

AN ESSAY ON SONGS AND BALLADS ;  
ILLUSTRATED BY EXAMPLES FROM SHAKESPEARE, AND THOSE  
CURRENT IN LANCASHIRE.

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AND

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[In order that my lamented friend may not be held responsible for any statements or opinions except his own, my additions to the Essay are enclosed within brackets.—T.T.W.]

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[In a dissertation on Songs and Ballads it may be well to define the signification of the two terms, which, though often used as meaning the same thing, are by no means synonymous. In England, *song* is the older word, being derived from the Anglo-Saxon *sang* ;—our early ancestors distinguishing male from female singers, the former by *sanger* and the latter *sangistere*, or, as we now say, *singer* and *songstress* ; in the latter case using a double feminine. As late as the thirteenth century the word *ballad* was not known in the English language. Though we derive it from the French *balade*, that word is not to be found in Kellam's *Norman Dictionary*, in the *Glossaire Francaise* of Ducange, nor even in the *Dictionary of the Academie Francaise*.] It is most probably borrowed by the French from the Italian *ballata*, a ball, a dance, or ballad. The French *bal*, a dance, and *baladin*, a dancer on the stage, a buffoon ; and the modern term *ballet* for a stage exhibition of dancing, all show that, in its original meaning, a ballad was a song sung during a dance. A ballad usually contains a story ; and in its present meaning it denotes a popular song, or roundelay, generally

sung in the streets. Usually it consisted of quatrains, or four-line stanzas ; but a piece of poetry, or rhyme, in verses of eight lines each, was formerly said to be composed in *balade-royal*.

We shall but briefly glance at the *history* of the Song and the Ballad.

This rude poetry has been in all countries the earliest record of public acts and events ; [the song in praise of heroes, and the incitor to living warriors to emulate the deeds of their ancestors. Tacitus tells us, in his *Annals*, that Arminius, long after his death, was remembered in the rude songs of his country ; and that ballads were the only annals known among the ancient Germans. Saxo-Grammaticus, speaking of the Northern writers of a somewhat later period, says, that they drew the materials of their history from Runic songs. The Scandinavians had their Scalds, whose business it was to compose ballads, (or *Sagas*,) in which they celebrated the warlike achievements of their forefathers. In Britain, Wales, and Ireland, the ancient bards and minstrels had the like functions ;] and when the warlike Edward I sought to subjugate Wales, he deemed it necessary to aim a blow at the national spirit, by destroying all the bards. Many of their compositions, however, survived ; and a writer, as late as Queen Elizabeth's time, describing North Wales, says, " upon the Sundays and holidays the multitude of all " sorts of men, women, and children, of every parish, do use " to meet in sundry places, either on some hill, or on the side " of some mountain, where their harpers and crotchets sing " them songs of the doings of their ancestors."\*

In process of time, as manners improved, the Ballad in every country by degrees included a wider range of subjects. It was no longer solely employed in rehearsing valorous deeds, but included in its rhymes the marvellous tale or the wild

\* Ellis's *Orig. Lett. of Eng. Hist.*, vol. iii, p. 40.

adventure, occasionally becoming the vehicle of sentiment and passion ; and no festivity was esteemed complete among our ancestors in the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries, which was not set off with the exercise of the minstrel's talents, who usually sang his ballads to the harp, and was everywhere received with respect. Gradually, however, these rude performances lost their attractions with the superior ranks of society. (See *Penny Cyclop. in voce.*) "When language became refined," says Dr. Aikin, "and poetical taste elevated by an acquaintance with the Greek and Latin authors, the subjects of the epic muse were no longer dressed in the homely garb of the popular ballad, but assumed the borrowed ornament and stately air of heroic poetry, and every poetical attempt in the sublime and beautiful cast, was an imitation of the classical models. The native poetry of the country was reserved merely for the humorous and burlesque ; and the term *ballad* was brought, by custom, to signify a comic story told in low, familiar language, and accompanied by a droll, trivial tune. It was much used by the wits of the time as a vehicle for laughable ridicule and mirthful satire ; and a great variety of the most pleasing specimens of this kind of writing is to be found in the witty era of English genius, which I take to be comprehended between the beginning of the reign of Charles II and the times of Swift and Prior. Since that period the genius of the age has chiefly been characterised by the correct, elegant, and tender ; and a real, or affected, taste for beautiful simplicity has almost universally prevailed."\*

In the further progress of literary taste, the older ballads came to be considered as objects of curiosity, on account of the insight they afforded into the manners and modes of thinking of remote times ; while the strokes of nature with

\* Dr. Aikin's *Essays on Song Writing*, 8vo, London, 1770.

which they abounded, and the artless simplicity and strength of their language, excited the admiration of liberal critics. When, therefore, they had long ceased to be current in popular song or recitation, they were carefully collected by poetical antiquaries, and elucidated by historical notes; and thus a secondary importance was attached to them, scarcely inferior to that which they possessed when chanted to the harp of the minstrel. (See Dr. Aikin's *Essay* prefixed to his *Vocal Poetry*, 8vo, London, 1810.)

Chief amongst the collections of our own national ballads may be named the *Percy Reliques*; Evans's *Old Ballads*, Historical and Narrative; and Ritson's *Ancient Songs* from the time of Henry III. Amongst more recent collections *The Pictorial Book of Ballads*, Traditional and Romantic, is one of the largest and, perhaps, the best. Ritson says that the number of our own ancient printed songs and ballads which have perished must be considerable. Very few exist of an earlier date than the reign of James I, or even of his son Charles. Being printed only on single sheets, which would fall chiefly into the hands of the vulgar, who had no better method of preserving these favourite compositions than by pasting them upon the wall, their destruction is easily accounted for. The practice of collecting them into books did not commence till after Queen Elizabeth's time, and is probably owing to Richard Johnson and Thomas Deloney, (great ballad-mongers,) who, when they were advanced in years, and incapable, perhaps, of producing anything of merit, seem to have contented themselves with collecting their more juvenile, or happier compositions, into little penny books entitled *Garlands*. Of these, being popular and often reprinted, many are still extant, particularly in the Pepysian Library. (Ritson's *Diss. on Ancient Songs and Music*, p. lxxii.)

Of single-sheet songs, ballads, or broadsides, often with

the musical notation appended, a large collection was made by James Orchard Halliwell, Esq., F.R.S., F.S.A., &c.; and presented by himself to the Chetham Library, Manchester. Interspersed with proclamations, prose broadsides, and various documents in manuscript and print, the whole collection has been mounted in thirty-two volumes folio. (See Halliwell's *Catalogue of the Proclamations, Broadsides, Ballads, and Poems*, presented to the Chetham Library, London, 1851.)

