Folk-Song in the North-East

J. B. Duncan's Lecture to the Aberdeen Wagner Society, 1908

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Although a number of studies by Gavin Greig on the subject of folk-song have been published, no major statement by his colleague, the Reverend James Bruce Duncan,[1] has been made generally available. However, three sets of shorthand notes on folk-song have been found among Duncan's papers: part of a lecture on 'Folk Song in the North East' given in 1906 (*Folk-Song Lecture* 1906),[2] a lecture on the same topic prepared for the Aberdeen Wagner Society (*Folk-Song Lecture* 1908) and a survey of the characteristics of old airs with lists of examples (*Characteristics*). By far the longest of these treatments of folk-song is the second, which is printed here. In speaking to the Wagner Society, Duncan was able to explore the musical aspects of folk-song more extensively than he could when addressing his remarks to a more general audience, and so it is in this lecture that the fullest expression of his ideas on the music of folk-song is to be found.

In a way this lecture of Duncan's, which was delivered on 22 February 1908, can be considered a companion piece to Greig's lecture on 'The Traditional Minstrelsy of the North-East of Scotland' which was given in Aberdeen just a fortnight later to the Scottish Branch of the English Association (Greig 1908). It was Greig who had originally been invited to address the Wagner Society in the 1904–5 season and again in the following years but, although he accepted the invitations, ill-health prevented his fulfilling his engagements (Greig *Letters to Duncan* 10 Nov. 1906, 20 June 1907), and the Wagner Society eventually approached Duncan. The two friends exchanged correspondence on the matter,[3] and when Duncan was quite certain that Greig, embarrassed by his repeated failures in the past, was relieved 'to have the thing "off",' he accepted the invitation to lecture, but it was agreed that the collaboration between them should be particularly close on this occasion. Greig suggested the lines they could work on in a letter of 24 June 1907:

> If, however, you think we might treat ourselves as a kind of combination, with yourself representing the combination on the occasion in question, I should be very pleased to fall in with the idea. In this view of the situation, while the lecture was of course your own, you c[oul]d easily associate me with yourself to the extent at least of representing the main positions as having been *jointly* arrived at and concurred in. Then as to musical illustrations I could lend such hand as was needed in arranging and preparing a suitable programme.

Shortly before the lecture was to be given, Duncan wrote to Greig (25 Jan. 1908): 'I still regret that you could not have done it yourself, and shall have occasion to say so.' The following report of the Wagner Society meeting which appeared in the Aberdeen *Evening Express* of Monday 24 February mentions Greig's contribution to the meeting itself and to the work on which both men were engaged:

THE ABERDEEN WAGNER SOCIETY

In the Girls' High School, Albyn Place, on Saturday evening, Rev. J. B. Duncan, Lynturk, delivered a lecture on 'Folk-Song in the North-East of Scotland,' to a large audience, consisting of the members of the Aberdeen Wagner Society and their friends. In the absence of Rev. H. W. Wright, the president, Mr Morrison occupied the chair, and appropriately introduced the lecturer.

During the evening excellent vocal and instrumental illustrations were given. Miss Janet Burt sang 'The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow,' 'The Laird o' Drum,' and 'Under the moon one thing I crave'; Miss Greig, New Deer, gave 'Mormond Braes,' 'The Gadie Rins,' the audience joining in the chorus, and 'The Beggar Laddie'; Mr Balneaves, the secretary of the society, sang 'The Baron of Brackley'; and Misses Scott and Sutherland played as a piano duet an excellent arrangement of all the airs sung, splendidly and effectively harmonised by Mr Gavin Greig, M.A., Whitehills Schoolhouse, who, as is pretty well known, is associated with Mr Duncan in the unearthing of the folk-song of the north-east of Scotland.

Besides arranging the piano duet, which Duncan spoke of using as a finale (*Letters to Greig*, 21 Feb. 1908), Greig also supplied piano accompaniments for the songs, one of which, *Mormond Braes*, is reproduced here (Plate II). His duet incorporates *The Emigrant's Farewell* in addition to items listed in the newspaper report[4] and so this tune, which is specified as an example in Duncan's notes, has been included among the illustrations. The songs may possibly have been sung in groups but they are given here at the relevant points in the lecture, with the exception of *Mormond Braes*. This may have been introduced as an additional instance of the use of the pentatonic scale but it was evidently included in the programme because it was a favourite of Greig's daughter Mary, who sang it.[5]

Duncan made very brief reference to his lecture in a letter to Greig written on 6 March:

Your duett seemed to be greatly enjoyed, and I hope to make farther use of it. Miss Greig would tell you the incidents of the Wagner meeting. Her services were very acceptable. I enjoyed the meeting, in spite of one or two hitches, and so apparently did some others.

In his reply of 19 March, Greig commented warmly on the success of the meeting and on Duncan's abilities:

Mary came home from Aberdeen with great accounts of the 'Wagner' demonstration & the capital 'appearance' you made. Two of her old Normal lecturers who were present, were, she said, specially delighted. It strikes me that, failing the Bench, your sphere sh[oul]d

PLATE I The Reverend James Bruce Duncan, 1848–1917.
(Photograph reproduced by kind permission of Mr Paul Duncan)

Mormond Braes.

𝄋

As I gaed doon by Strichen toon, I heard a fair maid mournin'; And she was makin' sair complaint For her true love ne'er returnin'.

It's Mormond Braes where heather grows, Where aftimes I've been cheery; It's Mormond Braes where heather grows, And there I've lost my dearie.

Ref. Sae fare ye weel, ye Mormond Braes, Where aftimes I've been cheery; Fare ye weel, ye Mormond Braes, For there I lost my dearie.

mf Ped. * f D.S.

G.G.

PLATE II *Mormond Braes* with Gavin Greig's piano accompaniment.

have been that of expository lecturing. I haven't just heard you at this on a platform, but on the floor of a room hundreds of times, & have formed my judgment—which is that your power of analysis & statement is greater than that of any other man I have ever met at close quarters. The illustrations had gone off well; & I am pleased that the p[iano]f[orte] duet went all right. Of course you had capital players, & this c[oul]dn't be counted on just every time. —Let me say that I might have written you after the affair was over; but honestly I was expecting to hear from *you*. But such is your judicial detachment that you didn't think it necessary to say anything about the event until a casual chance came— & then, ever so little!

