S. BARING-GOULD

SONGS OF THE WEST

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INTRODUCTION

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Dorothy Osborne, in a letter to Sir William Temple, in 1653, thus describes her daily home life. "The heat of the day is spent in reading or working, and about six or seven o'clock I walk out into a common that lies hard by the house, where a great many young wenches keep sheep or cows, and sit in the shade singing ballads. I go to them and compare their voices and beauties to some ancient shepherdesses that I have read of, and find a vast difference there; but trust me these are as innocent as those could be. I talk to them, and find they want nothing to make them the happiest people in the world but the knowledge that they are so. Most commonly, when we are in the midst of our discourse, one looks about her, and spies her cows going into the corn, and then away they all run as if they had wings to their heels." ("Letters of Dorothy Osborne," London, 1888, p. 103.)

Before that Sir Thomas Overbury, in his "Character of a Milkmaid," had written: "She dares go alone and unfold her sheep in the night, and fears no manner of ill, because she means none: yet, to say truth, she is never alone, she is still accompanied with old songs, honest thoughts, and prayers, but short ones."

During the reign of Queen Mary, the Princess Elizabeth was kept under close guard and restraint, but was suffered to walk in the palace grounds. "In this situation," says Holinshed, "no marvel if she, hearing upon a time, out of her garden at Woodstock, a certain milkmaid singing

pleasantlie, wished herself to be a milkmaid as she was; saying that her case was better, and life merrier." So Viola, in Fletcher's play, "The Coxcombe," 1647:

> "Would to God, my father
> Had lived like one of these, and bred me up
> To milk, and do as they do! Methinks 'tis
> A life that I would chuse, if I were now
> To tell my time again, above a prince's."

The milkmaid, and the girls guarding sheep and cows are things of the past, and with them have largely departed their old ballads and songs. Tusser, in his "Points on Huswifry," in 1570, recommends the country housewife to select her maids from those who sing at their work as being usually the most painstaking and the best.

> "Such servants are oftenest painsfull and good,
> That sing at their labours, like birds in a wood."

Nowadays, domestic servants sing nothing but hymns, and the use of ballads and folksongs has died out among farm girls, and these are to be recovered only where there are village industries as basket weaving, glove sewing, and the like.

But the old men sing their ancient ditties, or did so till within the last fifty years. Now they are no longer called on for them, but they remember them, and with a little persuasion can be induced to render them up. When I was a boy, I was wont to ride over and about Dartmoor, and to put up at little village taverns. There I was sure in the evening to hear one or two men sing, and should it be a pay day, sing

hour after hour, one song following another with little intermission.

There was an institution at mines and quarries called a *fetching*. It occurred every fortnight. The men left work early, and went to the changing room; stone jars of ale were brought thither from the nearest public house. Each man filled his mug, and each in turn, before emptying it, was required to sing. On such occasions many a fine old ballad was to be picked up. There was also the farm-supper after harvest, at which the workmen sang. Now the suppers have been discontinued. Ringer's feasts, happily, still remain, and at them a good old ditty may be heard. But most of the old singers with their traditional ballads set to ancient modal melodies have passed away.

In "Poems, etc.," by Henry Incledon Johns, published by subscription, Devonport, 1832, is the following interesting passage. He is describing a night spent in an inn on the borders of Dartmoor; he met farmers and labourers. "One of the party I observed never took any share in the conversation, but appeared to have been invited there for the sole purpose of singing to them. He sang a great number of ballads, making up in loudness for what he lacked in melody. I thought it betrayed rather a want of courtesy that his auditors continued to talk while he sang, and no less remarkable, that they never expressed either applause or disapprobation of his strains. Now and then, one or two of them would join in a line of chorus, but it seemed to be done in a sort of parenthesis, and the thread of the conversation was immediately resumed as vehemently as

ever.... I gleaned the following scraps of the border minstrelsy of Dartmoor:

'There was an old man as blind as blind could be,
He swore he saw the fox go up a great tree.'

