ONGS OF The EBRICES.

M.Kennedg-Fraser

MKennedb Macleod

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* Preface to the Second Set.

N this volume all the tunes are traditional, with the possible exception of "The Cork with the possible exception of "The Cork Leg," and the words of most are to be found on broadsheets. Nevertheless, I feel some explanation of the contents is necessary.

It is not pretended that the ballads or the tunes are now published for the first time. At least half of them, in one form or another, have appeared before, if not actually in the version given here; but the greater number will be new to those living outside the comparatively small circle of people who know much of Irish folk music. It may be that the lovely tunes of "Norah O'Neale," "The Light of the Moon," and "Cruckhaun Finn," are new even to that charmed circle. For each of those three tunes, as well as "A Good Roarin, Fire," and the superb version of "The Lowlands of Holland," I am indebted to my old nurse, Ellen Boylan, who has lived in my father's house for thirty-five years; from her, also, I learned "The Next Market Day," "I Know Where I'm Going," "A Ballynure Ballad," and "Must I Go Bound?" which appeared in the first volume. tunes are now published for the first time. in the first volume.

As far as possible the words of the ballads are given here precisely as they were recorded, Where I have made any slight adaptation I have done so for reasons set forth in the preface to the first volume, which reasons are surely justified in a book of this kind.

a book of this kind.

It requires the eloquence of no professional essayist to point out the deep human feeling, the simple pathos, the wise humor of some of these ballads, for their wonderful qualities are self-evident. Most ballads are human (if not historical) documents, and the story told so straightforwardly in "Skibbereen," for example, certainly falls into that category. Curiously enough in outline and in one or two details it resembles an actual incident recorded by a friend resembles an actual incident recorded by a friend of mine in Kerry less than forty years ago, though there could be no connection between the two stories. Of the fragment "Da Luain, da mairt" there is a legend to the effect that once upon a time a poor old hunchback overheard the fairies singing inside a rath in some lonely part of Ireland. The phrase he heard was simply that Ireland. The phrase he heard was simply that of "Da Luain, da mairt;" da Luain, da mairt," repeated many times. Being something of an artist after the manner of Hans Sachs, and dissatisfied with the incompleteness of the melody, he added—very softly to himself—"agus da Caideen" in the form I have given here. The fairies, being quick of hearing and naturally good musical critics, were delighted and promptly removed his hump. There are variants of this tale to be read in old books, and I have a dim removed his hump. There are variants of this tale to be read in old books, and I have a dim recollection of an ancient Beckmesser who so distorted the phrasing of the little song that he received one or two humps as punishment for his jealousy of our Hans Sachs. "The Bonny Bunch of Roses" is a curious relic

The Bonny Bunch of Roses" is a curious relic of the allegorical style of ballad. The version printed here comes from Dungannon in the County of Tyrone—a difficult song to sing, but very characteristic; it is best sung without any break in rhythm. England, of course, is the "Bonny Bunch of Roses," and the ballad itself is of English origin.

Chelsea, London, 1915.

HERRET HUGHES



Mayong Kennedy- Fraser

TWELVE SELECTED SONGS OF THE HEBRIDES

COLLECTED, EDITED, TRANSLATED,

AND ARRANGED

FOR

VOICE AND PIANOFORTE

BY

MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER

AND

KENNETH MACLEOD.

PRICE \$1.50 NET

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TWELVE SELECTED

SONGS OF THE HEBRIDES.

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FORE-WORD.

THE Celtic Songs and Tales here given are a selection from my volume of "Songs of the Hebrides," issued in 1909.

In 1905 I first visited the Outer Hebrides in search of songs. With the help of my daughter I have since steadily continued the work then begun.

From the outer Isles of Eriskay, Barra, North and South Uist, Benbecula and the Lewis, and from the nearer Skye and Eigg, we have reaped a rich harvest of hitherto un-noted airs.

But, valuable as this work may have been, it has gained enormously by the collaboration of the Island poet and literateur, Mr. Kenneth Macleod, a native of Eigg, and himself a cultured and life-long enthusiast for Island lore.

Of the twelve songs here bound together, two, the "Spinning Song" and the "Death Croon," were noted by me from his singing; the Gaelic words of the "Sea-Reivers," the "Sheiling Song," and "Tir-nan-òg," are from his pen; while the English Prose Tales, which abound in our joint volume, and are here only slightly represented, are from his own unique renderings of the legendary lore of his race.

To Miss Frances Tolmie, of Skye, the well-known collector, I owe the air of "The Sea-Gull of the Land-under-Waves"; that of the "Fairy's Love Song," my setting of which I have been asked to include here, is the only hitherto noted air in the Album. It will be found, already engraved and published a century ago, in Albyn's Anthology.

To the late Dr. Alexander Carmichael's collection of Hymns, Incantations, and Labour Lilts, entitled "Carmina Gadelica," I owe valuable verses of the Churning and Milking Croons.

In the work of making singing translations from the original Gaelic, where this could be secured, Mr. Macleod and I collaborated. To some of the airs, those of the "Sheiling Song," the "Skye Fisher," and "In Hebrid Seas," I had perforce to provide original English words. "Better," wrote Burns—zealously collecting Scots tunes in the eighteenth century—"mediocre words to a fine air than none at all."

The airs are given here as the people sang them. The instrumental settings are my own. To add harmony to an ancient melody, it has been said, is practically to produce a modern composition on an ancient foundation. A born Celt, with a life-long familiarity with the music, I have tried, in the choice and figuration of the harmonies, to preserve the atmosphere of the old songs, and while working at them have been ever haunted by impressions of summers spent in a strange sound-world of surging sea, wailing wind, and Celtic tonality.

MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER

THE CHRIST-CHILD'S LULLABY.

[TALADH CHRIOSTA.]*

In Eigg and Uist this lullaby is associated with a legend of which the following is a literal translation:—

HERE was once a shiftless laddie in one of the isles who had lost his mother, and that is always a sad tale, but had got a stepmother in her place, and that is sometimes a sadder tale still. He was not like other children at anyrate, but wise where they were foolish, and foolish where they were wise; and he could never do or say anything but what put anger on his stepmother. There was no life for him in the house, and if out he should go, as out he would, that was a fault too. His neighbours said that he was growing into the grave. His stepmother said that he was growing up to the gallows. And he thought himself (but his thoughts were young and foolish) that he was growing towards something which fate was keeping for him. On an evening there was, he brought home, as usual, the cattle for the milking, and if they gave little milk that time, and likely it was little they gave, who was to blame for it but the poor orphan! "Son of another," said his stepmother in the heat of anger, "there will be no luck on this house till you leave; but whoever heard of a luckless chick leaving of its own will?" But leave the shiftless laddie did, and that of his own will, and ere the full moon rose at night, he was on the other side of the ben.

