Jig’ in another set of it made in the county of Limerick by Mr P. Joyce, I have prefixed that name to it for facility of reference. The ‘Petticottee’, as I have already stated, was a species of lively dance, once fashionable in Ireland, and usually performed immediately after the minuet.

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. It consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 108. The music is a lively jig tune with various rhythmic patterns and ornaments. The final two staves end with a double bar line.

*Grá Geal mo Chroí*⁸⁶ (**Bright Love of My Heart**)

I trust that I shall be pardoned for the, perhaps irrelevant, avowal that it is with a no ordinary feeling of pleasure and, I may add, of pride, that I acknowledge myself indebted for the following exquisite melody, together with very many others of no less beauty, to a brother artist of Ireland – one whose refined genius has added new triumphs to art, reflected honour on his country, and contributed to the undying glory of the empire. Need I add that I allude to the sculptor of the Eve – Patrick Mac Dowell,⁸⁷ a gentleman whose intuitive perception of the beautiful, whether conveyed through the ear or through the eye, united with a rare combination of the moral and intellectual faculties, would have enabled him to become a great musician, if accident or choice had not led him to become a great sculptor; and whose passionate love for the melodies of Ireland – engendered by a high sensibility to their beauty – and ardent zeal for their conservation as memorials of the finer qualities of national character, are as pure and enthusiastic as they might well be if his soul were wholly absorbed in the charms of tune, and the ardour of unfeigning patriotism.

The Irish name of this melody – *Grá geal mo Chroí* – is common to several of our finer airs, and probably had its origin from some Irish song so called. But those melodies have usually received this appellation from their being adapted to different Anglo-Irish street ballads of no great age, to which this phrase of endearment, from its recurrence in such song, had supplied them with a name. The tunes so called have usually a tender and sorrowful character, and a triple time; as, for example, that most popular and pathetic one which, under the name of ‘Lough Sheeling’ – the ‘Come rest in this bosom’ of Moore’s *Melodies* – was first furnished by me for publication, but which is much more generally known as *Grá geal mo Chroí*. The melody here printed differs, however, from all others of the name that I have met with, in having a common time; and yet it will run with the words of the popular ballad to which the former air was sung, as smoothly as that better known tune – and indeed, in the pervading expression of sentiment, and in some of its peculiarities of construction – as the change from the minor mode in the first strain to its relative major in the second – there is so much in common between the two airs, as would almost lead to the conclusion that they had a kindred origin. I should further observe that, as the ballad alluded to bears internal evidence of a Cork origin, it is very probable that it was to the present melody it was originally adapted, as Mr Mac Dowell acquaints me that the air was obtained from and seems properly to belong to that county.

This ballad – notwithstanding its popularity – scarcely rises above the ordinary level of such Anglo-Irish compositions, which, it may be confessed, is low enough; and it is with some hesitation that I venture to quote the first four consecutive stanzas of the twelve of which it consists.

⁸⁶ *Grádh geal mo chroidhe*.

⁸⁷ Patrick MacDowell (1799–1870). Belfast-born sculptor, two of whose statues are to be found in Belfast City Hall.

I am a young lover that's sorely oppress'd,
 Enthralld by a fair one, and can find no rest:
 Her name I'll not mention, though wounded I be
 By Cupid's keen arrow for Gra gal ma chree.

When first I beheld that sweet female most fair,
 My eyes were eclipsed by her beauty so rare:
 By her soft, killing glances, she so enchanted me,
 That in anguish I languish for Gra gal ma chree.

Her lips are like coral, her cheeks like the rose;
 Her skin white as lilies, her eyes black as sloes:
 She's handsome and proper in every degree;
 No female can equal sweet Gra gal ma chree.

But her cruel parents are sharp and unkind;
 I dare not attempt to discover my mind;
 My grief to reveal for that sweet lovely *she* –
 My poor heart lies bleeding for Gra gal ma chree.



Some Treat of David

The following air, which belongs to the narrative class, was noted to me by Mr Robert A. Fitzgerald at Enniscorthy in the summer of 1853, and was sent to me by that gentleman immediately afterwards with the following remarks:

I got this air here in Enniscorthy since I returned from the sea. It is sung to a '98 ballad, and is, I think in strength of feeling and delicacy of style, far beyond the one I gave you before. You will be struck with the manly regret of the first part, and the romantic, spiritual grace of the second strain: it has a remote and almost visionary melancholy, like the far cry of Roland's horn when he fell at Fontarabia. I could not get the ballad belonging to it yet; but I think I shall be able to send it to you soon.

Of the tune alluded to, as having been previously forwarded to me, two settings have been given in the preceding volume – pp. 136, 137; and in connection with this tune I have stated there that the '98 ballad here alluded to, and which Mr Fitzgerald subsequently procured for me, was one of no merit or value, except perhaps as an historical memorial. I have, however, taken the first



few words of this ballad as a name for the present melody, as I have been unable to ascertain its true appellation.

The Humours of Caledon

I found the following dance tune, which is of the kind termed hop jig, in a MS book, already often referred to, containing dance tunes which were popular in Ireland during the last century. The place called Caledon, which has given the tune a name, is a small but beautiful town in the barony of Dungannon, county of Tyrone, which gives the title of Earl to the noble family of Alexander.



A Bhuachaill an Chúil Dualaigh (O Youth of the Flowing Hair)

By such true lovers of Irish melody as can at once comprehend and be impressed with its various tones of sentiment, the following air, I am fully persuaded, will be considered as one of no ordinary beauty and tenderness of expression. To me, at least, it required no interpretation of the lyricist to indicate its pervading expression of that passionate true love whose course, as the poet tells us, 'never did run smooth'. Yet it afforded me a no common gratification to find that the old song to which it had been united, and for which it was probably composed, was not unworthy of such a union – that it expressed the feeling engendered by such a passion, artlessly indeed, but with an energy, tenderness and depth, in such perfect concordance with the melody, that both are alike the true exponents of

each other, and appear to have had a contemporaneous origin in the outpourings of the one sensitive and sorrow-stricken soul.

I am, as usual, indebted to my friend Mr Curry for a copy of this song, which he believes to be a very ancient one, for it was considered as such by his father and other old people, by whom he had often heard it sung. He further believes it to be a Munster song, but it is certainly also known in Connaught, where it is commonly called *Ógánach an chúil dualaigh* – the word *Ógánach* being a synonymous term with *Buachaill* – ‘a youth, a boy, and in its primitive sense a cowherd, being derived from *bó*, plural *búa* or *búaibh*, a cow, and *cal*, to keep; Gr. *Boukodos*, i.e., *pastor boum*’.

I regret that I cannot give the translation of this song in the metrical form of the original, and into which I attempted to throw it, but I felt that whatever it might have gained in sound was more than counterbalanced by a loss of the simplicity and force conveyed in the literal prose. I trust, however, that some more practised and competent hand may be tempted to make such a translation for a song so worthy of the labour, and be able to effect the one without injury to the other.

A bhuachaill an chúil dualaigh,
 Cár chodail mé aréir?
 Ag colbha do leapan,
 Is níor airigh tú mé:
 Da mbeadh fios mo cháis agat,
 Ní chodlófá néal;
 Is gurb é do chomhrá binn blasta
 D’fhág an osna so im thaobh,

A bhuachaill an chúil dualaigh,
 Nár fheice mé Dia,
 Go bhfeicimse do scáile
 A’ teacht idir mé is an ghrian!
 Ní thuigeann tú mo mhearú,
 Is ní airíonn tú mo phian;
 Is mar bharr ar gach ainnise,
 Is leat do chailleas mo chiall.

A bhuachaill an chúil dualaigh,
 An bhfuil ár sonas le fáil,
 Nó an mbeimid ’nár gcónaí,
 In aon lóistín amháin?
 Sin araon pósta,
 A stóir is a dhianghrá!
 Ar naimhde fá bhrón,
 Is ár gcóngas go sámh!

Oh! youth of the flowing hair,
 Where slept I last night?

At the side of your bed;
 And you felt me not there:
 Had you known my sad case,
 Not a wink would you have slept;
 Since it was your sweet converse
 That caused this pain in my side.

Oh! youth of the flowing hair,
 May I never see God,
 If I do not see your shadow ever
 Between me and the sun!
 You understand not my ravings,
 And you feel not my pain;
 And to end my sad fortune,
 I have lost by you my reason.

Oh! youth of the flowing hair,
 Shall we find our good luck,
 Or shall we ever together
 In the one dwelling be?
 You and I married –
 Dear store of my heart!
 Our foes in deep sorrow,
 And full happy our friends!

Mr Curry has also given me the following stanza as a part of the same song, but though it breathes a similar passionate earnestness, I find it difficult to believe that it originally belonged to it – for in the former stanzas, hope sustains the sad complainer, while in this there is an expression of utter despair, and, as I have had already occasion to remark, such incongruous interpolations are of common occurrence in traditionally preserved Irish song.

Nuair luím ar mo leabain,
 Is í mo phaidir mo dheoir,
 Is ar m'éirí dom ar maidin,
 Is í m'aisling ochón!
 Mo ghruaig a bhí 'na dualaibh
 Is d'imigh 'na ceo –
 'Chionn grá a thabhairt don bhuachail
 Ná faigheadsa go deo!

When I lie on my bed,
 My sad tear is my pray'r,
 And when I rise in the morning
 My dream brings *Och on!*
 My hair that was flowing
 Now is gone to decay –

All for love of the youth
That will never be mine!

In reference to the notation of this melody, I should observe that I have obtained settings both from the Munster and Connaught counties, most of which, however, were more or less corrupt – for the air is not one which the ordinary singer could render with truthful expression. The setting here given – and which was noted from the singing of the late Patrick Coneely in the county of Galway in 1839 – is, I am satisfied, however, an accurate one; for I have found an almost perfectly similar notation of the air in the collection of Mr J. E. Pigot, and which was copied from a MS belonging to Mr Hardiman of Galway.



*Aon is Dó na Píobaireachta*⁸⁸ (The One and Two of Piping)

The following dance tune belongs to the class called 'set dances', i.e., tunes which, in consequence of some peculiarity in their construction, require figures or movements differing from those of ordinary dance tunes – and hence such dances are often danced by only one person. In this instance the peculiarity consists in the two strains, or parts, of which the air is composed, having twelve measures each instead of eight, the ordinary number.

As its name indicates, this tune is peculiarly a bagpipe one, and Mr Curry is of opinion that it was originally a march tune. It belongs exclusively to the province of Munster – the chosen region of pipers and pipe music, and I little doubt that the air is, as it is believed to be, of great antiquity; and however wild it may sound to modern cultivated ears, it has always been a special favourite in the province in which it had its origin.