To what an accident we owe the finest collection of the older Ballads in the language is shown from the following passage:—"A young Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, visiting at the house of a country friend, saw, lying on the floor beneath a bureau, an old, ragged, dirty paper book, of which the housemaid had torn away half, for the purpose of lighting her fires. Curiosity led him to rescue the remainder from destruction, and the gentle antiquary afterwards edited and published this treasure of minstrelsy." (Sir F. Palgrave's *History of England and Normandy*, Preface, p. xlix.) The gentle antiquary was Thomas Percy, who became D.D. and bishop of Dromore; and the fragmentary collection, thus in part only rescued by him from the flames, is now the well-known "*Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, consisting of old heroic ballads, songs, and other pieces of our earlier poets, (chiefly of the lyric kind,) together with some few of later date." It first appeared in three small volumes, octavo, in 1765, and has been well characterised by Ellis as "the most agreeable selection perhaps in any language."

With all respect for the writers whose opinions we have cited above, we are inclined to place the golden era of ballad literature in England a little earlier than the reigns of the Stuart kings.

It was "in the days of good Queen Bess" that song and ballad, catch and round, madrigal and canon, formed one chief recreation of all ranks and classes, from the monarch's

court and the baron's hall, to the village hostelry or the May-pole on the green. To sing and to play some instrument was a part of the education of all youth of both sexes who could obtain any education at all. For a gentleman or lady not to be able to take, the former a tenor or bass part, the latter a treble or a "mean" (as the *alto* part was then called), was regarded as a mark of deficient training, or of boorish ignorance. Collections of pieces, words and music, were in every knightly hall and lady's bower; and at all feasts and festivals one favourite enjoyment was for the whole party to join in part-song and madrigal. Our own Shakespeare, that "sweet Swan of Avon," has given us scores of songs and ballads of his own, and has put into the mouths of the *dramatis persone*, in many of his plays, countless snatches of quaint old ballads, of which all but these fragments are probably lost. To give every instance of this kind scattered through his dramas, would demand a large extent of space. We can only name a few prominent instances and make a general reference to the plays themselves for the full corroboration of our argument. In *Othello*\* we find that Iago incites Cassio to drink by singing a bacchanalian song, which, he says, he learned in England, and which is to be found in Percy's *Reliques*, its burden being "Take this old cloak "about ye." In touching presentiment of her own impending fate, Desdemona tells Emilia†—

"My mother had a maid called Barbara;  
 She was in love;—and he she loved proved mad,  
 And did forsake her. She had a song of 'Willow,'  
 An old thing 'twas, but it expressed her fortune,  
 And she died singing it. That song to-night  
 Will not go from my mind. I have nought to do,  
 But to go hang my head all at one side,  
 And sing it like poor Barbara."

Then Desdemona sings—

"The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,  
 Sing all a green willow;" &c., &c.

\* Act ii, Scene 3.

† Act iv, Scene 3.

This is from an old song, in black letter, in the Pepys Collection at Cambridge, but Shakespeare transformed it from the complaint of a "lass-lorn bachelor" to that of a "deserted maid." [With exquisite truth and beauty the poet makes Emilia exclaim in her dying moments—

"What did thy song bode, lady?  
Hark! canst thou hear me?  
I will play the swan, and die in music;—  
*Willow, willow, willow.*"

Who, that has seen a representation of, or indeed merely read, *Hamlet*, has failed to feel the wild sweetness of the songs of the distraught Ophelia? \* Then we have the gravedigger singing at his work; and Yorick, also, was a singer of merry songs.

In *Henry VIII* we learn, that in the reign of the "bluff monarch," French songs were all the rage. But in the closing scene of this play, at the baptism of the princess, afterwards Queen Elizabeth, Cranmer blessing the infant, predicts that—

"In her days every man shall eat in safety,  
Under his own vine, what he pleases; and sing  
*Merry songs* of peace to all his neighbours."

The prologue to *Pericles* is spoken in the character of our old poet Gower; as representing the ancient dramatic chorus—

"To sing a song that of old was sung;  
  
To glad your ears, and please your eyes.  
It hath been sung at festivals,  
On Ember-eves, and Holy-ales;  
And lords and ladies in their lives,  
Have read it for restoratives."

In the first part of *Henry IV*, † Glendower tells Hotspur—

"I was trained up in the English court,  
Where, being but young, I framed to the harp  
Many an English ditty, lovely well;  
And gave the tongue a hopeful ornament."

\* Act iv, Scene 5.

† Act v, Scene 1.

‡ Act iii, Scene 1.

Hotspur had not been cast in so gentle a mould, and hence he expresses his contempt for song and music thus—

“I had rather be a kitten and cry *mew*,  
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers.”

Again, Mortimer tells his wife—

“Thy tongue  
Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penned;  
Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bower,  
With ravishing division to her lute.”

Falstaff, too, “the merry knight,” is always babbling of song and ballad\*—

“An I have not ballads made on ye all,  
And sung to filthy tunes; let a cup  
Of sack be my poison.”

At the Boar's Head,† he cries out loudly for a song to make him merry.] In the second part of *Henry IV*, at the same tavern, he breaks into snatches of an old song, “When Arthur first in court began, &c.,”‡ and calls for a “merry song.” When Sir John Coleville surrenders to him on the field, Falstaff vaunts his feat:—“Let it be booked with the rest of this day's deeds, or by the Lord I'll have it in a particular ballad else, with my own picture on the top of it; Coleville kissing my feet.” Such ornamentation of the old ballad-sheet by rude woodcuts was even then common.

In *Cymbeline*,§ Arviragus and Guiderius finding, as they suppose, the dead body of a youth (Imogen), the former says—

“And let us, Polydore, though now our voices  
Have got the mannish crack, sing him to the ground,  
As once to our mother; use like note and words.”

\* *First Part of Henry IV*, Act ii, Scene 2. † Act iii, Scene 3.

[‡ Act ii, Scene 4; also, Percy's *Reliques*, vol. I, p. 198, ed. 1767:—

“When Arthur first in court began,  
And was approved king,  
By force of arms great victories wanne,  
And conquest home did bring,” &c.]

§ Act iv, Scene 2.



[They sing—

“Fear no more the heat of the sun,  
Nor the furious Winter’s rages;  
Thou thy worldly task hast done,  
Home art gone, and ta’en thy wages,” &c.