That night the stepmother could get neither sleep nor ease; there was something ringing in her ear, and something else stinging in her heart, until at last her bed was like a cairn of stones in a forest of reptiles. If I will rise, she said, and see if the night outside is better than the night inside. She rose and went out, with her face towards the ben; nor did she ever stop until she saw and heard something which made her stop. What was this but a Woman, with the very heat-love of Heaven in her face, sitting on a grassy knoll and song-lulling a babyson with the sweetest music ever heard under moon or sun; and at her feet was the shiftless laddie, his face like the dream of the Lord's night. God of the Graces! said the stepmother, it is Mary Mother, and she is doing what I ought to be doing—song-lulling the orphan. And she fell on her knees and began to weep the soft warm tears of a mother; and when, after a while, she looked up, there was nobody there but herself and the shiftless laddie side by side.

And that is how the Christ's Lullaby was heard in the Isles.

Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh, is m'eudail thu, M'iunntas àr is m' eibhneas thu, Mo mhacan àlainn ceutach thu, Cha'n fhiu mi fhein bhi'd dhàil.

Tha mi 'g altrum Rìgh na Mòrachd I
'S mise màthair Dhe na Glòrach I
Nach buidhe, nach sona dhòmhsa I
Tha mo chrìdhe làn de shòlas.

Mo ghaol an t-sùil a sheallas tlà, Mo ghaol an cridh' tha liont' le gràdh, Ged is leanabh thu gun chail Is lionmhor buaidh tha ort a' fàs.

'S tu Rìgh nan Rìgh, 's tu Naomh nan Naomh, Dia am Mac thu 's siorruidh t' aois, 'S tu mo Dhia 's mo leanabh caomh, 'S tu àrd Cheann-feadhna chinne-daonda.

'S tusa grian gheal an dòchais Chuireas dorchadas air fògairt, Bheir thu clann-daoin' bho staid bhrònaich Gu naomhachd, soilleireachd, is eòlas.

Hosanna do Mhac Dhaibhidh, Mo Rìgh, mo Thighearna, 's mo Shlàn'ear! 'S mòr mo shòlas bhi 'gad thàladh, 'S beannaichte measg nam mnài mi.

LITERAL TRANSLATION.

My love, my dear, my darling thou, My treasure new, my gladness thou, My comely beauteous babe-son thou, Unworthy I to tend to thee.

I the nurse of the King of Greatness! I the mother of the God of Glory! Am not I the glad to-be-envied one! O my heart is full of rapture.

O dear the eye that softly looks, O dear the heart that fondly loves. Tho' but a tender babe thou art, The graces all grow up with thee.

Art King of Kings, art Saint of Saints, God the Son of eternal age, Art my God and my gentle babe, Art the King-chief of humankind.

The fair white sun of hope Thou art, Putting the darkness into exile, Bringing mankind from a state of woe, To knowledge, light and holiness.

Hosanna to the Son of David, My King, my Lord, and my Saviour! Great my joy to be song-lulling thee— Blessed among the women I.

KENNETH MACLEOD.

^{*} The Gaelic verses are taken from a selection of Hymns compiled by the late Father Allan Macdonald, the King-priest of Eriskay, and printed for private circulation.

THE CHRIST-CHILD'S LULLABY.

(Taladh Chriosta.)

Noted in Eriskay from the singing of Mrs John Macinnes.
Words from FATHER ALLAN MACDONALD.

and arranged with pianoforte accomp: by MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER.



The melody alluded to here is said to have been a Northern Sailor's folk-song heard by Chopin in the Mediterranean.

*Italian vowel sounds.

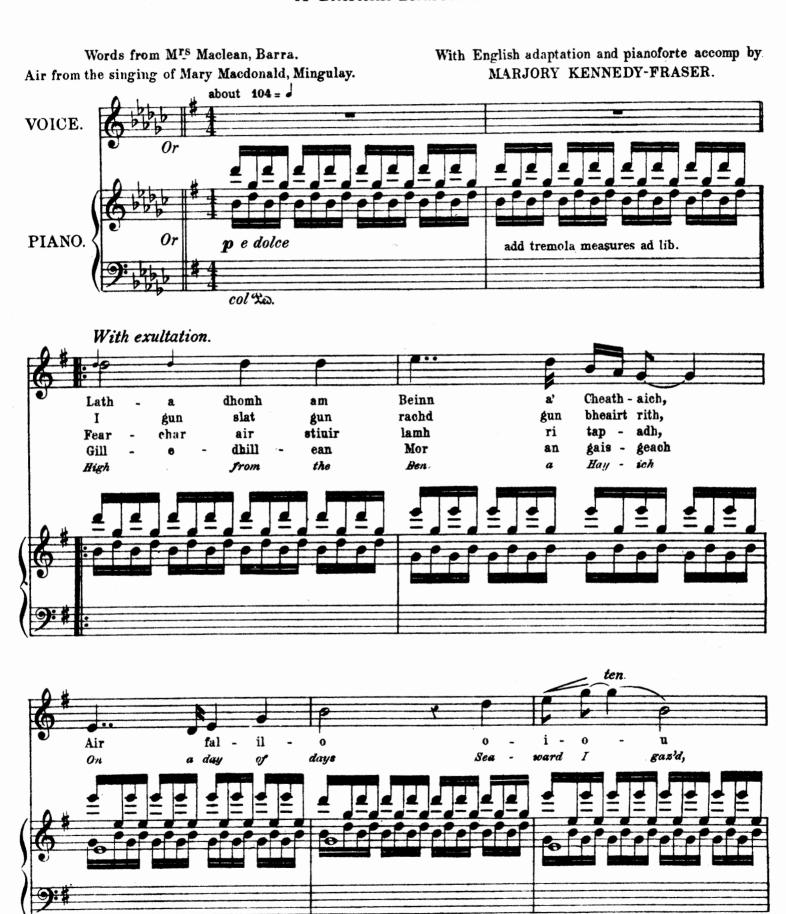
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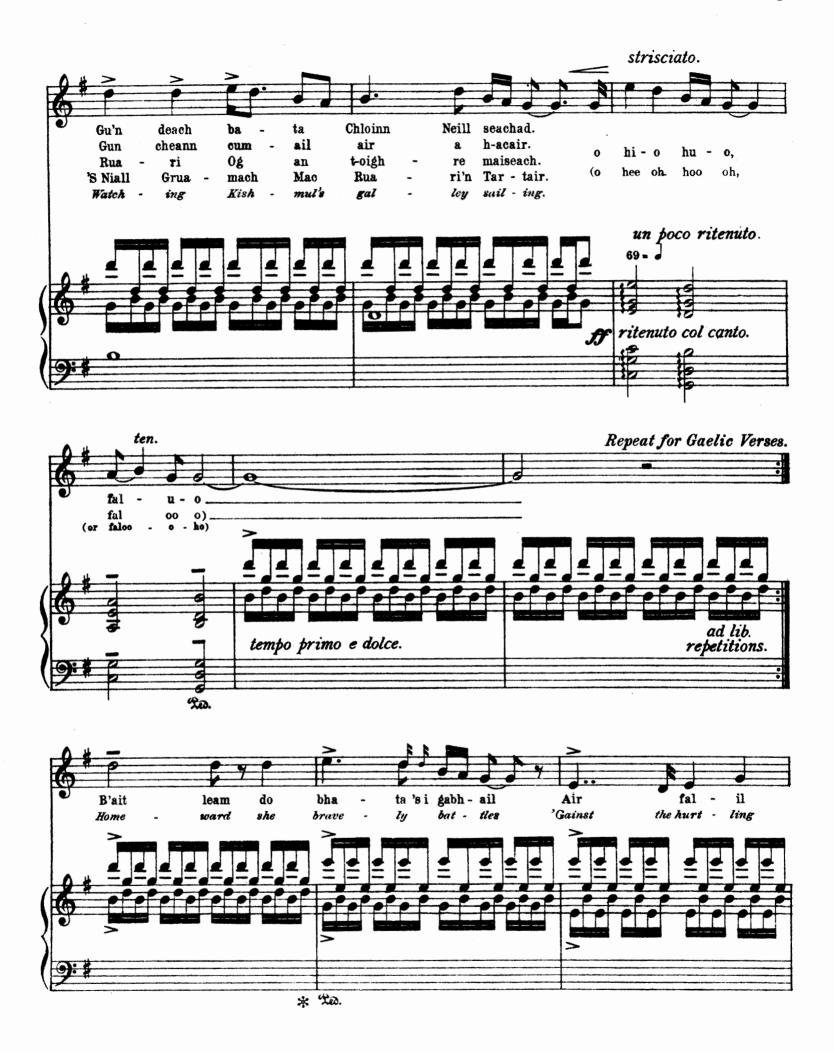