The correct performance of this old tune, as Mr Curry informs me, 'was always considered by the Munster peasantry as the acme of perfection in the professional piper; and its name originated a proverbial Munster phrase to denote an unquestionable victory in an argument, when the auditors exclaimed "*sin é aon is dó na píobaireachta*", or, "That's the one and two of piping"; or, when speaking of such a triumph, "He gave him (or them) the one and two of piping"'.

⁸⁸ *Aon is dó na píobaireachta*

This air was noted by Mr Joyce in 1853 from the whistling of John Dolan, a peasant of Glenasheen in the parish of Kilfinane, county of Limerick; but I have made some slight changes in the second strain of Mr Joyce's version, from a setting of the air which I found in one of the MS books of Patrick Carew, a Cork piper.



Bean Dubh an Ghleanna ((The) Black (haired) Maid of the Valley)

The name *Bean Dubh an Ghleanna*, or 'The black-haired Maid of the Glen', is applied, as I have found, to two different melodies, as well as to two distinct Irish songs differing from each other in every respect, except that love is the subject of both. Of these melodies one, under the name of *Moll Dubh an Gleanna*, or 'Black (haired) Moll of the Glen', has been printed by Bunting in his first collection of ancient Irish music; but in consequence of the erroneous barring, or marking of the measures – an error into which Bunting often fell in his notations of airs of this 'narrative class' – the emphasis, or accents, throughout the melody are necessarily falsified. This air has also been printed by the poet Moore, who has made it familiar to the world by his beautiful song called 'Go where glory waits thee', and in whose great work it appeared as the first melody of the series. This setting of the air – like the majority of the melodies chosen by Moore – was no doubt copied from the collection of his predecessor, and it is therefore no wonder that he should have left the rhythmical errors of Bunting's notation uncorrected; but he is answerable for a graver fault than Bunting's in his edition of the melody, namely, the mutilation of a third of a measure at the close of each of its strains or sections, and so destroying one of its most peculiarly Irish features. Considering, therefore, that the beauty of Moore's song must for ever perpetuate the errors and mutilations to which the air has been thus subjected, I have deemed it a duty, in the conduct of a work which has the truthful conservation of Irish music for its object, to reproduce it

in an unquestionably correct form – even though, as I confess, I do not expect that ears long accustomed to the corrupted version of it will be readily reconciled to a purer one.

The song which has given its name to this beautiful old melody has been printed by Mr O'Daly in his *Poets and Poetry of Munster*, with – as usual – a rather free metrical translation by the late James Clarence Mangan; and Mr O'Daly states – but without assigning any evidence of the fact – that the composition of this song is ascribed to *Éamann an Chnoic*, or 'Edmond of the Hills', a celebrated Rapparee, and song writer, who flourished about the year 1739. It seems obviously a peasant composition, and, beyond the harmony of its numbers, has but little pretension to poetical merit. I insert, however, a stanza of it as a specimen of its rhythmical structure, and as an evidence of the true form of the melody to which it had been written or adapted.

Tá bó agam ar an sliabh,
 Is táim le seal ina diaidh,
 Ó chailleas mo chiall le nuachar,
 Dá seoladh soir is siar,
 Ann gach áit dá ngabhann an ghrian,
 Go n-iontaíonn aniar tráthnóna;
 Nuair fhéachaim féin annsúd
 Ann gach áit a mbíodh mo rún,
 Ritheann óm shúil sruth deora;
 A rí dhil na gcumhacht,
 Go bhfóirir ar mo chúis,
 Mar is bean dubh ón ngleann do bhreogh me.

I have a cow upon the mountain,
 Which for some time I have been after,
 Since my reason I lost by a lover,
 Driving eastward and westward,
 Wherever the sun doth move,
 Until she returns from the west at even;
 When all this time I look



At my loved one's favourite haunts,
 From my eyes come floods of tears;
 O glorious King of Power,
 Mayest thou relieve my case,
 As it is a black maid of the Glenn that has wounded me.

Bean Dubh an Ghleanna (**The Black-Haired Maid of the Valley**)

The air which I now insert, in sequence with the preceding, and to which I have alluded as bearing the same name, will hardly be considered equal to it in beauty; but the song to which it belongs is of a somewhat higher order than that connected with the other melody, and the preservation of the air to which it is sung would, therefore, be desirable, even if its merits were less than they really are.

This song has been already twice printed; first, with a paraphrastic metrical translation, by Miss Charlotte Brooke in her *Reliques of Irish Poetry*; and again, with a more faithful metrical translation, by Mr E. Walsh in his *Irish Popular Songs*. I reprint it, however, with a literal translation by my friend Mr Curry, who, I may observe, agrees with me in opinion, that there is nothing in this song to authorize the name of *Bean Dubh an Ghleanna*, which has been given to it by Mr Walsh and other writers.

An bhfaca tú nó an gcuala tú,
 An stuaire dob áille gnaoi,
 I ngleannta dubha, is mé in uaigneas,
 Gan suaimhneas de ló ná d'óich';
 Béilín caoin an tsuanroisc
 Do bhuaire mé is do bhreogh mo chroí;
 Mo bheannacht féin go buan léi,
 Go dtí an cuan úd pé áit a mbí!

Tá sé scríofa i bprionta
 Do chom seang is do mhala chaol,
 Is do bhéilín tanaí faoi sin
 Ná sílfinn do dhéanfadh bréag;
 Do chrobh is gile is is míne
 Ná an síoda is ná clúmh n-éan,
 Is buartha cráite bhímse
 Nuair smaoiním ar scarúin léi.

Nuair a dhearcas í, do théigh mé.
 Le géarshearc dá gnaoi is dá snó;
 A mionachíocha gléigeala;
 A déad dheas, is a dlaoifholt óir;
 Ba gile a dreach na Déirdre,
 Chuir laochraí na Mí air feo,

Is ná Bláthnaid mhín na gclaonrosc,
Le 'r traochadh na mílte treon.

A phlúr na mban, ná tréig mé
Air bhaothlach, le saint dá stór,
Gan chló, gan mheas, gan bhéasa,
Ach blaoireacht is bruíon is gleo;
Is binn do sheinnfinn dréachta
Breátha Gaeilge duit oíche an fhómhair;
Is do scríobhfainn stair na Féinne,
Go léircheart, is na míleadh mór!

Have you seen, or did you hear of;
The maid of most resplendent face,
In the dark and lonesome valleys,
Where I have strayed both day and night;
The charming mouth, th' enchanting eye,
Which have disturbed and pained my heart;
My blessing e'er be with her,
In whatever place or land she be.

In printed verse described are
Her slender waist and fine-drawn brow,
With her thin-lipped mouth besides these,
Which once I thought could never deceive;
Her slender hand, more white and soft
Than down of swan and touch of silk –
How grieved and sorrowful am I,
When I but think from her to part.

When first I saw her, I became inflamed
With ardent love of her face and mien;
Her breast so gently swelling;
Her pearly teeth, her golden hair;
Her face more bright than Deirdre's,
Who the Red-branch heroes brought to ruin,
And than Blaithnait of eyes enchanting,
For whom a thousand champions died.

O peerless maid, forsake me not
For a clown, tho' great his wealth in store,
To fame, esteem, and worth, unknown,
Or aught but rude carouse and strife;
What soothing Gaelic strains I'd play
For thee at autumn's closing eve;
And then of Fenian deeds I'd read,
And heroes great of Erin's lore.

In reference to this air I should state that I have obtained settings of it from various sources, but that which I have selected as the most genuine has been copied from one which I found in my friend Mr Pigot's collection of Irish tunes and which was obtained from a MS belonging to Mr James Hardiman of Galway, whose recent demise, while this sheet was passing through the press, will be long deplored by his friends, and be regarded by many as a serious loss to the literature of Ireland.



Adieu, Ye Young Men of Clady Green

The following melody – which appears to me to possess a very touching expression of feeling – was noted by James M'Closkey, a schoolmaster in the parish of Dungiven, county of Londonderry, in January 1833; and as I have never found it known in any other county, I would ascribe its origin and preservation to that ancient principality of the O'Cahans, of which sept the M'Closkeys, now the most numerous family in the county, are an ancient tribe.

The English name which, of necessity, I have given to this air, having been unable to ascertain its Irish one, is borrowed from the burden of a modern local peasant ballad – Clady being a village situated on the high-road about midway between Dungiven and Londonderry.

This air, as will be perceived, belongs to that peculiar class of Irish melodies



which I have called 'narrative', and of which I have given so many interesting specimens in the preceding volume. I should remark, however, that those specimens were chiefly obtained from the Munster counties or those contiguous to them, and that tunes of this structure are rarely met with in either those of Ulster or Connaught.

*A Sheanduine Chroí*⁸⁹ (Thou Old Man of my Heart)

The three simple but truly characteristic melodies which, in connection with each other, I now place before the reader, appear to me to possess much interest from their peculiar characteristics and their apparently remote antiquity; and they are also interesting as examples of tunes which, though differing widely from each other in their tones, still preserve such a perfect similarity in intention and rhythmical structure, as can scarcely permit a doubt of their being but kindred streams from the one parent fountain. The separation, however, which has so nearly obliterated the mark of their common origin, and given such peculiar features to each, can scarcely have been a recent one, but rather such as a long and divergent course could alone effect.

Of these melodies, each has been obtained from a different province: The first – which was from Ulster – was noted in Dublin in 1842 from the singing of Mr Byrne, the excellent Irish harper, and, I may add, minstrel to the family of Shirley, now chief owners of the Barony of Farney, or Farny-donaghmain, in the county of Monaghan; and this setting preserves the form of the air as it is yet sung in that still Irish-peopled district of the ancient clan of the Mac Mahons of Oriel. And in this setting of the air the similarity of character observable in its second strain to the *Gol*, or *Gol na mban'san ár*,⁹⁰ or 'The lamentation of the women in the slaughter', as published by J. Cooper Walker and Bunting, indicates, as I conceive, a very early antiquity, and disposes me to consider this setting as the oldest and purest of the three forms of the melody. The second, or Munster form of the air, was noted in Dublin in 1853 from the singing of Teige Mac Mahon, the poor blind county of Clare peasant of whom I have often already made mention. The third setting preserves, as I assume, the form of the melody as sung in Connaught, for it was noted in Connemara in 1840 from the singing of the late Patrick Coneely, the Galway piper, and its accuracy has been verified by another setting made, either in that county, or the county of Mayo, in 1846–7, by the late William Forde of Cork. This setting, as will be perceived, preserves but a slight affinity with the two forms of the air preceding it, as in this version the air modulates into its relative minor at the close of the first strain, and proceeds in that mode through the whole of the second; and, in fact, it might be harmonized altogether as if it were in the minor mode.