Duncan made a slightly fuller comment in his next letter (27 March) than in his earlier one:

I am glad to hear that the Wagner lecture was found of interest. It was the evening of the Male Voice Choir Concert, and the musical reporters were all at it; hence the absence of report in [the] F[ree] P[ress] and the short one in the Journal.[6] Probably I should have acted as my own reporter; but I had no time to write even an abstract in longhand. As to my exposition, I will say only one thing—that I did feel that I was put upon my mettle *twice* this winter, both times from want of constant illustrations—the Castle lecture and this. And in both cases it was pleasant to have the *clearness* specially noticed, as it was.

That last remark of Duncan's brings out his concern that the examples should be appropriately sung. In a duplicated sheet of *Suggestions to Singers* he lays down the desirability of clearness of enunciation at the beginning of his instructions:

Folk Songs, though in their own nature quite simple, are often at first a little puzzling to singers. The following hints may therefore be of some use:

(1) As regards the words, very clear enunciation is the first of all requirements. However beautiful the tune, the folk singer always aims first at making his words intelligible.

(2) As the syllables of successive verses often vary, the singer should carefully study their adaptation to the accents of the music, which is divided only for first verse. To aid in this, the mark for slur or bind is usually written in MS below a syllable requiring to be sung to *two* notes in music; thus making a slur, if they are of different pitch, or a single note, if they are the same. A horizontal line (waved) connecting *two* syllables means that they are sung to *one* note of music. [*E.g.* in the case of *The Braes o' Invernessie* quoted in the commentary the opening line of verse 3 is written, 'Oh, high in the Highlands where ye feed your sheep'.]

(3) The full effect of folk-songs is not realised unless the singer is pretty independent of his MS, or, still better, can dispense with it entirely.

(4) As regards the airs, since they are used for illustrative purposes, it is specially desired that the written notes be adhered to; but when words in verses after the first *naturally suggest* slightly different length of notes (such as a dotted note or its absence) this adaptation should be made.

(5) As to expression, the usual simple devices of p, f, &c., and a little variation of speed, are appropriate and effective; but any elaborate or subtle forms of expression would be out of keeping with the simple and broad effects of such songs.

(6) For the same reason the accompaniments are in a simple and direct style; and as they had no place in the original nature of folk-song, they should always be played unobtrusively.

All of the songs that illustrate the lecture, except *Mormond Braes* which was supplied by Greig, were recorded from members of J. B. Duncan's immediate family—his mother, his sister Margaret and his brother George[7]—and Duncan had a warmth of feeling for the songs he discusses bred of his long familiarity with them in the family circle. He gives unrestrained expression to this emotion in his notes for the 1906 lecture where he appeals for the work of collecting, saying: 'There is a power in song that thrills a heart across the longest intervals of life. Those of us that can look back to memories of a father or mother singing these airs can hardly be unmoved at the thought of them perishing from the memory.' To the affection with which Duncan responds to the songs is added the authoritative knowledge derived from his field-collecting. In speaking of the proposed Wagner Society lecture, Greig had commented, 'I shall feel much relieved if the Society got a prelection on F[olk] S[ong] and as there are only two men this side of the Border who know the subject, if one doesn't go, the other must.' In the absence of others carrying out the investigation in depth of traditional Scots folk-song, it was English folk-song scholars who were best able to assess the full value of the work being done by Greig and Duncan. Lucy Broadwood, Honorary Secretary and later President of the Folk-Song Society, wrote of them in an obituary notice on the latter:

> The friends were ideal collectors; combining natural gifts, precise knowledge and scientific methods on the musical and literary sides with a personal distinction and lovableness of character which won for them friends and helpers wherever they were known (*JFSS* 6 [1918–21], 41).

At this time she was in correspondence with them both and Greig in a letter to Duncan of 24 June 1907 comments on the encouragement he has received from her and remarks:

> [Miss Broadwood] is much interested in our work I can see, and treats us with distinct respect! We are not 'in it' with our English friends in the field of research pure & simple. We are hopelessly behind in the matter of equipment—not personal of course but relative. But I do not think we are so far behind in our ability to *think* or to *generalise*. In fact it seems to me that with our Anglican brethren 'the rage of search' tends in some measure to keep in abeyance the generalising impulse.

Duncan certainly had, in addition to his sense of the value of folk-song and his wide knowledge of the folk-songs of his locality, a considerable interest in the theoretical aspects of the work, and his lecture is one of the fullest statements of the Scottish response to the trends of thought apparent in the authors principally drawn upon in the lecture, Parry with his international sweep and Sharp with his analysis of folk-song in England.

We are indebted to Mr Paul Duncan and Aberdeen University Library for permission to print the lecture notes and illustrations. Although the notes are carefully paragraphed and are generally expressed in complete sentences, Duncan would obviously have revised them to some extent before making them available for publication. They are given here without any radical alteration but in the course of editing some additions and emendations have been made which are either shown by the use of square brackets enclosing minor additions or else are identified in the footnotes.[8]

DUNCAN'S LECTURE: 'FOLK SONG IN THE NORTH EAST'

It is necessary to begin in ratified fashion with a definition. In the first place what do I mean by folk-song? The word is comparatively recent[9] and on the face of it bears marks of its German origin: so recent that Grove's *Dictionary* contains no article on it in the first edition (nor, I think, in the second).[10] It is not desirable to adopt a definition that begs any question. In the first place, however, it is a song belonging to the common people, and handed down mainly by tradition. I do not raise the question how such songs arose, whether they were begun as finished compositions by one individual, or started from slight germs and grew as they were handed on. The problem is one of old date and applies to both words and airs, but it is not necessary for us to answer it: only folk-song as we know it is the work of the people; the picturesque minstrel must be eliminated. This has been the tendency of recent enquiry as to words, and it applies to the music too. Only it is needful to say that they *belong* to the people, and that the mode of their transmission was purely traditional. To some slight extent tradition was aided by the broadsheet and the chapbook for the words; but, as a matter of fact, these were but secondary aids, and the chief dependence of the folk-singer was on his own memory and the memory of his neighbours; and in no case were the tunes ever learnt from writing. It is important to notice this, because, as we shall see, the whole character both of words and airs is fundamentally affected by this fact.

Now I need not stop to speak of folk-song in general. It is of course the primitive music and poetry of all nations; but it also goes on long after both music and poetry have taken on the forms of culture that widely separate them from it. In recent years there has been a remarkable revived interest in this subject over all the three kingdoms. Scottish, Welsh and Irish songs have long enjoyed a high reputation; but till quite lately little interest was taken in the true folk-songs of England. Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time* was a precursor of that interest, but, though a few traditional tunes were included in that work, its staple was gathered from documents. But in recent years the English Folk-Song Society, consisting of a band of musicians of the first class in England, have entered into the matter with great enthusiasm, and have set to the work of gathering directly from the people, and they have been surprised to find how much traditional music still remains, how much greater it is, and how different it is in many respects from what has usually been presented as popular music.