This is not the only dirge in Shakespeare’s dramas; for in *Much Ado about Nothing*, Claudius, at the supposed tomb of Hero, says—

“Now music sound, and sing your solemn hymn.”

The song, or dirge, contains the words—

“Pardon, goddess of the night,  
Those that slew thy virgin knight;  
For the which, with songs of woe,  
Round about her tomb we go.”\*]

It is literally true of our greatest dramatist that he has embalmed in his verse every kind of song, for every stage of life, from the cradle to the tomb. In *Titus Andronicus*,† Tamora says to Aaron—

“While hounds and horns, and sweet melodious birds,  
Be unto us, as is a nurse’s song  
Of *Lullaby*, to bring her babe asleep.”

So in the *Midsummer Night’s Dream*‡ is a song with a chorus of *Lullaby*. That the bitter, stinging satire of a coarse ballad was held in great dread we infer from several scattered passages in the plays. In *Antony and Cleopatra*,§ the Egyptian queen, finding herself Cæsar’s captive, fears being made a spectacle in Rome, to grace his triumph, and amongst other evils, sees and dreads lest—

“Scald rhymers, ballad us out of tune:  
The quick comedians  
Extemporally will stage us, and present  
Our Alexandrian revels.”

\* Act v, Scene 3.

† Act ii, Scene 3. Douce has an interesting note on the word *Lullaby*, in his *Illustrations*, which is reproduced in Staunton’s *Shakespeare*, vol. iii, p. 639.

‡ Act ii, Scene 2.

§ Act v, Scene 2.

[In *All's Well that Ends Well*,\* when Helena offers to cure the king, he asks—"What darest thou venture?" She assures him at once that she dare venture being "traded by odious ballads."

That love was a fertile theme for ballads in most times, none will doubt. Hence, in *Troilus and Cressida*,† Helen says, "Let thy song be *Love*." Pindarus accordingly sings—"Love, love, nothing but love, still more!" So it is in *All's Well that Ends Well*‡ where our poet describes a melancholy man as always singing, and adds—"I knew a man that had this trick of melancholy, and sold a good manor for a "song." The Widow also tells Helena how Bertram loves and serenades her daughter, that—

"Every night he comes  
With musics of all sorts, and songs composed  
To her unworthiness."§]

Even songs in air and sea have not eluded the exquisite sense of the poet. We have Ariel's delicious songs in the *Tempest*; and in the *Comedy of Errors*|| Antipholus of Syracuse exclaims: "I'll stop mine ears against the mermaid's "song." In the *Midsummer Night's Dream*,¶ Oberon also speaks of the "sea-maid's music." Armado, in *Love's Labour Lost*,\*\* asks Moth, "Is there not a ballad, boy, of 'The king "and the beggar?'" Moth replies, "The world was guilty "of such a ballad three ages since; but I think now it is "not to be found." This song, however, is printed in Percy's *Reliques*, and is the one alluded to by Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*,†† where he speaks of the time "When King Cophetua "loved a beggar-maid." In the former play Biron declares he—

"Will no more  
Woo in rhyme, like a blind harper's song."

Act ii, Scene 1.                    † Act iii, Scene 1.                    † Act iii, Scene 2.  
§ Act iii, Scene 7.                    || Act iii, Scene 2.  
¶ Act ii, Scene 1.                    \*\* Act i, Scene 2.                    †† Act ii, Scene 1.

Again,\* after the ditty—"When daisies pied and violets  
 "blue," Armando says, "the words of Mercury are harsh  
 "after the songs of Apollo." When we examine *Much Ado  
 about Nothing*† we find Benedick denying that he shall die  
 for love; and he exclaims—"Pick out mine eyes with a  
 "ballad-maker's pen." He again asks Claudio;—"Come, in  
 "what key shall a man take you, to go into the song?"  
 [Don Pedro requests Balthazar‡ to let him "hear that song  
 "again." Balthazar replies: "Oh good my lord, tax not so  
 "bad a voice to slander music more than once." Don Pedro—  
 "I pray thee sing." Balthazar sings—

"Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,  
 Men were deceivers ever;  
 One foot in sea, and one on shore,  
 To one thing constant never." &c.

One line of which song runs—"Sing no more ditties, sing no  
 "mo." Don Pedro adds—"By my troth, a good song."]

We find in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*,§ when Slender  
 longs to find favour in the eyes of Sweet Anne Page, that he  
 exclaims, "I had rather than forty shillings I had my book  
 "of songs and sonnets here." Mrs. Page,|| planning a fright  
 for Falstaff, by a number of persons in the guise of Herne  
 the Hunter and fairies, suggests—

"Let them from forth a sawpit rush at once  
 With some *diffused* song,"—

this is, with some *wild* and *irregular* melody.

That charming play *As You Like It* is redolent of free  
 forest life and jovial song. Amiens sings¶—

"Under the greenwood tree,  
 Who loves to lie with me,  
 And turn his merry note,  
 Unto the sweet bird's throat," &c.

\* *Love's Labour Lost*, Act v, Scene 2.

† Act i, Scene 1.

‡ Act ii, Scene 3.

§ Act i, Scene 1.

|| Act iv, Scene 4.

¶ Act ii, Scene 5.

Jaques asks for more, declaring "I can suck melancholy out of a song as a weasel sucks eggs . . . Come, sing; and you that will not, hold your tongues." Jaques himself sings, "If it do come to pass," &c. ; and when the Duke\* asks for him, a lord replies, "He is but now gone hence. Here was he merry, hearing of a song." Again, Celia tells Rosalind—†

"I would sing my song without a burden;  
Thou bring'st me out of tune."

A deer being killed, Jaques asks, "Have you no song, forester, for this purpose?" and the song is sung, "What shall he have that killed the deer?" [When two pages of the duke meet Touchstone and Audrey in the forest, Touchstone invites them‡ to "sip and sing." One of the pages asks, "Shall we clap into't roundly, without hauking or spitting, or saying we are hoarse, which are only the prologues to a bad voice?" They sing—"It was a lover and his lass;" on which Touchstone remarks, "Truly young gentlemen though there was no great matter in the ditty, yet the note was very untuneable." In another scene§ the Duke says, "Give us some music; and good cousin, sing." Amiens sings—

"Blow, blow, thou Winter wind,  
Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude."

Jaques, in the memorable "Seven Ages," portrays

"The lover,  
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eyebrow."

