

OF SOME FAMOUS SONGS.

LYRICS THAT HAVE TOUCHED THE HEART OF THE WORLD.

Song Inspiration and Personal History—The Lucky Irish Doctor, Robin Adair—The Old Minstrel Who Originated the Idea for the "Last Rose of Summer."

Every song, has what may be called a personal history, or, if the expression is preferable, a secret history. In most cases the sources of its inspiration most remain unknown, for even poets, fond as they are of setting forth their own feelings in rhyme and meter, are often chary of telling about the incidents which served as their inspirations. They must draw the line somewhere it seems, so as a general thing they draw it at the close of the song their choicest heart utterance, and leave the readers to guess for themselves how the lyric came to be written. Thus the materials for the history of famous songs are not numerous, nor easily found, for when a poet did tell the sources of his inspiration the narrative was usually hidden away in the uniformly dull pages of a private correspondence printed long after it had lost its interest to all but the members of his family, or confided over a glass and bottle to an intimate personal friend and divulged perhaps many years after the death of the narrator. To this general rule of reticence there are some exceptions, among the most notable being Burns. The Scottish bard did not like to talk about himself, and rarely did so in general company, but when with one or two friends he trusted, and who he knew would neither tax him with egotism nor suspect him of it, he was singularly confiding. Yet even the whole-souled, open-hearted Burns did not tell all his heart history, so we are left to conjecture no little as to the origin of many of his choicest lyrics, which no doubt had a history, which, however, was forever lost when the grave in Dumfries was closed above the coffin of the greatest poet of his age.

"ROBIN ADAIR."

"Robin Adair" came from the pen of a woman separated from her sweetheart, and had a bit of secret history more romantic than usual even with love songs. Robert Adair was an Irishman who, after some years of medicine and surgery in Dublin, became involved in a scandal that enforced his absence from town. He started to England, and soon after landing at Holyhead, in Wales, met with a lucky accident that proved the foundation of his future fortune and won for him the soubriquet of the "Lucky Irishman." As he was walking on the road, having no means to travel in better style, the carriage of a noble lady going to London was overturned, and she was somewhat hurt. Adair offered his services as a surgeon, set one or two dislocations, bound up her bruises and otherwise attended her so well that she insisted that he must attend her during the remainder of the journey. As may be supposed, he was nothing loth, nor after they got there did he reject the hundred guineas tendered him a fee, nor the general invitation to call at her house. It was there he met with Lady Caroline Keppel, the sister of the celebrated Admiral, and the twin at once proceeded to fall in love with each other so vigorously that, after the manner of such people, they determined that nothing but death should separate them. But Lord Albemarle, the lady's father, had a better match in view for her than a poor Irish doctor, and ordered her to give him up. She respectfully informed the old gentleman that she would not disobey his commands, but that, if not permitted to unite her fortunes with her Robin, she would never unite them with any one else; so there now. But his lordship had his own ideas on the treatment of a love case, so he packed her off to Bath, then the middle of the last century, a very gay resort, in the hope of effecting a cure. She was no sooner there, however, than she fell, in a poetic mood, and produced "Robin Adair," and the words being shown to a local musician, he set them to the melody now used, which is claimed by both Irish and Scotch. Not long after the Earl himself came down to see how the case was getting along, found all Bath singing about Robin Adair, discovered that everybody thought that he was a brute and the young lady the worst persecuted heroine in the world, wisely gave his consent at once, and the young couple were soon married.

"AULD ROBIN GRAY."

