

THE
PASTORAL,
OR
LYRIC MUSE
OF
SCOTLAND;

In Three Cantos.

BY HECTOR MACNEILL, Esq.

"Such were the strains our much loved poets sung!"

EDINBURGH:

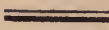
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FANCIFUL as poetical productions generally are, we naturally look for something more than mere imaginary painting when the subject turns on national manners or events. It may therefore be necessary, thus early, to intimate to the critical reader, that if he expects to find the following Poem founded on some historical fact, or traditionary testimony, he will be disappointed.—Nor let him attribute this defect to the negligence or stupidity of the author, but to those who have most unaccountably deprived him of these valuable sources of information. Had our early annalists and succeeding historians, instead of devoting their whole attention to intestine feuds, warfare, and hostilities, bestowed the tenth part of their labours on the manners, customs, and rural occupations of our ancestors, an author would have had little to plead in excuse for having reared a poetical fabric without some solid foundation, or for having painted national scenes and events, founded chiefly on conjecture and analogical deduction. Effectually excluded from all information on these interesting subjects by the causes just specified, and unfurnished with any materials for ascertaining the real condition of the Scottish peasantry during particular periods in our history, the author has availed himself of the only resources left him, namely, the untutored strains of national melody and song, or what may not improperly be called the evidence of national POETRY and MUSIC.

The scope, tendency, and object, therefore, of the following production, are to describe the united influence of these sister arts in harmonizing the passions, regulating the affections, and suppressing the turbulence of an uncivilized and barbarous people. By Music and Poetry is not here meant such as are usually met with in polished and refined society, but that species of simple melody and uncultivated song, which, without artificial ornament, or

fastidious correctness, touch the heart with genuine Nature, and awaken the feelings of sympathy, affection, and love. In addressing the inhabitants of his native country, who have long felt and acknowledged the influence of their national music, the author need hardly remark, that the particular species here alluded to is the PASTORAL AIRS and Lyrical compositions peculiar to the southern districts of this part of the kingdom, which have uniformly been considered as the Arcadia of Scotland. From the effects invariably produced by these tender and passionate productions, the author was naturally led to think that the progressive improvement of manners and sentiments, in that once sanguinary quarter, must have been considerably indebted to their united influence; and although nothing has been transmitted to establish the fact, or to authorise the conjecture, he is likewise disposed to think, from a variety of circumstances inseparably connected with the compositions themselves, that a number of the most popular of our southern songs and melodies were produced in consequence of a material change in the situation or condition of the inhabitants. But, as an explanation and defence of these opinions come not within the prescribed limits of a short address, the author must refer the reader to the subjoined Notes at the end of the Poem, a method which, to avoid a formal preliminary treatise on our Pastoral Music and Poetry, he has preferred.

It is almost unnecessary to remark, that the frequent change of measure in the versification was adopted merely to give corresponding effect to the different subjects introduced in the Poem. The Spenserian stanza, with all its advantages for harmony and sententiousness, is, however, apt to become languid in productions of any length; and exclusively of the difficulty annexed to a judicious and musical construction of this measure in our language, it can never prove favourable to Lyrical composition, which requires one more light and airy to render the subject sufficiently interesting.

EDINBURGH, 1st December 1808.

TO

MRS ARCHIBALD FLETCHER.

MY DEAR MADAM,

IT will, no doubt, surprise you much to find your name prefixed to a Poem which you never saw previous to its publication, and a liberty taken of which you had no previous notice. All I can say in my defence is, that having never dedicated any thing of mine but to those whom Friendship and Worth placed near my heart, I was unwilling to close my poetical labours without some public testimony of my regard for one whose virtues I have long known and admired ; and that, impressed with a belief that I should not have obtained permission to express publicly what sincerity and esteem prompted, I was constrained to accomplish by stealth, what, I had good reason to think, modesty would have prohibited. I might, indeed, with equal truth, add, that in a performance, where the MORAL and

SOCIAL virtues are particularly inculcated, it was natural for an author to look out for a suitable Patroness, and that, in choosing one as distinguished for her literary taste as for those accomplishments and talents which render the female character truly attractive, I have, in the present instance, been not altogether disinterested.—You know my sincerity too well to call this flattery. Should you, however, be inclined to think it complimentary, I have only to assure you, that it comes infinitely short of what all those who are sufficiently acquainted with your character, and blessed in your society, say of you daily.—That you may long remain to diffuse the sweets of this society, and to bestow that unremitting attention which contributes so essentially to the relief and comforts of humanity, is the ardent wish of,

My dear Madam,

your affectionate friend

and faithful servant,

H. MACNEILL.

THE
PASTORAL,
OR
LYRIC MUSE
OF
SCOTLAND*.

Canto First.

WHEN shall the woes of War and Discord cease !
When shall the morn of Harmony arise !
When shall the dawn of CONCORD, LOVE, and PEACE,
Break through the gloom, and light dark Europe's
skies !—
Vain dream !—for see ! to grasp the blood-stain'd prize,
Ambition, maddening, wades through seas of gore,
Lists, careless, to the groans and 'dying sighs
Of myriads overwhelm'd, to rise no more ;
And none but BRITONS smile, around their parent
shore !

* See Note A.

Oh, deaf to nature! and to bliss unknown!
 How long shall carnage brutify mankind?
 Whirl'd in tempestuous storms, by pride upblown,
 How long shall phantoms fascinate and blind?
 Health—comfort—hope; a gay contented mind,
 Are all we here can want, or need to crave;
 And may not *these* delight, if friendship twined
 The bonds of love, life's social sweets to save,
 And gild the traveller's path with sunshine to the
 grave?

One sportive summer's day is all that's given
 To cheer the transient gleam of insect bliss,
 Warm'd by the genial influence of Heaven,
 They burst to life, and love, and happiness:
 Roving on raptured wing, no ills oppress;
 Fruition bounds the circuit of their joy;—
 Shall MAN alone no kindred charms possess?
 Must storm and gloom *his* summer's day destroy,
 Nor peace nor social sweets his fleeting hours em-
 ploy?—

Ah me! encompass'd with afflictions drear!
Pain—sickness—sorrow, and disastrous fate;
The want of friendship's aid, to sooth and cheer,
And softening still the murmurs of regret;
The loss of all we loved, and prized so late,
Torn from the breast, where hope and transport
smiled!—

Are *these* not ills enow?—must rage, and hate,
And strife, and uproar join in discord wild,
Steel the relentless heart, and spurn affections mild?

Can nought compose these tumults that repel
The gentler throbs of nature, and prevent
The playful current of our joys to swell
In fond delight, or glide in calm content?—
Yes!—Heaven, with all her bounties, kindly sent
To mitigate the pangs of human pain,
Has given the MUSE, with tones mellifluent,
To cheer, inspire, and charm in varied strain,
With fancy, virtue, peace, and all her smiling train!

Lapt in her lays, that cherish and reform,
 And lure the mind to all that's guiltless fair,
 Lull'd are the tempests that upheave, and storm
 The labouring breast of avarice and care ;
 RETIREMENT'S calm is all *he* longs to share
 Who thrills at nature's glow, and woos her charms ;
 Hails her excitements ; paints her beauties rare ;
 Thoughtless of want ; unruffled with alarms ;
 And such-the bard, I ween ! whose breast true pas-
 sion warms.

A time there was :—alas ! how changed !—how gone !
 When worth and friendship link'd each social heart,
 Awaked by nature's call, in powerful tone
 The numbers flow'd ; free, negligent of art ;
 Warm was the strain ! impetuous to impart
 Whate'er for love or virtue could inspire
 Affections strong ; each MINSTREL felt the dart
 Of passion, kindling with poetic fire,
 While Pity struck the chords, and tuned the OSSI-
 ANIC lyre.

