

OLD SONGS AND OLD AIRS.

"SAVOURNEEN DHEELISH" was not written by George Colman, but by Lady Morgan, and it is surprising that it should be claimed for him because it was sung in his musical drama—"The Surrender of Calais." There was nothing more common than one man's songs appearing in another man's dramas. "Cathal the Hunter," and the splendid ballad, "Arthur MacCoy," were written by John Boyle, author of the historical work, "The Battle Fields of Ireland." The spirited Orange song, "The Maiden City," was not, I am glad to say, written by an Irish lady, but by a talented and very bigoted English-woman—Charlotte Elizabeth.

All the best known "Scottish" songs are not the productions of natives of Caledonia. The well-known song, "Roy's Wife," was written by an Irish lady—Mrs. Grant, of Carron. It is remarkable for its perfect rhythm and its peculiar musical accent.

Miss Blamire, who wrote "An' Ye Shall Walk in Silk Attire," was a Cumberland girl, and Mrs. Hamilton, who wrote "My Ain Fireside," was an Irishwoman. The author of the beautiful tune, "Within a Mile of Edinboro' Town," was an Irishman—Dr. Smith, a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin. "Hey! Johnny Cope, Are Ye Walkin' Yet," was composed by an Ulsterman named O'Hara, who followed the "Pretender" into Scotland, and was present at the battle in which Sir John Cope and the English troops were so well beaten. "There's Na Luck About the House," one of the best "Scottish" songs, is often attributed to Burns, but it was written by Meikle, the translator of Camoens. "Kate of Aberdeen" and "Nanny, Wilt Thou Gang Wi' Me" were not written by Scotchmen. Charles Doyne Sillery, an Irishman (born in Athlone), wrote the "Scottish Blue-Bells," of which I give two of the five stanzas—

"Let the proud Indian boast of his jessamine bowers,
His pasture of perfume and rose-cover'd dells;
While humbly I sing of those wild little flowers—
The blue-bells of Scotland, the Scottish blue-bells.

"Sublime are your hills when the young day is beaming,
And green are your groves, with their cool, crystal wells;
And bright are your broadsword, like morning dews gleaming,
On blue-bells of Scotland, on Scottish blue-bells!"

Though Scotland is rich enough in lyrical poetry and fine old airs, her sons are not satisfied. They have repeatedly endeavored to palm off as their own many of Ireland's grand old melodies. Of these I may mention four—"Maggy Lauder," "Lochaber," "Eileen a Roon," and "The Banks of Banna." "Maggy Lauder," is as purely Irish as "St. Patrick's Day," or "Garryowen," and much more ancient than either. The great Irish harper, Myles O'Reilly, who was born at Killencarra, County Cavan, in 1635, was the composer of the original "Lochaber," and it was carried into Scotland by another eminent Irish bard, Thomas O'Connellan—born in Sligo, in 1640. Long before the Scotch attempted to rob us of this melody, it was known in England as "the Irish tune," and words were written to it by Thomas Duffett:—

"Since Ceolia's my foe,
To a desert I'll go,
Where some river
For ever
Shall echo my woe," etc.

This song of Duffett's was published in London, in 1676, and Allan Ramsay, who wrote "Farewell to Lochaber," was not born until 1696, nor was his "Lochaber" given to the public until 1726—just fifty years after Duffett's song to O'Reilly's air.

Carroll O'Daily's exquisite and plaintive melody, "Eileen a Roon" (Eileen the secret treasure of my heart), the Scotch have endeavored to purloin, under the title of "Robin Adair." By the way, Robin Adair himself was an Irishman, lived at Hollypark, in Wicklow, and early in the last century was a member of the Irish Parliament. Handel, the great German composer, once declared that he would rather be the author of "Eileen a Roon," than the best of his own compositions. It is from this song of O'Daily that the famous expression of Irish hospitality, *cead mille failte*, was taken. It occurs in the concluding verse, and is thus translated by Furlong:—

A hundred thousand welcomes,
Eileen a Roon!
A hundred thousand welcomes,
Eileen a Roon!
Oh! welcome evermore,
With welcomes yet in store
Till love and life are o'er,
Eileen a Roon!

But the most remarkable attempt of the Scotch to steal an Irish air was that of "The Banks of Banna." This song was written by the Hon. George Ogle, to the air of "Down Beside Me," one of the sweetest of Ireland's ancient melodies. The Scotch long-coveted this air, for as far back as 1793, Robert Burns says, in a letter to George Thompson: "You are quite right in inserting the last five in your list, though they are certainly Irish." "Shepherds, I have lost My Love," (Banks of Banna), is to me a heavenly air. What would you think of a set of Scottish verses to it?

Burns' words to this air were rejected by Mr. Thompson. In 1824, Thompson himself tried his hand at the Irish melody, but his effort was also a failure. However, in 1851, Mr. Wood, of Edinburgh, surmounted the whole difficulty by giving, in one of his publications (*Songs of Scotland*), "The Banks of Banna," both words and music, with a very cool note, to the effect that "the air has been sometimes claimed as Irish!"

In the *Republic of Letters* and in *Whistle Finkie*, Scotland claims the credit of William Kennedy's works, for no other reason than that his poems, "Fifful Francis," were published in that country. Kennedy was born and bred in Ireland, was educated at Belfast, and begins one of his songs thus—

"Oh! while I live I'll ne'er forget the trouble of that day
When, bound unto the distant land, our ship got under weigh:
My friends I left at Belfast town, my love at Carrick shore,
And I gave to poor old Ireland my blessing o'er and o'er!"