Our Scottish folk-song occupies a peculiar position. It is a long time now since attention was first directed to the merits of Scottish songs. More than two hundred years ago they became known in England, and divided the interest of the concert-room in London with Italian music. The result was not only English publication of so-called Scottish songs, but also a literary and musical interest in the subject in Scotland itself, which ran down through the eighteenth century, and has continued more or less to the present time. But it led not only to the re-publishing of old songs but also to the writing of new ones, and to the composition of new airs. The aim was to produce songs and airs 'in the Scottish manner' as it was called, but, with few exceptions, both songs and airs were materially different from the traditional productions. The words were consistently artistic productions, in contrast to the simplicity and unconsciousness of the folk-songs; and the airs were cast in the musical moulds of the eighteenth century, not antique forms that remained among the people themselves. It is only in quite recent times that this fact has been perceived, if indeed it is recognised fully even yet. Scottish folk-song is something materially different from the Scottish songs that mostly fill the books (1). These of course have merits of the highest class; but they really belong to the genus art-song not folk-song; and their type is very different from that of the folk-song. It is very difficult to tell how much actual recording of folk-songs took place in the eighteenth century, and the small number known to be such is suspicious.[11]

As to folk-song in the *North-East*, I do not mean that there is anything specifically different here, but only that this is the field with which I have made most direct acquaintance; and my statements, when not otherwise guarded, must be taken as referring to it. In the collecting of folk-songs, the North-East of Scotland has had a rather remarkable prominence. In recording words of the songs and ballads, David Herd in the eighteenth century preserved more of these old songs and with greater faithfulness than any other; he belonged to St Cyrus. In the nineteenth century, a similar service was done by Peter Buchan especially for the ballads; and he was of Peterhead. Kinloch too belonged to the North-East, and preserved a good many ballads. And even as to the tunes, the greatest of the collections of airs gathered directly from tradition, notwithstanding its serious defects, is Dean Christie's published about thirty years ago, and Christie not only was a native of Aberdeenshire, but gathered his airs in Aberdeen and Banff. And now the modern interest in the subject has laid hold of our Aberdeen Antiquarian Association, the New Spalding Club, and it is intended to collect as far as possible what still remains in the North-East of the traditional songs. Our first interest is in the airs, but [it] is not confined to this.

Perhaps I should first answer the question, 'How are these traditional airs to be found?' And the answer is, by receiving them directly from the singers themselves. And as a rule these singers must be *discovered*; they are not of the kind that obtrude themselves on notice. Indeed, when the project of collecting the folk-songs of the district was first mooted, it seemed very doubtful whether enough of them still survived to justify the project, and indeed a man might have lived a long life in a country district

without ever hearing[12] a single specimen of them. As a matter of fact, there are only a few that now sing the old traditional songs, and in many cases those that have them can hardly be said to sing them, though they can recall them when required. Indeed, this has changed very much within my own memory: thirty or forty years ago, these songs were often sung, though the young people were already beginning to take up with more modern productions; but now they are mostly known only to old people, or to a few in middle life who have been [able] to learn them in favourable circumstances from the former generation.

On the other hand, when the proper persons are discovered, the extent of their stores is sometimes a surprise. Usually the first impression of the singer is that he can recall but a few songs; but when the work is begun, one brings up another until the result usually surprises the singer. Even the very aged person will sometimes remember both tune and words surprisingly: one man of eighty-five gave me about a dozen, with words mostly in full. From several [singers] I have received forty airs. From one, a man of seventy, I have had fifty-five airs, and the majority of the songs with pretty complete words.[13] One remembers what is said about the memory of the rhapsodes or reciters of the Homeric poems or the Finnish epic, and wonders what the memory of these persons would have been in days when they were often singing their songs at the fireside. Miss Broadwood, secretary of the Folk-Song Society, speaks of one traditional singer in England who could sing four hundred songs, of which he kept a list which Miss Broadwood saw; he once by request sang all his songs to a gentleman, and it took a month to do so.[14] I have not met with any case quite so remarkable; but in one case in which I have had exceptional opportunities of drawing out the memory of the singer, I have written three hundred and thirty airs from one singer, and have obtained from the same singer the words, reasonably complete, of about two hundred and thirty.[15]

Such are the sources of our folk-song; but now what is the nature of the product to be thus obtained? Now of course folk-song is made up of two elements [words and music] which must be looked at separately. Unfortunately in the past they have been to a large extent separated, and both songs and ballads have been gathered and published apart from their music. As I am addressing a musical association, I shall assume that your greatest interest is in the musical; and I shall dispose of the words, however interesting, in a few sentences.

Now the words have usually been grouped under the two classes of ballads, of the epic class, telling a story, and songs of the lyric class, considering a thought or sentiment. As regards the ballads, they have received an enormous amount of attention, and the great final work for them was done by the late Professor Child of America, but it is very strange how utterly they have been divorced from their music (2). The manner in which they have been written about even by distinguished literary men even makes one wonder whether such men ever heard a ballad sung, or knew that it was intended to be sung. It is curious how constantly they speak about the 'reciters' of ballads, as if such people had been a recognised institution. It is true there were in the old days metrical

romances which were recited, but they were quite different from the ballads in character and structure; and anyone reciting a ballad was looked at simply as doing a second best. Yet Andrew Lang writes a long article in the recent edition of Chambers's *Cyclopædia*[16] *of English Literature*, and constantly seems to assume that the ballads were merely prose stories put into rhyme, though they were occasionally 'chanted', whatever that may mean. The simple fact is that the great majority of those who collected the ballads knew nothing about music, took no interest in the airs, and therefore no doubt had the ballads 'recited' to them. I have heard many a ballad sung, but I never heard one recited without an apology for the absence of the singing.

Now, however, the actual singing of the ballads has pretty well disappeared. They are too long for the patience of either singers or hearers. And hence, though their tunes are often extremely beautiful and valuable, there is more danger of their being lost than there is with the songs. Yet we have noted a considerable number of them, and hope even yet to add to our stores.