'There was one among them all
That's slender, fair and tall,
With a black and rolling eye,
And a skin of lily dye.'

'A bonny lass I courted full many a long day,
And dearly I loved to be in her sweet company.'

(The lover then describes the progress of his suit, which proves unsuccessful, and concludes thus:—)

'Go, dig me a pit, that is long, large, and deep,
And I'll lay myself down, and take a long sleep.
And that's the way to forget her.'

"The air to the latter was rather plaintive, and from the lips of some siren might have been entitled to an *encore*, but the voice which now gave it utterance only added another to many previous proofs that the English are not a musical people. The minstrel was in appearance one of the most athletic men I have ever seen, and although seventy-five years of age, would still, as I subsequently learnt, perform a day's work better than most of the young men of the parish. He was a pauper, but in great respect among the neighbouring rustics for his vocal powers. His auditory were

moor-farmers with countenances as rugged and weather-beaten as the rocks among which they live."

It is not a little interesting to know that some seventy years after this recorded evening we were able to recover two of the songs which Mr. Johns gives somewhat inaccurately; and both are included in this collection. The first is "The Three Jovial Welshmen," No. 75; and the last is "The False Bride," No. 97.

One of my old singers, James Olver, was the son of very strict Wesleyans. When he was a boy, he was allowed to hear no music save psalm and hymn tunes. But he was wont to creep out of his window at night, and start away to the tavern where the miners congregated, and listen to and heap up in his memory the songs he there heard. As these were forbidden fruit they were all the more dearly prized and surely remembered, and when he was a white-haired old man, he poured them out to us.

Some forty or fifty years ago, it was customary when the corn was cut, for the young men of a parish to agree together, and without telling the farmer of their intention, to invade his harvest field, work all night and stack his corn, whilst he slept. It was allowed to leak out who had done him this favour, and in return, he invited them with their lasses to sup and dance and make merry in a lighted barn. Then famous old songs were sung. But all that good feeling is at an end, and in its place exists a rankling hostility between the tiller of the soil and his employer. Blame assuredly attaches to the farmer for this condition of affairs, in that he has done away with the farmhouse festivities in which workmen and employer took part.

One evening in 1888, I was dining with the late Mr. Daniel Radford, of Mount Tavy, when the conversation turned to old Devonshire songs. Some of those present knew "Widdecombe Fair," others remembered "Arscott of Tetcott"; and all had heard many and various songs sung at Hunt-suppers, at harvest and sheep-shearing feasts. My host turned to me and said: "It is a sad thing that our folk-music should perish. I wish you would set to work and collect it—gather up the fragments that remain before all is lost!"

I undertook the task. I found that it was of little use going to most farmers and yeoman. They sang the compositions of Hooke, Hudson, and Dibden. But I learned that there were two notable old singing men at South Brent, and I was aware that there was one moorland singing farmer at Belstone, I was informed of this by J.D. Prickman, Esq., of Okehampton. This man, Harry Westaway, knew many old songs. Moreover, in my own neighbourhood was a totally illiterate hedger, in fact, he could neither read nor write. He enjoyed no little local celebrity as a song-man. His name was James Parsons, aged seventy-four, and a son of a still more famous singer called "The Singing-machine," and grandson of another of the same fame. In fact, the profession of song-man was hereditary in the family. At every country entertainment, in olden times, at the public-house almost nightly, for more than a century, one of these men of the Parsons' family had not failed to attend, to sing as required for the entertainment of the company. The *repertoire* of the grandfather had descended to old James. For how many generations before him the profession had been followed I could not learn. James Parsons' ballad tunes

were of an early and archaic character. In fact, with few exceptions his melodies were in the Gregorian modes. At one time Parsons and a man named Voysey were working on the fringe of Dartmoor, and met in the evening at the moorland tavern. Parsons boasted of the number of songs he knew, and Voysey promised to give him a glass of ale for every fresh one he sang. Parsons started with "The Outlandish Knight," one song streamed forth after another, one glass after another was emptied, and these men sat up the whole night, till the sun rose, and the song-man's store was not then exhausted, but Voysey's pocket was. I could hardly credit this tale when told me, so I questioned Voysey, who had worked for my father and was working for me. He laughed and confirmed the tale. "I ought to remember it," he said, "for he cleared me clean out."