In the *Twelfth Night*,|| Sir Toby calls for a catch, and Sir Andrew for a song; on which the Clown asks—"Would

† *As You Like It*, Act ii, Scene 7.  
‡ Act v, Scene 3.

§ Act ii, Scene 7.

+ Act iii, Scene 2.  
|| Act ii, Scene 3.

“you have a love song; or a song of good life;” evidently meaning a song with a good moral tendency.] Sir Toby demands “a love song—a love song;” and the Clown sings, “Oh mistress mine, where are you roaming?” Again, Sir Toby asks, “Shall we rouse the night-owl in a catch, that “will draw three souls out of one weaver?” and they sing a catch according to his suggestion.

The Duke, when lovesick, exclaims\*—

“Give me some music;  
Now good Cesario, but the piece of song,  
That old and antique song we heard last night.”

And again—

“O fellow come, the song we had last night;  
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 chant it. It is silly sooth,  
And dallies with the innocence of life,  
Like the old age.”

The Clown then sings, “Come away, come away, death.”

The *Midsummer Night's Dream*,† another woodland play, is full of song. Titania, addressing her train in the wood, says, “Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song.” Then follows the song—

“Ye spotted snakes, with double tongue,  
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;  
Newts and blindworms, do no wrong;  
Come not near our Fairy Queen.”

Helena speaks of herself ‡ and Hermia, as—

“Both warbling of one song, both in one key.”

Oberon bids every elf and fairy sprite—

“This ditty after me  
Sing; and dance it trippingly.”

Titania says§—

“First rehearse your song by rote;  
To each word a warbling note.”

\* *Twelfth Night*, Act ii, Scene 4.

† Act iii, Scene 2.

‡ Act ii, Scene 2.

§ Act v, Scene 2.

Then follow the song and dance. When Bottom awakes from his charmed dream,\* he says, "I will get Peter Quince "to write a ballad of this dream: It shall be called Bottom's "dream, because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the "latter end of a play before the Duke. Peradventure, to "make it more gracious, I shall sing it after death."

The *Two Gentlemen of Verona*,† besides the beautiful song—

"Who is Silvia? What is she,  
That all our swains commend her?  
Holy, fair, and wise is she,  
The Heaven such grace did lend her,  
That she might admired be," &c.

contains a scene between Julia and her waiting-woman Lucetta,‡ which shews the poet playing, *more suo*, with many terms of the musical art; such as tune, note, song, setting to music, burthen, sharp and flat, concord, descant, mean and base; the term *mean* implying the intermediate part between the treble and the tenor. All this is in the second scene of the first act, and we refer to it as a remarkable instance of a custom of the olden times.

We have reserved, as our last illustration from Shakespeare, his *Winter's Tale*; because in that play he has given us, in the pedlar Autolycus, a life-like picture of the English ballad-singer and vendor, of his own time. He is introduced§ singing the ballad—"When daffodils begin to peer"—which contains allusions to "the sweet birds" and "how they sing." A clown, or countryman, speaking of a sheepshearing feast, says his sister hath made him "four-and-twenty nosegays for "the shearers; *three-man song-men* all." That is, they were singers of songs in three parts. He adds that they are "very "good ones, but they are most of them means and basses: "but one Puritan amongst them, and he sings psalms to

\* *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act iv, Scene 1.

† Act iv, Scene 2.

‡ Act i, Scene 2.

§ Act iv, Scene 2.

“hornpipes.” An old shepherd speaks of his aged dame, who, when alive, at the shearing feast “would sing her song “and dance her turn.”

Florizel praises Perdita's singing, and then Autolycus is thus heralded by a servant\* :—

*Servant*—“O master, if you did but hear the pedlar at the door, you would never dance again after a tabor and a pipe: no, the bagpipe could not move you. He sings several tunes faster than you'll tell money; he utters them as he had eaten ballads, and all men's ears grew to his tunes.

*Clown*—“He could never come better; he shall come in. I love a ballad even but too well, if it be doleful matter merrily set down; or a very pleasant thing indeed, and sung lamentably.

*Servant*—“He hath songs for man or woman, of all sizes; no milliner can so fit his customers with gloves; he has the prettiest love-songs for maids; . . . with such delicate burthens.

*Clown*—“Prythee bring him in, and let him approach singing.

*Perdita*—“Forewarn him that he use no scurrilous words in's tunes.”

Autolycus then enters singing—“Lawn as white as driven “snow.” The Clown demands—

“What hast here? ballads?”

*Mopsa*—“Pray now, buy some: I love a ballad in print, a'-life; for then we are sure they are true.

*Autolycus*—“Here's one to a very doleful tune. How a usurer's wife was brought to bed of twenty money bags at a burden; and how she longed to eat adders' heads, and toads carbonadoed.

*Mopsa*—“Pray you now buy it.

*Clown*—“Come on, lay it by: and let's first see more ballads; we'll buy the other things anon.

*Autolycus*—“Here's another ballad: Of a fish, that appeared upon the coast, on Wednesday the fourscore of April, forty-thousand fathom above water, and sung this ballad against the hard hearts of maids. It was thought she was a woman, and was turned into a cold fish, because she would not exchange flesh for one that loved her: the ballad is very pitiful, and as true.”

[Mr. J. O. Halliwell observes that the allusions in the preceding extract may be curiously illustrated by an early Ballad of a Fish, copied from the unique exemplar preserved in the Miller collection, entitled :—“The description of a “rare, or rather most monstrous Fishe; taken on the east

\* Act iv, Scene 3. The dialogue is somewhat abridged in the extract.

“coast of Holland, the xvij of November, Anno 1566.” In 1569 was published a prose broadside, containing “A true description of the marvellous straunge Fishe, which was taken on Tuesday was se’nnight, the 16th day of June, this present monthe, in the year of our Lord God 1569.” Also, in 1604, there was entered on the books of the Stationers’ Company—“A strange report of a monstrous *fishe*, that appeared in the forme of *a woman* from her waist upward, scene in the Sea.” And in May of the same year a ballad was entered under the title of “A Ballad of a strange and monstrous Fishe seen in the Sea, on Friday, the 17th of February, 1603.”]

