

**THE BALLADS AND SONGS  
OF SCOTLAND, IN VIEW OF  
THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE  
CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649114108

The ballads and songs of Scotland, in view of their influence on the character of the people by J. Clark Murray

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**J. CLARK MURRAY**

**THE BALLADS AND SONGS  
OF SCOTLAND, IN VIEW OF  
THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE  
CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE**



1833b

THE  
BALLADS AND SONGS  
OF  
SCOTLAND,

*IN VIEW OF THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE  
CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE.*

BY

JOHN CLARK MURRAY, LL.D.,

*Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy in McGill College, Montreal;  
Author of "An Outline of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy."*

"Songs of my native land,  
To me how dear!  
Songs of my infancy,  
Sweet to my ear!  
Entwined with my youthful days,  
Wi' the bonny banks and braes,  
Where the winding burnie strays,  
Murmuring near."

THE BARONESS NAIRNE

187560  
20/2/24

London:  
MACMILLAN AND CO.

1874.

## PREFATORY NOTICE.

THE following Essay was awarded a Prize offered by the St. Andrew's Society of Glasgow. By the terms of competition the copyright of the essay remained with the author; and as it was written with a view to publication, it is now given to the world with such alterations and additions as have been suggested on revision. The essay represents the fruit of studies in which the author has been accustomed to find relief from severer professional work; and his object in its publication will be attained, if it afford to his readers any of the recreation which its studies have brought to himself, while it may not be without service even to the student of the literature which it reviews. All other necessary information with regard to the general object and plan of the work will be found in the Introduction.

MONTREAL, *March* 1874.

## CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION . . . . .	ix
------------------------	----

### CHAPTER I.

LEGENDARY BALLADS AND SONGS . . . . .	PAGE I
---------------------------------------	-----------

### CHAPTER II.

SOCIAL BALLADS AND SONGS . . . . .	50
§ 1. Love Songs and Ballads . . . . .	50
§ 2. Domestic Songs and Ballads . . . . .	82
§ 3. Lyrics of general Social Relations . . . . .	108

### CHAPTER III.

ROMANTIC BALLADS AND SONGS . . . . .	127
--------------------------------------	-----

### CHAPTER IV.

HISTORICAL BALLADS AND SONGS . . . . .	135
§ 1. The War of Independence . . . . .	136
§ 2. The Border Feuds . . . . .	141
§ 3. The Reformation Period . . . . .	157
§ 4. The Jacobite Struggle . . . . .	163

## CHAPTER V.

	PAGE
GENERAL INFLUENCE OF THE BALLADS AND SONGS . . .	167
§ 1. Their Poetical Character . . . . .	168
§ 2. Extent of their Popularity . . . . .	178
INDEX . . . . .	199
GLOSSARY . . . . .	203



## INTRODUCTION.

"I knew a very wise man that believed that if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation."—FLETCHER OF SALTOUN, in a *Letter to the Marquis of Montrose, etc.*

IT is desirable that the reader of the following essay should notice the precise subject to which it is limited. The essay is simply an investigation of the influence which the ballads and songs of Scotland may be shown to have exerted on the character of the Scottish people. It makes no pretension, therefore, to be a satisfactory treatment of these lyrical productions in any other aspect. It is impossible, indeed, to discuss the effect of these or of any other productions of the Scottish mind on the development of Scottish character, without indicating more or less definitely the character of the productions themselves; and, consequently, this essay contains a large number of historical and critical observations on the ballads and songs of Scotland. The extent to which such observations were required to

elucidate the main question of the essay, will be differently determined by different persons; and possibly a rigid criticism would exclude as irrelevant a considerable amount of what is contained in the following pages. But the reader must meet with disappointment, who opens these pages with the expectation of finding in them an exhaustive treatment of the Scottish ballads and songs in general, or in any particular aspect other than that to which the essay is definitely limited by its title.

Even the special inquiry, however, to which we are thus confined, raises certain preliminary questions which cannot be accurately answered with ease. It involves, to some extent, an inquiry into the national character of the Scottish people, and into the agencies by which that character has been produced and modified. Both of these inquiries may be ranked among the most perplexing of those intricate problems which the science of human nature encounters at every step of its progress.

The former of these—the inquiry into national character—will, if answered at all by those who apprehend it clearly, be answered only with diffidence and by an indefinite outline; for the phenomena, on which an answer must be founded, are so subtle as often to elude the keenest observation, so intricate as to baffle the most searching analysis, so manifold as to exceed the grasp of the most comprehensive understanding. By means of the spectrum we can now analyse the

constitution of a world at immeasurable distance in space; but what agent of decomposition can unfold with certainty the character of a nation, or even of an individual? A remarkable instance of the difficulty involved in estimating even one's own character is furnished by the fact, that Goethe attached more importance to his scientific insight than to his poetical power; and, in summing up the results of his life, declared that as it had been the mission of Luther to dispel the darkness of the Papacy, so it had been his to overturn the Newtonian theory of colours!<sup>1</sup>

The other inquiry—that, namely, into the agencies by which a nation's character is developed, or into the precise influence which any particular agency may have exerted on its development—is even more difficult than the preceding. Here all the machinery of philosophical induction breaks down under the difficulty of making sufficiently accurate and sufficiently extensive observations, and the collateral difficulty of arranging the data which observation yields with a view to legitimate inference.

Now, if we had to serve merely the purposes of popular declamation, it would be easy enough, concealing the difficulty of all such inquiries, to assert a number of questionable platitudes on the Scottish character and on the influences by which it has been formed. The aim in the following essay has been to avoid all asser-

<sup>1</sup> Eckermann's "Conversations of Goethe," vol. i., p. 162. Compare Lewes' "Life of Goethe," vol. ii., p. 124.