Many a pleasant evening have I spent with old Parsons, he in the settle, sitting over the hall fire, I taking down the words of his ballads, Mr. Sheppard or Mr. Bussell noting down his melodies.

But one day I heard that an accident had befallen Parsons. In cutting "spears," *i.e.*, pegs for thatching, on his knee he had cut into the joint; and the village doctor told me he feared Parsons at his age would never get over it. I sent for Mr. Bussell, and said to him: "We shall lose our old singer, before we have quite drained him. Come with me, and we will visit his cottage, and see what more we can get from him." We went, and very pleased he was to sing to us from his bed. "Old Wichet," No. 30, was one of the songs we then acquired from him. Happily, the sturdy constitution of

the man caused his recovery, and he lived on for three years after this accident.

One day in November, I got a letter from the Vicar of South Brent, in which he informed me that Robert Hard, a crippled stone-breaker there, and one of my song-men, was growing very feeble. Without delay I took the train, and arrived at South Brent Vicarage, just as the party had finished breakfast. "Now," said I to the Vicar, "Lend me your drawing room and the piano, and send for old Hard."

The stone breaker arrived, and I spent almost the whole day, that is, till the dusk of evening fell, taking down his songs and melodies. From him then, I had "The Cuckoo," that I have published in my "Garland of Country Songs." A month later, poor old Hard was found dead in a snowdrift by the roadside.

I had enlisted the services of such excellent musicians as the late Rev. H. Fleetwood Sheppard, of Thurnscoe, Yorkshire, and Mr., now the Rev. Doctor Bussell, Mus. Doc., and Vice-principal of Brazennose College, Oxford, and we worked at collecting, at South Brent, where besides Robert Hard, was John Helmore, a miller, who died in the Ivy Bridge Workhouse in 1900; also at Belstone, and we worked through the length and breadth of Dartmoor. James Coaker,[1] a blind man of 89, in the heart of the moor, very infirm, and able to leave his bed for a few hours of the day only, was unable to sing, but could recite the words of ballads; but Mr. J. Webb, captain of a mine hard by, knew his tunes, and could very sweetly pipe them. On Blackdown, Mary Tavy, lived a mason, Samuel Fone, he died in 1898. He had an almost inexhaustible supply. Further songs were yielded by

a singing blacksmith, John Woodrich, of Woolacott Moor, Thrushleton, commonly known as "Ginger Jack"; also by Roger Luxton, of Halwell, by James Olver, Tanner, Launceston, a native of S. Kewe, Cornwall; by John Masters, of Bradstone, aged 83; by William Rice and John Rickards, both of Lamerton; by William Friend, labourer, Lydford; Edmund Fry, thatcher, a native of Lezant, Cornwall; Roger Hannaford, Widdecombe; Will and Roger Huggins, Lydford; W. Bickle, Bridestowe; Matthew Baker, a poor cripple, Lew Down; John Dingle, Coryton; J. Peake, tanner, Liskeard; and Mr. S. Gilbert, the aged innkeeper of the "Falcon," Mawgan, in Pyder. More were obtained from old singers at Two Bridges and Post Bridge on Dartmoor, from others at Chagford, at Holne, and at South Brent. From others again at Menheniot, Cornwall, and at Fowey. Some songs taken down from moor men on Dartmoor, in or about 1868, were sent me by W. Crossing, Esq., who knows Dartmoor better than any man living; others by T.S. Cayzer, Esq., taken down in 1849. Miss Bidder, of Stoke Flemming, most kindly searched her neighbourhood for old women who knew ancient songs, and sent me what she obtained. We had several rare old melodies from Sally Satterley,[2] now dead, of Huccaby Bridge, Dartmoor. She had acquired them from her father, a crippled fiddler.