These melodies, in connection with the words sung to them, have a sort of dramatic character, the words being expressive of the thoughts and sentiments peculiar to youth and age, as exhibited in a dialogue between a young wife and her old husband, and to which the strains of the airs, by their contrast of lively

⁸⁹ *A shean-duine croidhe.*

⁹⁰ *Gol na mna 'san ar.*

and grave movements, give a concordant musical expression. Such old dialogue tunes are not, I believe, found in England, but they appear to have been common amongst the Celtic people both in Ireland and Scotland; and I have also heard such songs chanted by their remotely related kindred, the Cumraig Celts, in Wales – with this difference, however, that among the latter, the two singers often join in harmony, while among the former they do so rarely, if indeed, ever.

First Setting

Second Setting

Third Setting

Of the words now sung to these old melodies, I have only the Munster, or Clare version, as taken down by Mr Curry from the Clare peasant Teige Mac Mahon, but though these words are amusing from their playful humour, they are unsuited for publication in a work like the present. I may state, however, that in their form and general spirit, these words exhibit so striking an analogy to the popular old Scottish song of 'My jo Janet', that it might be easily believed that the one was borrowed from, or at least suggested by, the other. This analogy, however, may have been wholly accidental, and certainly there is no affinity between the Irish tunes and the melody of the Scottish song, which there seems good reason to consider as very ancient, as a set of it appears in the Skene MS, under the name of 'Long ere onie old Man'.

Name Unascertained

The air which follows was noted at Dungiven in the county of Londonderry in 1833, but I was unable to ascertain its name, which was an Irish one. As will be perceived, it is a melody thoroughly Irish in its structure, and in its avoidance of the major seventh of the scale; and that it is very old, I cannot entertain a doubt.



*Cuirimse Chughatsa Searbhán Seoil*⁹¹ (I Send You the Floating Tribute)

In the preceding volume of this work I have given two or three of the ancient melodies sung by the young country girls when congregated at their spinning-wheels for the sake of companionship; and I confess that I feel a pleasure in returning to this interesting class of tunes for the purpose of adding another highly characteristic specimen. For, in connection with their peasant songs, such tunes, in their very artless simplicity, possess a charm for sensitive minds not often found in melodies of a more elaborated character – a charm derived from their power of generating vivid impressions of the thoughts, feelings and customary amusements of youthful rural life in bygone times.

I am aware, however, that the opinion which I have thus ventured to express is not likely to find a very general concurrence in the so-called musical world, but it is not for that world that this work is intended. And I would add that those over whose feelings such tunes are powerless, can claim but little community in sentiment with the great poet expounder of the human heart, who, in his *Twelfth Night*, has left us such touching allusions to the effects produced by such simple tuneful memorials – allusions which, though they have been a thousand times quoted, are yet so apposite to my present subject, that I cannot allow my just dread of critical censure to deter me from indulging in the pleasure of quoting once more.

Duke – ‘Now, good Cesario, but that piece of song,
That old and antique song we heard last night;
Methought, it did relieve my passion much;
More than light airs and recollected terms,
Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times:
Come, but one verse.’

⁹¹ *Cuirin-si cughat-sa an searbhán seóil.*

'Mark it, Cesario; it is old, and plain:
 The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,
 And the free maids, that weave their thread with bones,
 Do use to chaunt it; it is silly sooth,
 And dallies with the innocence of love,
 Like the old age.' [II. iv. 2-7; 44-8]

Like the spinners' tunes already given, this air was obtained from the county of Clare – a county in which, from various causes, the old language, manners and customs of the Celtic Irish have been longer preserved than in most other counties of Ireland. It was noted for me, expressly, during the past year, from the singing of the young women, by Mr Frank Keane, a native of that county, now resident in Dublin, to whom I have often already acknowledged myself indebted for contributions to this work; and the words sung to it have been supplied to me by Mr Curry. These words, as in the preceding instances, and indeed as in all songs of this class, have a conversational or dialogistic character. One of the assembled girls challenges another for the tribute of a song, and she so challenged replies that she sends the song to one who is living, or, in other words, the youth she loves. The first then guesses at the name of the *buachaillín*, and the second proceeds at some length to express her opinions, whether favourable or otherwise, of the youth so named, till the secret of her heart is made known to her listening companions – and so the song passes in succession from one girl to another till all in turn have become acquainted with each other's secret feelings – or at least so far as they are willing to expose them.

In reference to the form of dialogue assumed by this class of songs, Mr Curry writes as follows:

In this, as in all the songs that accompany female labour in the South, the opening lines have seldom any fixed or intrinsic value or meaning. Any set of words thrown into metrical lines will do to start with, and carry from one girl to the other a message, challenge, request, command, or idea calculated to call forth an expression of acceptance or rejection – such as we have seen in the songs *Maileo léro is im bó néro*, etc. It is possible, however, that anciently these introductory words were more clearly intelligible and carefully selected; but that the great modifications of rural life in Ireland for the last six hundred years have brought a degeneracy on these, as on many other of the old sports and pastimes.

First voice. Cuirimse chughatsa an searbhán seoil.

Second voice. Cuirimse fonn ar an té tá beo.

First voice. Seán Ó Conaill an buachaillín óg.

Second voice. Cuirimse síos go poll na draoibe é,

Crios den tuí air is léine róin,

Ar mhuin sceithe ghearr ghéar dheilgneach,

Is dá chéad dealg go dté 'na bheo.

Sop ar siúl é; gliogaram glún é;

Sála go socair é; bolg dá mheidir é;

Leathbhairrín sodair é; buailtear fán gcurach é;

Seoltar fán mbogach é, — is bainfidh sé móin.

First voice. Cuirimse chughatsa an searbhán seoil.
Second voice. Cuirimse fonn ar an té tá beo.
First voice. Seán Ó Dónaill an buachaillín óg.

Second voice. Cuirimse síos go tábhairne an fhíona é,
 Crios den tuí air is léine hollónd,
 Ar mhuin diallaite óir is airgid;
 Slán go gcasea mo charaid mear óg;
 As sin suas go crois an mhargaidh,
 Le maighre cailce agus machaire bó,
 Barr mo mhéar le barr a mhéar,
 Is sonuachar séin chun mo charad mear óg.

First Voice. I send you the floating tribute.
Second Voice. I sing a song to him who is living.
First Voice. John O'Connell is the nice young boy.

Second Voice. I send him down to the drab-pond,
 A girdle of straw on him, and a shirt of hair,
 Upon a bush of short sharp thorns,
 And may two hundred thorns pierce him to the quick.
 A moving wisp is he; knocker-knees is he;
 Easy heels is he; two-churn belly is he;
 A trotting half cake is he; drive him to the swamp –
 Let him loose to the bog – perhaps he'll cut turf.

First Voice. I send you the floating tribute.
Second Voice. I sing a song to him who is living.
First Voice. John O'Donnell is the nice young boy.

Second Voice. I send him down to the wine tavern,
 With a girdle of silk and a shirt of Holland,
 Upon a saddle of gold and silver;
 Safe may return my active young lover:
 From that up to the market cross,
 With a blooming maid and a park full of cows;
 The tips of my fingers to the tips of his fingers,
 And a happy young bride to my active young lover.



I should perhaps remark that, as Mr Curry acquaints me, the third line of each stanza of this song – that in which the first girl guesses at the name of the youth – was, as he had heard it, always spoken. Frank Keane, however, states that *he* has always heard it sung; and I have, therefore, left the choice open to the reader.

Roddy McCurley

The following pleasing melody was set in the county of Londonderry in 1833, and as its name – or rather, the name of the ballad which was sung to it – would indicate, it is probably a tune of Ulster origin. The ballad to which I have alluded was composed to preserve in remembrance the acts and fate of a certain Roddy M Curley, 'who was hanged at Toomebridge'; but at what time, or for what reason, he so suffered, I have been unable to discover, though I have taken more trouble with a view to acquire information on these points, than, perhaps, the inquiry deserved. I suppose, however, that he was a person of the peasant class who had been implicated in the 'troubles' of 'Ninety-eight'. Perhaps I should add that Toomebridge, the place of his execution, is a well-known village situated in the barony of Toome, on the Antrim side of the Bann river, near its emergence from the northern extremity of Lough Neagh.



A Lullaby

The following characteristic example of the class of airs known by the appellation of *suantraighe*, or 'lullaby' airs, was noted from the singing of my friend Mr Thomas Bridgford, R.H.A., by whom it was learnt in his childhood from the *croning* of his Irish nurse.



The Flannel Jacket

The following reel tune, which is of Munster origin, was set by Mr Joyce in the county of Limerick, and the accuracy of his notation of it has been verified by other settings which I found in the MS books of the Cork piper, Patrick Carew. Though probably of an age no earlier than the last century, it has a truly Irish character, and is a favourite tune of its kind in the southern counties, where it is now generally known by the more modern name of 'The Peeler's Jacket'.



I take some pleasure, I confess, in preserving specimens of this class of our dance tunes, which have been so wholly neglected by preceding collectors, for I consider them as interesting memorials of a period when our higher, as well as our humbler, classes of society were distinguished for an ease, grace and gaiety of which but vestiges now remain. In the saloons of our higher classes – but not yet in those of national Scotland – the graceful and animated movements of the Celtic reel have long given place to the drowsy promenades of the quadrille, and the monotonous and not over-refined whirling of the waltz. And in the absence of a national feeling to check the adoption of foreign dullness, our reels, as well as our other national dances, must ere long be things only remembered by the old, or known to students of our history as things of the past.

Archy Boylan

The following air is one of those to which I have already often alluded as having been noted in my young days from the singing of a lady who is a near connection of my own, and which had been learnt in her childhood from a poor woman, then aged, named Betty Skillin. It was sung to a common Anglo-Irish street ballad, of which I preserved only the above name.

This melody belongs to that class of our tunes which is the most numerous, and which are usually in common time, namely, those composed of four strains of equal length, and of which the first and second only differ in their tones, the third being but a repetition of the second, and the fourth of the first.



Banish Misfortune, or Mary of Inistuirk

For this pleasing melody I have to acknowledge myself indebted to Mr Patrick Mac Dowell, R.A., by whom it was noted in London from the playing of a Munster fiddler.

Mr Mac Dowell acquaints me that this tune is also played in the Munster counties as a dance tune, and as such I had myself noted it in 1840 from the playing of the late Galway piper, Patrick Coneely, who informed me that it was a tune of Connemara origin; and this statement may probably be correct, as it is sung in that romantic district to a popular peasant ballad called 'Mary of Inistuirk' – Inistuirk being the name of an island adjacent to the Connemara coast. The dance form of the tune differs, however, a good deal from the vocal one; and as it may be interesting to observe, by a comparison, the changes, both in expression and tonalities, which the air has of necessity assumed from its transformation into a bagpipe jig, I shall give a place to my own setting of it in immediate succession to that of my friend.