The Christ-Child's Lullaby.

*KISHMUL'S GALLEY.

A' Bhirlinn Bharrach.







H-8372.



THE SEA-SORROW.

THE sea has given to Hebridean song its fiercest joy and its most passionate sorrow. The former is illustrated in the "Sea-reivers' Song" and "The Ship at Sea;" the latter finds fitting expression in "The Sea-sorrow," "Ailein Duinn," and "The Seagull of the Land-under-waves." The songs of the sea-rapture are much less numerous and are, as a rule, the songs of men; the songs of the sea-sorrow are invariably the songs of women. The men reive and rove, and dream of strange lands and adventures beyond the waves.

Tha na luingis a' seoladh Le'n cuid òigear tro 'n chaol, An tòir air gaisge 's air gàbhadh, Air ceol-gàire 's air gaol. The ships go a-sailing With the young through the straits, In search of adventure and danger, The music-of-laughter and love.

But the women lose their husbands and brothers and sons and sweethearts, and the burden of their song is—

Fuar fuar fuar,
Fuar an cuan 's gur snàgach,
Fuar fuar fuar
O h-aigeal gu 'barr i.

Cold cold cold,
Cold the sea and snakish,
Cold cold cold,
From depths to top-wave she.

This gloomy picture of the *Tir-fo-thuinn*, the Land-under-waves, is not, however, the one given by those who ought to know best: the spirits of the drowned ones. "Cold thy bed to-night," said a woman once to the spirit of her drowned husband. "It is neither hot nor cold," was the reply, "but just as one might wish, if as he wished he got." "If not cold, lonely at any rate," suggested the woman. "I have the best heroes of Lochlann beside me," said the man, "and the best bards of Erin, and the best story-tellers of Alba, and what we do not know ourselves, the seal and the swan tell us." "Treasure of my heart," said the woman, "are not we the foolish ones to be weeping and sorrowing for the men, and they so happy in the Land-under-waves!" "Is fhior duit sin! Thou speakest truth there!" said the man, as he vanished into the night and the sea. To sorrow for the drowned ones is worse than foolish, however, it is actually cruel to the men.

Is trom an t-éideadh am bròn, Is truim' an léine am bròn. A heavy dress: sorrow, A heavier shroud: sorrow,

And more than once the weeping woman on the shore has heard the voice of her lost one in the waves entreating her to lift off him the burden of her grief.

A-Vore, my love, lift off me thy woe, The clouds are above and the clouds are below, The stars are above and the stars are below, The cleric has gone above, but better far to be belo A-Vore, my love, a-vore, my love, Lift off me thy woe, if toff me thy woe,*

"Never a sigh comes from the heart," said a woman of Uist, "but a drop of blood falls in its place." And in Eigg the old folk said that the tears of a woman o' sorrow fell in blood-drops on the heart of her loved one under the sea—" and is it not the sad thing to be drowned twice, once by the waves, and once by the tears of your folk!" And not only is the sorrow of the women cruel to the drowned ones, but it is also a source of danger to themselves. It is considered wrong, for instance, to sing a drowning-song twice in an evening, and some of the older generation refuse to sing one at all after sunset. "It is not right," one is told, "to disturb the rest of the ones-no-more; it is bad enough to put sorrow on them, but it is seven times worse to put anger on them." And stories are current in which the spirits of the drowned ones, exasperated beyond all patience, appear in their old homes between midnight and cock-crow, and give the women-lolk a fright which soon dries their tears and banishes their sorrow. It is a remarkable fact, indeed, that in the Hebrides (where one would least expect it) excess, whether of joy or of grief, is regarded as a direct tempting of Providence, and one is often told that "laughing overmuch is an omen of tears, and weeping overmuch an omen of greater evil to come." But the folk will tempt Providence all the same!

KENNETH MACLEOD.

^{*} The Gaelic version has appeared in The Celtic Review, vol. IV., p. 248.

THE SEAGULL OF THE LAND-UNDER-WAVES.9

Old Skye Air from Frances Tolmie. Words from KENNETH MACLEOD.

English adaptation and pianoforte accompaniment by MARJORY KENNEDY FRASER.



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The Seagull of the Land-under-Waves.



The Seagull of the Land-under-Waves. H-8372

AN ISLAND SHEILING SONG.

(Maighdeanan na h-àiridh).

Old refrain with Gaelic verses by Kenneth Macleod.

The melody taken down from the singing of Ann Macneill, Barra, and

set with English words and pianoforte accomp. by MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER.



†Gaelic "Mairi" is pronounced like French "Marie". Copyright 1908 by M. KENNEDY-FRASER. H-8372











A HEBRIDEAN SEA-REIVERS' SONG.

(NA REUBAIREAN.)

Old Gaelic words and translation from KENNETH MACLEOD.

Air from Penelone Macdonald, Eriskay.

Arranged by MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER.



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FAIRY MUSIC.

[CEOL-BRUTHA.]

[A literal translation of some Gaelic notes taken down from old folk in the Hebrides.]