But scared by feud, that gen'rates war and crime,
And sweeps the loves and virtues soon away,
The MUSES, trembling, fled their hostile clime,
And wandering, skulk'd, where power, with ruffian
sway

O'erawed the minstrel band.—Quick changed the lay;
Servile and mean, arose a mongrel crew;
And, as they sung of spoil and midnight fray,
Waked the discordant tones, untuned, untrue,
Which Nature never own'd, nor Pity ever drew*!

Stung with the sounds, oppress'd with grief and pain,
Sad, o'er the wild, a sister mourner fled;
Her robe, neglected, swept the desert plain,
The bleak wind whistling round her laurell'd head;
Fast down her faded cheek, late rosy red,
The tide of silent sorrow trickling fell!—
Ask you the mourner's name?—'twas MUSIC, led
By wilder'd grief, her plaintive notes to swell
Safe where the Muses sung, within their shelter'd
dell.

* See Note B.

Near to the choral band, embower'd and hid
From rapine, hate, and feud's relentless ire ;
Low in a grassy vale, where, tame, the kid
And lambkin dancing play'd, a ruin'd sire
Secluded lived. Escaped from whelming fire
At midnight's murdering hour, swift, through the roar
Of wintry storms, he fled from horrors dire,
And with an infant—saved of all his store !
To YARROW'S sylvan banks the blooming treasure
bore.

Here, lonely screen'd, affection urged to save
The helpless life dependent on his aid ;
His sheltering roof, the bank's deep echoing cave ;
His food, the wild fruits glean'd around the glade!—
Heaven, favouring, smiled. A lamb, that wilder'd,
stray'd

Within the grot, th' experienced sire retain'd,
Lured by its bleating cries, fond, undismay'd,
The dam swift follow'd, answering as it plain'd,
And with her milky store two helpless lives sustain'd.

Thus nightly lured, the wintry season past ;
Returning spring increased the fleecy fold ;
Contentment soothed, and deaden'd woes at last,
While years untroubled came, and passing roll'd :
The stripling grew ; the sire, though frail and old,
Beheld, with cheering hope, his shepherd boy
Secured from want. Each eve the warrior told
The tales of former happiness and joy,
And all the woes of feud, that ruin and destroy !

And oft, to cheat and cheer the lingering hour,
The hoary sage would wake the legend strain ;
Recount the marvellous deeds of martial power,
And paint the tumult of th' embattled plain ;
Yet, while he sung the carnage of the slain,
In sorrow's tone, soft pity's sighs he drew ;
And checking rising fervour, shew'd how vain
The pride of *conquest*, slaughtering to subdue !
Compared with virtue's charms, unchanging—ever
new.

And oft, I ween ! to warm impassion'd youth
With all that's courteous, generous, just, and brave,
Instructive age would blend with moral truth
Romantic feats, when dauntless KNIGHTHOOD gave
Its bright example to reform ; and save
Unshelter'd virtue from oppression's power ;
Chastised dishonour ; freed the injured slave
Of tyrant thrall ; attack'd the dragon-bower ;
Broke beauty's captive spell, and storm'd th' en-
chanted tower.

Touch'd with the subject of the evening's lay,
The stripling caught the sorrows that were sung,
And wandering, lonely, with his flock by day,
Conn'd the sad tales, o'er which he nightly hung ;
And much he wish'd (unpractised yet and young)
In suited strains, emotions to unfold,
When from the neighb'ring dell, sweet warbling rung
The MUSES' varied notes—now soft, now bold,
And to his ravish'd ear th' important secret told.

'Twas then arose, united, and refined,
The witching strains of MELODY and SONG!
True to each note the charms of verse combined
The power of thought, impassion'd—moral—strong;
Through wood and vale, re-echoed sweet among
The haunts of quiet, soft the warbling rose:—
Flocks listening gaze; arrested oft, and long,
The bounding roe-buck and his woodland does
Turn, captived by the sound harmonious as it flows!

Thrill'd with the charm!—enchanted with the art!
The fond enthusiast, listening to the choir,
Felt the warm flash of genius shoot athwart
His ardent brain, and caught th' electric fire;
And as he listening heard the changing lyre,
Sweet as the Muses sung the PASTORAL lay,
Now melting soft to passion's warm desire;
Now lightly brisk to rural joys and play,
Whole nights and summer days past unperceived
away!

They sung of love, and lover's pains,*
Their joys, and softened sorrow;
They sung contentment's rural strains
Around the "Braes o' Yarrow;"
On "Etterick banks" was heard the reed
That piped to pastoral leisure,
And echoing sweet round winding Tweed
Was heard the varying measure;

And Teviotdale returned the sound
With all its groves embowering,
And "Galla water's" green hills crown'd
With whins and wild thyme flowering;
Blithe were the strains by "Cowden knows"
And "Leader's haughs" and river!
But sad! where Jed's stream murmur'ing flows
The blythe notes echoed never! †
For war with blood stained Jed's sweet shore
When love oft wail'd her marrow,
And wafted mid the tempest's roar
The sound was heard at Yarrow.

* The Pastoral Songs.

† See Note C.

Sad o'er the lone vales as it swept,
And thrill'd the heart with anguish,
The Muses changed the lyre, and wept ; *
Love's notes were heard to languish ;
The rural pipe neglected lay !
No sound was heard by night or day
But melting " d'ule and sorrow !"
Beside some bank or willow'd stream
Soft PITY tuned the mournful theme,
And starting, saw in frightful dream
Some lover drown'd in Yarrow !

But had you seen the Shepherd boy †
When SONG and MUSIC fired his breast,
Tune the loved instruments with joy
That by the Muses' skill express'd
The varied Passions that confess'd
The power of Nature's artless sway ;
You would have sworn the ruin'd mind
To reason lost—wild—unconfined
Had wing'd its maniac way !

* The Ballad Strains.

† See Note D.

Oh! had you seen him as he stray'd,
Rapt, through the greenwood's lonely shade,
 When silence reign'd at even,
And heard him pour his varied song
Descriptive—moral—melting—strong!
 Inspired by favouring Heaven,
You would have hail'd him as he stood
Entranced in fond poetic mood,
 The genius of the grove;
And thought you heard by bank and spring
Responsive sweet! the wood-nymphs sing
 Of rural peace and love!—

The Muses markt, and raptured smiled,
And as they claspt loved Nature's child
 Delighted to their breast,
In tears of joy they blest the morn
On which a *Shepherd bard* was born
 To charm rude minds to rest.
“And take,” they cried, “the pastoral reed
 That pipes to peace and pleasure,

And sing while flocks round Yarrow feed
The sweets of rural leisure ;
Yet midst the charms that song bestows
Think of the child of sorrow,
Who whelm'd to-night with warfare's woes,
Weeps o'er her lot to-morrow !

Attune the lyre ! but let it sound
To every answering dale around
The melody of woe !
For melody and song assail
The frozen heart, when miseries fail
To melt th' infuriate foe :
Sad let it ring ! to *Nature* free !
Unmarr'd by art-trick'd minstrelsy ;
For art and nature ill agree
When passion bursting speaks ;
While left alone to play her part,
Deep-melting sorrow wrings the heart,
And oft the heart too, breaks !

But when Pleasure's warm sensation
 Prompts the mirth-inspiring strain,
 Snatch fond Youth! the blest occasion
 To light transport up again!
 Pleasure's joys may flie to-morrow,
 Hail them while they kindling move!
 Life was ne'er foredoom'd to sorrow
 Cheer'd with melody and love!
 Ever changing—ever fleeting,
 Life is but an April day,
 Smiling—frowning—tempting—cheating!
 Hail its sun-beams while they play.

Song and melody can lighten
 Loads that bend the drooping soul,
 Gild the gloom of fate, and brighten
 Regions darkling round the pole;
 Cheering with their warm intrusion
 ICELAND shivering feels the glow,
 LAPLAND, yielding to illusion
 Smiles amid eternal snow : *

* See Icelandic and Lapland Poetry.