Can any one doubt, after reading these numerous passages, that the time of Shakespeare was the golden age of English ballads? We take our proposition as fully proved, and amply illustrated, in every particular. We will, therefore, now pass from the ballads of a nation to consider those of a palatinate county. In doing so, we may at once remark that both song and ballad flourished greatly in the olden times throughout all the North of England and the Midland Counties.\*

[The county of Lancaster has not been prolific of ballad-loving antiquaries. In this respect she suffers when compared with her neighbouring districts. Sir Walter Scott collected and gave to the world, *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*; and while Northumberland and Durham, Westmoreland and Cumberland, with the great shire of York, have had their respective collections of their older songs and ballads, until recently scarcely anything had been done to secure and perpetuate the fleeting, because for the most part oral and traditional, ballads of Lancashire. We know of no collection in print, till Mr. J. O. Halliwell, F.R.S., added to our ballad literature the *Palatine Anthology*, being “a collection of

\* Mr. Harland’s manuscript ended with the first portion of this clause; the rest is added by myself to complete the Essay.—T.T.W.



“Ancient Poems and Ballads relating to Lancashire and Cheshire.” This was followed by the *Palatine Garland*, “a selection of Ballads and Fragments supplementary to the *Palatine Anthology*.” Both these works were printed in 1850, for “private circulation only,” and hence their contents remain comparatively unknown to the great majority of the public. There existed, and still do exist, many other songs and ballads, not included in these collections, which are not the less worthy of permanent preservation, and deserve more than a passing notice. If we limit our inquiries to those which range through three centuries only, their subjects will be found to present much variety, and their modes of treatment are very dissimilar. It has been very justly remarked that, “amidst great social mutations, and the progress of education and civilization, there are some broad features of English ballad literature, especially in the subjects which most largely hold the popular affection and regard, which in all essentials will ever remain alike, however their outward garb may change with the transitory tastes and fleeting fashions of the age. The three favourite themes, alike of the oldest ballad and the most modern song, are Love, War, and Murder.”\* Many specimens of various degrees of merit may be found ranging under one or other of these three great divisions. There are also others which may more properly be described as “satirical and humorous, sporting and bacchanalian, trade and local, songs.” Many of the latter are extant only in the broad and strong vernacular dialects of different portions of Lancashire.

The principal *Ballads and Songs of Lancashire*, ranging from the time of Edward IV to the last century, have been collected and published by the author just quoted; and it is from this work that we shall select our examples in illustration of some points in our local ballad literature. Amongst

\* Harland's *Ballads and Songs of Lancashire*, p. xiii.

the satirical and humorous, that of "The Tyrannical Husband" appears to be worthy of special notice. It is the old, old story of household squabbles between man and wife, which are oftentimes more bitter than important. Wife's work, according to the ballad, is *no* work in the opinion of the husband: but wife's work is *all* work in the estimation of the wife. An interchange of duties takes place, when "confusion becomes worse confounded"; and, as Mr. T. Halliwell's version has it, the husband—

Swore by the sun, the moon, and the stars,  
And the green leaves on the tree,  
If his wife did'nt do a day's work in her life,  
She should never be ruled by he.

The "Balade of Maryage," first given by Dr. Whitaker from the Browsholme papers, is remarkable for its keen and homely satire. There is also considerable poetical merit in the composition. The burden of the ballad relates to a "love-lorn ladye," who ventures to ask her follower when he intended to marry. His answer is characteristic; for he assures her, among many other impossible things, that—

When Summer's sun will dry no mire,  
And Winter's rain no longer patter.  
When moor or moss do saffron yield,  
And *beck* and *syke* run down with honey;  
When sugar grows in every field,  
And clerks will take no bribe of money.  
Or when the sun doth rise at noon,  
Then will my love and I be married.

On hearing this she bids him farewell, remarking very philosophically—

I swear and vow, if this be true,  
And thou of such an evil carriage;  
If I should live ten thousand year,  
I'd never more expect thy marriage.

"Warrikin Fair;" "The Frog and the Crow;" "Dick o'

“Stanley Green;” “Blackley Courtship;” the “Lancashire Miller;” “Jone o Grinfelt;” and several others, are equally characteristic.

Our songs and ballads relating to love matters, domestic relations, &c., &c., are of various kinds. Some of these contain metrical declarations of love without results; others exist in which such declarations end in marriage and happiness;—but there is a third, a larger, and, strange to say, a more favourite class, in which the ballad-loving public is told of desertion, envy, hatred, jealousy, and murder, under some of their most repulsive forms.

The confirmed, and ever-growing avarice of old people is well illustrated by the “Liverpool Tragedy,” where an aged couple unwittingly murder their long-lost sailor son, in order to become possessed of his savings. The suicide of father and mother follows the sad discovery of his being their own offspring, and their only daughter dies mad the next day. The *moral* of the whole is not forgotten, for the ballad concludes by advising—

Children all from disobedience flee,  
And parents, likewise, not too covetous be.

“The Unfortunate Love of a Lancashire Gentleman” is also typical of a large class. A young gentleman, whose father “was well known, and of high degree,” falls in love with, and secretly marries, a young girl much inferior to him in the social scale. There was

Nothing wanting in her  
But this, the grief of all,  
Of birth she was but lowly,  
Of substance very small:  
A simple hired servant,  
And subject to each call.

His father, in course of time, finds him a suitable match, and insists upon his son's marriage; but the latter contrives

for a time to repel his father's proposals. At last, however, his resolution gives way under a threat of being disinherited, and, in order to get rid of his intended wife, he stoops to treachery and murder. He declares that—

Where nobody was near,  
I embracèd her most falsely,  
With a most feignèd chear,  
Then to the heart I stabbed  
This maiden fair and clear.

He then adopted the clumsy expedient of slightly wounding himself—

And said that thieves to rob us  
Had wrought this deadly strife.

The artifice did not succeed. He was taken, tried, and executed. His low-born wife committed suicide, and his father "ended his days in nought." The villain's parting advice has often found a parallel in modern times, for he bids us, in the usual hypocritical style, to—

Mark what care and sorrow,  
Forc'd marriage it doth bring;  
All men by me be warnèd;  
And, *Lord forgive my sin.*

Cruel and unnatural stepmothers find no favour in the tragedy of "Fair Ellen of Radcliffe." This lady was "her father's only joye," and, consequently,

Her cruel stepmothèr  
Did envye her so muche,  
That day by day she sought her life,  
Her malice it was suche.

She ultimately persuades the master cook to slay the damsel and make her flesh into pies. The father asks for his daughter during dinner, and is told that she has fled to some nunnery. He is even desired to forget her. The scullion-boy, who had previously offered his own body to the cook in order to save

his young mistress, can contain himself no longer, but "with  
"a loud voice so hye" informs his master that—

If now you will your daughter see,  
My lord, cut up that pye.