As regards the words of the songs, the case is somewhat different. Although their composition has come down to quite recent, even present, times the songs have not attracted so much attention from collectors, and on the whole their words, while they have their own interest as an exposition of particular phases of life, do not have the merit and interest of the ballads.[17] They have moreover suffered from the contact of the literary song proceeding from Allan Ramsay, Burns, Baroness Nairne, Hogg, Tannahill, and the great horde of other imitators. In fact, it is this literary song that is now chiefly thought of when Scottish song is spoken of. Let no-one despise [it], rather let us all be deeply [grateful] for it; but there is this to be said, that it has never taken hold of the same class of people that sang so heartily the old folk-songs. Its very artistic finish, its appeal to subtler feelings, its self-consciousness, all tend to keep it at a distance from these people. One would not wish to restore the folk-song *en masse*, but there are specimens that might very well be restored, along with their melodies, for some of them may even yet find appreciation where the more simple and direct thought of the past generation can be truly valued. It may be added that there are some surprises in the relationship between the two types as the absence among the old folk-songs of drinking and patriotic songs, and the occurrences of folk-songs that have given origin to literary songs, such as Lady Ann Lindsay's *Auld Robin Gray* (based on *Auld Widow Greylocks*) and Lady Nairne's *The Land o' the Leal* (based on *Be Kind to Your Nainsel', John*).[18]

Turning to the airs of these songs, let us enquire what are their musical characteristics. If any musical person will carefully listen for a while to the traditional singing of folk-song, he will soon get an impression of something about it different from modern music. The same feeling [is] to some extent produced by the oldest Scottish airs in the books, but the effect there is only partial, and for this reason, that when they were gathered in the eighteenth century they were rarely published exactly as heard, but were filed down into conformity with forms of modern music. He might not be able to say wherein the peculiar musical effect consists; but he will feel it, and may try to express it by such

words as wild, simple, direct; or he may try to express his sense of the fact that the airs are not in agreement with what he considers regular musical form by speaking of the singer as lilting, crooning, or chanting. This effect was realised long ago, and various attempts were made by writers on Scottish music to analyse it into its elements. Tytler, Ritson, and Dauney wrote about the peculiarities of Scottish music; and among the most recent, Muir Wood on Scottish music in Grove. The analysis is imperfect in all of them, even [the] last mentioned, though [it is] an advance on the rest. There has been no recent attempt to deal with the subject; but the lines on which it must be pursued are becoming clear enough. The peculiarities of Scottish folk-music have become more intelligible from two sources that have now been opened up: the one, a comparison with the folk-song of other nations, and the other, a revived study of the ancient musical forms on which they rested.

Now I think it will be best for me to group the musical features of folk-song around the chief causes that have produced them. These are mainly two, the one their mode of transmission by tradition, and the other their independence of harmony, but each of these has widespread effects. They have operated in the folk-songs of all nations, but their effects have varied to some extent according to the characters of the peoples.

I

First I will discuss some of the characteristics that are connected most directly with the mode of transmission. What we have here to remember is that they were never written down, and that the true folk-singer is never a reader of music. He has learnt the tunes by ear, and his only aim is to sing them as he learnt them. It is quite common to receive [from the folk-singer] the apologetic statement that he does not know music, and he needs the assurance that that is just the greater reason why his singing of the tunes[19] will be uncorrupted. But this mode of transmission has distinct results in the form and character of the airs.

But we must first observe that the transmission was not merely musical, but was made in conjunction with words. Though the memory for melodies is often very retentive, it must usually be taken along with the words. Not infrequently the singer [20] is put out when asked to whistle the tune, or even to sing it line by line; if he is to recall it with confidence, he must sing it right through. The meaning of which is, that he is thinking chiefly of the words: the tune has been so acquired that it comes to him without thinking, and though one note and phrase of course suggests another, he cannot in any way name one note from another. This is true of singers whose ears are really very correct, and who will quickly correct any slip you may make in singing after them. Now the result of these facts is not without importance, for the structure of the melodies must be such as fit them for such transmission; and if they are not so [21] [to] begin with, they will inevitably become so, or die.

And first, the airs must be comparatively simple; that is, they must not be florid or

in any way elaborate (3). An old air, so to speak, is never conscious of its own beauty.[22] If it were so, it would need too much attention to itself; whereas the folk-singer thinks of the words, and lets the air look out for itself. That is the universal character of all folk-songs; yet one may easily find Scottish airs in the books that betray their modern origin by their very elaboration. We need only compare the old air of *Auld Robin Gray* with the later one with its modulations to the minor of the same tonic to feel how impossible it is to conceive of such an air as traditional.[23]

Then again, the rhythms must be comparatively simple, and so they are. They may be either common or triple, but the subdivisions have never any elaborations, else they could not be retained. The triple may have three beats to the bar, but there is also a very favoured mode of dividing the bar, dividing one of the beats while [each of] the other two has full length. The result is to give the effect of a common time to the air (4), though each successive pair of notes is double the length of the preceding, as, for example, in *Under the Moon:*[24]

♩= M. 56
slower
Un - der the moon one thing I crave, If I had
slower
you, all things I have; But with-out you no - thing I
slower
find That can bring con - tent - ment to my mind.

In England some folk-song collectors have recorded many examples of changes from 3 to 4 and even work rhythms such as 5/4 and 7/4; the changing rhythms are very common in German folk-music. We have found nothing of the kind here; but it must be said that in writing these rhythms there is often great care needed to write them so as to suggest the correct accent. A judicious use of the rest at the end of lines is required, not to indicate an actual pause so much as a start at a new part of the bar; and one is often reminded that after all our time forms are but very approximate indications of the actual accentual effects (5).[25]

Then there are some interesting effects connected with the stanza arrangement of the melodies that have something to do with traditional transmission. In general it should be said that these airs usually turn to account to the fullest their melodic material. It is quite a common thing for a four-line stanza to have only two different lines of melody, which may be combined in various ways (6).[26] They may be arranged alternately,[27] that is ABAB, with possibly a slight variation on the last; also AAAB, AABA.[28] Or they may take the form ABBA (like the lines [in] *In Memoriam*). This form is said to be

specially Celtic,[29] but in any case it would be an excellent aid to the memory, and at the same time give variety, seeing that not only are the second and third[30] a repetition, but the fourth and first are again the same. A commonly found form with three different melodic phrases is ABCB[31] and we have also the full ABCD often enough.

It has to be added here that our oldest melodies are uniformly in one strain. That was noticed by the best students of Scottish airs long ago, though strangely enough Christie's book is full of airs with two strains,[32] though his own statement[s] indicate that many of them [are] mere arrangements of his own. Our own experience entirely confirms the old inferences: the second strains, when they grow, are nearly always instrumental airs, and are expansions of the old melody (7).