Of the vast quantities of tunes that we have collected, perhaps a third are very good, a third are good, and the remainder indifferent. The singers are almost invariably illiterate and aged, and when they die the tradition will be lost, for the present generation will have nothing to do with these songs, especially such as are modal, and supplant

them with the vulgarest music hall compositions. The melodies are far more precious than the words, and we have been more concerned to rescue these than the words, which are often common-place, and may frequently be found on broadside ballad sheets. The words are less frequently of home growth than the airs, and over and over again we came upon ballads already in print, but not to the tunes to which they are sung elsewhere. There are, in fact, only a few, such as "Cupid's Garden," "Bold General Wolf," "Lord Thomas and the Fair Eleanor," "Barbara Allen," "Outward Bound," "The Mermaid," that retain the melodies to which sung in other parts of England. But, "Tobacco is an Indian Weed," "Joans' Ale is New," "The Fox," and many others have tunes to which sung in Devon and Cornwall that are quite different and local. A remarkable instance is that of "Sweet Nightingale." This appeared in 1761 with music by Dr. Arne. The words travelled down to Cornwall, not so Arne's tune, and they were there set to an entirely independent melody. Then again, when a tune did travel West, and was heard by some of the peasant singers, if it did not commend itself to their taste, they altered it, perhaps quite unconsciously into a form more satisfactory to their minds. I have given a very curious example of this, "Upon a Sunday Morning."

Our folk music is a veritable moraine of rolled and ground fragments from musical strata far away. It contains melodies of all centuries from the days of the minstrels down to the present time, all thrown together in one heap. It must be borne well in mind that to the rustic singer, melody is everything. It was so in the days before Elizabeth. The

people then did not want harmony; to them harmony is quite a modern invention and need.

At the present day, we are so accustomed to choral and concerted music that we have come to care little for formal melody, and Wagner has taught us to be content with musical phrases alone. Melody is a musical idea worked out in successive notes of our scale. Modern music is constructed in but two of the seven diatonic modes, in which melodies may be cast, the major and the minor; with the result that the modern ear entertains no appreciation of an air that is not in the Ionian scale, the "tonus lascivus" of the ancients.

The jongleur or minstrel had but the rudest of instruments; the peasant singer had none at all. What interest he can create, what effect he can produce, must be through melody alone. Now, I venture to assert that the folk music of the English peasantry has been surpassingly rich in melodiousness, and that no tune has had a chance of living and being transmitted from generation to generation, unless it have a distinct individuality in it, in a word, contains a melodious idea. Moreover, not having been framed only in the common major or minor key, it is abundantly varied. It has been a well-spring from which hitherto we have not drawn.

In former times, that strongly defined dividing line which separates the cultured from the uncultured did not exist. The music of the peasant was also the music of the court; the ballad was the delight of the cottager and of the noble lady in her bower. But the separation began, in music, in the Elizabethan days; in ballads, in those of James I., when

nearly every old ballad was re-written to fresh metres, unsingable to the traditional airs. The skilled musician scorned folk melodies, and revelled in counter-point.

It is a mistake to suppose that all mediæval music was in the Gregorian modes other than our major and minor. Even in the 13th century, the modern major mode was used, so that some of our traditional airs, which seem to be modern may really be old.

M. Tiersot notes that among the melodies extant of three trouvères of the Thirteenth century, a certain number are modern in character. Of twenty-two airs by the Chatelain de Coucy, three are frankly in the major; five others in the 7th or the 8th tone, give the impression of the major. Of nine melodies by the King of Navarre, four are in the major, a fifth in the 7th tone, is of the same nature as those of De Coucy. Of thirty-four *chansons* by Adam de la Hall, twenty-one are in the major.