The discovery of the cruel murder was soon followed by  
condign punishment.

Then all in blacke this lord did mourne,  
And, for his daughter's sake ;  
He judged her cruel stepmother,  
To bee burnt at a stake.

Likewise he judged the master cook  
In boiling lead to stand ;  
And made the simple scullion boye  
The heire of all his land.

The ballad entitled "Townley's Ghost" may be paralleled by many examples from other districts. It threatens all the terrors of a spirit-world upon those who are the authors of political executions; and it also embodies the wide-spread, popular belief that even in this life the ghosts of those unjustly put to death will never cease to torment their real or supposed murderers. This superstition is older than Homer. Political feeling runs high in this ballad, and George II is made to assure the Duke of Cumberland that he is willing to be befriended by his Satanic Majesty himself, provided he can only retain the crown of England.

Shenstone's "Jemmy Dawson" has long and deservedly been a favourite with all classes. It "records one of the  
"many touching episodes connected with Lancashire's share  
"in the Rebellion of 1745"; and both its hero and heroine will command our sympathy and regret so long as our county literature shall last. James Dawson was a Captain in the Manchester regiment, commanded by Col. Francis Townley. He was affianced to Catharine Norton, "an orphan, whose  
"parents had been of illustrious rank."

Young Dawson was a gallant youth,  
 A brighter never trod the plain ;  
 And well he loved one charming maid,  
 And dearly was he loved again.

One tender maid she loved him dear ;  
 Of gentle blood the damsel came,  
 And faultless was her beauteous form,  
 And spotless was her virgin fame.

Capt. Dawson was one of those who surrendered at Carlisle ; and, after trial, was hanged, drawn, and quartered. His betrothed one beheld all the horrid formalities of the law brutally carried out, without much apparent emotion ; but, when—

The dismal scene was o'er and past,  
 The lover's mournful hearse retired ;  
 The maid drew back her languid head,  
 And, sighing forth his name, expired.

The song of the " Burnley Haymakers " is probably the only representative of its class. Its learned astrological phraseology has not found any imitators. Such songs have little chance of becoming popular, because they transcend the ordinary literature of the multitude. This specimen would probably not have had a century of active life, had it not been for the comical appearance and eccentricities of " Robin o' Green, the Burnley Ballad Singer." Its composer was a country schoolmaster, and his pedantry is evident in every stanza. Some local astrologer had predicted fair weather for the hay season after a due examination of the stars, and although the sky soon became " enveloped with " clouds that threatened rain," he was—

Yet confident, and called it ' pride of the weather,'  
 And was assured that it was no rain ;  
 Æolus lets loose his wings with moistened feathers,  
 Dipped in the Ocean to cast them here again.  
 Astræus puffs and blusters ;  
 Drove the clouds in clusters,  
 Here rushing, there crushing, till they poured down  
 Such mighty clouds of rain,  
 As if they strove again,  
 By force of a new deluge this lower world to drown.

We need not continue this minute examination of the leading characteristics of our Lancashire songs and ballads. Enough has been done to prove that they are worthy of comparison with those of any other county;—and hence a brief summary of several others must suffice for the present occasion. Amongst the more fugitive, and anniversary compositions, we may range those of “James I and the Loin of Beef;” all the May Songs and Christmas Carols; the Wassail Songs; and even some of the Jacobite effusions relating to the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Many excellent pieces appertaining to these events are now unfortunately lost. To print or publish them, in any way at the time, was treasonable, and hence many have died with their authors. Even the relaxation of the law, at a later period, did not prevent the loss of many which were once popular amongst the Jacobites in Lancashire.

The field-sports of our local gentry have met with a fair share of attention from our local poets. The “Stonyhurst Buck-hunt;” the “Radcliffe Otter-hunt;” the “Death of an Old Huntsman;” and the “Bonny Grey,” may be cited as illustrative of this class. There is a fragment entitled the “Extwistle Hunt,” known only to one or two old men in East Lancashire, which is of much the same character as the Stonyhurst song, but applied to the hare. The doings of an old hound form the burden of several stanzas; and the Parkers of Extwistle, subsequently of Cuerden, are awarded their meed of praise as daring sportsmen.

Of strictly bacchanalian songs we have comparatively few. The chief of these are “The Christmas Wassail Bowl,” and that in praise of “Warrington Ale.” This paucity cannot have arisen from the temperate habits of our gentry; for towards the close of the last century, the practice of drinking until the last man fell under the table, was as common in Lancashire as in any other county. Our more modern trade songs are far more numerous. Of these, we may instance—

“Hand-loom *versus* Power-loom;” the “Hand-loom Weaver’s Lament;” and “Grimshaw’s Factory Fire,” as being worthy of examination, and characteristic of popular feeling. In most ballads and songs of this class there is generally an earnest outcry against machinery, with a constant refrain respecting the oppression of the poor by their employers. Even the destruction of new inventions by fire is lauded as an instance in which that element assisted in avenging the wrongs of the oppressed.\* There was frequently too much reason for these somewhat violent effusions. Those who remember the manly truthfulness and lofty power of Bamford’s “God help the Poor,” will need no further proof that oppression did once exist under some of its most galling forms; and hence the severity of some of our local bards.

There are several local songs and ballads which have not yet found their way into any printed collection. Of these, the “Owdham Recruit” is not devoid of merit. It is also interesting, as containing several local phrases and allusions, mixed up with a considerable share of racy Lancashire humour. After each verse there is a portion in prose, which is marked as to be “spoken,” an example which has been followed by some of our modern comic musical composers. In the first recitation the “recruit” very humourously describes his enlistment “for a Captain”; in the next he is before “the justice to be detested”; afterwards he complains of not being allowed to act as Captain, and sets off “to gang toards whoam agen.” He is soon arrested, and carried before a “cooart marshall” which orders him “six and thirty good wallopers” for deserting. This, however, produces no improvement, and he is finally “drummed out” to the tune of the “Rogue’s March.” We give the ballad itself from a local broadside:—

\* Harland’s *Ballads*, p. 275.



## THE OLDHAM RECRUIT.

When i're a young lad, sixteen years ago,  
 I lov'd a pretty lass, and followed the plough;  
 But somehow or other I was ne'er content,  
 Till I like a *noddy*\* for a sodger went.  
 There were such shouts of mirth and glee,  
 For I thowt I should a Captain be.  
 Bud ah! by *gum*! I wur varra much mista'en,  
 And monny a time I wished mysel at t' plough-tail again.