There is one other effect that has been mentioned in this connection; it is the extensive use of the refrain or chorus. It has an interesting history: according to Chappell [1.222–3], it [began as a] burden, which originally meant, not a chorus, but a slow droning accompaniment taken part in by the company while the singer sang the verse. But it afterwards became a chorus joined in by the company, which was of great service, especially with long ballads, in giving a rest to the singer, as there was no accompaniment to furnish an interlude. And finally they were often sung by the singer himself. It seems to be the original burden use of these choruses that led to the employment of meaningless words, which are found in such extensive use, although it was also natural to keep them up because they were easily remembered by the company. Sometimes also a line or two of suitable words was employed, and there was a chorus device also used, namely, to repeat the last line or two after the singer. Later, this was often sung by the singer himself, though there was no particular meaning in this, beyond giving a certain rest to his memory to enable him to recall his next stanza.

There is just one other effect [of] oral transmission which needs to be mentioned, which is that airs of folk-songs as well as their words are usually found in varying versions (8). In most cases the changes would be quite unconscious, and airs will be found rendered by different people with wonderful nearness to each other. But if the melody is old the varying versions are inevitable, and their relations to each other are very curious and interesting to the student of the subject. Of course each singer is confident that his own is the right one, but the collector soon learns that there is no right, and they have all to be written. And then he becomes possessed of a family whose relationship it is hard or even impossible to trace. He will have twin sisters hardly distinguishable from each other, and parents and offspring plainly enough declared; but oftener he will have a crowd of relations whose connection shades off into all degrees, while he will also discover[33] intermarriages among airs of the most extraordinary kind. No doubt it all takes place as naturally as the relationships of human beings; but the collector in his perplexity comes to understand the 'fluidity' of folk-song.

There are no such variations, however, in the case of *The Gadie Rins* and this song, with its absence of versions and its second strain, may be taken as an illustration of modern tendencies; it is also an example of the use of a chorus.[34]

Chorus

O gin I were where the Gau-die rins, where Gau-die rins, where Gau-die rins, O gin I were where the Gau-die rins at the fit o' Ben - a - hee.

Fine. Verse

O I wid never come back a - gain, back a - gain, back a - gain, O I wid never come back a gain To view this low count-ry.

D. C.

II

Let us now turn to the great source from which sprang the peculiarities of these airs: namely, their independence of harmony. It is a common observation that the modern composer thinks in harmony, not in melody (9). He may produce effective melodies, but they are not constructed without a view to harmony. Mr Cecil Sharp [1907: 56] points out that to the modern musician 'there is no such thing as an intelligible melody that has no relation to harmony; that it is impossible to think a melody without thinking a harmony to it'.[35] Yet, as Mr Sharp also points out, scales existed long before harmony, and the folk-singer sings his melodies without any relation whatever to harmony. The result of the great change in music made by harmony has been manifold; it is needless to say that it has practically opened up a new world of music. Yet the musician sometimes overlooks the fact that to the mass of men music is still melody, and that harmony with all its marvellous effects, is to them little more than merely an accompaniment to melody. Now our folk-songs take us back to a time when this was the feeling of all; and a great part of their peculiarities are easily explained when we trace the change that harmony has introduced into the forms of melody.

Of all these differences, the most remarkable is the effect upon the scales employed, and of this I shall first speak. In the first place, there are a certain number of our folk-tunes that employ a scale of different intervals from the modern scale (10). It is a scale without what we call the 4th and 7th of our ordinary major mode, the F and B of the white scale on the piano, the fah and te of the tonic sol-fa. But its use, though most common in major tunes, is not confined to them. Such a scale is of course without

semitones, having[36] indeed a minor third where they would have been. The origin of this scale has been matter of much controversy, and it has indeed a curious interest in the history of music. Sir Hubert Parry [pp. 21–40] points out that nearly all the early scales of civilised nations fall into two groups, those that adopt the five-note scale and those that adopt the seven notes; and it is curious that the pentatonic scales were most common in the Far East—in China, Japan, and the East Indies—though the five notes sung were not always the same. Our own pentatonic scale [37] is said to exist among all the Celtic races (11); and it illustrates how narrow was the outlook of writers on these subjects in former days that it was at one time customary to think of it as [a] special scale, and to call it the Caledonian scale. But whatever its origin, it has a very characteristic effect; the large intervals and the concentration of the effect on the strong notes of the scale giving a certain air [of] breadth and completeness to the tunes;[38] and it was this effect no doubt that led to its preservation long after the full scale was in use. It does not appear to be often found in England; but it is quite common, though not exactly abundant, in the surviving folk-tunes of our district. It should be added however that there are a certain number of airs, originally pentatonic, which show the modern influence by introducing the 4th or the 7th or both as passing notes. In such cases one can often trace the process of change by finding the pure tune on the lips of one singer and the intrusive notes introduced by another, generally in unaccented situation, and[39] of course these changes would also be assisted by harmonic influences, as the 4th and 7th are the distinctive notes of the scale and needed to fix tonality. For example, the tune *Gala Water* in its oldest recorded form, is pure pentatonic; but as now generally sung the 7th has been introduced.[40] This version of *The Laird o' Drum* is an example of the use of the pentatonic scale:[41]

But there is another matter connected with the scales of our folk-tunes that has yet wider influence on our folk-song music: it is the employment of the ancient modes in the use of the ordinary diatonic scale of seven notes.[42] And to understand this subject, we must begin by putting aside our current ideas of the ordinary major and minor

modes as including all music. In point of fact a number of other modes were in regular use up to the beginning of the seventeenth century; and it is this state of matters that is perpetuated in folk-music.

We have first to think of a diatonic scale, as represented on the white keys of a piano. That is to say, we must conceive of a series of notes so arranged that they rise by gradations of intervals in which two tones and a semitone always alternate with three tones and a semitone. Then we must put aside the idea that one note of this scale is any more entitled to predominate than the rest; in fact, the great idea of the ancient modes was just that any note of the scale might be taken as the ruling or fundamental note. There was just one exception, namely, that what we call the 7th or te was not allowed to hold this position. Thus the same diatonic scale was used in all the modes, only the fundamental or governing note was different in each. And so six modes originated, which were named after the ancient Greek modes, though it is believed that the names were not quite correctly transferred. The movable tonic sol-fa represents this with least danger of being misunderstood; but if we employ the names of the white keys on the piano, we must remember that the scale we are thinking of is not a fixed one, but may be at any pitch, provided only that the intervals are preserved the same.

It was in connection with the music of the mediæval church that these modes were most fully studied, and it was usual to name them in this way from provinces of Greece with which they were understood to have connection: the first mode, or Dorian, began on D, or ray; the second, or Phrygian, on E, or me; the third, or Lydian, on F, or fah; the fourth, or Mixolydian, on G, or soh; the fifth, or Æolian, on A, or lah (our descending minor); the sixth, or Locrian, on B, or te (considered illegitimate); the seventh, or Ionian, on C, or doh (our present major).