Nor freezing blasts from Alpine height
Can chill the fervent pleasure ;
Nor climes where softer charms invite,
Obliterate the *measure* :
Where'er he roams, bold, calm, or gay,
Re-wake the strain which youth's blithe day
Heard round HELVETIA'S steeps,
Tho' nursed in war—to valour bred,
The *soldier* gone !—fame—glory fled,
Thinks of his home, and weeps ! *

* “There is a dance in Switzerland which the young shepherds perform to a tune played on a sort of bag-pipe. The tune is called *Rance des Vaches* ; it is wild and irregular, but has nothing in its composition that could recommend it to our notice. But the Swiss are so intoxicated with this tune, that if at any time they hear it when abroad in foreign service, they burst into tears ; and often fall sick, and even die, of a passionate desire to revisit their native country ; for which reason, in some armies where they serve, the playing of this tune is prohibited. This tune having been the attendant of their childhood and early youth, recalls to their memory those regions of wild beauty and rude magnificence ; those days of liberty and peace ; those nights of festivity ; those happy assemblies ; those tender passions, which formerly endeared to them their country, their homes, and their employments ; and which, when compared with the scenes of uproar they are now engaged in, and the servitude they now undergo, awaken such regret as entirely overpowers them.”

BEATTIE *on Poetry and Music.*

O patriot passion ! close intwin'd
With friendship warm, and love refined,
 Resistless is thy power !
Let wealth with grandeur gild his lot,
The wanderer still sighs for his cot,
 His hill and native bower !
And while he sighs, and frequent turns
With ardent mind, and breast that burns,
 To scenes no longer near !
Each simple air his mother sung,
Placed on her knee when helpless young,
 Still vibrates on his ear !

Strike then the lyre, and raise the song
 Attuned to joy or sorrow ;
Oh ! pour it melting sweet along
 The answering banks of Yarrow !
Till shepherds listening, catch the strain
 As flocks are careless roaming,
And milk-maids lilt it soft again
 At ewe-bughts in the gloaming ;

Till love and friendship on the wing
Waft concord to disorder,
And teach e'en *Rapine's* hordes to sing
“ PEACE TO THE TROUBLED BORDER !”

END OF CANTO THE FIRST.

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Canto Second.

BLEST be the song! (a bard, though humble, cries),
That moves by Pity's power th' infuriate breast;
Lures Mercy beaming from her native skies
To soften rage, and shelter the oppress'd;
And guide to Peace, where Concord, warm caress'd
By friendship, tunes in harmony the string
To love and pastime, innocence and rest,
As shepherds pipe, and rural poets sing
Till cliffs reverberate round, and answering vallies
ring!

“ Smit with the love of song,” by bank and stream
The Stripling framed the subject of the lay,
And while the loves and virtues warm’d his theme,
Nor care nor sorrow cross’d his flowery way;
But, when the clang of carnage and affray
Assail’d his ear, his throbbing heart would swell;
For, reft of all by rapine’s savage sway,
The houseless wanderer fled from murder’s yell,
And shivering roam’d the wild, or weeping skulk’d
the dell!

Ah! what could *he*, who burn’d to yield relief
Without the power to succour, or to save?
But tune the lyre to sympathy and grief,
And sing the virtues of the fall’n and brave!
But weave the partial theme, where pity gave
Unblemish’d valour to the warrior slain;
Or, strew with flowers of praise the lover’s grave,
Unbless’d with hallow’d dust, or funeral train,
And chaunt each mournful dirge in sorrow’s doleful
strain!

Lured by the sounds, sad floating on the gale,
Accordant to the breast of plaintive woe,
The neighb'ring shepherds sought the tuneful vale,
And melting heard compassion's numbers flow ;
And as they felt the charm, and wept the blow
Of adverse fate, they loved the lay that shed
Th' embalming dew of praise on those laid low ;
For sorrow loves to hear the favourite dead
Receive the look'd for meed that cheers death's
gloomy bed !

Listening they caught the *melody* of song,
While mem'ry held the moral of the lay ;
And circling wide the pastoral haunts among,
Love nightly heard what passion framed by day :
For as each songster, save from war's dismay
By secret bank and streamlet mused alone,
Flowing the numbers came ;—now sad—now gay,
As warm emotions burst in varied tone
To love's enchanting joys, or grief's lamenting moan.

Spreading, at length they reach'd the banner'd hall
Of plundering chief, and haughty baron bold,
Dead'ning the pangs of guilt in festive brawl
As round in savage mirth intemperance roll'd ;
More savage still, the *minstrel strains* extoll'd
The crimes of midnight deeds and horrors fell !
When thrilling warm through breasts insensate cold,
The moral Muse transfused her magic spell,
Waked the lost mind to thought, and struck the
PASTORAL shell !

Sweet is the charm ! when round the social board
Pure friendship weaves the myrtle with the vine ;
But sweeter still, when o'er each trembling chord
Soft SYMPATHY awaked by strains divine
Steals kindling warm ; created to refine,
And light th' expanding soul, released and free
From sordid lusts, and selfish cares that twine
Around th' unfeeling heart, shut out—ah me !
From ev'ry sound of woe, love, mirth, or melody !

Deep rung the lyre ! for dismal was the tale
That chronicled the ills of feudal waste !
Wild rose the strain ! but soft as summer's gale
Came Pity wafted to the conscious breast ;
And while the theme with artless truth impress'd
The wants and woes that spring from warfare's spoil,
It pointed cheering to the path, where blest
With annual plenty, INDUSTRY and TOIL
Smile round their cultured lawns, and rich reward-
ing soil.

It sung of joys—unknown to carnage dread !
Of charms, that soothing, gild life's frequent gloom ;
CONTENT, mild beaming round the peasant's shed,
Comforts that cheer, and prospects that illumine ;
LABOUR unfretful, yielding to the doom
That mingles worldly ill with heavenly good ;
Till resignation, smiling to the tomb,
Sheds mellow'd lustre o'er vicissitude
Soft as mild Cynthia's rays o'er upland, lake, and
wood !

It sung of war ;—but war unstain'd with crime !
It sung of strife ;—but strife with glory crown'd ;
Of spoils—but spoils obtained by feats sublime,
SLAVERY o'erwhelm'd—her captured leaders bound ;
BANNERS, high waved to victory's gladd'ning sound
Triumphant swell'd to liberty and pride,
As from th'insanguined field, and corse-strew'd ground
(Changing to blood famed BANNOCKBURN ! thy tide)
Strode Scotia's patriot sons ;—with freedom by their
side.

But mournful was the strain, and wailing wild
The sound of Scotia's loss, and Scotia's woe !
When lifeless strew'd, unhonour'd and defiled,
On FLOWDEN's field she saw her warriors low.
Her “ forest flowers ” no more in vernal blow !
Dazzling the raptured eye as bright they shed
Their radiance round, to warm with martial glow
Each patriot breast ; while waving o'er their head
High tower'd the monarch oak in regal grandeur
spread.

Yet, while in sorrow's tone the numbers roll'd,
Plaining and wild to faithless Fortune's frown,
Prophetic struck, the Scottish Muse foretold
Succeeding days of glory and renown,
When link'd in *Union*, laurell'd wreaths should crown
Her valiant sons, and minstrels of the dale,
And future bards in powerful accents drown
Desponding murmurs, and lamenting wail,
And weave on Flodden-Field a MARMION'S pictured
tale.

Rapt in successive visions as they rose,
She sung of deeds conceal'd from mortal eye,
Of heroes, doom'd oppression to oppose,
Bounding o'er waves, to conquer or to die!
“ On EGYPT'S shore,” she cried, “ shall valour, high
Upborne by freedom, guard what freemen prize,
With phalanx firm, and dauntless look defy
Outnumber'd legions, and inclement skies,
Till awed on MAIDA'S plain proud Gallia shrinks
and—flies.