O-DAY is Friday, the day of the Cross, and we may speak well or ill, just as we like, of the Folk of the bruth*, of the Fairy-den; were it any other day, they would hear the least whisper, and an ill word might put great anger on them. Why do they hate Friday and the Cross? Darling of my heart, it isn't hatred at all, at all—it is only envy. Hast never heard of the man of God who was one day reading the Holy Book on a knoll near Dunvegan Castle? That were indeed a tale to tell, but to make it short, did not the knoll open where there was no opening at all, and out came one of the Folk? "That is a good book thou art reading," said she to the man. "It is the Book of God," said he. "And is there any hope for us in the Book," asked she. As I have said, the man was a man of God, but though his heart was in heaven, his head was on earth, and if he told the truth, he told it artfully. "There is hope in the Book," said he, "for the whole seed of Adam." Almost before the words were out of his mouth, the little woman in green gave the shriek of perdition and vanished out of sight, but, for long after, a voice of wailing was heard in that same knoll: Not of the seed of Adam we, not of the seed of Adam we.

The poor Folk! it is likely they have their own share of trouble, just like ourselves; and if the tales be true, they often put trouble on others too. There was a woman in Barra herding cattle one day, and did not the Folk come upon her and carry her with them underground! At any other time the same woman would not have been against a little ploy, but, sad tale! she had left a babe at home, and sweeter than Fairy music is the laughter of her only child to the mother's ear and heart. Och! och! she must have been the sad one, sitting day and night in the bruth, eyes and arms seeking the little one that was not there. O darling of my heart, wae's me for the full breast and the empty knee. And the tale says that one evening she knew—but how she knew is what I do not know—that her sister was sitting on the knoll, and she began to croon a song in the hope that she might be heard above—

Little sister, O my sister, Pitiest thou my plaint to-night?

For all that, few who go into the bruth are as keen to leave it as was the woman of Barra. The Folk are so good at the music that if thou wert to enter the bruth to-day the sapling might become the tallest tree in the forest ere thou would'st get tired of listening. Hast heard of Cnoc-na-piobaireachd, the Knoll-of-piping, in Eigg? In my young days, and in the young days of the ones before me, all the lads of the island used to go there on the beautiful moonlight nights, and bending down an ear to the knoll, it was tunes they would get, and tunes indeed; reels that would make the Merry-dancers themselves go faster, and laments that would draw tears from the eyes of a corpse; sure, in one night, a lad o' music might get as many reels and laments as would marry and bury all the people in Eigg—ay, and in the whole Clanranald country forbye!

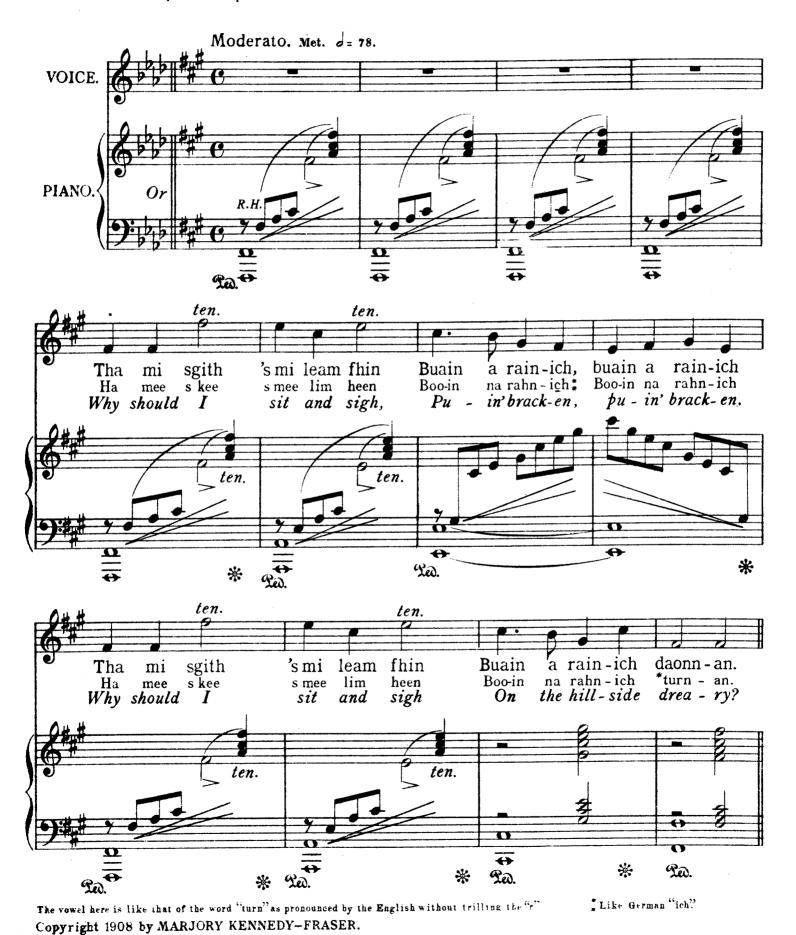
But I never heard that any of the young lads in Eigg had the luck of MacCrimmon. It was from the Folk of the Bruth that he got his share of music, and not little was that same share. Three of them came to him as he lay weeping on the knoll, and said the first: "I will give thee the championship of piping." Said the second: "I will give thee the championship of goodly company." Said the third: "Two championships are enough for any man; I will put an ill along with them—the madness of the full moon." And as it is the unlikely thing that often happens, better was the ill than the good, for the MacCrimmons never played so well as when the moon was full and the madness lay upon them. Hast ever heard of the two night-wanderers who were passing a wood near Dunvegan Castle? Said the one to the other: "Are they not the two beautiful things, the full moon in the sky and the music of the mavis in yonder wood?" "It is not the mavis at all," said the other; "it is Padruig Mor MacCrimmon, and the warbling of the mavis in his fingers."

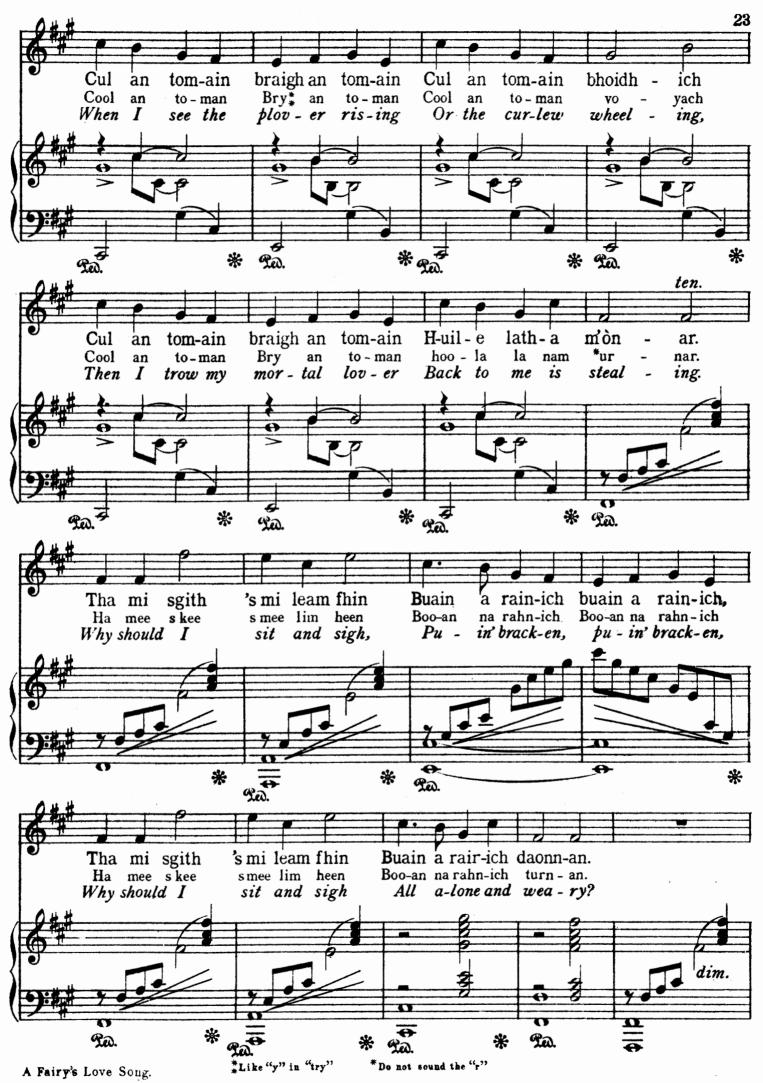
KENNETH MACLEOD.