So we march'd and march'd abeawt Owdham streets,  
 Where they tried to persuade me 'twas my turn to treat;  
 I treated them all till we geet drunk as *foos*,  
 Between serjeant, me, and corporal, there wur nod mich to chuse;  
 I thowt that my *brass* wod never ha been done,  
 Thinks I but we shall live a life of rare fun.  
 Bud ah! by *gum*! I wur varra much mista'en,  
 And monny a time I wished mysel at t' plough-tail again.

Bud when my brass wur o spent and dun,  
 They pushed me about for a bit of roaring fun;  
 By *gum*, they'd like to *throttled* me; eh what a sin;  
 With a collar stiff as steel just stuck under my chin,  
 They cut my hair so close, sure, and gathered such a crop.  
 They made me soon i'th regiment a real dandy fop.  
 Bud ah! by *gum*! I wur varra much mista'en,  
 And monny a time I wished mysel at t' plough-tail again.

Ist never forget what a fuss of me they made,  
 When we went to a *pleck* ut they coed their parade;  
 If I could look to pleeos um theer, may I indeed be brunt,  
 For they wanted all at once my *een*, left, reet, and front;  
 Then o in a row like fire *potters* we wur stood,  
 And my toes would'nt turn in let me do wot I could;  
 I listed for a Captain; but, by *gum*, I wur mista'en,  
 And monny a time I wished mysel at t' plough-tail again.

I wondered wot the *dickins* could ever be the matter,  
 For they shut me in the guard-house to live on bread and *watter*;  
 And when I offered then to quit that ugly place,  
 A soldier with his *bagnet* stood staring in my face:  
 I began then a thinkin that my case was varra bad,  
 For i're wur off' by far than when i'th awkward squad.  
 I listed for a Captain; but, by *gum*, I wur mista'en,  
 And monny a time I wished mysel at t' plough-tail again.

The "Cockey Moor Snake" has had more than one imitation, both in prose and verse. Tim Bobbin's "Man of Heaton" and the "Flying Dragon" is a composition of the same

\* See Glossary.

character ; but it is not easy to decide which is the model. Both are intended to ridicule the countryman's ignorance of various articles of dress. We give the satire from a broadside, which lacks the printer's name :—

COCKEY MOOR SNAKE.

Come listen to my sportive lay,  
While I relate what people say ;  
About a hunt which happened o'er,  
And on a place called Cockey Moor.  
A lady she walked out one day,  
And had got on a new boä ;  
She through the fields her way did steer,  
In the summer season of the year :  
But as the day was rather warm,  
She hung her boa upon her arm ;  
She thought she had it quite secure,  
But dropped it down on Cockey Moor.

The lady on her way did hie,  
And weavers two by chance passed by ;  
They saw it stretched upon the ground,  
Bill cried out " Jack ! What's this we've found ?"  
Just at this time the west wind blew  
And twirled the boa round the two !  
" By gum," said Jack, " I tell thee Bill,  
" Its summat *wick*, it waint stand still."  
Then close inspection they did make,  
When Bill cried out " it is a snake !"  
And from it they did run, and roar  
" A snake ! a snake ! on Cockey Moor."

Now off they ran as quick as thought,  
Their neighbours to a man they brought ;  
They told them all what they had seen  
Twisting and twirling on the green.  
" It's three yerds lung," they each did say,  
" Its colour neither black nor grey ;  
" The middle thick, the ends wur small,  
" By gum, it hed noa legs at all !  
" Yoan oft heerd tell o them there whales,  
" That's got no head, but has two tails ;  
" Beside its covered o'er wi yure,  
" There's noa sich game on Cockey Moor."

When awt folk round had heard the news,  
Some took their spades and some their *shoos* ;  
This took a pike, and that a rake,  
And off they set to hunt the snake.

Their terrier dogs they also took,  
 In case that it might take the brook ;  
 And whistled on the hounds that day  
 For fear the snake might run away.  
 With rusty bay'nets not a few,  
 That had shone bright at some review,  
 The people hied from every door,  
 To kill the snake on Cockey Moor.

As they drew nearer to the place,  
 Fear and surprise stood in each face ;  
 For there the snake lay on the ground,  
 Just like a hoop in circle round.  
 The bravest then out loudly spoke—  
 " I say, my lads, this is no joke,  
 " Keep back your dogs, don't go too near ;  
 " I wish my gron-feythier wur here ;  
 " He'd tell us soon before it dies,  
 " Whether it walks, or swims, or flies ;  
 " Or if he's seen the like afore,  
 " For he's th' owdest mon on Cockey Moor."

To this wise plan they soon agreed,  
 And fetched the old man with much speed ;  
 For many months he had been sick,  
 So in a cart they wheeled him quick ;  
 Just as the old man did arrive,  
 Jack shouts aloud " its yet aloive !"  
 So in his cart the old man bent,  
 And eyed it o'er with much intent :  
 " Now wheel me back," old Roger said,  
 " That is a thing that God ne'er made ;  
 " Adam ne'er kersun'd this I'm sure,  
 " The Devil has come to Cockey Moor."

Now when they heard it was the Devil,  
 They vow'd they'd plague that fause old rebel ;  
 And each one to the other said,  
 For once Old Nick shall soon be laid.  
 Then all poor Satan they surround,  
 When lengthways lying on the ground ;  
 They swore they would no pity take  
 For thus appearing like a snake ;  
 To make sure work they did intend,  
 To cut it up from end to end,  
 And vow'd they'd either kill or cure,  
 That devil-snake on Cockey Moor.

Their dogs ne'er once set up a yell,  
 Because they there no blood could smell  
 Some said it was a thing quite rare,  
 But thought the Devil had none to spare ;

His dwelling place being very warm,  
 His blood dried up as with a charm ;  
 Now wandering through the world so loose,  
 They'd catch Old Nick, and "cook his goose."  
 So then for Satan dug a hole,  
 His body buried without soul,  
 And prayed that it might rise no more  
 To frighten folks on Cockey Moor.

Now to the church all went next day,  
 To hear the parson preach and pray ;  
 And as he opened out his book,  
 This truly was the text he took—  
 "Satan was made—and so was Sin—  
 "God made a hole to put him in."  
 Then crazy Dick stood up and cries,  
 "Stop parson, stop ! Tha'art tellin lies ;  
 "I know quite well the Devil is laid,  
 "I helped to bury him with my spade ;  
 "We made a hole quite deep I'm sure,  
 "An tumbled him in on Cockey Moor."