The ecclesiastics themselves had laid down very elaborate rules for these modes. These rules specified what notes in each mode were permissible as opening and closing notes, what notes were allowed in the cadences, to what compass the melody might extend, and a great many other details. But it is important to observe that, though the ecclesiastics had most fully elaborated these rules, the use of the modes was in no sense confined to ecclesiastical music, and it is really not historically correct to speak of the ecclesiastical modes. It is only recently that this has been properly perceived; and hence a good deal of unnecessary wonder has been expressed at finding music constructed in ecclesiastical forms. The wonder ceases when we recognise that these modes were in use for all music down to the first half of the seventeenth century, including such secular music as existed, and also the sacred music of Protestant churches as well as the Romanic. What actually led to the disuse of the modes was the advance of harmony; had melody been the only consideration, the probability is that they would have continued to the present day. Sir Hubert Parry [p. 43] goes so far as to say that some of the other modes were for melodic purposes 'infinitely preferable to the Ionic', that is to say, our present major, while the experiments in harmony slowly but surely demonstrated that for harmony it was of all the modes the one supremely fit. And it was under

the same harmonic influences that the modern minor scale was developed; so that its 7th was sharpened to furnish a leading note like the major scale, where the leading note had been found so valuable, especially in cadences; and later on even the 6th was sharpened to accompany it.

This then is one of the great outstanding facts of folk-song, that many of its melodies are constructed in the old melodic modes. [But this] does not mean that folk-songs[43] do not include ordinary major tunes. It has to be remembered that our major scale was itself one of these modes, the Ionian; and there is good evidence that, though it was not loved by the ecclesiastical musicians, it was in frequent use for secular music, and was designated *modus lascivius* [*sic*]. And besides, a good deal of our folk[-music] originated after the modes had been given up, and already the influence of harmony [was being felt], though only in a rudimentary form. And what it does imply is that a considerable proportion of our airs fall into one or other of these modes. We cannot look for obedience to the ecclesiastical rules in them; but the singers show no hesitation about their scales, and there are two rules that are nearly uniformly obeyed (12), one that the melody ends on the fundamental note of the mode, and the other that the final *descends* upon that note, and generally by one degree: this latter being against the harmonic tendency. But besides, though in all modal music the tonality of the air is more uncertain, especially in the first part, than it would be in the harmonic melody, yet in the best airs the fundamental note so predominates throughout that it establishes itself in the ear and colours the melody. Of course this is all the more needed in unaccompanied melodies, as these were.

The modes that now remain with us, in addition to the major, are chiefly three. First, there is the Æolian founded on A or lah (13). It is identical with the modern descending minor, but differs from the modern minor very markedly in that the latter has introduced a sharp 7th in ascending as a leading note to its tonic. Now it is important to notice that this modern minor scale is never found in any true traditional singing; it is even difficult to get ear singers to produce this sharp 7th in the minor. The experience of collectors in this matter is pretty much the same in the case of all folk-singers.[44] I have noted about a thousand airs, and I have never once had the sharp 7th in the minor sung to me by a traditional singer; and Mr Greig's experience has been just the same and the English folk-song collectors give the same report. The difference in the melody made by this change is very characteristic: the strength and vigour of the old, the delicacy and refinement of the new; and it shows how our old airs have been aided, when we find that the books of Scottish songs are full of this modern minor touch. The characteristics of the old modes were treated simply as inaccurate singing, while they were really the best proof of accuracy; and their old features were quietly changed into modern forms. The most extraordinary case of this kind is Christie, who gathered from actual singing, but entirely changed without scruple in order to arrange the airs according to his fancy. This version of *The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow* is an example of the Æolian mode:[45]

♩ = M. 66

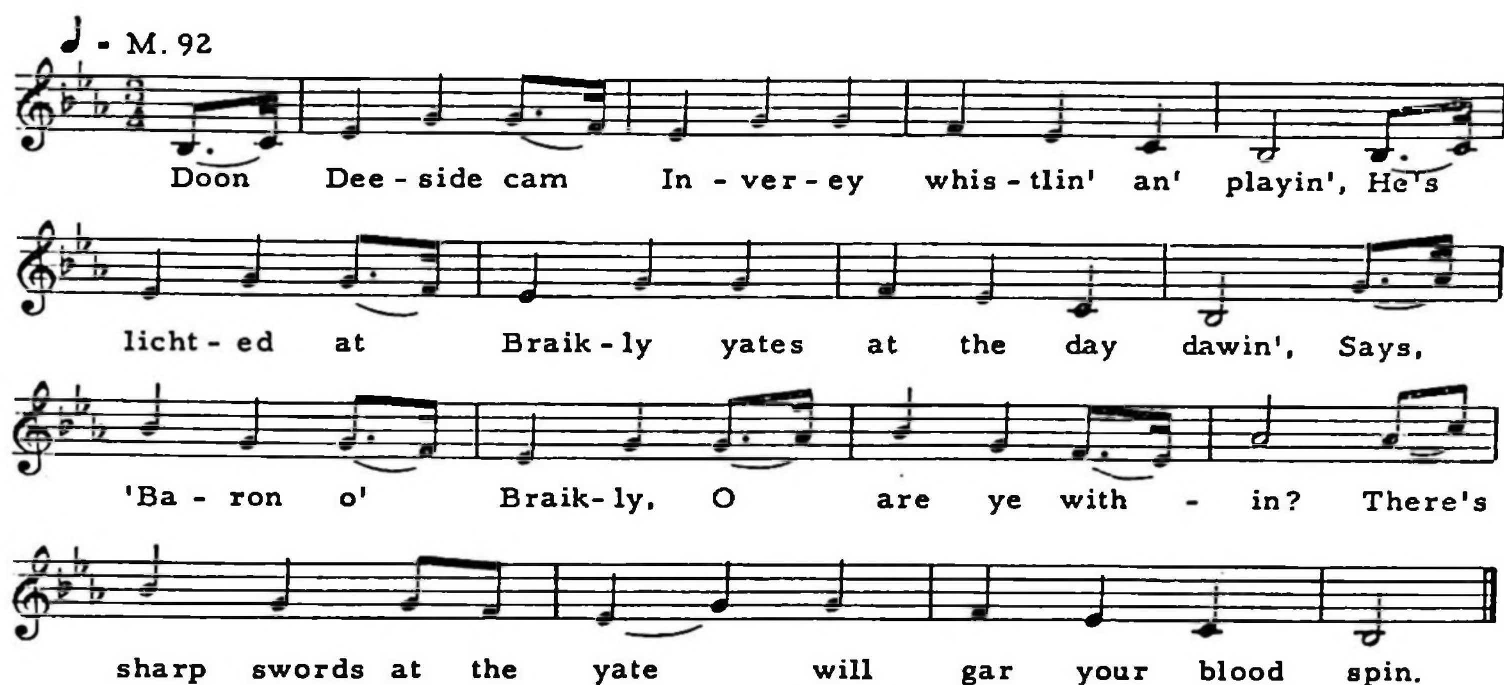
There lived a la - dy in the west, And ye scarce could find her
mar - row, She was coort - ed by nine
gen - tle - men And a ploo - man lad in Yar - row.