I have already had occasion to remark that metamorphoses of this kind – so common with the popular opera airs of the present time – have been of very common occurrence in Ireland; and we may, perhaps, ascribe to such metamorphoses a large amount of that flow of melody and expression of sentiment which so generally characterize our dance music.



Bacach na Cleithe (The Bacagh of the Wattle)*An Ceo Draíochta*⁹² (The Magic Mist)

This fine old melody was noted by Mr Joyce in the summer of 1853 from the singing of Alice Kenny – an old woman then residing in the romantic parish of Glenroe in the county of Limerick – and I have no doubt that it is a tune of Munster origin, and of a very remote age. I draw this latter conclusion in part from that Irish peculiarity of structure of which I have treated, in connection with a melody of the same class, at page 89 of the preceding volume; but still more from its antique *tonalities* – the presence of which will, no doubt, be somewhat startling and unpleasant to ears accustomed only to modern music; though to those familiarized to such tonalities, they will, I am persuaded, add to the racy and impressive character of the air. I will not assert that the tonalities of this melody are exactly those found in either of the so-called Dorian or Aeolian modes, nor even of that Phrygian, to which Selden tells us ‘the Irish were wholly inclined’; but I may venture to say that their affinity with the tones of the *canto fermo*, or old modes of the church – and particularly with those which have a minor character – must be at once apparent to, and arrest the attention of, all those who have made themselves acquainted with the peculiar characteristics of the old ecclesiastical or Gregorian music. This, however, is not the place to treat at any length on the curious features of resemblance which this melody, in common with so many others both of Ireland and Scotland, bears to the oldest *canto fermo*; and I have now alluded to them only for the purpose of drawing attention to the frequent occurrence of such features, which will be found amongst the tunes already printed in this work, and perhaps still more amongst those which are to follow.

There is another peculiarity in this melody to which, perhaps, I should draw attention, namely, the omission, or as it would seem the studied avoidance, of the interval of the second, or *supertonic*, of the scale (the note G) through the whole course of the air. This omission, both in Irish and Highland melodies, is a rather unusual circumstance, as the use of this interval – at least in the final cadence of the air, falling upon the tonic or key note – is a characteristic feature

⁹² *An ceó draoidheachta.*

of the melodies of both countries. In this omission, however, we find another feature of resemblance to those of the Church modes; and the skipping over this tone at the close of strains – as in the present instance – by a drop from the minor third to the tonic, is a characteristic of frequent occurrence not only in the *canto fermo*, and the oldest melodies of Ireland, but also in many of the oldest Scottish tunes, as noticed by Mr Finlay Dun in his able and most interesting ‘Analysis of the Structure of the Music of Scotland’, printed in the Appendix to the late Mr William Dauneys’s Dissertation on the Skene MS, etc. (Edinburgh, 1838).

Mr Joyce has also furnished me with a copy of the Irish song now sung to this air, and which has given to it the name by which it is now generally known. It is a Jacobite song of the usual Irish allegorical character, and, as I should suppose, a composition of the early part of the last century, written with a view to excite the people of Munster to engage in the coming effort to restore the exiled Stuarts to the throne. But, though this song might be of some value in a collection of such relics, and particularly as illustrating to some extent the fairy mythology of Ireland, it does not possess either poetic merit or novel characteristics sufficient to induce me to give insertion to more than one of its six eight-line stanzas, and I give this only as a specimen of its rhythm and metre.

Ceo draíochta sheol oíche chun fáin mé,
 Ar mhínthuar do tharlaíos gan suan,
 Dom stiúradh faoi choillte gan áitreabh;
 Cois taoibh Loch na Blarnan sea chuas.
 Ar mo shuí dom chois crainn ghlais an bhlátha,
 Ba ghairid gur shín liomsa suas,
 An ógh mhaiseach mhíonla dob áille
 Dár shíolraigh ó Adam anuas.

A magic mist one night led me astray,
 I wandered without sleep upon a smooth path,
 Which led me to woods without dwellings;
 To the brink of Lake-Blarney I came.
 As I sat by a green tree in full blossom,

'Twas not long 'till there stood by my side
 A maiden the most comely and charming
 That ever from Adam came down.

*Caitilín Ní Aodha*⁹³ (Kitty O'Day)

This lively song and – as I should suppose – dance tune, was given to me by my friend Mr William Allingham, now Comptroller of Customs at Ballyshannon, by whom it was learnt in the county of Leitrim.



A Single Jig

For the following dance tune, which is of the kind termed 'single jig', I am indebted to my respected friend, Mrs J. S. Close. It was learnt by that lady in her native county of Galway during her childhood, and she has now no recollection of its name.



Ploughmen's and Carters' Whistle

In the following melody I add another air to the class of tunes of occupation, of which I have already given so many examples; and I confess that it appears to me to be of surpassing beauty. It is known in the county of Clare as 'The Whistle of the Ploughmen and Carters', for it is commonly used by both to soothe and cheer their horses at their tedious and unexciting labours; and of its

⁹³ *Caitilín Ní Aédha. Ní Dheá* is the usual Irish version of O'Day, as applied to women.

extreme antiquity I cannot entertain a doubt. This precious specimen of an ancient pastoral music – so full of deep and solemn tenderness and of its kind, such as no country but Ireland has produced, or, as I believe, could produce – was noted from the whistling of the blind Clare peasant Teige Mac Mahon, who, previous to his loss of sight, had been for many years a ploughman; and I have set the strain twice in order to exhibit and preserve a memorial of his mode of ornamenting, and, to some extent, varying the notes of the melody on repetition.



*A chos Deas i mBróig*⁹⁴ (O Beautiful Foot in Shoe)

The following air was noted in Connemara during the summer of 1839 from the singing of the late Galway piper Patrick Coneely, and I have reason to believe that it is a melody which properly belongs to the adjacent county of Mayo. It was sung to an Irish love song, of which, unfortunately, I only took down the first few words as a name.

As will be perceived, this melody belongs to that very numerous class of our tunes in which the airs consist of four strains or parts, these strains usually presenting, when in common time, four bars each, and where they are in triple time – as in the present instance – five bars or measures; and though this melody may be said to be wholly wanting of Bunting's great and peculiar characteristic of Irish music, the emphatic major sixth – for it only occurs as an unessential passing note – the air is yet thoroughly Irish, as well in its expression of sentiment as in its peculiarity of structure.

Since the preceding notice was signed for the press, Mr Curry has informed me that the melody called *A chos deas i mbróig* is equally well known in the Munster as it is in the Connaught counties, and that he believes the song which has given to it this name is one of Munster origin, and of a very old date. It is, however, also sung in the Munster counties to the beautiful tune, of a similar

⁹⁴ *A chos deas i m-bróig.*



structure, now usually known by the name *Bean an fhir rua*, or, 'The red-haired man's wife'. Mr Curry has been familiar with this song from his childhood, having often heard it sung by his father, but he can now only remember distinctly its first stanza, which I here annex:

A chos deas i mbróig!
 Is córach casta do chúl,
 Is glan geal do shnó,
 Is is rómhear leagadh do shúl.
 Níl sa Roinn Eorpa
 Aon tseoid níos deise ná thú;
 Do ghrua mar an rós:
 Seo póg, agus téanam ar siúl.

O handsome foot in shoe!
 How neat is thy ringleted hair;
 How pure and white thy complexion,
 And how quick the glance of thine eye.
 There is not in Europe's quarter
 A jewel more precious than thee;
 Thy cheek like the rose:
 Here's a kiss, and let us be off and away.

*Tamall dá Rabhas sul d'Iompaigh an Mámh Orm*⁹⁵ (**One Time in My Life Before Fortune Played False to Me**)

I am indebted to my friend Mr Mac Dowell, R.A., for the notation of the following melody, which I consider a very old and characteristic one, and also for the annexed stanza of the Irish song sung to it. Both were noted in London from the singing of Mr Jordan, a native of the county of Limerick, now serving in the met-

⁹⁵ *Tamall dá rabhus sul d'iompaigh an mágh orm.*

ropolitan police; and both are, doubtless, of at least a Munster, if not, as most probable, a Limerick origin. That this song is, at all events, the composition of a Limerick rhymer, may be inferred from a line of the stanza of it which has been preserved; and Mr Curry believes this stanza to be a portion of one of the songs of Shane Aerach O'Shanahan, a Limerick poet who flourished about the year 1760. This stanza runs as follows:

Tamall dá rabhas sul d'iompaigh an mámh orm,
Do gheobhainn bean as an gceantar, nó a Neantanán álainn;
Bean cheanúil cheansa, bean mhín, tais gan táire,
Is bean do raghadh anonn liom go Londain má ba ghá é.
Tá bean in Eas Géitinne a deirim go deimhin,

[The pages of Petrie's second volume end at this point. The melody below is taken from Stanford's *The Complete Collection of Irish Music as Noted by George Petrie*, number 1436.]



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Appendix A

SOCIETY

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The Preservation and Publication of the immense quantity of National Music still existing in Ireland, and of which much is yet unwritten, have long been a desideratum among those who are acquainted with the real extent and value of some private collections. Among these lie, almost unknown, many hundreds of airs hitherto unpublished in any form, and which range through every class of pure Irish Music, from the most elevated style of ancient vocal melody, down to the smooth-flowing graceful songs of the last two centuries; and among which are preserved, very many, too, of those vigorous, dance-compelling, quick tunes, which cannot be equalled by any similar music of other countries. Besides these collections, a considerable quantity of airs, not yet noted down, is to be found current, as is well known, among the peasantry in all parts of the country.

This Society has been instituted for the purpose of Preserving, Classifying, and Publishing these airs of every kind, and likewise all such words (whether in the Irish or English language) connected with any of them, as appear to possess any peculiar interest.

The *Preservation* of existing Irish Music is proposed to be effected by the collection and classification of all such as has been already noted down on paper, and by the formation of a central depot in Dublin, to which persons having opportunities of noting down what is still unwritten may be invited to send copies of any airs which they can obtain, either in Ireland or among our countrymen in other lands.

The Council invites every Irishman, and every Irishwoman too, to send copies of any Irish airs they may possess, *or may find any means of procuring*, to one of the Honorary Secretaries, who will immediately submit all airs sent them to the Committee charged with their arrangement and preservation.

The Publication of our National Music will also be proceeded with by the Society, to the utmost extent that the subscriptions they may receive will allow. It is proposed to print a *selection*, consisting of several hundred airs of all kinds, both vocal and instrumental, and to arrange them with suitable Harmonies and Accompaniments for the Harp or Piano-Forte. A volume of such selections

(containing from 150 to 200 airs, hitherto unpublished) will be given to every member, in return for his subscription of One Pound; and the Council have already at their disposal the materials of more than five such volumes which will also include copious notes upon the structure, expression, and (where possible) the history of each air printed.