The folk airs that we give in our collection may not please at first, certainly will not please all; but when once a relish for them has been acquired, then hearers will turn with weariness from the ordinary concert hall feebleness, as we turn from the twaddle of a vacuous female. We have found it necessary to take down all the variants of the same air that we have come across.

M. Bourgault Ducoudray, in his introduction to "Mélodies populaires de Basse Bretagne," Paris, 1885, says: "When a song has been transmitted from mouth to mouth, without having been fixed by notation, it is exposed to alterations. One is sometimes obliged to collect as many as twenty variants of the same air, before finding one that is good.

This is the greatest difficulty to the seeker; it is as hard to lay the hand on the veritable typal form of a melody as it is to meet with an intact specimen among the shells that have been rolled on the sea shore." When a party of singers is assembled, or when one man sings a succession of ballads, the memory becomes troubled; the first few melodies are given correctly, but after that, the airs become deflected and influenced by the airs last sung. At Two Bridges one old singer, G. Kerswell, after giving us "The Bell-ringers," sang us half-a-dozen ballads but the melody of the bells went through them all, and vitiated them all so as to render them worthless. On another occasion, we took down four or five airs all beginning alike, because one singer had impressed this beginning on the minds of the others. At another time, when this impression was worn off, they would sing correctly, and then the beginnings would be different. Experience taught us never to take down too much at one sitting.

In a very few years all this heritage of traditional folk music will be gone; and this is the supreme moment at which such a collection can be made. Already, nearly every one of my old singers from whom these melodies were gathered, is dead. They are passing away everywhere. Few counties of England have been worked. Sussex has been well explored by the late Rev. John Broadwood, and then by Miss Lucy Broadwood[3]; Yorkshire, by Mr. Frank Kidson; Northumberland, by Dr. Collingwood Bruce and Mr. John Stokoe. Mr. Cecil Sharp is now engaged on Somersetshire, and Dr. Vaughan Williams on Essex. Who will undertake Lincolnshire, Dorset, Hampshire, and other counties? The

purely agricultural districts are most auriferous. In manufacturing counties modern music has driven out the traditional folk melodies.

With regard to the approximate dates of the airs we give, all that we can say is that such as are in the ancient modes are not later than the reign of James I. How much more ancient they may be, it is impossible to determine. The melodies of the Handel and Arne, and then those of the Hooke and Dibden periods can be at once detected. Some few of the melodies we have taken down were certainly originally in one or other of the ancient modes, but in process of time have been subjected to alteration, to accommodate them to the modern ear.

Although some seventy per cent. of the airs noted from the very old singers are modal, we have not given too many of these, as the popular taste is not sufficiently educated to relish them. But such as can not perceive the beauty of the tunes that go, for instance, to "The Trees they are so high," in the rarely used Phrygian mode, "Flora, the Flower of the West," in F, "Henry Martyn," "On a May morning so early," etc., are indeed to be pitied. We have not been able to give those lengthy ballads, such as, "The Outlandish Knight," "The Brown Girl," "By the Banks of Green Willow," "The Baffled Knight," "William and the Shepherd's Daughter," "Captain Ward," "The Golden Glove," "The Maid and the Box," "The Death of Queen Jane," etc., which are too long to be sung and listened to with patience now-a-days.

In some instances we have set other words to a ballad tune, as XXXVI. One of my old singers said to me concerning this ballad, "When my little sister, now dead, these twenty

years, was a child, and went up from Exeter to London with me in a carrier's van, Lor bless'y, afore railways was invented, I mind that she sang this here ballet in the waggon all the way up. We was three days about it. She was then about six years old." The ballet, by the way, is not particularly choice and suitable for a child or a grown-up girl to sing, according to our ideas.