“ A time will come, when roused by treachery’s guile,
An injured land, determined to be free,
Shall turn for aid to Britain’s guardian isle,
The fostering home of long-nursed Liberty!—
Swift at the call, IBERIA arm’d, shall see
Congenial bands, by valour waved o’er,
Rush onward as the shout of victory
Rings from VIMEIRA’S heights to Tagus’ shore,
While distant vales repeat—BRAGANZA reigns once
more !

“ Fame to the brave ! (she sung in ardent tone !)
Who for their country’s safety nobly fall ;
Revered tho’ lost ; ’graved on no mouldering stone,
Their names still live ! adored and loved by all :
Unwarp’d by interest, deaf to party brawl,
Aroused by danger, warm’d by valour’s flame,
Pure honour glowing, lists but to the call
Of *duty’s* sacred, never-ceasing claim,
Till virtue rears the tomb, and ’graves—a PATRIOT’S
name !

“ And fame,” she cried, “ shall sound her clarion long
 For those, who, warm’d by truth, the lyre shall string
 To peace and concord, wove in deathless song,
 As love and friendship sail on downy wing :—
 And such shall come !—I see by bank and spring
 Deckt in their rosy wreaths, the tuneful train !
 My Ednam bard,* by Nature woo’d to sing
 Her unmark’d beauties in unrivall’d strain ;
 My moral minstrel bold;† my heav’n-taught rustic
 swain!‡

“ And thee ! my pastoral warbler, § in whose lays
 My airs, revived, shall ring round burn and knowe,
 Blithe as the “ Gentle Shepherd” piping strays
 O’er Pentland’s height, or sings in “ Habbie’s How ;”
 But chief my songstress!|| on whose modest brow
 I see the tragic muse the chaplet bind,
 Fresh as when cull’d from Avon’s mulberry bough
 And meads bright varied as her Shakespeare’s mind,
 Th’ unfading wreath she wove, and round his temples
 twined !”

* THOMSON.

† BEATTIE.

‡ BURNS.

§ RAMSAY.

|| JOANNA BAILLIE.

More had she sung ;—but mindful of the lot
Of measured life, she droopt, and heaved a sigh,
Condemn'd her pride, and turning to each spot
Where mute one day each tuneful bard would lie
Her sorrows flow'd !—yet while they dimm'd her eye,
Re-cheer'd she saw, bright thro' the gathering gloom,
A favourite's blossom'd grave in vernal dye,
Where new-blown roses, fresh in annual bloom,
Bedeck'd the wintry turf that wrapt her aged HOME.*

Touch'd with her praise, and emulous of fame,
(Dear to the heart that owns poetic charms !)
The Shepherds listening, felt ambition's flame,
Guiltless of aught that fires to slaughtering arms :
PEACE lent the glow ;—oppress'd with wild alarms,
And stung with crimes that rent the mourner's breast,
Each strove to light the genial flame that warms
To social joy, when love smiles war to rest,
Unbinds the scaring helm, and hides the blood-dyed
crest.

* JOHN HOME, the celebrated author of Douglas, who seems to have dropt in the grave unnoticed and forgot !!

And first, to wake COMPASSION, dead
 In breasts long torn asunder
With ranc'rous hate, and carnage dread
 Mid uproar, rage, and plunder,
They tuned the chord to misery's moan,
A wild, disorder'd, melting tone!
 Which grief alone can swell,
And joining numbers, sadly true,
In artless strains described, what few
 Skill'd bards can paint so well.

Urged by the Muse, who never speaks
 To feeling breasts in vain,
The shepherds touch'd the string that wakes
 To *Penitence* and *Pain*;
And as the BALLAD lay they sung,
And o'er the lyre impressive hung
 With sighs responsive deep;
Each mournful tale resistless drew
The drops of Pity's heavenly dew
 From eyes unused to weep!—

Wild rose the *Passions* free
 Bursting in sorrow !
Sad was each melody
 Wafted round Yarrow !
Deep, deep ! the tragic lay
Fram'd to feud's deadly fray,
Pouring Love's welladay !
 O'er murder'd marrow !—

Changed are the notes of cheerless woe,
 The strains of sorrow cease ;
A softer theme is heard to flow,
 The heav'n-tuned song of PEACE !
When Pity moves the ruthless breast,
Like Love's star glittering in the west
 Peace gilds the lurid gloom,
A rosy dawn succeeds the night,
A cheering sun beams radiant bright,
 All nature breathes perfume !

O Thou! with olive garland crown'd,
Meek shelt'rer of despair!

Sweet SYMPATHY! with robe unbound
And throbbing bosom bare!

How oft, when fury lights the eye,
And dark revenge broods threat'ning nigh,

Thy angel form appears
Gliding amid the dismal gloom,
To lull the storm, and soft illumine

With sun-beams glanced thro' tears!
Then springs the soul to raptures new,
Unfelt by murder's slaught'ring crew,

Till touch'd with pity's smart,
Mild MERCY then resumes her tone,
And Friendship smiling on his throne,
Clasps Concord to his heart!

For touch the soul with soft delight
That flows from guiltless pleasure,
Swift, kindred charms with smiles invite
To Love and social leisure;

Compared with strife, new pictures rise
To strike, astonish, and entice

From crimes, that blackening scare !
Till shudd'ring at each horror past,
The ruffian turns to Heaven at last
With penitence and pray'r.

Nor ceas'd the band, till sprightly sweet

The *Pastoral* strains arose
In cadence brisk, and numbers meet,*

Care's murmurs to compose ;
Each songster warbling, trill'd the wires
That rung to *Pleasure's* chaste desires
By streamlet, bank, and grove,
And echoing round the cheerless dome
Of gloomy Discord's hostile home
Breath'd HARMONY and LOVE !

From southern Cheviot's war-stain'd hills
To broom-flower'd Pentland's heights and rills,
No other tales were told

* See Note E.

But milk-maids lilting at their pail,
And shepherds piping in the dale,
Or wooing at the fold :

Sweet were the sounds by stream and glade
As pastimes echoed in the shade

While flocks and herds were roaming !
But sweeter still, the trysted hour
When lovers met in secret bower
Or ewe-bughts in the gloaming !

But when they sung how love beguiled

Each dark, ungentle passion ;
How Nature woo'd, and sigh'd, and smiled,
And jeer'd in am'rous fashion ;

A warmer strain was heard to ring
From every sweet accordant string

To harmonize disorder,
Till far and near the swelling sound
Was heard the answering hills around,

“ PEACE TO THE TROUBLED BORDER ! ”

Moved with the shepherds' artless lays,
 War smooth'd his rugged feature ;
A softening murmur whisper'd praise,
 Waked by the strains of nature ;
The youthful warrior felt love's flame,
The plund'rer, blushing deep with shame,
 Forgot his purpose dire ;
And deeper still, the *Minstrel* crew
Blush'd, conscience struck !—in haste withdrew,
 And dropt the BORDER LYRE.

The songsters smiling, raptur'd saw
The power of nature's sovereign law,
 And blest the pastoral strain ;
And as they swept with willing hand
The sounding chords, around the land
 The *Virtues* bloom'd again ;
And as they bloom'd, they odours shed
Rich o'er the wild, where MERCY led
 Her train to social rest,

And PEACE, long doom'd by strife to roam,
Call'd love and friendship to her home,
 And nursed them at her breast.

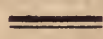
Among the band that softened rage,
Was one, whose skill and reverend age
 Attracted notice due ;
For, as he struck his Doric lyre,
His sparkling eye shot youthful fire,
 As rapt, his numbers flew ;
Prepared to sound a warning call
At once to soften and appal
 The turbulence of feud,
He tuned his voice to sorrow's wail,
And bending to his mournful tale,
 Thus sung in pensive mood.

END OF CANTO THE SECOND.

The first part of the report is devoted to a general
 description of the country and its resources. It
 is followed by a detailed account of the
 various branches of industry and commerce.
 The author then proceeds to a description of the
 climate and the soil, and finally to a
 summary of the principal facts and
 observations which have been made during
 the course of the expedition.