This famous Scotch song has connected with it a bit of personal history that is probably unique of its kind, indicating, as it does, a degree of aversion to notoriety such as is rarely seen. It was written by Lady Anne Lindsay, a woman of marked poetic gifts, but of singular shyness. She wrote the song for her own amusement during a day of loneliness, and showed it to her mother and the members of her family under a promise of secrecy. By their advice she sent it to a publisher, who had it set to an old Scotch tune and issued it as anonymous, not even himself knowing who was the writer. The song proved immensely popular, and in a few years was sung not only in every corner of Scotland but in England also, while soldiers and sailors bore it wherever the English arms and ships were known. For fifty years the secret of its authorship was kept concealed, or at least the song was not acknowledged by her, in so many words, during her lifetime, though many suspected her to be the writer. The nearest she came to an avowal of herself as a poet was in a letter to Sir Walter Scott, in which she inclosed a copy of the verses, made by her own hand, admitted that she had something to do with their composition and gave him permission to tell his "dear friend, the author of Waverley." Yet, during this half century, a romance had been founded on the brief story told in the simple lines, a play had been written on the same subject, the

name had been borrowed for an opera and for a pantomime, and even in the puppet shows the sorrows of the song found expression. It is probable that such another instance of concealment, where no cause existed but excessive modesty, is not to be found in the history of literature. The secret of its authorship was not fully revealed until after the death of Lady Anne.

"KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN."

There was nothing remarkable about the composition of the words or of the music of this well-worn song, but it, nevertheless, has connected with it a bit of personal history that is worth the telling. The words were written by Mrs. Crawford, an Irish lady, who is said to have died about 1855, and the music was composed by F. W. N. Crouch, an English musician, who had much ability, but little balance. The song was composed in Plymouth, England, and for the copyright Crouch received £5 and thought himself very lucky. He was extremely eccentric, and marvelously imprudent, two facts that ill-fitted him for business, so nobody that new him felt in the least surprised when he came to America in 1848, as first 'cello in the orchestra of an Italian opera company, to hear that he had fallen out with the manager, had left the company and settled in Portland, Me., as a teacher. He did not teach long, having little patience with pupils and preferring to stroll about, giving concerts wherever he could get an audience. So generous was he, as well as imprudent, that on one occasion, when aiding in a concert for the benefit of a friend, finding the receipts very small, he increased them to the extent of \$10 by casting in the last bill in his possession. Going from bad to worse, he was finally reduced to abject poverty, and was in this condition when Titiens sang her first visit to this country and made New York. On the night of her first concert "Kathleen Mavourneen" was advertised, and a shabby tramp, by aiding to move the effects of the company, managed to obtain admission to the stage. She sang the melody with marked effect, and as the notes rang from her lips some one noticed that the tramp was weeping. No attention was paid to him, however, until after the great soprano had retired from the stage, when he approached her and tendered his thanks for singing his song so beautifully. It was Crouch. At the close of the concert he left the hall, went out into the night and disappeared. He was never heard of again, and probably died not long after.

"ANNIE LAURIE."

The secret history of "Annie Laurie" is an illustration of the sarcasm of fate. Annie Laurie was no myth but a young Scotch girl of noble descent, being the daughter of Sir Robert Laurie, the founder of a Scottish line of brave men and fair women. Annie was one of four daughters, all good looking, but Annie especially so, her wit and beauty attracting suitors far and near. There was nothing extraordinary about this fact; there have been many such women, unknown to fame, but among the gentlemen who visited her father's house and sought the honor of an alliance with the family was a Mr. Douglas, of Fingland, whose affection amounted to infatuation. Under the influence of the tender passion the mind, even of an ordinary person, sometimes develops unexpected abilities, and so it was with Mr. Douglas, who, though he had never before shown poetic gifts, waxed eloquent, and one day produced the song which has gone round the English-speaking world. It was duly presented in proof of his affection, but whether the lady was a poor judge of poetry, or whether her heart had already been elsewhere bestowed, does not appear nor matter much now; the only thing certainly known being the fact that the poem did not secure the result intended. Poetic justice would seem to require that the lady should have been overcome by the charms of the song and at once surrendered her young heart into the guardianship of the poet. She did nothing of the kind, for, even if she was engaged to him, as one line of the song intimates, she broke the engagement and married a gentleman named Ferguson, known to fame only as the husband of Annie Laurie. Who married Mr. Douglas, if he married at all, is not matter of definite record, the fact that he did not marry the lady for whom he expressed a poetic willingness to lay him down and die being the most conspicuous feature of the whole incident.