In giving these songs to the public, we have been scrupulous to publish the airs precisely as noted down, choosing among the variants those which commended themselves to us as the soundest. But we have not been so careful with regard to the *words*. These are sometimes in a fragmentary condition, or are coarse, contain *double entendres*, or else are mere doggerel. Accordingly, we have re-written the songs wherever it was not possible to present them in their original form. This was done by the Scotch. Many an old ballad is gross, and many a broadside is common-place. Songs that were thought witty in the Caroline and early Georgian epochs, are no longer sufferable; and broadside ballads are in many cases vulgarised versions of earlier ballads that have been lost in their original forms.

What a change has taken place in public feeling with regard to decency may be judged by the way in which Addison speaks of D'Urfey in "The Guardian," 1713, No. 29. "A *judicious* author, some years since, published a collection of sonnets, which he very successfully called "Laugh and be Fat; or, Pills to purge Melancholy." I can not sufficiently admire the facetious title of these volumes, and must censure the world of ingratitude, while they are so negligent

in rewarding the jocose labours of my friend, Mr. D'Urfey, who was so large a contributor to this treatise, and to whose numerous productions so many rural squires in the remotest parts of the island are obliged for the dignity and state which corpulency gives them." And again, in No. 67, "I must heartily recommend to all young ladies, my disciples, the case of my old friend, who has often made their grand-mothers merry, and whose sonnets have perhaps lulled to sleep many a present toast, when she lay in her cradle." Why—D'Urfey's Pills must now-a-days be kept under lock and key. The fun so commended by the pious and grave Addison is filth of the most revolting description. And yet the grand-mothers of the ladies of his day, according to him, were wont to sing them over the cradles of their grand-children!

So when a "Collection of Old Ballads" was published 1723–5, the Editor, after giving a series of historical and serious pieces, in a later volume apologises to the ladies for their gravity, and for their special delectation furnishes an appendix of songs that are simply dirty.

A good many of the ditties in favour with our rural song-men, are, it must be admitted, of the D'Urfey type; and what is more some of the very worst are sung to the daintiest early melodies. Two courses lay open to us. One that adopted Dr. Barrett and Mr. Kidson to print the words exactly as given on the broadsides, with asterisks for the undesirable stanzas. But this would simply have killed the songs. No one would care to warble what was fragmentary. On the other hand, there is that adopted by the Scotch and Irish collectors, which consists in re-writing or modifying

where objectionable or common-place. This has been the course we have pursued. It seemed a pity to consign the lovely old melodies to the antiquary's library, by publishing them with words which were fatal to the success of the songs in the drawing room or the concert hall. We resolved where the old words were good, or tolerable, to retain them. Where bad, to re-write, adhering as closely as possible to the original. Where the songs were mere broadside ballads, we have had no scruple in doing this, for we give reference to the press-mark in the British Museum, where the original text may be found. But the broadside itself is often a debased form of a fine early ballad. The broadside publishers were wont to pay a shilling to any ballad mongers who could furnish them with a new ditty. These men were destitute of the poetic faculty and illiterate, and they contented themselves with taking old ballads and recomposing them, so as to give to them a semblance of novelty, sufficient to qualify their authors to claim the usual fee. Here are some lines by one of the fraternity:

> "I'm Billy Nuts wot always cuts
> A dash through all the town, sir,
> With lit'rary men, my clever pen
> In grammar gains renown, sir,
> In song, and catch, and ditty.
> And then to each, with dying speech
> I do excite their pity.
> So all agree to welcome me,
> With drum and fife and whiols, (*sic* for viols)
> A cause my name stands fast in fame,

The Bard of Seven Dials."
(B.M., 11,621, K. 4)

Our object was not to furnish a volume for consultation by the musical antiquary alone, but to resuscitate, and to popularise the traditional music of the English people. As, however, to the antiquary everything is important, exactly as obtained, uncleansed from rust and unpolished, I have deposited a copy of the songs and ballads with their music exactly as taken down, for reference, in the Municipal Free Library, Plymouth.