DORNOCK HA'.

A BALLAD.



Canto Third.

THE night blew cauld thro' snaw and sleet,
 Loud rair'd the blast wi' deaf'ning din;
 A voice cam' sad, yet mournfu' sweet;
 "Unbar the door, and let me in!

On feckless eild, wi' waes down borne,
 Bereft o' hame, friends, kith or kin,
 Some pity tak'!—till cheering morn
 Unbar the door!—Oh let me in!"

To feckless eild, or sorrow's mane
 My door was aye unbarr'd and free,
 Come in auld man!—tho' left alane,
 The friends o' pity here ye'll see :

Come in auld man ! our house, tho' sma',
 Has aye a nook for want and wae ;
 There's shelter here frae wind and snaw,
 And kindness too, for night and day.

We led him to our cozie nook ;
 His cheek was wan—his strength was gane !
 My GRIZZIE cast saft pity's look,
 As frae her heart burst sorrow's mane ;

She brought the best things frae her hoard,
 The bicker ream'd wi' nappy brown,
 And smiles o' kindness round the board
 Made welcome's feast gang sweeter down.

Cheer'd wi' my Grizzie's kindly treat,
 The carle's heart began to glow ;
 Our wee-things crap around his seat,
 Our ingle bleez'd a canty low ;

Aft times he sigh'd, and sometimes smil'd,
 Then shook his head as white as snaw ;
 And aft a thought his peace beguil'd,
 Whan down a tear wad trickling fa' !

“ Blissfu' the lot ! ” at length he cries,
 “ When kindred virtues mingle round ;
 Unbind the cords that misery ties,
 And pour their balm in sorrow's wound !—

'Twas sae alas ! when plenty shed
 Her heart'ning joys within my ha' ;
 Ilk strave to mak' the mourner glad,
 And dry the tears that grief let fa' !

The cauldest night snell winter blaws
 Could warm the freezing heart o' care ;
 Skreen'd safe within my sheltering wa's,
 Smiles bright'ning brak' through mirk despair ;

The feast, the sang, the tale gae'd round
 To cheat the pang that sorrow gae,
 And aye wi' cheering, softening sound
 I waked to mirth the minstrel lay !"

What brak the joys that plenty shed?—
 What banish'd safety frae your ha'?—
 Was't *poortith*, aye in sorrow clad,
 That sent ye mourning thro' the snaw?

" It was na poortith wrought the change ;
 It was na want owrtorn'd my ha' ;
 'Twas deadly feud, and black revenge
 Sent frail fourscore thro' blast and snaw !

Ae fearfu' night—(oh ! night of fate !)
Loud beat the storm wi' thund'ring thud,
The waters raise, and in a spate
Updash'd in foam the neighb'ring flood ;

A cry o' horror through the blast
Reach'd where my family quak'd wi' fear ;
Starting I raise in wilder'd haste,
And frae the wa' upsnatch'd my spear ;

“ Oh gang na forth ! my MARIAN cried,
As fast she held me to her breast,
The rain has swell'd the raging tide—
Oh gang na forth !” she sigh'd and prest.

“ A horseman rides the roaring flood
Loud cried our warden frae the tower,
He's miss'd the ford at Dornock wood,
Nor horse, nor man, will reach the shore !”

Fearless I flew whar danger led,
The horse was gane ; the rider seen
Struggling for life in death's deep bed,
Dash'd round in Kirtle's whirling linn !—

Oh ! had the life that then remain'd
Sunk in the flood I desp'rate braved,
What ills and waes that since hae pain'd
This bleeding heart had then been saved !

Senseless and pale we bare him hame ;
My HELEN fair, prepared his bed !
We waked ere lang life's smother'd flame ;
My Marian kind, band up his head !

Three weeks we cherish'd in our ha'
This fause Earl's son o' high degree,
The fourth, the traitor stal awa'
A treasure rich, and dear to me !

The lily pure that decks the vale
Fresh gilt wi' morning's beams and dew,
The rose that blushing scents the gale,
Wi' Helen match'd would tyne their hue!—

Ah me! e'en now, cheer'd in this nook,
Wi' thae sweet young things round my chair,
Methinks I see her artless look;—
Sae *ance* she smiled wha—smiles nae mair!”

‘ O waefu' mourner!—yet disclose
What cam o' Helen stown awa'?’
“ Our Warder brought the tale o' woes
Loud echoing thro' my sorrowing ha'—

Bowne!—bowne!—to horse! I raging cried,
To horse! my gallant friends and true,
Ere night I guess, if swift we ride,
The traitor thief the deed shall rue!

Lang, lang I sought my darling child,
 (The gem was hid in secret bowers.)
 At length 'mang glens, and forests wild,
 We spied the raver's castled towers :"

' I come to warn ye o' your fate,'
 Outspak a herald loud and bauld,
 ' Nae careless watchmen guard yon gate,
 Nae worn-out warriors frail and auld ;

Full fifty spearmen, stoops o' weir,
 Guard round ;—their leader bad me say,
 Come to your Helen kind and fair,
 The bridal feast shall crown the day.'

" Gae, tell your fause and taunting lord
 To keep his feasts for them wha crave !—
 I cam na here to grace his board,
 His life, or her he's stown I'll have !

His fifty warriors let him guide,
 Wi' thirty leil I'll meet him here;
 Justice and heaven are on our side,
 The *base* alane hae cause to fear!

The bugles rang thro' glen and wood;
 Our spearmen fought wi' might and main;
 I sought fause GUY—he fell in blood;—
 My faithfu', valiant friends war slain!"

My Grizzie's colour fled, and came,
 Her heaving sighs fast rise, and fa';
 'Speak! is na GREGORY your name,
 The Baron ance o' DORNOCK HA'?"

"What boots it what I ance possest!
 My name, my lineage wherefore tell!—
 They've lang lain buried in this breast,
 In flames o' fire my family fell!—

Oh barb'rous deed ! to smother life
 Guiltless o' harm—to virtue true !—
Inhuman fiends ! I brunt nae *wife*,
 Nor *blooming babes* that round ye grew ;

I cam na at the dead o' night
 Wi' fire to flame your 'ancient ha',
Drive frailty's eild to winter's blight,
 And send it mourning thro' the snaw !—

What boots it what I *ance* possess !
 My birth I've lang conceal'd in shame,
A wand'rer houseless, and distress'd,
 Could ill bruik *Dornock's* baron'd name !”

His streaming griefs my Grizzie sees,
 She sprang like light'ning frae her seat,
Cried, while she claspt the mourner's knees,
 ‘ Your Helen's daughter's at your feet !’

“ My *Helen's daughter!* ” skreech'd he wild,
 As sair wi' warring thoughts he strave;—
 “ Rise—rise! nor mock my helpless eild;—
 My Helen's lang syne in her grave!”

‘ Lang, lang I ken!—and weel I might!
 Her death has lang been mourn'd by me;
 But maist o' what ye've tauld this night
 I've heard upon my mither's knee;

Aft, aft in sorrow's waefu' mood
 When winter's nights blew drifts o' snaw,
 She'd tell of *Guy's* red field o' blood,
 And a' the waes o' Dornock Ha'!

And aft (when driven frae house and hame
 By *Guy's* rough sire, wha nought could move.)
 She'd talk o' GREGORY's ancient fame,
 And weep his death in tears o' love!