A FAIRY'S LOVE SONG.

Old Celtic Words and Air.
Lowland Words by JAMES HOGG,
The Ettrick Shepherd, adapted.

Pianoforte Accompaniment composed by MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER.









A Fairy's Love Song. H-8372

*do not trill the "r"

°TIR-NAN-ÒG,

Or, *Skye Fisher's Song.

Original Gaelic poem by KENNETH MACLEOD. Melody noted in a fishing boat off the Isle of Eriskay from the singing of Gillespie Macinnes,

and fitted with English words and piano accomp: by MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER.



^{*}mo nighean duch - my maiden dark Copyright 1909 by Marjory Kennedy-Fraser.

^{*} This song may be had separately.



Tir-nan-Og H-8372



Tir-nan-Òg H-8372

SONGS OF LABOUR.

In the Hebrides labour and song went hand in hand; labour gave rise to song, and song lightened labour. In this book specimens are given of songs associated with spinning, waulking, milking, churning, and rowing. Apart altogether from their musical value, they are of interest as a characteristic element in a life which is fast passing away. Labour is now being more and more divorced from song, and in the course of a very few years the folk will be surprised to hear that their fathers and mothers once used song as a substitute for steam and electricity! One reason is that labour itself is changing; in its old forms it was suited to song; in its new forms the noise of machinery is its music. The quern, for instance, is never used now except in a case of emergency in the outlying isles, and with the quern has disappeared some of the prettiest Gaelic croons. Likewise, patent churns impoverish equally the lilts and the buttermilk, and once sanitary law has forbidden hand-milking and home-waulking (or, at any rate, "human" waulking!) the last link between song and labour will have been snapped.

It is hardly necessary to say that the measure and the time of the labour-songs are suited to the special kind of work involved. In the spinning-song, for instance, "the long drawn out gradually accelerating phrase culminating in a long pause, is evoked by the periodic rhythm of the spinning itself." The wool is carded into rolls or "rowans" (Gaelic rolag), and the time of the song is really determined by the spinner's manipulation of the rolls. As a rule, the spinner is singing the verse and the short chorus as she stretches out her hand for another roll, joins it to the end of the spun one, and gets into the swing of the spinning; this done, the wheel and the long chorus go merrily together, gradually getting quicker, till the spinner, prolonging a note, stretches out as far as her right hand can reach what remains of the roll, and then, with a

hithillean beag cha la o hill iù ra bhó, runs it through to the bobbin.

Of the labour-songs which survive, the ones used for waulking, for fulling the home-spun cloth, are the most numerous and the most varied. The theme may be love or war or the praise of a chief, or even a tragedy such as the Sea-Sorrow; any song, indeed, may be used for waulking, provided the verse is sufficiently short and the chorus sufficiently long. Many of the old Ossianic ballads have been adapted for the purpose, each line forming a verse, followed by a chorus; the result being that ballads which might otherwise have been lost have been thus preserved, though in every case the diction has been greatly simplified and modernised in the process. There are, of course, different songs for different stages of the waulking,* and the stages vary from two or three at a "little" waulking to anything up to twelve at a "big" waulking. The writer has noted the following well-defined stages at Hebridean waulkings within the last twenty years:—

(1) Fairly slow songs—drain-teasachaidh, "heating-songs"—to give the woman time to get into the swing of the work. (2) Lively songs—drain-teanachaidh, "tightening-songs"—to break the back of the work. (3) Frolic-songs—drain-teanachaidh—to give the maidens a chance of avowing or disavowing their sweethearts. (4 and 5) Stretching and clapping songs—a' sineadh's a' baslachadh an aodaich—to make certain that the cloth is of even breadth. (6) The consecration of the cloth—coisrigeadh an aodaich. (7) Folding songs—a' coinnleachadh an aodaich. As the consecration of the cloth is now practically a thing of the past, a speciment of the chants used may be given—

Car deiseal a h-aon, Car deiseal a dhà, Car deiseal a tri.

A' ghrian gus a' chuan shiar, An cinneadh-daonda gus an Trianaid Anns gach gnìomh gu suthainn siorruidh, 'S anns na sòlasaibh.

Beannachd an Dòmhnaich air an aodach so, Gu meal 's gu'n caith na fiurain e Air muir 's air tir, 's ann an caochladh Nam mòr-thonna.

Oran a h-aon air,
Oran a dha,
Oran a tri,
S nar biodh fuaighteadh ris gu dilinn
Ach ceol-gàire nan nionag
'S pògan-meala nam mìneag
'S nan òranaich'—
Is fóghnaidh sin!

The sunwise turn once,
The sunwise turn twice,
The sunwise turn thrice.

Suiting the action
to the words.

The sun to the Western Sea, Mankind to the Holy Three In each deed for aye and aye, And in the gladnesses.

The blessing of the Lord on this cloth, May the heroes wear it, enjoy it, By sea, by land, in the changes
Of mighty waves.

One song on it,
Two songs,
Three songs,
And may there be sewed to it never
But music-laughter of maidens,
Honey-kisses of fair ones
And singing ones—
And that sufficeth!

It may be added that, in the case of the frolic-songs, verses were improvised in which the name of each maiden present was coupled with that of her sweetheart, to whom some slighting allusion; was invariably made; and the maiden, in her reply, was expected to resent this and to praise the slighted one up to the skies. Sometimes, however, either from want of will or want of pluck in the maiden (in the Hebrides it could hardly have been lack of poetic talent!) the young man was left unpraised and unsung, the result being civil war in the township, and breaking of hearts, if not of heads.

Kenneth Macleod.