These volumes will not be published generally, but will be distributed to the *members of the Society only*, any person may become a member on payment of One Pound, annual subscription, but without any entrance fee. Subscriptions are payable in advance, and become due on the first of January in each year, and each member will be entitled to receive one copy of every publication of the Society issued within the year for which he shall have subscribed. (Members may take their books, either in volumes complete, at the end of the year, or in parts consisting of a certain number of sheets, stitched in a strong cover, which will be issued according as the work is printed.)

The Council have completed arrangements with the President, GEORGE PETRIE, LL.D., V.P.R.I.A., for the printing of his splendid collection in connexion with the Society, and they feel great satisfaction in being able to announce that their first volumes will comprise his invaluable stores. That collection consists of considerably more than five hundred unpublished airs, carefully selected from the results of many years' investigation; and if the Society obtains the amount of support the Council feel it may well claim, they hope to complete the printing of Dr PETRIE's work in three volumes.

The Collection of Dr. PETRIE will be accompanied by an introductory dissertation upon the history, antiquity, and characteristic structure of Irish Music, by that most eminent Irish antiquarian, the former portions of which will also embrace the learning of another distinguished member of the Council, EUGENE CURRY, M.R.I.A. After such a commencement the Council will proceed to the publication of other collections which have already been presented to the Society, and which will be prepared for printing under the superintendence of a Committee of Publication, appointed by the Council, and including, perhaps, the most competent authorities on Irish Music now among us: (the Committee appointed on the formation of the Society consisted of DR. PETRIE (President), REV. DR. TODD, S. F.T.C.D., REV. DR. GRAVES, F.T.C.D., the late WE. HUDSON, M.R.I.A., DR. HUDSON, M.R.I.A., and EUGENE CURRY, M.R.I.A.) Thus the Council do not think it too much to expect that the volumes eventually completed by this Society will contain a complete, satisfactory, and popular explanation of the structure, character, and peculiarities of Irish National Music, an accurate account of its history as far as known (and it reaches back for many centuries), and a Collection which in extent, rarity, and beauty, will surpass anything of the kind ever attempted. The genius and expression of our Music will thus be fixed, and its noblest stores preserved for the admiration of future ages, and the perpetual pride of the Irish race.

The first volume of the Society, now completed, consists of the first volume of the PETRIE COLLECTION, and contains 147 airs, arranged for the Piano-Forte, illustrated by a great quantity of criticism and observation. The Dissertation upon the History, Antiquity, and Structure of Irish Music, by the Editor, is in preparation, but cannot be satisfactorily published until the completion of his editorial labours upon this splendid collection.

The Council desire to make it known, that according to the arrangements with their President, by which he consented to publish his great work in connexion with the Society, the property in the Petrie Collection is exclusively vested in Dr. Petrie, after those members of the Society who shall have paid their subscriptions during the present year shall have received their copies; and according, that members joining after the 1st January, 1856, will have to purchase this volume at an advanced price. The Council have also to observe, that Dr. Petrie's collection has been edited and prepared for the Press solely by himself and not under the control of the Committee of Publication, and that Dr. Petrie alone is responsible for the opinions contained in the present volume.

Appendix B

Table of Materials and Sources

The following table is loosely based on and extended from the one found in Donal O'Sullivan's article 'The Petrie Collections of Irish Music'. The columns are organized as follows:

- Column 1 – The page number of melodies in Petrie's 1855 and posthumous 1882 editions.
- Column 2 – The title in Petrie's 1855/1882 editions.
- Column 3 – Petrie's English version of the title.
- Column 4 – The number of the melody in Stanford's edition.
- Column 5 – The name given to the melody in Stanford's edition.
- Column 6 – The number of the melody in the Trinity College, Dublin Library, as given by Deasy (where relevant – see Marion Deasy's Ph.D. thesis for more details).
- Column 7 – Notes. This includes alternative titles and other relevant information.
- Column 8 – The source given in Petrie's index.
- Column 9 – The alternative name given in Petrie's index.
- Column 10 – The modernization of the Irish title by Lillis Ó Laoire.
- Column 11 – The opening of the melody in Breandán Breathnach's system (see Breandán Breathnach 'Between the Jigs and the Reels', *Ceol*, V, 2 (March 1982), pp. 43–8). An underlined number (e.g. 7) indicates that the note is in the octave lower. An overlined number (e.g. 7) indicates that the note is in the octave higher.

Page in 1855 edition	Petrie Title	English Title	Stanford No.	Stanford Title	TCDL	Notes	Source in Petrie Index	Name in Index if Different	Modernized Irish Title	Breathnach number
3	<i>An cailín ruadh</i>	The red-haired girl	1321	Similar			Noted in Dalkey, 1815		<i>An Cailín Rua</i>	3731
4	The colleen rue	The colleen rue	1101	<i>An cailín ruadh</i>					<i>An Cailín Rua</i>	1452
5	<i>Rígh an ratha</i>	The king of the rath, or Ree raw	n/a	n/a	70.145		Mr James Fogarty, of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny) c.1852		<i>Rí an Rátha</i>	3524
6	<i>An cleasaíthe fir óig</i>	The cunning young man	n/a	n/a	30.59	cf 275	Mrs Aspull, Dalkey, 1815		<i>An Cleasai Fir Óig</i>	3631
7	<i>An ball síodamhail</i>	The silken article	271	No title			Biddy Monahan (Sligo), 1837		<i>An Ball Síodúil</i>	555.552
8	<i>Ní ólfa mé ní's mó ar na bóithre seo Shligigh</i>	I will drink no more on those roads of Sligo	1221	Similar			Eugene Curry, Esq., (learned by his father about 1760), Co. Clare		<i>Ní Ólfaidh mé Níos Mó ar na Bóithre seo Shligigh</i>	5252
10	<i>Péarla an bhrollaigh bháin</i>	The pearl of the white breast	623	Similar			Eugene Curry, Esq. (Co. Clare)		<i>Péarla an Bhrollaigh Bháin</i>	1611.5223
12	<i>Planxstaidh no pléaraca re Ó Cearbhalláin</i>	Planxty by O'Carolan	875	Planxty by O'Carolan			MS book of Irish airs by Mr John Shannon, of Listowel (Co. Kerry), setting of Roche, a Kerry fiddler		<i>Planxstai nó Pléaraca le Ó Cearbhalláin</i>	3131
18	<i>Ní thréigfidh mo grádh go deóidh mé</i>	My love will ne'er forsake me	701	Similar			Mr P. J. O'Reilly, Westport (Co. Mayo)		<i>Ní Thréigfidh mo Ghrá Go Deo Mé</i>	1213

19	<i>Martán dubhach</i>	Melancholy Martin	748	Martin Dough		Taken down in Banagher (Co. Derry), 1837		<i>Mártaín Dubhach</i>	127.125
22	<i>An buachaill caol dubh</i>	The black slender boy	1261	Similar		Thomas Davis (Munster Setting)		<i>An Buachaill Caol Dubh</i>	3322
22	Same title – Second version	Second version	1260	Similar		Thomas Davis (Munster setting)	The Black Slender Boy	<i>An Buachaill Caol Dubh</i>	3412
23	Same title – Third version	Third version	1262	Similar		Paddy Coneely	The Black Slender Boy	<i>An Buachaill Caol Dubh</i>	1111
25	<i>Ag an mbóithrín buidhe</i>	At the yellow little road	1489	Similar		Teige Mac Mahon, a Clare ballad- singer, 1854		<i>Ag an mBóithrín Bui</i>	1213
28	<i>Fead an oirimh</i>	The ploughman's whistle [King's County]	n/a	n/a		Taken down in the King's County		<i>Fead an Airimh</i>	3321
29	Same title [Kilkenny]	Same title [Kilkenny]	1053	Plough song		Mr Patrick Fogarty, Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)		<i>Fead an Airimh</i>	1673
30	Same title [Clare]	Same title [Clare]	1055	Plough song		Teige Mac Mahon, a Clare ballad- singer, 1854		<i>Fead an Airimh</i>	3332.2221
31	<i>An filleadh ó Fhine Ghall</i>	The return from Fingal	253	[No title]				<i>An Filleadh o Fhine Gall</i>	5151
32	Popular ballad tune	Popular ballad tune	78	[No title]	[The Graceful Maiden] (Deasy)	A Dublin street ballad singer, about 40 years ago	Ballad Tune		3331

Page in 1855 edition	Petrie Title	English Title	Stanford No.	Stanford Title	TCDL	Notes	Source in Petrie Index	Name in Index if Different	Modernized Irish Title	Breathnach number
33	<i>A Shinéad, thug tú an chlú leat</i>	O Jenny, you have borne away the palm	1302	<i>Gíní thugfainn éalughudh leat</i>			Taken down in Banagher (Co. Derry), 1836		<i>A Shinéad, Thug Tú an Chlú Leat</i>	5132
35	<i>Cormac Spáineach, nó An drumadóir</i>	Cormac Spaineach, or The Drummer	1246	<i>Is gorta chugat-sa</i>			Mr James Fogarty, of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)		<i>Cormac Spáineach, nó An Drumadóir</i>	1355.7247
37	<i>An cána droigheann éille</i>	The blackthorn cane with a thong	208	[No title]			Biddy Monahan (Sligo), 1837	The blackthorn cane with the thong	<i>An Cána Draighean Éille</i>	366.511
38	<i>Ta mo grádhsa ar an abhainn</i>	My love is upon the river	50	[No title]			Mr James Fogarty, of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)		<i>Tá mo Ghrása ar an Abhainn</i>	5535
39	Lady Wrixon. A planxty by O'Carolan	Lady Wrixon. A planxty by O'Carolan	876	Similar			An old collection of Carolan, about 1721			5355
40	<i>Maire Ní Mhaceadhá</i>	Molly Hewson	n/a	n/a	93.189		Betty Skillin (noted above half a century ago by –) [set by a 'near connection' of Petrie]		<i>Máire Ní Mhac Aodha</i>	6754
41	<i>Lán bhéodha</i>	All alive	450	All alive. Your welcome to Waterford			MS. Music-book of the middle of the eighteenth century		<i>Lán-Bheo</i>	3431
42	<i>Cois cuain Mhughdhorna</i>	All along the Mourne shore	519	Similar			Mr Joseph Hughes (Co Cavan).		<i>Cois Cuain Mhúdhorna</i>	5673