Till worn wi' grief and mirk despair
 She died! and left her child forlorn,
 Till Kenneth's love, and tender care
 Dried up the tears that now return :—

But blest the night that blew the blast
 And sent ye wandering thro' the snaw
 To find a kindred hame at last
 To cheat the waes o' **DORNOCK HA'!**

'Twas thus, I ween ! in times of old
The *Lyric Muse* impassion'd told
 In simple, varied strain,
Her melting tales to touch the heart
With sympathy, and warm impart
 Affliction's woes and pain :
And as she sung her moving theme
By broomy bank, and limpid stream,
 The PASSIONS, ever true
To Pity's tones, resumed their sway,
Long check'd by war, and feudal fray,
 And strong, and stronger grew ;

And as they swell'd, and throbbing beat,
Fond from their rural hid retreat
 The Loves came smiling by,
And joining Friendship, hand in hand
Danced raptured round in choral band
 To PEACE and HARMONY !

Each softening virtue claim'd a place,
Warm Charity with angel face,
 Compassion, heavenly meek !
And Modesty, in blushing traits,
Scarce seen in these new-fashion'd days
 To deck youth's virgin cheek !

Blest be the song ! and blest the lyre !
That warm the soul with passion's fire,
 Again a poet cries ;
Lure Peace and Concord, to assuage
With lenient balm infuriate rage,
 And Mercy from the skies !
For till they join, by Virtue twined,
DISCORD and WARFARE crush the mind,
 While Ruin sweeps along ;
Nor LOVE, nor HARMONY divine
Bend, wooing from their radiant shrine
 To prompt the poet's song.

THE END.

NOTES.

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NOTES.

NOTE A. P. 1.

OF the origin, continuance, or decline of the PASTORAL STATE in the southern districts of Scotland, we are as ignorant as of the origin of its Poetry and Music. That it *partially* existed in various spots during the turbulence of the feudal times in that quarter, cannot, we think, be doubted; but that it attained the importance and prevalence which we have good reason to suppose must have occurred at some particular period, may certainly be questioned. We can hardly conceive, that when every freebooter seized on whatever supplied his necessities, or gratified his revenge, and when the plunder of herds and flocks was one of the principal objects of nightly rapine, the Pastoral State could have been either general or alluring. Without security, it is next to impossible that any thing approaching to *pleasure* or *serenity* can influence the mind; for neither the occasional sweets of domestic peace, nor the raptures of love, can remain long to illumine the countenances of those who are fearfully looking forward to impending danger. Amidst the obscurity that hangs over this interesting subject, there are, however, fortunately some gleams of light, which break through it, and enable us, at least, to discover faintly, what otherwise we should search for in vain. National song has this advantage, that

while it speaks the language of the times, it describes the manners of the people. It is indeed impossible it should do otherwise; for, as the only source from whence it flows is *Passion* and *Emotion*, so must these be awakened by the existing circumstances and occurrences which are immediately connected with the situation of the inhabitants. We may, therefore, safely turn to this guiding ray when all other lights are extinct; and, on the present occasion, it will perhaps be found sufficient to illuminate what otherwise must have remained in total darkness.

What naturally occurs on considering the present subject, is first, the peculiar quality or distinguishing feature of our national Poetry and Music: 2dly, Has this poetry and music undergone any material change at some particular period? 3dly, What marks and distinguishes this change? And lastly, What were the causes which produced it? The confined limits of a note precludes a full investigation of what would require a pretty long treatise to be completely illustrated, yet the author will endeavour to communicate, in as few words as possible, what occurs to him on these different points.

The distinguishing qualities of our national melodies and lyric poetry are *Passion* and *Simplicity*, which they possess in a degree superior to any other compositions with which we are acquainted. With one solitary and singular exception, they breathe the genuine effusions of the human heart, and appear uniformly to flow from the pure dictates of nature. The exception, however, to which we allude, cannot be passed over in silence, as it marks a particular era, which seems to have perverted not only the natural feelings of mankind, but the usual sentiments and passions of the poet. To those who have perused the ingenious Mr WALTER SCOTT'S collection of the "Border Minstrelsy," it will appear evident, that the *subject* and *poetry* of these rude times differed as materially from what we usually meet with even among savage na-

tions, as they did from the compositions that succeeded, a considerable time after, in the same quarter. It is unnecessary to specify what must be obvious to every person who has attended to this singular species of poetry; but as our present object is to point out what particularly distinguishes the compositions of this period from what followed, it may be just observed, that intestine feuds and hostilities—tumult and disorder—midnight plunder, murder, and calamity, were the animating subjects which furnished these savage songsters with materials for their inspired lays! Now, it must be equally obvious to every person acquainted with our later compositions, that our pastoral songs present subjects, and express sentiments, the very reverse of this. Every thing breathes peace, tranquillity, harmony, and love. Nothing indicates warfare, tumult, or alarm; on the contrary, every description, sentiment, and passion, incline us to conclude that general safety, combined with rural happiness and content, were the genuine excitements of poetry. How shall we reconcile these contrarieties? or rather, how can we possibly conceive that circumstances so opposite in their nature were the effects of the same cause, or that they originated from the same source?—In other words, how can we bring ourselves to believe that the *condition* or *situation* of the inhabitants in that particular quarter were the same during the prevalence of such opposite strains and sentiments; or that national song should have held such different tones during the same period? Are we not rather warranted to infer, that previous to those last mentioned compositions, a material change had occurred—that the disorders of feuds and animosities had greatly subsided, or entirely ceased—that, relieved from the calamities of intestine warfare, and protected from oppression, the natives of these border districts began to taste the sweets of repose, and turn their minds to more peaceful and profitable employments; and that, in consequence of this

happy change, and the inhabitants being little experienced in agriculture, or the mechanical arts, the *Pastoral State*, in a country so particularly adapted to this occupation, became more generally extended, and produced those effusions of the Muse so congenial with the feelings and sentiments of the community.

As an additional support of the above opinion, it may be remarked, that the plaintive and pathetic *Ballads* which paint in such true colours, and touching language, the calamitous effects of feuds and dissensions, are evident proofs of their being compositions *posterior* to the barbarous era already mentioned. They are indeed so different in every respect from those of the Border Minstrels, that no doubts can remain that they were the production of a description of men actuated by very opposite sentiments and feelings; nor have we any good reason to question, that they belonged to the same class of poets (whoever they were) whose pastoral lays breathe every thing concordant with nature and humanity. That these strains, joined to our tender and passionate melodies, should have necessarily produced considerable effects in softening the manners, and improving the sentiments of the inhabitants, can hardly be doubted, when we reflect on the unvarying influence of a similar species of music in harmonizing the minds, and regulating the affections of barbarous nations. So powerful, indeed, was this influence, and so firmly established was the fact, that it was not only attended to, but became a particular object with those whose enlightened views were anxiously directed to the improvement of their country. "The Greeks (as a French author judiciously observes*) were remarkable for the importance they attached to music. It was interwoven in their institutions, and even had an influence on their laws. The austere Spartans

* Abbé MILLOT, Elements of Ancient History.

were so attentive to music, and considered it as an object of so great importance, that every innovation was strictly forbidden. They had experienced the advantage of harmony in civilizing the people, and softening their savage manners; for music and poetry, *going hand in hand*, conduce to that purpose.”—“The grave and judicious POLYBIUS, (he farther remarks), takes notice, that music was necessary to the Arcadians in particular, for, by the neglect of it, one of their cities, Cynætha, became noted for its ferocity and barbarity, of which, till the time of this omission, there had been but few examples. PLUTARCH, after the most famous philosophers, represents music as an excellent means of soothing the passions, and regulating the heart and temper; but he speaks of a manly, simple, and majestic music, which should be suited to *Poetry* and *Dancing*, both the one and the other being comprehended in the general idea of music.”—“The Romans, concludes the same author, left an art to their slaves which the Greeks held in such estimation.” As the present note has already exceeded the usual limits, the author will only add the concurring testimony of an elegant and profound writer, on the influence of national poetry in softening the manners and passions of mankind, for which he is certain the reader will readily forgive him.