^{*} It may be explained that the object of the waulking is to shrink and thicken the cloth. The web is steeped in ammonia and laid on a long narrow table, at which some twelve or twenty women sit down and thump and rub the cloth against the boards, always taking care to keep it moving sunwise round the table. Cloth for Sunday wear gets about two hours' waulking; cloth for the wear and tear of tilling and boating has to be thicker, and gets at least double the time. No one ever asks, however, "How long will it take?" but "How many songs will it take?"

[†] From Janet Macleod.

† The Gaelic expressions are: cur nan gillean's an dubhradh (or, turadh); 'gan toirt as; 'gam fàgail ann.

MILKING CROON.

Cronan Bleoghain.

Air, Refrain, and one Verse noted from the singing of Peggy Macdonald, S. Uist. Extra verses from "Carmina Gadelica" with kind permission of Mrs. E. Carmichael Watson.

arranged for voice and pianoforte by MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER.



Additional verses from the "Carmina Gladelica."

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^{*}Pronounce like English "my? *ao - like eu in French peur.

†Kye - cattle (pronounce the vowels ye like y in by?)





Milking Croon

*Pronounce Breed-ya (or sing English equivalent, Bridget.)



Milking Croon.



Milking Croon.

*This and the following verse may be omitted.



Milking Croon.





Milking Croon.

A CHURNING LILT.

From the singing of Annie Johnstone.
The Glen, Barra.

Translated and arranged for voice and pianoforte by MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER.



Copyright 1908 by M. KENNEDY-FRASER.

*Uig- (Wick) a bay.



This verse and the following were added (by kind permission of Dr Alexander Carmichael) from the "Carmina Gadelical" A Churning Lilt.

SPINNING SONG.

From the singing of Janet Macleod, Eigg, memorized by Kenneth Macleod.

Noted and Arr: for voice and pianotorte by MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER.



^{*}The sounds of the syllables of the refrain are here represented by monosyllabic English words.

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*This gradually accellerating phrase was sung as the thread was long drawn out.

Spinning Song.





Spinning Song.

IN HEBRID SEAS.

(Heman Dubh. An ancient Waulking Song.)



Copyright 1909 by M. Kennedy-Fraser.
*This Key is recommended.



^{*&}quot;dubh" pronounce like English verb "do;" yet the "d" somewhat approaching the "t" in "to." In Hebrid Seas.





THE DEATH-CROON.1

In the days of the old Celtic church, the Death-croon was chanted over the dying by the anam-chara, the soul-friend, assisted by three chanters. Later on, the rite passed into the hands of seanairean a' bhaile, the elders of the township, and the mnathan-tuiridh, the mourning-women, the latter eventually developing into a professional class, whose services could aways be obtained for a consideration. In more recent times, the bean-ghluin, the knee-woman, the midwife, was also the bean-tuiridh, the mourning-woman, and as the friend of the folk in the coming and the going of life, was regarded with the greatest veneration both by young and by old. To this day the knee-woman of the isles chants her runes and celebrates her mysteries in the houses of birth and of death, but always with closed doors—metaphorically, at any rate. As recently as eighteen years ago, a Death-croon was chanted over a dying person in the Island of Eigg.

An ceò 's an drùchd,
An drùchd 's an ceò,
An ceò 's an drùchd
An sùil mo ghràidh,
An sùil mo ghràidh,
A Thì dh' fhosgail an t-sùil òg,
Dùn i an nochd an clò a' bhàis,
An clò a' bhàis.

The mist the dew,
The dew the mist,
The mist the dew
In the eye of my love,
In the eye of my love.
Thou who did'st open the young eye,
Close it to-night in the sleep of death,
In the sleep of death.

From the nineteenth to the sixth century is a far cry, but the Death-croon brings the two together. St. Donnan of Eigg and fifty of his muinntir, his disciples, had suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Queen of the Isle, and were sleeping their first night's death-sleep in the churchyard now known as Cill-Donnain. At midnight solus an aigh, a blessed light, was seen above the graves, and voices were heard chanting a croon of which only a few lines have been handed down.

Is moch a chuireas a' ghrian fàilt air Donnan, Is moch a sheinneas an t-ian àilleachd Donnain, Is moch a dh' fhàsas am fiar air ùir Donnain. Sùil bhlàth Chriosd air an ùir, Reulta na h-iarmailt air an ùir, Cha bheud cha bheud a dh' ùir Donnain. Early gives the sun greeting to Donnan, Early sings the bird the greatness of Donnan, Early grows the grass on the grave of Donnan, The warm eye of Christ on the grave, The stars of the heavens on the grave, No harm, no harm to Donnan's dust.

And said the old folk of Eigg: The Queen and her maidens saw the light and heard the singing and, way of the women! wonder brought them towards the churchyard. And, sure, there must have been tàladh, fascination, in the light, for as it would move they would follow, and did it not bring them little by little, and not little was that same little, to the loch 3 you know yourself, the one in which the each-uisge, the water-horse, lives—and, O Mary Mother, was it not there the judgment was!

In the isles the black loch among the hills is always associated with death and unholy deeds and croons. The sea, with its ebb and its flow, is suggestive of life. If it has the terrible strength, it has also the nobility, of the lion. But the loch among the hills is a snake—black and slimy, with death in its eye. A tale and a croon will tell the rest.

On a night there was, it befell a *pears-englais*, a cleric, to be returning from the hill to the shore-clachan, and what came upon him but the weather of the seven elements—and what can be worse than that! Since he could not do better, he did the best he could, and his only choice being an evil, he took shelter in a cave under a rock. He had not been long there when a great white lightning sudden-flashed before his two eyes, and in the glare he saw a deep black loch between two precipices; and O Blessed Being of the Graces! beside the loch was a man in the death-throe, and three wizards crooning over him—a lean black wizard, a bald grey wizard, and a sleek yellow wizard.

Is moch a chuireas a'ghrian fàilt air Stròdha. Early gives the sun greeting to Stròdha.

Learned by the writer, partly from his aunt, Janet Macleod, and partly from Raonaid Campbell, a native of Eigg; stray lines were afterwards got from Catriona Macleod, Trotternish, Skye, but she said they were part of a piobaireachd which was much played at funerals in olden days.

² Iain Og Morragh, the poet-schoolmaster of Eigg in the early part of the 19th century, began one of his songs in praise of the island with the lines:

³ Still called Loch nam ban mor, "the loch of the big women."

⁴ The tale and the croon were got from old Vincent MacEachin, Island of Eigg.

Ars' am baobh caol dubh:

Ospag, ospag, fhir a th' ann i 'Nuair bhios tu thall, 'nuair bhios tu thall, Bidh tus' an laimh, bidh tus' an laimh, Speachan an diugh, meanbhagan am màireach, 'Gad itheadh, 'gad thachas, 'gad mhamadh, Thall thall,

Fhir a th' ann.

Ars' am baobh maol glas:

Ospag, ospag, fhir a th' ann!

Nuair bhios tu thall, 'nuair bhios tu thall,
Bidh tus' an laimh, bidh tus' an laimh,
Fitheach os do chionn, giogan ad shèil,
Nathair-nimhe 's i teachd dlùth, 's i teachd dlùth,
Thall thall,
Fhir a th' ann.