Next to this Æolian mode in frequency would come the Dorian founded upon D or ray (14). On first hearing[46] it sounds very much like the Æolian; but the old musicians attributed to it a different effect; and it is generally recognised that it is not nearly so plaintive as the old minor but rather grief without sadness. It was for that reason a great favourite with the old ecclesiastical musicians, and [there are] a considerable number of such melodies in the folk-song of most countries as well as our own. This version of *The Emigrant's Farewell* (15) illustrates the use of the Dorian mode:[47]

♩ = M. 72

Come, all my old com-rades, once more let us join, Let
all your sweet voi - ces join chor - us with mine, We'll be
hap - py and mer - ry, from sor - row re - frain, For we
may, and may ne - ver, meet all here a - gain.

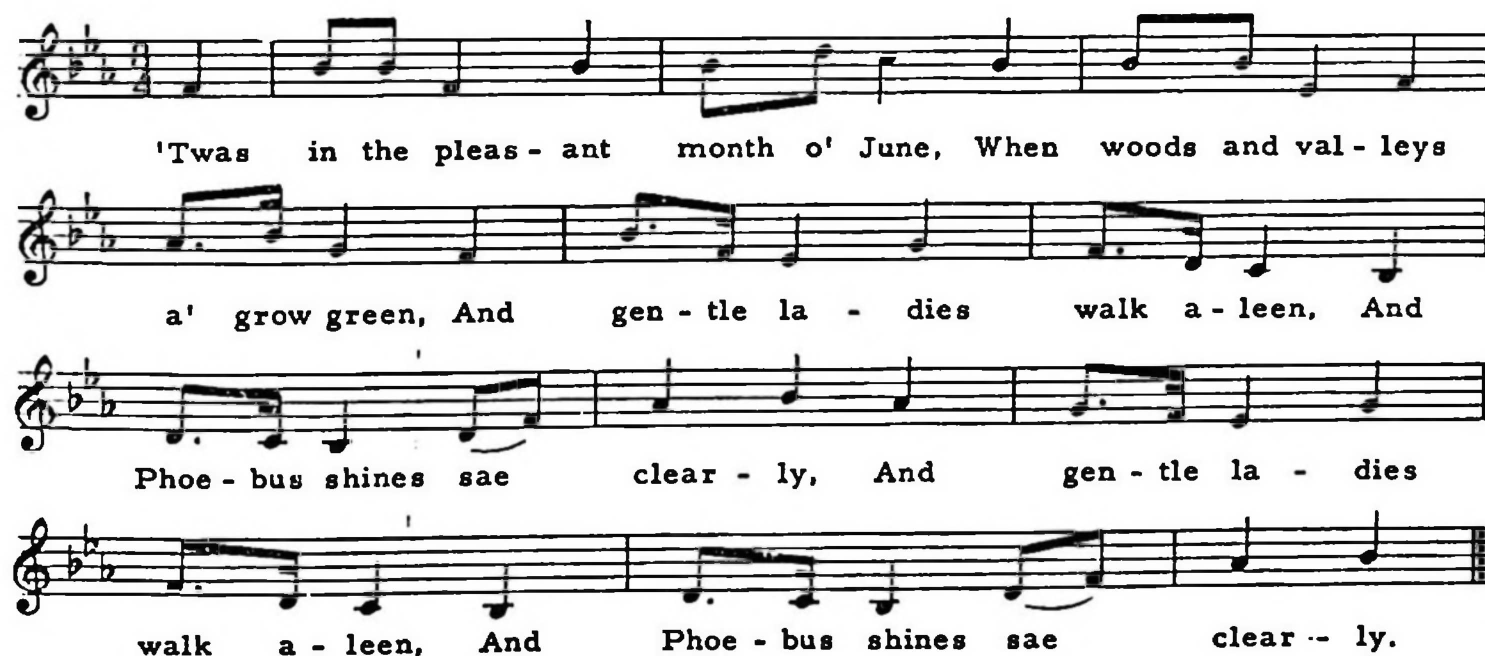
The remaining mode still in full use among us is the Mixolydian,[48] founded on G or soh (16). This is scarcely so abundant as the others, but is still quite common. There [is] often a fine dignity about these airs; we have an example in *Scots Wha Hae.* Of course its major third allies it more with the major than with the minor. The use of the Mixolydian mode may be illustrated by this version of *The Baron o' Brackley* (17):[49]



With regard to the other two modes, Lydian (on fah), and Phrygian (on me), traces may be found of both (18)[50] but I have not met with any decisive examples: they are found, however, in other countries. Probably they have begun [to be] modified into one or other of the other modes; and their position is just the same in England.

I may just add, before leaving the modes, that they are often written so as to disguise their nature. The Dorian is then printed as a minor with the 6th sharpened, and the Mixolydian as a major with the 7th flattened. No doubt the actual intervals are given in this way; but it is simply a remnant of the time when the modal nature of such melodies was not understood, and it has the disadvantage of suggesting that these are chromatic notes systematically introduced by the singers; whereas, when properly written according to the old way (19), they are seen to be purely diatonic.[51]

The only other point connected with the scales of folk-music is the matter of modulations and chromatics. In regard to chromatics, the most distinct case is the occasional use of the flat 7th in a major tune (20) in cases where it does not only read as a Mixolydian, as in this version of *The Beggar Laddie:*[52]



Various explanations of this have been suggested, such as the old dislike to a leading note, or the very flat 7th on the bagpipe. Mr Cecil Sharp [1907: 72] has called attention to the fact that the singing of this note is often distinctly different from the 7th of the tempered scale; and I myself had examples where a good singer sang to me the note on one occasion so that I wrote it sharp, and on another flat (21). It is at any rate an occasional chromatic note; and the only other example, by no means so common, is the use of the sharp 4th for a similar chromatic purpose. As to modulations, they are pretty nearly limited to passage from one mode to another, which is not infrequent, and in more modern airs an occasional use of the sharp 4th in a medial cadence, and also the flat 7th for the same. But this latter was opposed to the instincts of the old folk-singer, and he found his cadences otherwise.