"What was his shape?" his reverence said,  
 "Just like a snake th' owd lad wur made ;  
 "All covered o'er with bristly hair :"  
 They laughed to see the parson stare.  
 "If this be true, Dick, what you say,  
 "I'm sure it was my wife's boa ;  
 "She lost it as she walked about,  
 "Somewhere between this and Tumfowt ;  
 "And if the snake you'll bring to me,  
 "Five shillings I will give to thee.  
 "You've made a great mistake I'm sure  
 "No snakes can crawl on Cockey Moor."

Now off Dick went, and soon he brought,  
 That which the parson eager sought ;  
 He brought him in a bag, alas !  
 "Come now," says Dick, "let's have that brass."  
 The parson then put down the crown,  
 When to his friends Dick turned him round ;  
 "Come on my lads, we'll have a spree,  
 "For each to this his share can be."  
 But when the shreds of boa were out,  
 "Curse on you all," he loud did shout,  
 "I never was so tricked before,  
 "With devil-snakes from Cockey Moor."

It may not be uninteresting to notice the scenes where most of these songs and ballads have been laid. To some extent the localities have given their colourings to their

subjects. Bewsey Hall, the scene of the feud between the Butlers and the Stanleys, stood near Warrington;\* Radcliffe Tower, connected with the improbable tragedy of Fair Helen, lies between Bury and Manchester; Hoghton Tower, famous for the Sir Loin, is still a conspicuous object near Blackburn; Lea Hall is not far from Preston, and is connected by the "Ballad of the Blessed Conscience" with a feud between the Hoghtons and the Langtons, in which Sir Thomas Hoghton was slain. We are, however, of opinion that Mr. Whittle has exercised his powers, as editor of this broadsheet, with considerable freedom. Some of the ideas embodied in the stanzas scarcely seem to belong to the period assigned to the composition. Several of the verses have a decidedly modern cast. It is sometimes dangerous to attempt improvements on the frame-work of an old ballad. We must not omit to mention Dr. Byrom's description of "Careless Content." This poem is not only almost unique, but is one of the happiest efforts of the kind in our language. Its complete *abandon* is remarkable; its felicity of expression and its high moral sentiment have rarely been equalled, perhaps never excelled.†

"I am content, I do not care,  
 Wag as it will the world for me;  
 When fuss and fret was all my fare,  
 It got no ground as I did see:  
 So when away my caring went,  
 I counted cost, and was content.

I sue not where I shall not speed,  
 Nor trace the turn of every tide;  
 If simple sense will not succeed,  
 I make no bustling, but abide;  
 For shining wealth, or scaring woe,  
 I force no friend; I fear no foe."

The pleasing alliterations of this, and some of our other

\* *The Bewsey Tragedy and its Legend*, Harland's *Ballads*, pp. 13-22.

† Harland's *Ballads*, pp. 173-177.

songs and ballads, are worthy of consideration. Considerable use is made of accented final syllables; and in Sheale's "Love Song" we have an instance of the old pronunciation of *would, should, could, &c.*, as rhyming with *mould, gold, &c.*; a practice which is not yet forgotten by some of those who have passed their "three-score years and ten."

The localities mentioned in other songs are pretty well distributed over the county. Amongst these we find Manchester, Preston, and Warrington; Liverpool, Swinton, and Stretford; Stonyhurst, Blakeley, and Northen; Oldham, Greenfield, and Droylesden; Burnley, Gorton, and Middleton; besides many minor places on the banks of the Mersey and the Ribble. Most of these places have been rendered famous in national or local history, by the presence of lordly or knightly families; several of whose sons have distinguished themselves by their prowess in war, their gallantry in love, or their ferocity in family feuds. Such actions nearly always found some local rhymester ready to celebrate these deeds in his rude, and sometimes doggerel lines; but they were none the less welcome on this account. The pedlars, too, were ever ready to adapt these loose and halting rhymes to some popular melody, and sing them to admiring audiences who cared little or nothing for the loss or gain of a poetical foot.

The ballad-singers of the present day are not much in advance of their predecessors, who followed the same trade three centuries ago. They are never at a loss for a melody suited to some doleful tale; nor do a few deficient or redundant syllables impede the course of the minstrel's drone. It is interesting, too, to observe how frequently ancient compositions are adapted to suit modern occurrences. The frame-work of the old ballad is preserved almost entire; but the skeleton is re-clothed with the muscle and sinew of some similar event of modern date. Metrical ghost stories have thus done duty on many occasions; the poetical adventures

of the first "love-lorn ladye" have had many imitations; and the "doleful ditty," which announced some "awful murder," two or three centuries ago, was heard to "new words" when Weatherill, of Todmorden, committed his atrocious crime.

In Songs and Ballads on any given subject, there is generally a substratum common to many counties, and it may be to several countries. There is a difference of detail to some extent, but the main features are nearly identical. It would be no difficult task to *skeletonise*, or form *root models*, of our Popular Traditions, Nursery Rhymes, Songs, and Ballads. Were this done to any considerable extent, we should find many similarities of detail, many coincidences of event, and not a few identical results. The *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, the *Ballads and Songs of Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, &c.*, contained in the works of Scott, Halliwell, Harland, Leigh, Jewitt, and others, form easily accessible sources for such an examination. There would probably be no great difficulty in determining how much is common property, so far as these counties is concerned, and what is peculiar to each locality. It appears to us that the former element will much exceed the latter, since the *general stock* has been accumulating for many centuries, and has, at times, received large additions from other countries. It is also much easier for those whose "business is sheets," to imitate a given model, than to invent an entirely new frame-work for a popular Song or Ballad.]

---

GLOSSARY.

- Bagnet* - - A bayonet.  
*Brass* - - Money, or coin of any kind.  
*Dickins* - - A substitute for Devil.  
*Een* - - - Eyes.

- Fause* - - - Cunning.  
*Foos* - - - Fools.  
*Gum* - - - A substitute for God, in a more forcible expletive.  
*Noddy* - - - A very foolish person.  
*Old Nick* - - A local name for the Devil.  
*Pleck* - - - A space of ground.  
*Potters* - - - Fire pokers.  
*Shoos* - - - Shovels,  
*Throttled* - - Strangled, choked.  
*Watter* - - - Water, according to local pronunciation.  
*Wick* - - - Alive.  
*Yure* - - - Hair.



THE HISTORY OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY OF LONDON  
AND THE  
ROYAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH

FROM THE  
FOUNDATION OF THE SOCIETY  
TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY  
JAMES HUTTON

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EDINBURGH

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