Ars' am baobh caol buidhe:

Ospag, ospag, fhir a th' ann!
'Nuair bhios tu thall, 'nuair bhios tu thall,
Bidh tus' an laimh, bidh tus' an laimh,
Gaoth 'ga reothadh feadh an t-seilich,
Guin is fuachd mar uisge goileach,
Thall,
Fhir a bh' ann.

Said the lean black wizard:

Torture, torture, man that be!

Over there, over there,
Thou shalt be bound, thou shalt be bound,
Wasps to-day, midges to-morrow,
Eating thee, itching thee, tumouring thee,
Over there, over there,
Man that be.

Said the bald grey wizard:

Torture, torture, man that be!

Over there, over there,

Thou shalt be bound, thou shalt be bound,

A raven above thee, a thistle in thine eye,

A venom serpent coming nigh, coming nigh,

Over there, over there,

Man that be:

Said the sleek yellow wizard:

Torture, torture, man that be!
Over there, over there,
Thou shalt be bound, thou shalt be bound,
Wind a-freezing through the willows,
Stinging cold like scalding water,
Over there, over there,
Man that was. 5

And while the wizards were at the croon, the cleric was making the caim, the sacred circle, round about himself; and once he had made the picture of the Cross on it and blessed it in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, he knew then that no evil could come upon him, howsoever long till cock-crow—but for all that, O man of my heart, the loch was deep and the loch was black!

From the hills, the last refuge of paganism, the Death-croon leads us to the sea and the Iona coracles. A world of years ago (said an old Eigg woman), long long before Prince Charlie landed in Moidart, the folk there were fierce and dark and ignorant; they kept Bealltainn, Beltane, better than Christmas or Easter Sunday, and (O Mary Mother, sain us from evil!) it is said they would even be praying to the serpents. Columba of my love heard of this, and it gave him a sore heart that people should be so far in their own light as to turn their back on heaven and the saints—sure, he was ever the dilleagan, the beauteous-one, son of a king and grandson of a king, and he might have been a king himself, had that been his wish-but to get back to my tale, he sent two of his monks to Moidart to teach the folk there the good Christian ways of the church. But were they not the foolish ones, the folk of Moidart! They would not listen to the monks, and at last the younger of the two said: "We will return to Iona and leave the seven curses of the church on Moidart." In the dusk of evening the two were down on the shore, with their coracle in sailing trim, and something in their faces which no wise person would wish to see. "I hear the dip of oars," said the younger one, "and the sound is making for the point further down." Wonder soon brought them to the spot, and what they saw was a coracle gliding away into the darkness, a lady-lord clothed in white lying on the strand, and a baby boy sucking a cold breast. And the older monk began to chant the Death-croon over the dead, but I do not know what the words were, for it is said he never chanted that croon again, but always a better one. Before he was through with it, the eyes of the baby boy were upon him. "She is not dead," said the little one, "but she always loses life and milk when the monks of Iona lose their heat-love for the folk." What more? O treasure of my heart, miserable creatures like us may not know what passed between the Blessed Mary and her Son and the monks of Ionabut, at any rate, the two men returned to their coracle and made a hole in her.

KENNETH MACLEOD.

Witches and wizards were notorious for tricky diction. One of their worst curses went forth disguised as a blessing:

An Ti bh' air Neamh | gad | bheannachadh, "The Being that was in Heaven bless thee." "May He do that same," said the unwary ones, and at once the curse took a grip of them. "May the Being that is in Heaven sain us," said the wise ones—and lo! the curse disappeared in black smoke.

⁶ Peggy MacCormick—Peigi Bhan. She and her brother, Vincent MacEachin, carried with them into the grave legends and runes which, had they been noted down, would have made quite a remarkable volume.

THE DEATH CROON.

(AN CRONAN BAIS)

As traditionally sung by Kenneth Macleod.



*English form of the Gaelic word meaning River. Pronounce with Italian A. Copyright 1909 by M. Kennedy-Fraser.





SONGS OF THE HEBRIDES, Vol. I.

FORTY-FIVE ANCIENT TRADITIONAL CELTIC AIRS, CHIEFLY COLLECTED ORALLY IN THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND,

KENNEDY-FRASER, MARJORY

Arranged by her for VOICE AND PIANOFORTE, with English and Gaelic words.

GAELIC EDITOR

KENNETH MACLEOD.

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*Kishmul's Galley.

*In Hebrid Seas.

The Ship at Sea.

*The "Black Loorgan."

The Silver Whistle.

*The Sea-Reivers.

UNCANNY SONGS-

The Seal-Woman's Croon.

The Mermaid's Croon.

*The Water-Kelpie.

*A Fairy Plaint.

*A Fairy Love Song.

LABOUR LILTS-

*Two Milking Songs.

*Churning Lilt.

Spinning Song.

Waulking Song.

Soothing Croon. Slow Rowing Song.

DEATH CHANTS-

*The Lay of Diarmad.

Dunvegan Dirge.
*Death Croon.

Death Farewell.

A CHRISTMAS DUANAG.

SEA-SORROW SONGS-

*The Sea-gull of the Land-under-Waves.

Sea Sorrow.

*Harris Love Lament.

LOVE SONGS

*The Mull Fisher.

*The Exile's Dream.

*The Skye Fisher.

*An Eriskay Love Lilt.

*Island Sheiling Song.

Ullapool Sailor's Song.

*Lochbroom Love Song. Loch Leven Love Plaint.

*The Bens of Jura.

Flora Macdonald's Love Song.

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A 13th Century Love Lilt.

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—Musical Standard.

"Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's collections are unique. No folk-song collections ever published have revealed more true sympathy and understanding than these. . . ."
—Music Student.

"A set of four 'Songs of the Hebrides,' by Marjory Kennedy-Fraser, proved of much historic as well as musical interest, as the composer has spent some years in collecting a series of these folk-songs from the Hebrides, taking down the ancient tunes as they were sung by the people of the Isles. These old melodies have been very cleverly woven into a harmonic texture which enhances their charm without destroying the archaic character, and which suggests the atmosphere of the old Celtic folk-song."—Standard.

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"The music reflects the spirit of the words with an uncommon degree of success. That degree is of the highest.
... In the pianoforte accompaniments Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser has brought to bear the resources of the skilled musician; melody and accompaniment are welded together with the hand of enthusiasm."—Morning Post.

"They are delightfully characteristic; now weird to a degree in the 'Skye Fisher's Song,' anon fascinating in their fairly simple charm, as in the 'Island Sheiling Song' and the pretty and dainty 'Milking Song,' and above all they bear the stamp of inevitableness."—Daily Telegraph.