THE LAST ROSE.

Moore's greatest song, now associated inseparably with the name of the most noted lyric songstress of our century, was set by the poet to an old Irish air, called the "Grove of Blarney," which he altered materially to adapt it to its new use. The words were suggested by an Irish tradition, well told by Charles Wolfe, the author of the "Burial of Sir John Moore." In the olden days, when every petty Irish chieftain's court contained a minstrel, one of these influential characters had the misfortune to offend his lord and was driven out of the domain. For years nothing was heard of him, but one day, when his name had become little more than a memory, he suddenly reappeared in the village, to the astonishment of the old and the delight of the young. He was urged to play, and attempted to comply with the request, but it was soon discovered that he could play and sing but one air, a song about a rose that was left blooming alone on the parent stem long after all its companion flowers had faded and scattered their leaves on the grass beneath. The constant repetition of this pathetic melody with its equally sad words depressed the spirits of the whole village, and, demented as he was, the old bard perceived the effect of his singing, and quietly withdrew to the church yard in the immediate vicinity, where he sheltered himself in a recess in the wall of the church and sang his one song to all who approached and desired to hear him. He could never be prevailed on to enter a dwelling, so the kindly villagers inclosed the nook he had chosen for a home with a wall and roof, so that he had shelter from the inclemencies of the seasons. Food was regularly brought and placed where he could reach it, and there he lived many years alone. One day a young girl who had lost her lover came to the churchyard to visit his grave, and while there asked old Dermid to sing. He took his harp and tried to do so, but as his fingers swept the familiar strings, his feelings overcame him and he laid down the harp. "I shall never sing again," he said, and truly spoke, for the next day he was found dead. He was the last of his race, but the song he inspired is destined to live as long as English is spoken.

THE NEWS IN A NUTSHELL.

THE VERY LATEST FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.

Interesting Items About Our Own Country, Great Britain, the United States, and All Parts of the Globe, Condensed and Assorted for Easy Reading.

CANADA.

Manitoba crop prospects continue favorable.

Mrs. Cracksford of Hamilton was nearly killed by an overdose of painkiller.

Lord Aberdeen has appointed Inspector Macpherson, son of Sir David Macpherson, an honorary A. D. C.

Dr. G. R. Parkin has been appointed Principal of Upper Canada College in place of Mr. George Dickson.

Alex. Wilson, recently arrested for robbery in Chatham, was removed to the London Asylum for the Insane.

A Millers' Association for Manitoba and the Territories was organized at Brandon on Tuesday, and officers elected.

It is probable that the unveiling of the Macdonald statue in Kingston will be postponed till the Queen's birthday next year.

Dr. H. H. Miles, late Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction, Quebec, a distinguished educationist, died at Montreal.

The annual returns of the postoffice savings banks show that the deposits made last year were slightly lower than in the preceding year.

It is not believed in Ottawa that there is any truth in the alleged cases of pleuropneumonia in Canadian cattle recently landed at Deptford.

Mr. Parmelee, deputy Minister of Trade and Commerce, is directing the attention of Canadian lumbermen to Turkey as a good field for Canadian lumber.

The Ontario Government has decided to farm out the Toronto Central prison binder twine factory, which has hitherto been conducted as a Government undertaking.

Another vacancy in the Senate has been filled by the calling to that House of Mr. Josiah Wood, M. P. for Westmorland, in place of the late Senator Burns. Mr. Wood, who is fifty-two years of age, has been thirteen years in Parliament.

The Dominion Department of Trade and Commerce transmitted to the Provincial Treasurer of British Columbia a cheque for seventeen thousand dollars, being the portion due to the province of the per capita tax on Chinese entering the province during the last fiscal year.