The Rev. H.F. Sheppard, who worked with me for twelve years in rescuing these old songs, and in bringing them before the public, is now no more. A new edition has been called for, and in this some exclusions and some additions have been made. We do not think that the pieces we have removed are not good, but that we are able to supply their places with others that are better. Mr. Sheppard entertained a very strong objection to arranging any song he had not himself "pricked down" from the lips of the singers, and as Mr. Bussell had noted down hundreds as well, these, for the most part, had to be laid on one side. Mr. Sheppard was, doubtless, right in his assertion, that unless he had himself heard the song sung, he could not catch its special character, and so render it justly.

Acting on the advice of Mr. Cecil Sharp, of the Conservatoire, Hampstead, who has kindly undertaken the musical editorship of this edition, I have introduced several interesting ballads and songs that, for the reason above given, were excluded from the first. Mr. F. Kidson has kindly

afforded us information relative to such songs as he has come across in Yorkshire.

In conclusion I give a few particulars relative to the Rev. H.F. Sheppard, my fellow-worker, and Mr. D. Radford, the instigator of the collection, both of whom have passed away.

Henry Fleetwood Sheppard was a graduate of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and had been appointed Travelling Batchelor to the University. Through the whole of his clerical career he was closely associated with sacred music, especially with Plain-song, of which he was an enthusiastic admirer. As precentor of the Doncaster Choral Union from 1864 to 1884, he became the pioneer of improved church music in that part of Yorkshire. In the year 1868 he was presented to the Rectory of Thurnscoe, which at that time was an agricultural village numbering about 180 inhabitants, where he remained until 1898, when he resigned his living on account of his advancing years which precluded his coping satisfactorily with the population swelling to 3,366 souls, owing to the opening of coal mines in the parish. In 1888, as already intimated, he was associated along with myself in the collection of Devon and Cornish folk songs.

When he resigned the incumbency of Thurnscoe, he retired to Oxford, where, in his declining years, he might, at his leisure, dip into those store houses of classical and musical literature in which his soul delighted.

Three days before Christmas, 1901, a slight stroke of paralysis gave warning of possibly serious mischief. A sudden and fatal collapse ensued on S. John's Day, without further warning. He was laid to rest at Oxford on New Year's Eve. An inscription in the Vestry wall at Thurnscoe, was cut

by one who was in Mr. Sheppard's choir for nearly forty years before his death. "Pray for the peace of Henry Fleetwood Sheppard, Rector of this Parish Church, 1868–1898, who went to rest, December 27th, 1901, aged 77 years."

Mr. Daniel Radford, of Mount Tavy, was an enthusiastic lover of all that pertained to his county. He knew that a number of traditional songs and ballads still floated about, and he saw clearly that unless these were at once collected, they would be lost irretrievably, and he pressed on me the advisability of making a collection, and of setting about it at once. I began to do so in 1888, and continued at it, working hard for twelve years, assisted by Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Bussell. Mr. Radford was one for whom I entertained the deepest affection, inspired by his high character; and I knew that what he judged to be advisable should be undertaken in no perfunctory way.

Mr. Radford died January 3rd, 1900, at the age of seventy-two, and was buried in Lydford churchyard. The beautiful rood-screen in the church has been erected by his sons to his memory.

In the collection, the music initialed H.F.S. has the accompaniment arranged for the piano by Mr. Sheppard, that initialed C.J.S. by Mr. C.J. Sharp; that F.W.B. by Dr. Bussell.