Rutland Boughton, in the Music Student, alluding to the volume of "Songs of the Hebrides," with its blend of racially preserved melody, poetic transliterations of Gaelic lore into English by the Isleman, Kenneth Macleod, and the artistic musical treatment of the airs by Marjory Kennedy-Fraser, says (with the trenchant language of exaggeration), "I, myself, place these with the few greatest things in music: 'the '48,' the 'Choral Symphony,' and 'Parsifal.' The accompaniments are the perfection of folk-song atmosphere. The composer is a real genius."

"Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser is at once a born Celt, and by heredity and training a musician to the core, and it is difficult to know where one's appreciation of this remarkable book begins. From the very first page the Celtic atmosphere makes itself felt, and he or she must be a poor artist who is not guided thereby to the very soul of Gaelic song."—The Oban Times.

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"Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser recently gave a recital at which many of these songs were sung, and there can be no question that the musical public will be delighted at having the opportunity of studying and singing them for themselves. . . . In the work of editing, translating, and arranging them for voice and pianoforte, the collector has had

the assistance of Mr. Kenneth Macleod. The task has not been easy. While getting the words from one singer, the collectors have often had to wait a long period before getting the best version of the tune from another. Then there has been the transliteration of the words from Gaelic into English, and the provision of suitable accompaniments. But the result justifies the labour."—Morning Post.

- "The strikingly romantic Hebridean Songs arranged by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser, 'The Eriskay Love Lilt,' 'The Seagull of the Land-under-Waves,' and better still, 'Kishmul's Galley.'"—Glasgow News.
- "Notes and disquisition on the songs and ballads form a valuable feature of the volume, the legendary lore of which they are full being all so very strange and interesting. Then we have Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's accompaniments—so musicianly and so finely interpretative of the spirit of the various situations, lyric and dramatic. Only one thing more is needed: to hear the finished product by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser herself."—Aberdeen Free Press.
- "Very quaint and original were some of the songs.... Ancient heroic lays, a group entitled 'Sea-Sorrow and Sea-Rapture,' labour lilts, fisher songs—all gave witness of Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's unremitting researches in a field which now numbers so many labourers, though Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser, in going to the Hebrides, has gone further afield than most."—Standard.
- "This gifted lady is more than a mere collector of songs. Her arrangements all show her to be possessed of the actual musical faculty in a degree not always found amongst folk-song enthusiasts. Moreover, she is in the most intimate touch with the Celtic mind and art. Thus, when she takes the purely melodic treasures of the primitive Hebridean fisher and farmer folk, and essays to clothe them in harmonic raiment, she is able to perform the task without ever raising in our minds a hint of incongruity. We are never made to think that beautiful simplicity has been turned into mediocre complexity. And this is something of a feat."—The Queen.
- "Making the hitherto untouched Hebrides her special domain, she has rescued from oblivion many especially fine airs... that well repay a closer acquaintance, for they have peculiarities that they share, so far as we are aware, with the music of no other land... Their makers drew their inspiration from the sea, and there is a note in their music which we do not find in the more familiar type of Scottish ballad. Such songs as 'The Mull Fisher,' 'The Island Sheiling Song,' the quaint 'Seal Woman's Croon,' and 'Kishmul's Galley,' have a charm peculiar to themselves and quite irresistible."—Daily Telegraph.
- "Particularly poignant and haunting was the interpretation of 'The Seagull of the Land-under-Waves,' which is perhaps the most beautiful of the melodies that Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser has yet published."—Manchester Courier.
- "... The Waulking Song, 'In Hebrid Seas,' cast in a lighter vein; its well-marked melody and skilful accompaniment proved so irresistible that a repetition was necessary."—Glasgow Herald.
- "... Some of the melodies appear to be of great antiquity, and nearly all are beautiful. As soon as the ear had grown accustomed to the strange intervals and the absence of the leading note, it responded to the exquisite purity of this ancient music."—The Lady.
- ". . . Whether it be a crooning Eriskay lullaby, a love song, a ballad, a labour song, or a sea-faring romance—she has seized, as none but a Scottish singer could, the spirit of the words, and has made a valuable contribution

- to the preserved folk-music of Scotland. She has skilfully used the old airs as themes for miniature compositions, and without impairing the quality of the folk-song, has contrived to produce an art-song. Greatly appreciated was the rendering of a new Ossianic chant discovered by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser in the Island of Benbecula."—Scotsman.
- "The predominant note in Hebridean folk-songs, Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser said, was the sea. . . . The songs of searapture were the songs of the men, and the songs of seasorrow the songs of the women. . . A wide range of primitive passion, legendary lore, and picturesque imagery reflected in lilts, croons, chants, and lullabies, having in common a quaint yet impressive simplicity and a pre-eminent claim to preservation."—Evening News.
- "Sea songs, love songs, epic lays, and labour lilts. The pentatonic nature of a large proportion of the songs was no less marked than their extreme beauty. Even in the others the leading note and subdominant usually occurred so rarely as not to disturb the general pentatonic character, and it would seem that Mrs. Fraser has collected most valuable materials in a state of almost pristine purity, and dating back to the very dawn of music. The range generally extended over the octave from tonic to tonic, or dominant to dominant, but more elaborate ones, such as 'The Skye Fisher's Song,' had definite contrasts of high and low pitched phrases. On the other hand, the Death Croon, 'Home thou'rt going to-night to the Winter Everhouse,' has a short compass of tonic to dominant, with a reciting note on the mediant, and is no doubt of extreme antiquity. The Ossianic lay, 'Aillte' (which the old Hebridean singer from whom Mrs. Fraser obtained it, will only chant if his hearers sit unbonneted before him), is particularly beautiful, and other fine songs are the Waulking Song ('In Hebrid Seas'), and the 'Hebridean Sea-Reiver's Song.' "-Pall Mall Gazette.
- "Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser has approached her subject with keen insight and understanding, with the result that the beauty of the quaint old tunes is enhanced while their essential characteristics are retained."—London Globe.
- "'Sea Tangle' by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser and Mr. Kenneth Macleod is a valuable contribution to the literature of Hebridean folk-song. 'Sea Tangle' may be commended to all singers able to appreciate poetry of work and note. The songs have high intrinsic value apart from their interest as reflections of thought and feeling among primitive people in the Western Islands of Scotland."—Glasgow Herald.
- "Mrs. Kennedy-Fraseris an out-and-out enthusiast upon a subject which she has made peculiarly her own, and with much justification, for her researches have produced some notable numbers. It is strange to find that the modernised pianoforte accompaniments written by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser do not seem incongruous, but this may be due to the songs themselves, many of which are admirably adapted to such treatment."—Musical News.
- "These songs will surely bring a touch of refreshing nature-contact into many a teaching room and concert hall, and wherever they go they will make enthusiasts. As before, Mr. Kenneth Macleod has written an account of the legendary sources of each song. The discerning public that finds a joy in the tales of Sharp ('Fiona Macleod') would welcome something more extended from this kindred spirit."—Music Student.
- "All have the true folk-song ring, with, in most cases, a peculiarly wistful, mournful, wild, and yearning character in addition, which proclaim their Celtic origin."—Westminster Gazette.

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