

ENGLISH SONGS AND BALLADS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9781760579531

English Songs and Ballads by Alexander Hume

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

ALEXANDER HUME

**ENGLISH SONGS
AND BALLADS**

ENGLISH
SONGS AND BALLADS;

BY
ALEXANDER HUME,
AUTHOR OF "SCOTTISH SONGS."

Come sing, and you that will not,
Hold your tongues. As YOU LIKE IT.

I pant for the music which is divine;
My heart in its thirst is a dying fower;
Pour forth the sound, like enchanted wine,
Loosen the notes in a silver shower.
Like a herbless plain, for the gentle rain,
I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.
* * * * *
More! O, more! I am thirsting yet.

SHELLEY.

London:
PUBLISHED BY C. FOX,
67, PATERNOSTER ROW,
AND W. TAIT, EDINBURGH.
1838.

23455, 25

1867, Dec. 18.

Gift of
Henry G. Denny, Esq.
of Boston,
(H.C. 183-2.)

LONDON:

CLARKE, PRINTERS, SILVER STREET, FALCON SQUARE.

TO

W. J. FOX, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR,

I dedicated my former volume of *Scottish Songs* to ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, the Biographer of Robert Burns, because I received great kindness at his hands, both as a man and an author. As I am greatly your debtor, I feel much pleasure in taking the only opportunity I have of expressing my sense of the obligation, by dedicating this volume to you.

My former Songs were wedded to the melodies of my native land, a land rich in melodies that have outlived the discord of centuries, not in moth-decayed manuscripts, or in costly folios, but in the hearts alike of noble and peasant; in the cottage and in the palace; ever fresh and sweet, never dying or growing old.

Song, of all descriptions of poetry, is a powerful agent in holding the minds of men for good or evil, as it may be directed. Some one said that he cared not who made the laws of the country so long as he made the songs, and it was a beautiful saying, yet not more beautiful than it was true; for, however much society is benefited by the law, still its object is to force men to justice, while the true object of Song is to draw him to it, for the love of it. Let those sneer at this who never heard or felt a Song, beyond the compositions so called, that fall from the press in scores weekly, whose principal merit, if merit they have, lies in the lithographed title-page generally attached to them.—They are not songs, but meaningless words attached to meaningless sounds, on which fashion has set its seal, to amuse or surprize a meaningless audience. A true Song is a hymn breathed out from the lowest depths of the heart, and, like electricity on the air, stirring all that comes within its influence. It is not at home in the drawing-room, comes not at request, but is ever spontaneous.—The head may en-

treat, ay, command, and the lips send forth words and sounds, but, if the heart wills it not, it is the pipe without a player; the spirit is not there. When the heart is full it runs over, and finds relief in the dear joy of its own flowing. It has beguiled many and many a weary hour of its sorrows, and made doubly full many a happy one. When heard issuing from the lips of some rustic maiden, wedded to some beautiful melody, fit companion for such beautiful truth, and drawing forth the sympathies of the listeners around her, let those who witness it, and it can be witnessed at every cotter's fire, and on every hill-side in Scotland, deny, if they can, that Song, in its influence, is mighty deep, and enduring.

Here is an extract from an old author, exhibiting, in a very affecting situation, the power of Song, even on children.—A son is talking of his mother.

“ Oft have we children sat upon her lap,
A-cold, with hunger gnawing at our hearts,
And, lacking aught to stay the craving there,
To steal upon the time and pain, would she,
Though care and sickness weighed her spirit down,
Sing to us songs of her dear native land.—
We felt no more the cold or hunger then.”

Again, an old man says, in the same poem,

I prithee sing to me that ancient song
 That tells of home and home's endearing joys ;
 'Twas coined by some sweet bard who died unknown ;
 But I do worship, and my simple brain
 Drinks deep of childhood in the listening,
 As some faint traveller on the arid sand,
 Alighted at the long, long looked for spring,
 Gulps down the water through his parched throat,
 And drinks so sweetly, prays to thirst again.
 I'd like to die to that same ancient strain ;
 I prithee sing *that* song."

There is another proof of its power, as related by the late lamented Robert Nicholl, author of a volume of beautiful Lyrics. "During the expedition to Buenos Ayres, a Highland soldier, while a prisoner in the hands of the Spaniards, having formed an attachment to a woman of the country, and charmed by the easy life which the tropical fertility of the soil enabled the inhabitants to lead, had resolved to remain and settle in South America. When he imparted this resolution to his comrade, the latter did not argue with him, but leading him to his tent, he placed him by his side, and sung him 'Lochabar no more:' the spell was on him, the tears came into his eyes, and wrapping his plaid around him, he mur-

mured 'Lochabar nae mair! I maun gang back.' Na! the songs of his childhood were ringing in his ears, and he left that land of ease and plenty for the naked rocks and sterile valleys of Badenoch, where, at the close of a life of toil and hardship, he might lay his head in his mother's grave."

Look at the power of Song as exemplified by its great master, Robert Burns, a poet who will live *longer* than the language in which he has written, yet a man who died a beggar, although a world's creditor. He came to Edinburgh a ploughman, fresh from the fields, with the marks of the plough on his hands, and a ploughman's garb on his back; walked in the halls of the wealthy, the titled, and the learned; and by Song alone, for although he did not always sing it, he always *felt, thought,* and *spoke* it, made them know that their wealth, titles, and bare learning, sank before the might of the poor peasant, who stood pennyless, titleless, and almost friendless, before them. And why was his song so powerful? Because it was true: while he sang he taught—he told that