It is understood that on account of increased and enlarged postal service on the Canadian Pacific railway, a rearrangement of the postal subsidy to that railway has been made, which will have the effect of increasing it about one hundred thousand dollars per annum.

Jessie Gibson, aged 17 years, daughter of Mr. Alex. Gibson, Waskada, near Melita, Man., was the victim of a terrible accident last Saturday. While baking her clothing caught fire, and she ran out on the prairie, where all her clothes were burned off. After intense agony she died on Sunday.

Mr. John Kennedy, chief engineer of the Montreal Harbor Board, has gone to Chicago, accompanied by half a dozen other gentlemen interested in engineering, to inspect the great work of the drainage canal, and the menace which it is supposed to present to the St. Lawrence shipping.

A special from Paris received in Montreal reports the death of Louis A. Desaulles on Sunday morning at the age of seventy-seven. Mr. Desaulles was a Legislative Councillor before Confederation, and founded the Liberal organ Le Pays. He played a prominent part in Canadian politics during the fifties.

GREAT BRITAIN.

Mr. Justin McCarthy, M. P., leader of the Irish Nationalist party, has issued a manifesto appealing to the Irish members of Parliament to end the dissensions in the ranks of their party, which, he says, have brought disaster to the National cause.

It is almost certain that Lord Salisbury will offer Sir Philip Currie, the British Ambassador to Turkey, the post of Ambassador to Germany; but it is probable that Sir Philip will refuse the offer, as its acceptance would greatly defer his chances of obtaining the Ambassadorship to France.

UNITED STATES.

The Iron Age says the iron trade is likely to sustain the present high level of prices.

The California Labor Commission is starting a movement against Japanese immigration.

New York State is quarantined against Connecticut cattle on account of tuberculosis.

The first car ferry for service between Port Dover and Conneaut was launched at Toledo.

The Wholesale Bakers' Association of New York City has raised the price of bread one cent a loaf.

It is reported to Washington from British Columbia that seals in the Behring Sea are practically extinct.

Spring Valley, Ill., is under mob law. The Italians refuse to allow the coal company to operate their plants or the negroes to re-enter the shaft.

Mayor Strong of New York, asked President Roosevelt to go a little easier in his enforcement of the saloon-closing law, and Mr. Roosevelt point blank refused.

Statistics received at the Washington Bureau of Indian Affairs show that of the 247,000 Indians in the United States 30,000 are to-day engaged in farming, stock-raising and other civilized pursuits.

A practical joker sent a box of sawdust and lucifer matches to Police Commissioner Roosevelt of New York. The only persons affected were a lady clerk in the postoffice and an innocent reporter.

The great Chicago drainage canal, when completed, will take away from the lake six hundred thousand cubic feet of water per minute, and will seriously interfere with navigation on the St. Lawrence.

The expert counterfeiters, who for two years past have been engraving and printing United States gold certificates and flooding Canada with notes of other denominations,

have been discovered, and four of the gang of five are under arrest in Jersey City.

Arrangements are in progress in Chicago to entertain the representatives of the Irish race from every part of the world who will assemble on September 24, 25, and 26 in that city, to decide on a policy to be pursued respecting Ireland and her people. Over 1,000 delegates are expected.

The authorities of the Smithsonian Institution have awarded the Hodgkins prizes as follows:—First grand prize \$10,000, to Lord Rayleigh and Prof. Ramsey of London, for their discovery of argon as a constituent element of the atmosphere; third prize, \$1,000, to Henry de Varigny of Paris, for the best popular essay on the properties of the atmosphere. The second grand prize, \$5,000, was not awarded, none of the contestants fulfilling the conditions.

GENERAL.

Business prospects in Newfoundland are improving.

H. M. S. Linnet, a second-class twin-screw gunboat, has arrived at Foo-Chow.

Continuous rains in many parts of Japan have ruined the rice crop, and a famine is feared.

