

**SONGS AND POEMS.
WITH A SKETCH OF
JOHN SKINNER'S LIFE**

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Songs and Poems. With a Sketch of John Skinner's Life by John Skinner & H. G. Reaid

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JOHN SKINNER & H. G. REID

**SONGS AND POEMS.
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JOHN SKINNER'S LIFE**

SONGS AND POEMS,

BY THE

REV. JOHN SKINNER,

AUTHOR OF "TULLOCHGORUM."

WITH A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE,

BY

H. G. REID,

EDITOR OF "PETERHEAD SENTINEL."

PETERHEAD:

WILLIAM L. TAYLOR.

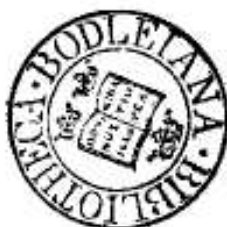
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PREFACE.

THE SONGS and POEMS of the Rev. JOHN SKINNER have been held in high estimation by his countrymen for nearly a century, yet fifty years have elapsed since they were published in a collected form. Even those pieces which have appeared in modern collections are, in general, so altered and mutilated that they almost lose their original beauty. These considerations, combined with the growing taste for genuine Scottish poetry, naturally suggested the present publication. At the request of the Publisher, I have written a Sketch of the Author's Life, and added Notes where explanations seemed necessary and the facts could be ascertained.

Although a large number of Mr SKINNER's Manuscripts were unfortunately destroyed after his death, a few were preserved, and to his relatives—especially

his aged grandson, Mr ROBERT CUMMING, Longside— in whose possession they are, I have been greatly indebted for the facilities of reference and assistance kindly afforded.

From the materials thus placed at my command, and other resources, I have gathered some facts hitherto unpublished, and been enabled to present what, I trust, will be found a correct and comprehensive, though necessarily brief, narrative of the incidents in the life of the venerable poet.

H. G. R.

PETERHEAD, *April*, 1859.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

THE REV. JOHN SKINNER, one of our most popular lyric poets, and a man of great learning, was born on the 3d of October, 1721, at Balfour, in the parish of Birse, one of the wildest and most romantic districts in Aberdeenshire. His father, who had married the widow of Donald Farquharson of Balfour, was then schoolmaster of the parish; but about two years afterwards, he removed to Feht, a small hilly parish within twelve miles of Aberdeen. For upwards of fifty years he faithfully discharged the duties of parochial teacher there. A man of upright character, and no mean attainments, he was much esteemed in the locality, and, it is recorded, prepared more young men for the University than most schoolmasters of his day. Shortly after his new appointment, his wife died, and, having been several years a widower, he married a second time, and had a numerous family, the youngest of whom, James, became a lawyer of some distinction in Edinburgh.

John was the only fruit of the first union. Unlike most men of eminence, he owed little to maternal influence and teaching—

A mother!—Ah! the venerable name,
Which my young lips were never taught to frame.

These were the words of the man, and to a devoted father he was indebted for his early training. No time was lost,