—'Irish World.'

MARRIAGEABLE AGES.

REPORTS from Her Majesty's representatives abroad, showing the earliest age at which marriages can be legally solemnised in each of the States of the continent of Europe, have been presented to the House of Commons in pursuance of their address dated June 15, 1874. In Austria the age of discretion, both for males and females, is fourteen, and this period of life must be reached on both sides before a marriage can be valid. In Hungary, however, the marriage laws are entirely ecclesiastical, and males of the Roman Catholic confession cannot contract marriages until they have completed their fourteenth year, nor females till they are twelve years of age. The Orthodox Greek Church follows the same rule: but Protestants consider males under the age of eighteen and females under the age of fifteen unable to contract valid marriages. In Cisleithania, Jews are subject to the civil law; but in Hungary there is no restriction as to the age at which they may marry. In Russia, eighteen years for males and sixteen for females are the periods of life at which marriage may be legally contracted. In Turkey there is no general law on the subject of marriageable ages. The Italian law fixes eighteen years for males and fifteen years for females as the earliest time of life at which marriages may be solemnised. Prussia, by the statute of December, 1872, sanctions marriage in the case of males on the completion of their eighteenth year, and the fourteenth year in the case of females, no exception being allowed to these provisions. The law in France states the earliest age at which marriages can be contracted to be eighteen years in the case of males and fifteen in the case of females, but powers of dispensation are reserved by the code. Under the old Monarchy, boys could marry at the age of fourteen and girls at twelve, as under ancient Roman and even Athenian law. The Belgian code is the same as the French in determining the ages of eighteen and fifteen severally as those at which men and women may marry, and in leaving a right of dispensation. Bavaria has four sets of laws on the subject. Under the "Landrecht" the lawful age for males is fourteen and for females twelve. In the district in which the "Gemeines Recht" prevails the limits of age are the same. The more advanced ages of eighteen for males and fifteen for females are in those parts of Bavaria in which the Prussian "Landrecht" rules; and in those districts which acknowledge the French "Code Civile" the age for males is eighteen and for females fifteen, as in France and Belgium. Leaving to the Minister of Justice the faculty of granting a dispensation, the law in Denmark fixes the age of twenty for a man and sixteen for the girl as the earliest at which persons can marry. In Greece, males cannot marry before fourteen years of age nor females before twelve; while in the Ionian Islands, sixteen and fourteen years are respectively the legal ages. A bill has been, or is about to be introduced into the Athenian Chamber, appointing fifteen of the earliest age for males and twelve for females. In Hesse Darmstadt and Baden, the standard of marriageable ages is curiously high. The consent of parents is necessary in the case of men until they have completed their twenty-fifth year; in that of women until they are twenty-one. In the event of parents refusing the consent, respectful summonses can be made by the children, and the law requires three such summonses from men who have not attained their thirtieth year, and women who are not twenty-five years of age, and two summonses only after that age. The earliest age at which the law of Baden, under any conditions, allows the population to marry is eighteen years for men and fifteen for girls. The completion of eighteen years by males and sixteen by females is necessary for valid marriage in the Netherlands. In Saxe Coburg Gotha no male is permitted to marry before he has attained his twenty-first year. Cases occur where exceptions are made, namely, when the parents of a young man are from illness or age no longer capable of managing a farm or any other business, and it becomes necessary that the wife should assist in the household. Such exceptions, however, can only be granted by the Government, to whom the petitioner must apply. As regards females, all that is necessary is that at the age of fourteen years they should be confirmed before leaving school. It seldom happens that a girl marries before her seventeenth year. By the law of June, 1870, the legal ages of marriage in Spain are fourteen for male and twelve for females. It is just the same in Portugal, with this qualification, that minors—that is, persons of either sex under twenty-one years of age—cannot contract marriage without the consent of their parents. In Wurtemberg no subject, male or female, can be legally married, unless of the full age of twenty-one years, without the consent of parents, and in the case of males, a special dispensation from the administrative authorities. This dispensation is granted only under exceptional circumstances, and the requirements of military service alone render it practically impossible in most cases for any man to marry before he is of age. The marriageable age for females is fixed for Wurtemberg by-law at the completion of the fourteenth year, and under that age no marriage can be legally solemnised. The principle which underlies the provision of the law in contract minors are legally incompetent to conclude, whereas females are supposed to acquire majority by marriage. In Saxony, the legal age for the marriage of males is eighteen, for females sixteen years. According to the amended paragraph of the new German Civil Marriage Bill the ages would be respectively twenty and sixteen years, instead of eighteen and fourteen as in the draft of the Bill. In Roumania the legal age for marriage is eighteen years in the case of males and fifteen in that of females. There is much variation of the marriage law in Switzerland as to the ages of contracting parties, which in some cantons is as high as twenty years for males and seventeen for females, and in others as low as fourteen for males and twelve for females. Consent of parents is also required up to twenty-five years in Uri, in Schaffhouse, in Appenzell, in Tessin, and in Geneva.—'Home News.'

The Catholics of Kimberly (South African Diamond Fields) intend to forward, for presentation to the Pope, sixteen picked diamonds, as a token of their veneration and esteem. The valuable parcel will be accompanied with an address, expressive of their deep attachment to his Holiness's Head of the Church.