43	<i>As truagh gan peata an mhaoir agam</i>	I wish the shepherd's pet were mine	1501	Similar	Teige Mac Mahon, a Clare ballad singer, 1853	<i>Is Trua gan Peata an Mhaoir Agam</i>	757 2.3213
44	<i>D'imthigh mo grádh-ta mo croidhe teinn</i>	My lover has gone, my heart is sore	700	Similar	Mr P. J. O'Reilly, Westport (Co. Mayo)	<i>D'imigh mo Ghrá - Tá mo Chroí Tinn</i>	3152
47	<i>An cailín bán</i>	The fair girl	538	[Probably altered by Petrie from 538. The fair girl]	Paddy Coneely, the piper (Galway), 1839	<i>An Cailín Bán</i>	1551
48	<i>D'imthigh sé 'gus d'imthigh sé</i>	He's gone, he's gone	753	Similar	Taken down at Dungiven (Co. Derry), 1837	<i>D'imigh Sé agus D'imigh Sé</i>	4467
51	<i>Cailín a' tighé mhoir</i>	The girl of the great house	998	The housekeeper	Rev. M. Walsh, P.P., Sneem (Co. Kerry), and Mr Patrick Joyce (Co. Limerick)	<i>Cailín an Tí Mhóir</i>	3452
52	<i>B'fhearr Liomsa Ainnir gan Gúna</i>	I would rather have a maiden without a gown	n/a	n/a	Mr Patrick Joyce (Co. Limerick)	<i>B'fhearr Liomsa Ainnir gan Gúna</i>	1321
55	<i>O'bhean an tighé, nach suaírc é sin</i>	O woman of the house, is not that pleasant?	1504	Similar	Teige Mac Mahon, a Clare ballad singer, 1854	<i>Ó 'bhean an tí, nach suaírc é sin</i>	1421
55	Same title. Second version	Same title. Second version	994	Similar	Noted by the late William Forde of Cork, 1846	<i>Ó 'Bhean an Tí nach Suaírc é sin</i>	1321

Page in 1855 edition	Petrie Title	English Title	Stanford No.	Stanford Title	TCDL	Notes	Source in Petrie Index	Name in Index if Different	Modernized Irish Title	Breathnach number
56	<i>Suig anso, a mhuirín, láimh liom</i>	Sit here, O murneen, near me	1482	Similar			Teige Mac Mahon, a Clare ballad-singer, 1854		<i>Suigh Anso 'a Mhuirín' Láimh Liom</i>	135.765
57	Name unknown [Londonderry Air]	Name unknown	n/a	n/a	89b.1		Miss Jane Ross, Newtown Limavady (Co. Derry)	Song		3335.26-3
58	<i>Loch Aillinne</i>	Lough Allen	258	[No title]			From a fiddler in Co. Leitrim		<i>Loch Aillinne</i>	5325.5343
61	Sligo air	Sligo air	206	[No title]	213		Biddy Monahan (Sligo), 1837			3623
62	Hop jig	Hop jig	102	[No title]		[Hazel and Johnny] Deasy	MS Collection of dance tunes, about 1750	A Hop Jig		227.113
63	Blow the candle out	Blow the candle out	634	Similar			Betty Skillin (noted above half a century ago by –) [set by a 'near connection' of Petrie]			3361
64	I'll be a good boy and do so no more	I'll be a good boy and do so no more	536	Similar			Mr Joseph Hughes (Co. Cavan), taken down about forty years ago [about 1815]			3731
65	Tatter the road	Tatter the road	522	Similar			MS music book, about 1750			4211
66	Name unknown	Name unknown	56	[No title]			Mr James Fogarty of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)	Military air (or Chorus)		1663

67	<i>Cá rabháis anois, a chailín bhig?</i>	Where have you been my little girl?	n/a	n/a		Mr Patrick Joyce (Co. Limerick)	<i>Cá Rabhais anois a Chailín Bhig?</i>	3344.3371
68	<i>Déanfadh dam' ghrádh geal, ucht sgatháin ghlan</i>	I'll make my love a breast of glass	622	Similar		Betty Skillin (noted above half a century ago by -)	<i>Déanfadh dom Ghrá, Geal, Ucht Scátháin Glan</i>	1363
69	Scorching is this love	Scorching is this love	1234	<i>Is maith an duine thú.</i> Scorching is this love		Revd. M. Walsh, P.P., Sneem (Co. Kerry)	<i>Is Maith an duine Thú</i>	1111.3332
69	When she answered me her voice was low	When she answered me her voice was low	251	[No title]	[The Dove]	Mrs. Joseph Hughes (Co. Cavan), about 1815		3222
70	Name unknown	Name unknown	58	[No title]		Mr James Fogarty of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)	Military Song	4336
71	Jig	Jig	105	[No title]		Mr James Fogarty, of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)	A Single Jig	3135
72	<i>B'fuiris tu aithne na facha tú Roisí'riain</i>	'Tis easily known that you never saw Rosy	1200	Similar		Noted from a street singer in Dublin, about 1825	<i>B'fhuiris Domh Aithne Nach bhfaca Tú Róise Riamh</i>	7254
73	<i>Seó hu leo</i>	An Irish lullaby	1532	<i>A bhean úd shíos ar bruach an t-srutháin, seó thú léó</i>		Mary Madden, a blind ballad-singer (Limerick), 1854	<i>Seo Hú Leó</i>	7254
78	The advice	The advice	764	Similar		Miss Jane Ross, Newtownlimavady (Co. Derry)		51157
79	I once lov'd a boy	I once lov'd a boy	452	Similar		Miss Holden, noted by Mrs Joseph Hughes		3153

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80	Good night, and joy be with you	Good night, and joy be with you	995	Joy be with you			Paddy Coneely, the piper (Galway), 1837			3535
81	Allan's return	Allan's return	506	Similar			A Dublin street ballad, early in the nineteenth century			3465.1111
81	<i>Gluigir a mhadir</i>	The splashing of the churn	1250	Similar			Mr James Fogarty, Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)		<i>Glugar an Mheadair</i>	315.274
82	The forlorn virgin	The forlorn virgin	563	Similar			Anne Buckley, the Claddagh (Galway) 1839			4156
84	<i>Maileó léró, is imbó néró</i>	A spinning wheel tune	1474	<i>Lúra, lúra, nó dhá lúra.</i> A mock scolding spinning song.			Eugene Curry, Esq, and Teige Mac Mahon, (Co. Clare) 1853		<i>Maileó Léró, is Imbó Néró</i>	517Ī
87	<i>Sin binn bubbaro</i>	A spinning-wheel tune	1368	Ím bím bob-a-rú			Anne Buckley, the Claddagh (Galway) 1839		<i>Sin Binn Babaró</i>	55Ī
87	Blackwater foot	Blackwater foot	897	Similar						3111.313Ī
88	<i>Nóra an chúil ómra</i>	Nora of the amber hair	1403	<i>Péarla an chúil ómra</i>			MS book of Irish tunes, written by Mr Patrick O'Neill, Co. Kilkenny, in 1785		<i>Nóra an chúil ómra</i>	4221
90	<i>Nach aoibhinn do na h-éiníne</i>	How happy for the little birds	1451	<i>Is aibhinn do(s) na h-éinínibh</i>			Mr James Fogarty of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)		<i>Is aoibhinn do na hÉiníní</i>	6321

91	N	Black cloaks to cover Bobby, or The Lament for Gerald	Black cloaks to cover Bobby, or The Lament for Gerald	n/a	n/a	92.186	Dr O'Sullivan (Co. Kerry), about 1815		1765
92	Y	The hunt	The hunt	879	Similar		Mr Patrick Joyce (Co. Limerick)		1326.4452
95	Y	<i>Rois geal dubh</i>	The fair-skinned, black-haired Rose	1426	<i>Beir leat mé</i>		Mr James Fogarty, of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)	<i>Róis gheal dubh</i>	7221
96	Y	Sir Patrick Bellew's march	Sir Patrick Bellew's march	985	Similar		MS Music book, about 1750	Bellew's March (Sir Patrick)	5353
99	Y	Nancy the pride of the East	Nancy the pride of the East	74	[No title]		Mr James Fogarty of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)		3451
101	Y	Last Saturday night as I lay in my bed	Last Saturday night as I lay in my bed	767	Similar		Mr James M. O'Reilly (Co. Carlow)		5621
102	Y	David Foy, or Remember the pease-straw	David Foy, or Remember the pease-straw	682	Remember the pease-straw	683	A Dublin ballad singer, about 40 years ago [about 1815]		6216
103	Y	The gobby o	The gobby o	546	Similar		MS book of dance tunes, about 1750		3151
104	Y	<i>Dá á-téidhin go cóbach</i>	If I should go to a clown	785	'98 ballad, County of Wexford		Mr Robert A. Fitzgerald, Enniscorthy (Co. Wexford)	<i>Dá dtéinn go Cóbach</i>	343Z
105	Y	Same title, second version	Same title, second version	784	'98 ballad, County of Wexford		Mr Robert A. Fitzgerald, Enniscorthy (Co. Wexford)	<i>Dá dtéinn go Cóbach</i>	377Z

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106	The old woman lamenting her purse	The old woman lamenting her purse	620	Similar			Mr James Fogarty of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)			3231
109	The monks of the screw	The monks of the screw	490	Similar			William Henry Curran, Esq. Air of Curran's 'Monks of the Screw'			153.541
110	The groves of Blackpool	The groves of Blackpool	573	The Groves of Blackpool, or the Cove of Cork						753.351
111	O Nancy, Nancy, don't you remember?	O Nancy, Nancy, don't you remember?	n/a	n/a	46.93			Taken down from singing, about 1805		1131
112	Name unascertained	Name unascertained	49	[No title]		[The Old Blind Bard] (Deasy	A Dublin street singer, above 40 years ago [about 1815]	Ballad Tune		3715
113	One Sunday after Mass	One Sunday after Mass	633	Similar			Noted down above forty years ago [about 1815]			1511
114	The pipe on the hob	The pipe on the hob	947	Old Cork jig			Mr Patrick Joyce (Co. Limerick)			3575
115	<i>Druimfhionn donn dílis</i>	The faithful druimionn donn	692	Perhaps you and I will be judged in one day			Noted in Co. Derry, 1837		<i>Droimfhionn Donn Dílis</i>	5115

