

Vagabond Songs and Ballads of Scotland

With many Old and Familiar Melodies

Edited, with Notes,
By **ROBERT FORD**



ALEXANDER GARDNER

Publisher to Her Majesty the Queen

PAISLEY; and PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON

1899

She's auld, an' she's runkled, she'll no bide their scorning,
She'll beat them whan tried in a battle, I'll bail ;
So we'll ne'er lat her want Athole brose i' the morning,
Nor weel-buttered bannocks o' barley meal.

Sae up wi' the kilties, etc.

There is a song with this refrain, said to have been written by the celebrated John, Duke of Argyll and Greenwich, who figures so favourably in the "Heart of Midlothian," as the patron of Jeanie Deans ; and Robert Burns picked up a fragment of a still older ditty, the ower-turn of which was—

Bannocks o' bere-meal, bannocks o' barley !
Here's to the Highlandman's bannocks o' barley !

These have been often printed. But here is a song, a very worthy one—which, though it has seldom seen the light of the printed page, has been sung by at least a generation of country people in Scotland.

THE BONNIE BANKS O' LOCH LOMOND.

By yon bonnie banks, and by yon bonnie braes,
Where the sun shines bright on Loch Lomon',
Where me and my true love were ever wont to gae,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomon'.
O, ye'll tak' the high road, and I'll tak' the low road,
And I'll be in Scotland afore ye ;
But me and my true love will never meet again
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomon'.

'Twas there that we parted in yon shady glen,
On the steep, steep side o' Ben Lomon',
Where in purple hue the Hieland hills we view,
And the moon coming out in the gloamin'.

O, ye'll tak' the high road, etc.

The wee birdies sing, and the wild flowers spring,
 And in sunshine the waters are sleepin' ;
 But the broken heart it kens nae second spring again,
 Tho' the waefu' may cease frae their greetin'.

O, ye'll tak' the high road, etc.

The refrain of this puzzling song, which has recently enjoyed a vogue in the highest circles, is supposed in substance to have been the adieu to his sweetheart by one of Prince Charlie's followers in the '45, before the poor fellow's execution at Carlisle. The tradition is that his sweetheart was at the side of the scaffold, and his parting words to her were—"Ye'll tak' the high road, and I'll tak' the low road, and I'll be in Scotland afore ye." The low road, we are told, meant for the prisoner the grave, and his words indicated that death would bring his spirit to Scotland before his sweetheart could travel back to the banks of Loch Lomond, where they had learned to love each other, and had hoped to spend a long and prosperous married career.

I do not doubt that the song we have heard so much of recently is but the rescued fragment of an old country ballad of the same name. So evident is this, indeed, that a large portion is actually extant, which Lady John Scott, the writer of the modern version of "Annie Laurie," picked up in the streets of Edinburgh, I do not know how many years ago. Miss F. Mary Colquhoun, of Luss, has also gathered some wandering verses, notably these—

We'll meet where we parted in bonnie Luss Glen,
 'Mang the heathery braes o' Ben Lomon' ;
 Starts the roe frae the pass an' the fox frae his den,
 While abune gleams the mune thro' the rowan.

Wi' yer bonnie laced shoon an' yer buckles sae clear,
 An' yer plaid ower yer shouther sae rarely ;
 Ae glance o' yer e'e wad chase awa' my fear,
 Sae winsome are yer looks, O, my dearie !

What has been sung of late, however, is perhaps enough for the singer's purpose. William Black, the novelist, and others have given it as their opinion that the song is wholly of recent origin ; but Mr. Kippen, of Crieff, assures me that he heard it frequently on the streets, in one form or another, more than sixty years ago.

THE BONNIE BANKS O' LOCH LOMOND.

- “ OH ! whither away, my bonnie, bonnie May,
So late, an' so far in the gloamin' ?
The mist gathers grey o'er muirland an' brae,
Oh ! whither alane art thou roamin' ? ”
- “ I trysted my ain luv the nicht in the broom,
My Ranald, wha lo'es me sae dearly ;
For the morrow he marches to Edinburgh toun,
To fecht for the King an' Prince Charlie ! ”
- “ Yet why weep ye sae, my bonnie, bonnie May,
Yer true luv from battle returnin',
His darlin' will claim in the nicht o' his fame,
An' change into gladness her mournin' ! ”
- “ Oh ! weel may I weep—yestreen in my sleep
We stood bride an' bridegroom thegither !
But his lips an' his breath were as chilly as death,
An' his heart's bluid was red on the heather ! ”
- “ Oh ! dauntless in battle as tender in love,
He'll yield ne'er a foot to the foeman ;
But never again frae the field o' the slain
To Moira he'll come an' Loch Lomon'.
- “ Oh ! he'll gang the hie road an' I'll gang the low,
But I'll be in Heaven afore him ;
For my bed is prepar'd in the mossy graveyard,
'Mang the hazels o' green Inverarnan.

“The thistle shall bloom, an’ the King hae his ain,
 An’ fond lovers meet in the gloamin’,
 An’ I an’ my true luv will yet meet again
 Far abune the bonnie banks o’ Loch Lomon’.”

These are the verses, alluded to in the note to the foregoing song, which Lady John Scott picked up in the streets of Edinburgh.

THE BARRIN’ O’ THE DOOR, O.

Lively.

The musical score is written on a single treble clef staff in 2/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody is lively and consists of four lines of music. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with some words underlined to indicate syllable placement. The final line of music ends with a double bar line.

It fell about the Martinmas time, And a gay time it was
 then, O! That our gude-wife had puddin's to mak', And she
 boil'd them in a pan, O! The barr-in' o' our door,
 weel, weel, weel, O, the barr-in' o' our door, weel.

It fell about the Martinmas time,
 And a gay time it was then, O!
 That our gudewife had puddin's to mak'.
 And she boil'd them in a pan, O!

The barrin' o' our door, weel, weel, weel,
 O, the barrin' o' our door, weel.