A republic has been organized by the Cuban rebels, and a provisional organization is under process of formation.

British Indian Sikh troops will escort the British consul, who goes to Ku-Cheng to investigate the missionary massacre.

At Kisingen Mr. Stern of New York, was sentenced to two weeks' imprisonment and a fine of 600 marks for insulting an official.

Cholera is raging in Russian Podolia, and when temporary hospitals were erected the inhabitants resisted and troops were called out to quell the rioting.

Archdeacon Wolfe cables from Foo-Chow, saying that the Chinese soldiers sent to protect the mission at Ku-Cheng broke into and plundered it. He adds that no reliance can be placed upon the Chinese authorities.

The New Zealand Government has granted an annual subsidy of one hundred thousand dollars to the Pacific steamers for calling on both inward and outward voyages, and Canada will carry the New Zealand mails across the continent free of charge.

As a result of the recent massacre of missionaries in China, the British Foreign Office has instructed Mr. R. O'Connor, the British Minister at Peking, to demand the safety of all British subjects in the disturbed districts, and to insist upon a full enquiry into the massacre.

At a crowded meeting of the European residents of Shanghai speeches condemning the action of the Chinese authorities in the case of the recent massacres of missionaries were made and a resolution was adopted to appeal directly to the European Governments against the outrage.

GROWING IN POPULATION.

The British Isles Show a Steady Increase with the Exception of Ireland.

The total increase in the population of the British Isles in the four years since the census of 1891 is somewhat over nine hundred thousand. The population in 1891 was 38,608,164; now it is 38,936,270.

Inasmuch as the number of inhabitants of Ireland has decreased by nearly 200,000 in the period, the increase for England, Scotland and Wales is more notable than appears on the surface. These three kingdoms, which had 33,303,414 people four years ago, are returned now as having 34,423,288—1,119,874 more. At this rate of increase, the population of Great Britain proper grows, proportionately, as rapidly as that of Canada, which is a remarkable fact—particularly remarkable in view of the loss to the mother country through emigration, and the gain of Canada by immigration. The old country is not dead yet. The following are the detailed figures:—

	1891	1895
England and Wales.....	33,303,414	34,423,288
Scotland.....	4,025,847	4,142,471
Ireland.....	4,704,750	4,522,982

Ireland's people evidently still continue to leave their native soil in numbers which are not offset by the natural birth increase. The next census seems likely to show Scotland and Ireland much on a par as regards population, whereas less than fifty years ago the population of Ireland was considerably more than double that of Scotland. In 1851 the greenisle contained 6,553,385 people, and Scotland but 2,888,742. Sixty years ago Ireland had over three times the population of the oatmeal kingdom. The decrease of the number of inhabitants in Erin remains still an argument that something is not right there in some way or other.

How the Earth Quaked.

A monk in the Italian city of Florence has kept a trap set for earthquakes, and when the recent seismic disturbance arrived he got what he wanted. His device con-



sisted of a plumb line suspended over a disk, and so arranged that the point of the weight should mark the surface of the disk when oscillation took place. The accompanying seismogram is from a photograph forwarded to the Iron Age by its correspondent in Florence. The lines shown were traced during about three seconds of the quake.

Always Scented.

A highly perfumed young lady—The myrrh-maid.

PRACTICAL FARMING.

Seed Bed for Winter Wheat.

This year on account of drought in many sections and consequent grass and clover seed failures, there will be large breadths of stubble lands broken for wheat.

The usual custom is to start the plow and keep them going until all the land is plowed, and then abandon the fields to weed propagation till time to harrow or roll it down for seeding. The plan appears to be to do as little work on the land as possible. If the land breaks up cloddy, in most cases winter frosts will have to mellow them.