“It is difficult to say to what a degree, in the earlier periods of society, the rude compositions of the Bards and the Minstrels may have been instrumental in humanizing the mind of *savage warriors*, and in accelerating the growth of cultivated manners. Among the Scandinavians and the Celtæ, we know that this order of men was held in peculiar veneration; and, accordingly, it would appear, from the monuments which remain of these nations, that they were distinguished by a delicacy in the passion of love, and by a humanity and generosity to the vanquished in war, which seldom appear among barbarous tribes,

and with which it is hardly possible to conceive how men in such a state of society could have been inspired, but by a separate class of individuals in the community, who devoted themselves to the pacific profession of poetry, and to the cultivation of that creative power of the mind which anticipates the source of human affairs, and presents in prophetic vision to the poet and the philosopher, the blessings which accompany the progress of reason and refinement."

STEWART'S *Elements of the Human Mind*, p. 533.

NOTE B. P. 5.

"*Which Nature never own'd,*" &c. As it is not unlikely that the freedom of this censure will meet with the disapprobation of those who, for some time past, have been captivated with the novelty of rugged strains, and still more rugged manners, the author thinks it necessary to observe, that however averse he may be to the *compositions* of the Border Bards, his objections are infinitely stronger to the subjects which they celebrate. If the legitimate end and purpose of poetry be to "give pleasure," either by delighting the mind with productions of fancy, or by exciting the passions with paintings that awaken the best feelings of the human heart, can we reasonably conceive that representations of the most atrocious scenes, expressed in the most barbarous versification, should afford pleasure or gratification to a moral and well cultivated mind? Yet, strange as it may seem, such productions, with nothing to recommend them but their *novelty*, are not only relished but admired in the 19th

century, an age of lettered refinement; and by those too, who would be not a little offended were they accused of a deficiency in moral principle, or a want of poetical taste! May we presume to account for this singular perversion?—perhaps the following short explanation will not be found very wide of the mark.

Unfortunately for the fine arts, they are not more exempted from the influence of fashion than every thing else, in an age of luxurious refinement. The love of novelty, which may be considered as its inseparable attendant, requires something to excite enjoyment when the relish for what is *natural* begins to fail. Poetry, as well as music, however excellent, will, if often repeated, lose their original charm, and consequently every expedient will be resorted to as a temporary gratification. Accustomed as we have long been to the smoothness of polished numbers, and to sentiments accordant to the feelings of mankind, the ear has become tired with harmony, and the palate cloyed with sweets. Some powerful stimulus, however harsh, was therefore necessary to provoke lost appetite; and a species of poetical composition, the very reverse of good writing, and repugnant to the sentiments of humanity, has procured admirers in the present century, which, we have good reason to think, would have been rejected, even twenty years ago, with disgust. Should this explanation come near the truth, may it not be fairly questioned, whether poetical *genius* or poetical *taste* be at present most on the decline? It is almost unnecessary to add, that the above remarks can have no reference whatever to *recent* border strains, revived and imitated by one who, for boldness of imagery, richness of colouring, and vigour of expression, may be said to stand unrivalled in these times, and whose poetical subjects and sentiments are as remote from immorality as the whole tenor of his conduct.

NOTE C. P. 10.

“*The blithe notes echoed never.*” Taking into consideration the usual excitements of descriptive poetry, it is not a little remarkable that the singular beauty and rural scenery of the banks of the “sylvan *Jed*” should never have been sung, or once mentioned, by any of our pastoral poets. The only probable cause that can be assigned for this omission is, that from the frequent inroads of the southern marauders, and the repeated calamities which this ill-fated spot, from its near vicinity to contending parties, experienced, it consequently became unfit for pastoral enjoyment or safety. As an additional support of this conjecture, the *Liddle* is likewise unsung by any of our ancient poets, and we have reason to suppose from a similar cause. ARMSTRONG, indeed, in his poem on Health, introduces his native stream, and talks of “Doric lays tuned by her love-sick swains,” with which we are totally unacquainted. Should this not be admitted as an additional proof that our pastoral songs and melodies were the actual compositions of the shepherds, it must at least be considered as a singular exception to the general tenor of these descriptive productions. That several of our popular songs and ballads were the compositions of persons superior in station to the mere tenders of herds and flocks, cannot be doubted; but that the greatest number were composed by the shepherds themselves seems highly probable. Independently of every thing peculiar to the situation of this description of men, and the uniform prevalence of poetry, during the existence of the pastoral state in all parts of the globe, there is such minute delineations of rural scenes and objects—such intimate acquaintance with particular haunts, and such repeated allusions to every thing connected

with pastoral employment, displayed in our later songs and ballads, that seem to mark something *more* than the usual paintings of poetry. Not a bank, or stream, or hill, or dale is unnoticed; and, while the general theme is rural occupations peculiar to pastoral life, we are in a manner constrained to believe that the poet describes scenes and circumstances with which he was not only familiarly acquainted, but intimately connected. In support of these opinions, it is with no small pleasure the author subjoins the sentiments of a very acute and elegant writer on this subject.

Dr BEATTIE, in his admirable Essays on "Poetry and Music," after having pointed out the characteristical difference of Highland music and song, and assigned the natural causes of its peculiarity, gives the following contrast. "Some of the southern provinces of Scotland, present a very different prospect. Smooth and lofty hills, covered with verdure; clear streams winding through long beautiful vallies; trees produced without culture, here straggling or single, and there crowding into little groves and bowers, with other circumstances peculiar to the districts I allude to, render them fit for pasturage, and favourable to romantic leisure and tender passions. Several of the old Scotch songs take their names from the rivulets, villages, and hills adjoining to Tweed and Melrose,* a region distinguished by many charming varieties of rural scenery; and, whether we consider the face of the country, or the genius of the people, may properly enough be termed the Arcadia of Scotland. And all these songs (adds he) are sweetly expressive of love and tenderness, and other emotions suited to the *tranquillity* of pastoral life." Talking of the music, he farther observes: "Nor can I acquiesce in the opinion of those who give the honour of this invention to the

* Cowden knows—Galla shiels—Galla water—Ettrick banks—Braes o' Yarrow—Bush above Traquair, &c.

monks of Melrose. I rather believe that it took its rise among men who were *real shepherds*, and who actually felt the sensations and affections whereof it is so very expressive." Mr RITSON likewise is clearly of this opinion. "One cannot adduce (he observes) the performance of scholars and distinguished individuals as specimens of national song. The genuine and peculiar natural song of Scotland is to be sought—not in the works of HAMILTON, THOMSON, SMOLLET, or even RAMSAY; but—in the productions of obscure or anonymous authors, of shepherds and milk-maids, who actually felt the sensations they describe; of those, in short, who were destitute of all the advantages of science and education, and perhaps incapable of committing the pure inspirations of nature to writing; and in this point of view, it is believed the English have nothing equal in merit, nor, in fact, any thing of the kind." Of the music, he observes, "it cannot be reasonably doubted, that many, if not most, or even all of the most celebrated and popular Scottish melodies, now extant, as distinguished from the Highland airs, have actually been composed by natives of the Lowlands, speaking and thinking in the English language; by shepherds tending their flocks, or by maids milking their ewes; by persons, in short, altogether uncultivated, or, if one may be allowed the expression, uncorrupted by art, and influenced only by the dictates of pure and simple nature. The tunes now preserved must, therefore, have been noted by accident; numbers have doubtless perished, and perhaps daily perishing, of equal, or possibly greater merit."

Historical Essay on Scottish Song.

Note D. P. 11.