117	It was an old beggarman, weary and wet	It was an old beggarman, weary and wet	678	Similar		William Allingham (Co. Donegal)		5272
118	Ancient lullaby	Ancient lullaby	1007	Similar		Miss Jane Ross, Newtown-Limavady (Co. Derry)		3565
119	Coola shore, or When I rise in the morning with my heart full of woe	Coola shore, or When I rise in the morning with my heart full of woe	507	I rise . . .		Mr Joseph Hughes (Co Cavan), taken down about forty years ago [about 1815]		6441
121	Óró mor a Móirín		508	Down among the ditches, oh!		O'Neill MS (Co. Kilkenny) 1787	Óró Mhór a Mhóirín	5175
122	Sadhbh Ní Fhaeláin	Sally Whelan	727	Similar		Paddy Coneely, the piper (Co. Galway), 1839	Sadhbh Ní Fhaoláin	4411
123	Cailleacha Chúigíd Ulladh	The hags of Ulster	1109	Cailleacha ó thuaidh The northern hags		Paddy Coneely, the piper (Co. Galway) 1839	Cailleacha Chúige Ulladh	522,532
123	Name unascertained	Name unascertained	153	[No title]	63	A Dublin street singer, early in the nineteenth century	Ballad Tune	1165
124	Óró a chumain ghil	Oro thou fair loved one	1301	Similar		Teige Mac Mahon, a Clare ballad singer, 1854	Óró a Chumaim Ghil	1616
126	Mo ghrádhsa an jug mór is é lán	Dear to me is the big jug, and it full	n/a	n/a	24.47	Paddy Coneely, the piper (Galway), 1839	Mo Ghrása an Jug Mór is é Lán	5111

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127	A double jig – name unascertained	A double jig – name unascertained	952	A County of Leitrim jig		[The Antrim Lasses] (Deasy)	Patrick Hurst, a fiddler from Co. Leitrim, 1852			1151
128	Preab annsa n-ól	Spring into the drink	1446	Grádh is san ól			Mr Patrick J. O'Reilly, Westport (Co. Mayo)		<i>Preab san Ól</i>	1111
129	Name unascertained	Name unascertained	287	[No title]			Mrs J. S. Close (Co. Galway)	A Planxty		5211
130	Name unascertained	Name unascertained	n/a	n/a	87.178	[Hymn]	Noted early in the nineteenth century A slow tune			4433.3211
131	<i>Bímíd ag ól, ag ól, ag ól</i>		1064	Similar			Teige Mac Mahon, a ballad singer from Co. Clare, 1854		<i>Bimis ag Ól, ag Ól, ag Ól</i>	1177
132	Ploughman's whistle	Ploughman's whistle	1051	Similar			Thomas H. Bridgford, Esq., RHA			5211
133	Oh, rouse yourself, it's cold you've got	Oh, rouse yourself, it's cold you've got	654			When you are sick, 'tis tea you want	Mary Madden, a blind ballad-singer, of Limerick, 1854			1721
133	The strawberry blossom	The Strawberry Blossom	483	Similar						3551.5143
134	Oh, Johnny, dearest Johnny	Oh, Johnny, dearest Johnny	693	Similar			Taken down in Co. Derry, 1837			3332.5356

135	Oh, Sheela, my love, say will you be mine?	Oh, Sheela, my love, say will you be mine?	n/a	n/a	90.183		A Dublin street ballad singer, about 40 years ago		2453	
136	The Irish hautboy	The Irish hautboy	1499	<i>Má is maith leat</i>		1499			5131.4336	
137	I wish the French would take them	I wish the French would take them	497	Similar			Betty Skillin (noted above half a century ago by –) [by a ‘near connection’ of Petrie]		1116	
138	<i>Ar thaobh na carraige báine</i>	By the side of the white rock	575	The white rock			Mr Joseph Hughes (Co Cavan), taken down about forty years ago. [about 1815]	<i>Ar Thaobh na Carraige Báine</i>	1131	
139	Same title – second version	Same title – second version	n/a	n/a			William Forde of Cork	By the side of the White Rock	<i>Ar Thaobh na Carraige Báine</i>	5132
140	<i>Bruach na carraige báine</i>	[The brink of the white rock]	n/a	n/a		503 [Copied by Petrie for purposes of illustration from Bunting’s 1840 volume, p. 22]	Bunting, 1840	<i>Bruach na Carraige Báine</i>	5131	
141	<i>An cuimhin leat an oidhche úd do bhí tú ag an bh-fuinneóg?</i>	Do you remember that night that you were at the window?	1514	Similar			Teige Mac Mahon, a Clare ballad-singer, 1854	<i>An Cumhain leat an Oíche Úd do bhí tú ag an bhFuinneóg</i>	1357	
143	<i>Ar thaobh na carraige báine</i>	Beside the white rock	n/a	n/a				<i>Ar thaobh na Carraige Báine</i>	534Z	
144	The Catholic boy	The Catholic boy	282	[No title]			The Right Hon. David R. Pigot (Chief Baron)		5154	

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145	<i>Do chuirfinn-si féin mo leanabh a chodhladh</i>	I would put my own child to sleep	1011	Nurse tune			Mr Patrick Joyce, from Mrs Cudmore, Ardpatrik (Co. Limerick)		<i>Do Chuirfinnse Féin Mo Leanbh a Chodhladh</i>	3344.5545
147	<i>Baile Phátraic</i>	Ballypatrick	1454	Similar			Mr James Fogarty, Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)		<i>Baile Phádraig</i>	5133
148	<i>An londubh 'san smólach</i>	The blackbird and the thrush	822	Similar			Anne Buckley, at the Claddagh (Co. Galway) 1840		<i>An Lon Dubh is an Smólach</i>	3275.3351
149	As I walked out one morning I heard a dismal cry	As I walked out one morning I heard a dismal cry	658	Similar			Mr Robert A. Fitzgerald, Enniscorthy (Co. Wexford)			1252
150	O'Flinn – A planxty by Carolan	O'Flinn – A planxty by Carolan	499	O'Flynn by Carolan			An old collection of Carolan, about 1721			1171
152	<i>Domhnall Ó Graedh</i>	Donnel O'Graedh	1330	Similar			MS book of James Hardiman, Esq. (Co. Galway)		<i>Dónall Ó Grae</i>	1421
153	A quick march, name unascertained	A quick march, name unascertained	n/a	n/a			Mr Robert A. Fitzgerald of Enniscorthy (Co. Wexford)			135Z
154	<i>An bean óg uasal</i>	The young lady	635	When I am dead and my days are over			Mr Patrick Joyce (Co. Limerick)		<i>An Bhean Óg Uasal</i>	1543

156	<i>A chúl álainn deas</i>	O thou of the beautiful hair	464	Come all united Irishmen and listen unto me		Mr Patrick Joyce (from Joseph Martin, Ardpatrick, Co. Limerick), 1854	<i>A Chúl Álainn Deas</i>	3331.5575	
157	Name unascertained	Name unascertained	21	[No title]		Mr James Fogarty of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny) Song		7362	
158	Lady Athenry. A planxty by Carolan	Lady Athenry. A planxty by Carolan	n/a	n/a	68.143	Burke Thumoth's collection of Carolan, 1720		3151	
159	<i>Bliadhain 'sa taca so phós mé</i>	This time twelve months I married	1479	<i>Déanfaidh mé cuilt dom' shean briste</i>		[<i>Déanfaidh mé cuilt dem shean bhriste</i>] Deasy	<i>Bliain is an Taca so a Phós Mé</i>	3143	
161	<i>Dá g-castaidh bean tanaraidhe liomsa</i>	If I should meet a tanner's wife	1480	Similar		Tiege Mac Mahon, a ballad singer from Co. Clare, 1854	<i>Dá gCastaí Bean Tanaraí Liomsa</i>	6476	
162	<i>Cearc agus coileach a d'imthigh le chéile</i>	A cock and a hen that went out together	1508	Similar		Teige Mac Mahon, a ballad singer from Co. Clare, 1854	<i>Cearc agus Coileach a D'imigh le Chéile</i>	3145	
163	Munster jig, name unascertained	Munster jig, name unascertained	930	Similar		O'S gives 930 [The Cliffs of Moher] Deasy	Frank Keane, Co. Clare, 1854	A Munster Double Jig	1257
165	<i>Uch, uc ón, as breóite misi</i>	Och ochone, it is sickly I am	1296	<i>Och, ochón, mo bhrón, as mo mhilleadh</i>		Eugene Curry, Esq. (Co. Clare)	<i>Och Ochón, Is Breoithe Mise</i>	7775.3215	

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166	There was a lady all skin and bone	There was a lady all skin and bone	134	[No title]		138	A Dublin ballad singer, 40 years ago [about 1815]			3136
167	Munster jig, name unascertained	Munster jig, name unascertained	931	Similar			Mr Patrick Joyce, from Michael Dineen of Coolfree (Co. Limerick) 1852	A Munster Single Jig		5353
168	The winter it is past, or The Curragh of Kildare	The winter it is past, or The Curragh of Kildare	439	Similar			Betty Skillin (noted above a century ago by –) [middle of the seventeenth century]			1147
171	<i>Ding dong didilium, buail seo, séid seo.</i>	The Smith's song	1407	An táilliúr aerach, nó Ding dong didilium			Mr Patrick Joyce, from Mary Hackett, of Ardpatrik (Co. Limerick), 1853		<i>Ding Dong Didilium, Buail seo, Séid seo</i>	5231.2245
174	The melody of the harp	The melody of the harp	1066	<i>Ceólta cruit</i> – The melody of the harp			MS book of James Hardiman, Esq. (Co. Galway)	Song		<u>3566</u>
175	The rocky road	The rocky road	969	Jig			Mrs J.S. Close (Co. Galway)			543.512
177	Never despise an old friend	Never despise an old friend	675	Similar			Taken down in Co. Derry			5351
178	Pretty Sally	Pretty Sally	500	Similar			A Dublin street ballad singer, above 40 years ago [about 1815]			3156

180	The nobleman's wedding	The nobleman's wedding	495	Once I was invited to a noble wedding		William Henry Curran, Esq, and Mr Patrick Joyce (Co. Limerick)		1133.2311
180	Same title – second version	Same title – second version	491	Similar		Miss Petrie		1155.4321
180	Same title – third version	Same title – third version	493	Once I was invited to a noble wedding		Mary Madden, a blind ballad singer (Limerick, 1854)		1156.5121
181	The hour I prove false	The hour I prove false	128	Once I was invited to a noble wedding		A Dublin ballad-singer, 40 years ago [about 1815]		5325
182	The token	The token	n/a	n/a	81.166	Mrs Joseph Hughes (Miss Holden)		1173
184	The lament of Sir Richard Cantillon	The lament of Sir Richard Cantillon	1025	The lamentation		Mary Madden, a blind ballad singer (Limerick, 1854)		3312
184	<i>Péarla an chúil craobhaigh</i>	The pearl of the flowing tresses	1401	Similar		Mr Patrick Joyce (Co. Limerick)	<i>Péarla an Chúil Craobhaigh</i>	1347
185	Kitty Magee	Kitty Magee	513	Similar		MS book of dance tunes, about 1750		1512
186	Mo mhúirnín óg	My own young dear	1370	Mhúirnín óige		Taken down in Co. Derry	<i>Mo Mhúirnín Óg</i>	4262
187	<i>Caoine</i>	A lamentation	1035	Similar		Frank Keane, Co. Clare		5551
188	The scolding wife	The scolding wife	476	Similar		O'Neill MSS, 1787		5577.1132
189	Name unascertained	Name unascertained	76	[No title]		A Dublin ballad singer, early in the nineteenth century	Ballad Tune	3343