No 1 BY CHANCE IT WAS

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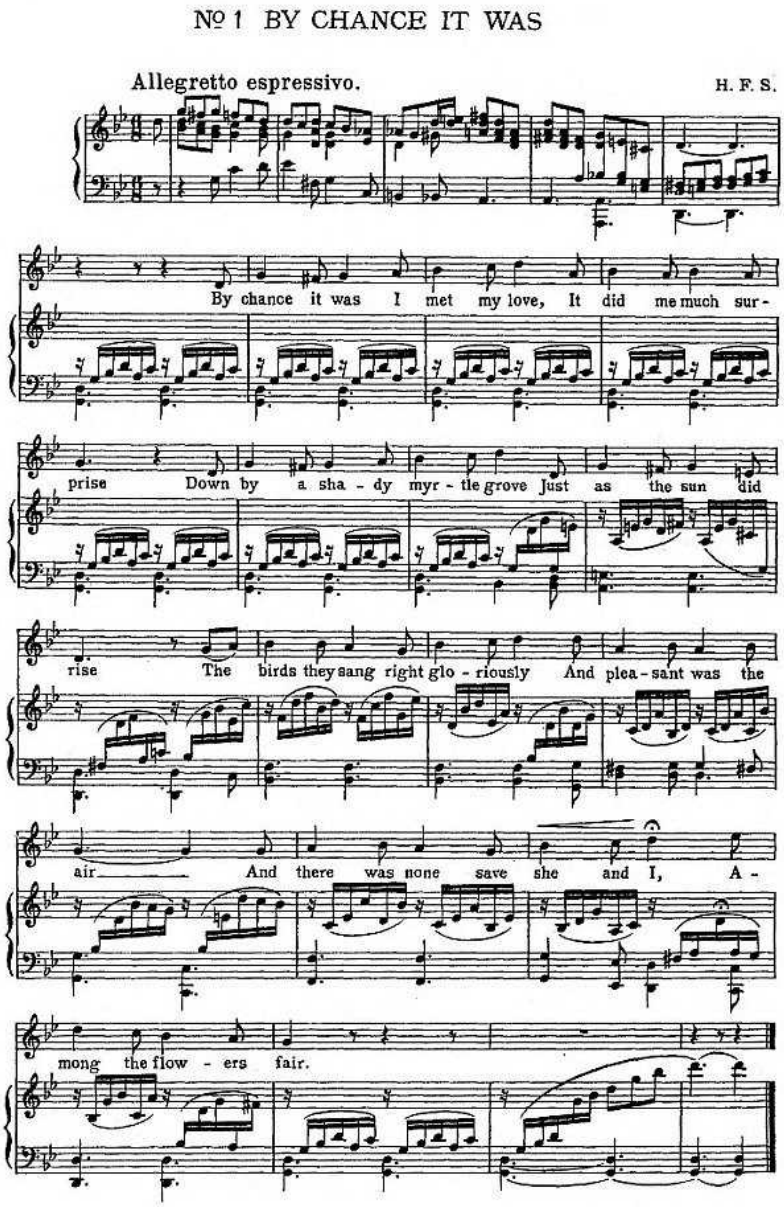
H.F.S.



[Listen] [XML] [Note]

By chance it was I met my love,
It did me much surprise,
Down by a shady myrtle grove,
Just as the sun did rise.
The birds they sang right gloriously,
And pleasant was the air;
And there was none, save she and I,
Among the flowers fair.

2

In dewy grass and green we walk'd,
She timid was and coy;
"How can'st thou choose but pity me,
My pretty pearl, my joy?
How comes it that thou stroll'st this way?
Sweet maiden, tell me true,
Before bright Phœbus' glittering ray
Has supped the morning dew?"

3

"I go to tend the flocks I love
The ewes and tender lambs,
That pasture by the myrtle grove,
That gambol by their dams;
There I enjoy a pure content
At dawning of the day,"
Then, hand in hand, we lovers went
To see the flock at play.

4

And as we wended down the road,
I said to her, "Sweet Maid,
Three years I in my place abode
And three more must be stayed.
The three that I am bound so fast,
O fairest wait for me.
And when the weary years are past
Then married we will be."

5