There are few requisites necessary to secure a perfect seed bed, if such a thing is possible. Going back a little, it is necessary, to get best results from surface culture, that the land have perfect drainage either natural or artificial. Without this the ideal surface preparation is a failure. When stubble land is to be prepared, other tools than the plow should go to the field at the beginning. Before starting the plow, the harrow, drag and roller should have attention and be put in shape to do the best work when needed. They should be ready to hitch to without annoyance or loss of time.

The plow should have jointers or drag chains to put all stubble and weeds out of sight. Then, to make the most of the moisture in soil when first turned up, the plow should be followed with the roller, working down before noon what has been plowed during the morning, and late into the evening the plowing of the afternoon. This work can even be improved by following the roller with a scuffling drag. This latter will fill up all holes and smooth down uneven places left by the plow.

The farmer does not like to be bothered changing the team from the plow to the other tools and back again, and regards the plowing as first and most important. More often it is equally important to conserve the moisture in the soil. Sometimes the expected rains come, often they do not. If the soil is cloddy and worked directly after the plow, the moisture is retained in the soil, otherwise it is lost and the farmer is compelled to wait for rain, or seed his land in improper condition. It should ever be borne in mind that wheat needs a solid seed bed underneath with a fine surface. If the land is in proper condition to plow, not too wet, the farmer need have no fear that he will get it too solid by continuous working. The plowing should be done as early as possible, and plans should be laid to give the land as frequent workings as possible. The seed bed cannot be too solid underneath, nor too mellow on top. The implements that can be used to the greatest advantage the farmer must determine at the time, being governed by weather and soil conditions. It is not safe to expect a wheat crop when the drill hoes up clods continuously, nor is good farming to depend on frost action to mellow the clods and cover the wheat roots during the winter. Since it has been demonstrated that first-class wheat crops can be grown from corn stubble, a few lines as to how they are secured will be in order here. The corn should be grown on clover sod, or land made rich by manures, and should have frequent and continuous cultivation. The corn may not need so much, but it is a necessary preparation for the wheat to get all it needs in the way of food from the soil. Level cultivation for the corn will be found a great advantage when wheat seeding is to be done.

Care should be taken not to have this seed bed too loose. Shallow-working tools will be best in its preparation. One or two inches of the surface cannot be made too fine. If a line of dust on the highway, so much the better. There is more profit in cultivating areas sown when perfect tillage is given, than in expanding areas with poor culture. At sowing time a large acreage sown sounds well, but at harvest time the maximum yield in bushel, sounds better.

Weaning Young Lambs.

Concerning the time, or rather the age, of weaning young lambs, little can be said. Their varying ages and conditions, together with the intended management of the flocks, must enter largely into any discussion which had for its object the settlement of this question.

It is very important to the successful weaning of the lambs that they be grown as rapidly and steadily as possible from the start. To do this, and at the same time secure the largest profits from mutton lambs, we are inclined to the belief that it pays to grain the lambs daily even if on good pasture. A lamb-creek is not a difficult thing to construct, and it is a useful adjunct to the shepherd's outfit.

There are so many enemies of the sheep now that any one can easily see the importance of keeping the lambs, and sheep, too, in a thriving condition. The chances for heavy losses, should any disease or malady overtake them, are greatly reduced when the sheep are in a vigorous condition.

When the lambs are taken away from the ewes they should be run on fresh feed, good hearty pasture. In addition to this they should receive a liberal grain ration of bran and crushed oats, equal parts.

The ewes should be turned on short feed, so that it will have a tendency to reduce the production of milk. At least the heaviest milking ewes should be milked out after forty-eight hours, and to insure the safety of the udders this process should be repeated a second time.

A Business View.

Business Man—By George, it's going to rain. Here you'd better take an umbrella. You'll sell me one of those cheap, won't you?

Honest Umbrella-mender—Dese umbrella not mine.

Business Man—I know. That's why I thought you'd sell them cheap.

Not Adulterated.

Customer—I suppose this ground coffee is half pea.

Dealer—No, the coffee is not, but the pepper is.

Oh? The pepper is?

Of course. Look in the dictionary.