“*But had you seen the shepherd boy.*” Fanciful and perhaps improbable as this personification may at first sight appear, the author flatters himself, that, on a nearer view, it will be found defensible. While we labour in vain to ascertain the precise period when an important art or science began to enlighten and improve mankind, we may safely attribute its origin to some inspired child of genius, whose creative powers brought it first to view. But for such extraordinary men, it is next to certain, that many of those delightful arts and useful discoveries which we now possess would never have been known, and far less have attained the perfection to which they are now arrived. Of these creative or inspired powers of the human mind, the arts of *Poetry* and of *Music* have, in all ages, laid claim to particular attention and admiration, and, taking every thing under consideration, it cannot excite surprise. The invention of a HOMER is perhaps not less wonderful than that of an ARCHIMIDES, nor are the discoveries of a NEWTON more astonishing than the inspired muse of a SHAKESPEARE. In ascribing, therefore, the origin of our pastoral melodies and poetry in the south of Scotland (of which we know nothing) to a particular shepherd, gifted with native genius, and influenced by concurring circumstances, the author humbly conceives he has done nothing but what poetical licence authorises, when no other lights can be obtained. Exclusively of this explanatory defence, it must be admitted, that in poetical painting there is additional interest produced by personification. What would appear tame and flat in narrative, becomes animated in prosopopœia, and throws the colouring of another delightful art over what otherwise

would have neither light nor shade. Should this not be true, the author, in the preceding poem, has been unpardonably guilty.



NOTE E. P. 32.

“*In cadence brisk and numbers meet.*” The striking difference between the sprightly movements and exhilarating strains of what are called our *pastoral* melodies and songs, contrasted with those which are conceived to be of a much older date, could hardly escape the notice of those critics who have bestowed considerable attention on this captivating species of national music and poetry. The inference drawn, that certain changes or alterations had, at different periods, taken place in our melodies, was extremely natural, and, indeed, highly probable. Without pretending to assign the causes which might have produced these changes, they have contented themselves with pointing out the distinguishing marks of early composition, by its extreme simplicity of constructure, and with tracing a gradual progress in musical science, by a more regular and artificial construction. In this investigation, a late writer,* not less remarkable for his elegance of taste than his knowledge of music, has gratified the public with a very beautiful little treatise on our Scotch melodies and song, in which he has established *three* distinct eras, which, with much ingenuity, he supposes, mark the progress of musical composition, from the extreme simplicity of its commencement to about the middle of the 17th century, when it ceased.

* The late Mr TYTLER of Woodhouselee.

To this opinion and arrangement, another critic,* no less remarkable for his acuteness and severity, opposes his decided negative; and, in the course of his investigation, it must be confessed, starts objections, and produces facts, which have considerable weight, although he frequently misrepresents or mistakes Mr TYTLER's general positions. Without entering into a critical examination of this controversy, it may be sufficient briefly to observe, that unless we are disposed to doubt the evidence of our own senses, and reject what must be obvious to every person conversant with musical composition and expression, it is indisputable that many, if not the greater number of those melodies which have been long considered and called the "*Pastoral Airs of the South*," differ very materially from those which are now considered to be of a much older date, and that the subjects, as well as the sentiments conveyed in the songs that accompany them, bear little or no resemblance to each other. The author thinks it necessary here to remark, that he alludes not to words composed by our *later* poets, but such as have been known time immemorial, and unquestionably of considerable antiquity.

When, or by what cause, these alterations took place, is, at present, foreign to the question; but that such must have happened, admits of little doubt, when the following circumstances are duly attended to. Our Scottish melodies (speaking generally) are distinguished by three qualities peculiar to them, namely, *simplicity*,—*tenderness*,—and *plaintiveness*, or what perhaps may be more properly termed melancholy. These have long procured them admirers; but what chiefly distinguishes our "*pastoral* melodies and songs of the south" from the others is *cheerfulness*, not only in the airs, but in the subjects and sentiments that

* Mr RITSON on Scottish Song.

accompany them. To argue that all this might have very naturally happened during the same period and condition of the people, from the same cause which in the present time produces musical and poetical compositions perfectly different in their nature, would, we apprehend, be little to the purpose, when it is recollected, that, till a certain period, (whatever time it was) nothing relative to pastoral scenes or occupation is mentioned in our songs or ballads, and that, even setting musical cadence and expression altogether aside, the *construction of musical composition*, (as Mr TYTLER has clearly shown) had, at some time, undergone a material alteration. Till some satisfactory *cause* is therefore assigned for these unquestionable *facts*, we certainly are at liberty to infer, that changes in our national melodies, and lyrical compositions, had actually occurred at some particular period, and consequently, that those which we have good reason to consider as later compositions, were materially different from those that preceded them.

The foregoing strictures, set down without method or arrangement, are merely what occurred to the author on a general view of a very obscure subject. It is hoped that they are delivered without either dogmatism or ostentation; and indeed, considering the total want of assistance he has had in the execution of the present work, it would have been altogether unbecoming in him to have assumed either, more especially, as the intention of what has been advanced was not to support a *theory*, but to suggest what might probably induce others, more competent to the task, to prosecute inquiries, and, if possible, to establish facts on which reliance might be placed. The subject certainly is not less interesting to the philosopher than it is to the antiquarian. It embraces what particularly concerns the inhabitants of this part of the united kingdom, and, the author would fain hope, the lovers of national

music and song still more. Should, however, nothing illustrative of this dark subject appear through the gloom of antiquity, the author may at least console himself with having first attempted, however ineffectually, to remove it. Hypothetical and fanciful as his opinions may probably appear to some readers, the *data* on which they are founded cannot be altogether set aside. When all other resources are withheld from us by the ignorance or barbarism of unlettered times, national poetry and music have been uniformly resorted to, and, not unfrequently, have afforded aid. If these untutored arts are admitted as expressive of the natural passions and emotions that produced them, we surely may safely infer, that what occasionally excited these passions and emotions must have been circumstances or events immediately connected with the existing state of society. Hence, the simple, unadorned picture of *manners, customs, and prevailing occupations*; and hence, too, the reigning *sentiments* of a particular class or description of people. In the circumstances adduced in the preceding notes, there is, if not positive proof, at least internal evidence, that the poetry and music peculiar to a particular district were intimately connected with the existing state of society. Fancy or imagination is here entirely out of the question; for the music, as well as the poetry, is not only highly *passionate*, but peculiarly *expressive*. Had these been uniformly the same, the object of the present inquiry would never have occurred; but they vary in so many important points, and present such opposite pictures, that it is impossible not to be struck with the dissimilitude.* If it is denied that this proceeded from

* It is not a little remarkable that we should have no fewer than *four* different kinds of music in Scotland, all completely distinct in their nature, namely, the southern melodies already noticed; the western or Gaelic airs; the northern or Strathspey music, and that species of brisk exhilarating measure distinguished by the name of *reel*, or dancing music, which cannot be considered as peculiar to any particular quarter. Each of these, however, has its peculiar charm, but so perfectly different from each other, that no person possessed

any change in the condition of the people, it is incumbent on those who withhold their assent, to shew what the sources were from whence they flowed, and what occasioned so evident a change in the *style, sentiments,* and *descriptions* of the composers. On the other hand, should it be maintained, or even alleged, that the pastoral state in the southern districts, neither *succeeded* the feudal, nor became more widely extended, to what circumstance, or at what period, are we to ascribe productions particularly and generally descriptive of pastoral life, which is no where to be found during the existence of the feudal state? These questions are surely not unreasonable; but what seems to put this last-mentioned point beyond all dispute is, that the pastoral state, not only existed long after the feudal state was extinct, but did not finally terminate till a very few years ago in many of the districts above alluded to. This fact can be proved by thousands now in life, for even thirty years ago, nothing was more common than flocks and herds roaming at large over uncultivated fields and uninclosed districts, now particularly appropriated to agricultural operations; nor has any country been more unequivocally marked and distinguished for general pasturage than the quarter immediately under review.—From time immemorial, “*The pastoral Scenes and Songs of the South*” has been a phrase equally proverbial with “*The feuds of the Border.*”

of a musical ear can be at a loss to distinguish them the moment he hears them.—Can we venture to account for these singular musical distinctions in the same country? Can we suppose that they originated from any other cause than a difference in the relative situation, condition, and occupation of the inhabitants, combined with the influence of climate and local scenery?—The subject is certainly deserving of philosophical attention.—See *Dr BEATTIE on Poetry and Music.*