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190	Sagart an bhonadh	The priest with the collar	1065	Priest, a mhornín!			MS music book, about 1750		<i>Sagart an Bhóna</i>	1222
191	Name unascertained	Name unascertained	57	[No title]		[<i>Fáinne Gael an lae</i> – the Dawning of the Day]	Mr James Fogarty of Tibroghney (Co. Kilkenny)	Song		2342
192	As a sailor and a soldier were walking one day	As a sailor and a soldier were walking one day	771	Similar			Mr Patrick Joyce (Co. Limerick)			1732
<i>1882 Volume</i>										
1	Gather up the money	Gather up the money	881	Similar			Mr Richard Morrison, MD (Dublin and Walcot Bay near Bray)			3751
2	The top of sweet Dunmul	The top of sweet Dunmul	560	Similar			Noted in Dungiven (Co. Londonderry) 1834			1456
3	<i>An cumhain leatsa an oidhche úd?</i>	Do you remember that night?	223	[No title]			Mr Patrick Joyce, from Michael Dineen of Coolfree, Ardpatrick (Co. Limerick)		<i>An Cumhain Leatsa an Oíche Úd?</i>	125Z

4	Name unascertained	Name unascertained	n/a	n/a	Mr Patrick Joyce, from Mrs Cudmore, of Glenasheen, Ardpatrick (Co. Limerick)	1737
5	Ceapach dáinig	Ceappa Dainig	1441	Similar	Mr Patrick Joyce, from Lewis O'Brien, of Coolfree, Ardpatrick (Co. Limerick)	<i>Ceapach Dáinig</i> 5737
6	The green bushes	The green bushes	222	[No title]	Mr Patrick Joyce, Joseph Martin of Kilfinnan (Co. Limerick)	1757
7	Carolan's draught	Carolan's draught	669	Similar	Old MS music book sent by Revd M. Walsh, PP, Sneem (Co. Kerry)	1357.1755
10	<i>Caitilín Ní Uallacháin</i>	Kitty Huallaghan	n/a	n/a	No source given	<i>Caitilín Ní Uallacháin</i> 1113
11	Kitty Huallaghan	Kitty Huallaghan	482	Catty Nowlan	No source given c.1819(?)	1351
12	The blackberry blossom	The blackberry blossom	475	Similar	Mr Richard Morrison, MD (Dublin and Walcot Bay near Bray)	7453.5553
14	<i>Ar lorg na ngamhan do chuireas-sa mo leanabh</i>	To seek for the calves I have sent my child	1529	To look for my calves I sent my child	1854 in MS Mary Madden, a blind ballad-singer (Limerick, 1853)	<i>Ar Lorg na nGamhan do Chuireas-sa mo Leanbh</i> 3356.4271
15	Same title – second version	Same title – second version	1547	<i>Sighle ní Ghamhna</i>	Mr James Hardiman (Co. Connaught)	1354

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16	<i>Maidín fhómhair, nó Cailín péacach</i>	The harvest maiden, or Sprouting maiden	n/a	n/a			Noted in my boy days		<i>Maidín Fhómhair, nó Cailín Péacach</i>	5321
18	Consider well, all ye pretty fair maids	Consider well, all ye pretty fair maids	656	Similar			Mr Robert J. Fitzgerald of Enniscorthy (Co. Wexford)			3232
19	The petticootee jig	The Petticottee Jig	984	Ancient Munster march and jig			Noted in Dublin from the playing of Frank Keane (a native of Co. Clare)			3252
20	<i>Grádh geal mo croidhe</i>	Bright love of my heart	1290	Similar			Mr Patrick Mac Dowell (Co. Cork)		<i>Grá Geal mo Chroí</i>	1354.4173
22	Some treat of David	Some treat of David	783	Ninety-eight ballad			Mr Robert J. Fitzgerald of Enniscorthy (Co. Wexford) 1853			2161
23	The humours of Caledon	The humours of Caledon	615	Similar			MS book of dance-tunes.			135.134
25	<i>A bhuachail an chúil dualaigh</i>	O youth of the flowing hair	1572	<i>Ogánaigh an chúil dualaigh</i>			Patrick Coneely (Co. Galway), 1839		<i>A Bhuachaill an Chúil Dualaigh</i>	3614
26	<i>Aon is dó na píopaireachta</i>	The one and two of piperling	1416	Similar			Mr Patrick Joyce, from John Dolan, of Glenasheen, Kilfinane (Co. Limerick), 1853		<i>Aon is Dó na Píobaireachta</i>	3434.3432

28	<i>Bean dubh an ghleanna</i>	The black-haired maid of the valley	n/a	n/a	[Re-written by Petrie from Bunting's 1796 volume, p. 26, no 47]	<i>Bean Dubh an Ghleanna</i>	1411
30	<i>Bean dubh an ghleanna</i>	The black-haired maid of the valley	1291	As fonn binn dubh an ghleanna	MS book of James Hardiman, Esq. (Co. Galway)	<i>Bean Dubh an Ghleanna</i>	436Ī
31	Adieu, ye young men of Clady green	Adieu, Ye Young Men of Clady Green	757	Similar	James M'Closkey, Dungiven (Co. Londonderry) 1833		55Z1
32	<i>A shean-duine croidhe</i>	Thou old man of my heart	529	n/a	Noted in Dublin in 1842 from the singing of Mr Byrne	<i>A Sheanduine Chroí</i>	5Ī2Ī
33	Same title – second version	Same title – second version	1190	<i>Cár fhúg tú do bhriste, a shean-duine croidhe?</i>	Noted in Dublin in 1853 from the singing of Teige Mac Mahon		5757
33	Same title – third version	Same title – third version	1225	<i>Seanduine cam</i> , or The young wife and the old man	Noted in Connemara from the singing of Patrick Coneely the Galway piper, 1840		732Ī
34	Name unascertained	Name unascertained	19	[No title]	Noted at Dungiven (Co. Londonderry) 1833		3Ī3Ī
37	<i>Cuirin-sí cughat-sa an searbhan seoil</i>	I send you the floating tribute	1172	Similar	'During the last year' Frank Keane, native of Clare	<i>Cuirimse Chughatsa Searbhan Seoil</i>	3561

Page in 1882 edition	Petrie Title	English Title	Stanford No.	Stanford Title	TCDL	Notes	Source in Petrie Index	Name in Index if Different	Modernized Irish Title	Breathnach number
38	Roddy McCurley	Roddy McCurley	737	Similar			Set in Co. Londonderry in 1833			1153
38	A lullaby	A lullaby	1009	Similar			Noted from Mr Thomas Bridgford, RHA			5252
39	The flannel jacket: [a combination of 584, The flannel jacket, and 893, The peeler's jacket]	The flannel jacket: [a combination of 584, The flannel jacket, and 893, The peeler's jacket]	n/a	n/a		584/893	Mr Joyce (Co. Limerick)			5353.7243
40	Archy Boylan	Archy Boylan	744	Similar			Noted in my young days			5564
41	Banish misfortune, or Mary of Inistuirk	Banish misfortune, or Mary of Inistuirk	775	Similar			Mr Patrick Mac Dowell, RA, noted in London from the playing of a Munster fiddler			3351
42	<i>Bacach na cleithe</i>	The bachagh of the wattle	1549	Similar					<i>Bacach na Cleithe</i>	5572
44	<i>An ceó draoidheachta</i>	The magic mist	1159	Ceó druidheachta			Noted by Mr Joyce from the singing of Alice Kenny, Glenroe (Co. Limerick), 1853		<i>An Ceo Draíochta</i>	5475
45	<i>Caitilín Ní Aédha</i>	Kitty O'Day	512	Kitty O'Hea			William Allingham (Co. Leitrim)		<i>Caitilín Ní Aodha</i>	556.556

45	A single jig	A single jig	288	[No title]	[The Merry Old Maid]	Mrs J.S. Close (Co. Galway)		1174
46	Ploughmen's and carters' whistle	Ploughmen's and carters' whistle	1102	Similar		Teige Mac Mahon (Co. Clare)		5455
47	<i>A chos deas i m-bróig</i>	O beautiful foot in shoe	1299	Similar	1300	From the singing of the Galway piper, Patrick Coneely, 1839	<i>A chos Deas i mBróig</i>	2272
48	<i>Tamall dá rabhus sul d'iompaigh an mágh orm</i>	One time in my life before fortune played false to me	1436	<i>Tamall dá rabhas-sa</i>	[title and note printed without tune]	Mr Patrick Mac Dowell, RA, noted in London from the singing of Mr Jordan (C. Limerick)	<i>Tamall dá rabhas sul d'iompaigh an mámh orm</i>	5454

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First published in 1855, George Petrie's *The Petrie Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland*, is widely regarded as one of the most important nineteenth-century collections of traditional Irish music. It contains nearly two hundred melodies collected by Petrie as well as song texts in Irish and English and detailed notes by Petrie about their sources. The collection, which was originally published under the auspices of the Society for the Preservation and Publication of the Melodies of Ireland, has been out of print for many years and the few remaining copies are now extremely rare collector's items.

This new edition contains all of Petrie's original text, the melodies and his introduction. The text is prefaced by a biographical essay that positions the collection in the context of Petrie's life and work and within the broader field of Irish traditional music. The piano accompaniments, written by Petrie's daughter and included in the first edition, have been removed. Instead, the melodies have been restored to their original form by reference both to Stanford's *The Complete Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland as Noted by George Petrie (1789-1866)* and to the original manuscripts held in the National Library of Ireland. Cooper's new edition also contains a completely reset version of the text, in which the Irish spelling has been modernized and a standard font adopted. The new edition of this book will form an invaluable addition to the bookshelves of both students and performers of Irish traditional music.

David Cooper is Professor of Music and Technology, and Head of the School of Music, University of Leeds.

'Petrie devoted his life to promoting knowledge of Irish antiquity. His book is regarded as one of the most important 19th-century collections of Irish music. It contains nearly 200 melodies and texts of songs in Irish and English, with notes about their provenance. As David Cooper remarks in his excellent introduction, Petrie "brought scholarship, enthusiasm and the love of the amateur to the study of what was widely seen as barbaric and uncivilised music". In doing so he helped to lay the foundations of the traditional music revival.'

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