Turning now from this fundamental matter of scales, I shall treat the remaining manifestations of independence of harmony more briefly, though they are by no means unimportant. And the first of these is the melodic progressions, which are in the oldest airs distinctly unharmonic. It is not easy to group these, though their effect is felt clearly enough; but the general truth appears in the fact that old folk-airs are very difficult to harmonise satisfactorily: they were not made for it, and often fit it but ill. There is also but a vague sense of tonality, especially in the first part of the tune, a circumstance that often puzzles the inexperienced recorder of them, as he [is] puzzled to find his way in the melody. But a few more definite characteristics may be specified.

One feature is a comparative absence of passing notes (22).[53] A smooth flowing melody always suggests a modern origin; in the older airs most of the notes had independent and substantive value, and the melodic leaps were therefore greater.

Then again the folk-melody often surprises by the use it makes of individual notes. The emphasis is often put where we should not expect it. This is specially applicable to the 7th of the scale, which in modern music is so regularly treated as a mere leading note for the tonic, while in old airs it has quite often a substantive value of its own. And in lesser measure the same thing may be said of the 2nd, which has a prominence beyond what it receives in present-day airs. But the peculiarity of the melodic 6ths is especially marked in the cadences (23). I have already mentioned the tendency to descend upon the final; and we have to add the absence of the leading note (which indeed was much disliked by the ancient musicians: indeed it had the distinction of once[54] being forbidden by the pope in a bull, though the church singers in what some may think a characteristically ecclesiastical way, merely dropped it from their copies and went on singing it all the same). But not only is a true leading note wanting but we may even have in its place, in Æolian and Dorian, a note preceding the final which is a tone below and may even be accented, as in *The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow* already quoted.[55]

It must be added in this connection that we have a considerable number of folk-songs, especially in the major mode, that [have] what may be called rudimentary harmonic suggestions. One of these is a tendency to harp on the notes of a common

chord, especially on the tonic. The same tendency may be detected in [the] presence of modern cadences, such as obtrusive introduction of the leading note. Or again, a very marked imitation of one phrase by another points in the same direction; and of course any distinct tendency to modulation. Such indications may not carry very far, but they imply the influence of harmony, very likely unconscious, in the composer of the air.[56]

And now, in conclusion, if the question is raised as to the general character and comparative merit of our folk-song airs, a word or two must be said. Sir Hubert Parry [pp. 62–80] has divided the folk-music of the world particularly into two classes; one, those that are most characterised by melodic patterns whose treatment gives both unity and variety to the melody; and these belong to the strongly intellectual races, such as the Germans and the English. Then there is the class of the emotional folk-music, where the tune tends to rise to a climax on the high note, or in the most emotional to several, and also inclines to energetic rhythm, as in Spain and Russia. Now in regard to both these he pronounces the Scottish folk-tunes to reach the highest level. I may venture to add that this judgement, necessarily formed from the songs imperfectly recorded in the books, would be entirely confirmed by the records from actual singing. Their close-knit unity is a remarkable feature of them; and it is often a curious study to watch how this has been unconsciously preserved through all the versions that a tune has passed through. And at the same time their emotional character is very prominent, though it seems generally, at least in the best specimens, to preserve a certain gravity and dignity. It is this that has often been mistaken by strangers for mere sadness, especially as they misunderstand our old minor and Dorian melodies. If we might venture to compare our gatherings with those recorded by the English collectors, we should be inclined to say that in both these features they are more impressive than the average of what is found in England. And the same impression is produced by the absence of those irregularities that are so common in England; our melodies look more like the work of those whose ears were unconsciously trained to appreciate the highest melodic effects (24).

It is, after all, the airs to these old songs that are most valuable (25), though they have received least attention.[57] Many of them are thoroughly worth preserving. Some of these have not seen the printed page at all; others have been published in mutilated forms. But they ought to appear in their genuine old forms, without which they lose their real flavour. No doubt there are difficulties: the manner of accompaniment is one of them. We can hardly expect them to be sung without accompaniment in these days, but the accompaniment should be in agreement with the mode and character of the melody itself (26). That is often difficult to obtain; but has been achieved, and can still be done. The greatest mischief is done by the so-called 'arranging' of these airs. No doubt the arranger would maintain, as the emendators of the ballads did, that as the editions of the airs are so many, he is quite entitled to make his own changes, but even if the traditional singer makes his unconscious alterations, he is likely to do it in

line with the actual style of the air, while the arranger is pretty certain to do it in terms of modern musical ideas.

As to wider and higher uses of the folk-song music, I can only speak as an interested observer. It has lately been maintained by Mr Cecil Sharp [1907: 127–34] that an English school of music should be founded upon the English folk-songs, by composers realising their meaning and taking them as the themes of their compositions. There have of course been examples of such uses made of folk-songs in other countries, but how far it may be practicable here it is not for me to say. Such questions will settle themselves in time no doubt, but meanwhile it is enough for me that there is still a large amount of beautiful melody in danger of being lost, and we are called on [to] garner it while yet there is time (27).[58] The old people hardly sing these songs now, except for special purposes; and the younger generation has turned away from them, oftener than not to inferior material. It is well to look after them while there is time.

I may quit with the words of Sir Hubert Parry in his very interesting chapter on folk-music in his *Art of Music* [p. 80]: 'As art-music grows and pervades the world, pure folk-music tends to go out of use among the people. . . . Civilisation reduces everything to a[59] common level, and "the people" cease to make their own tunes, and accept vulgarised and weakened portions of the music of the leisured classes, and of those who wish to be like them. The rapid extinction of the tunes which successively catch the people's ears as compared with the long life of those that went to their hearts in old days, is an excellent vindication of the fact that what is to be permanent in music needs a genuine impulse in feeling as well as the design which makes it intelligible. True folk-music is an outcome of the whole man, as is the case with all that is really valuable as art. The features which give it its chief artistic and historical importance (apart from its genuine delightfulness) are those which manifest the working of the perfectly unconscious instinct for design, and those in which the emotional and intellectual basis of the art is illustrated by the qualities of the tunes which correspond with the known characters of the nations and peoples who invent them.' We have seen how these effects are illustrated in our Scottish folk-song, and it seems a worthy undertaking to seek the preservation of it in more authentic form than it has generally received, and before repositories of it, which are fast disappearing, have altogether died away.

Commentary

The revival of interest in folk-song at the beginning of this century was a musical rather than a literary phenomenon. Most collectors of that time were more interested in tunes than texts—in contrast to the earlier period when, as Duncan rightly points out (2), the music was largely ignored. As a result these collectors have met with some criticism from more recent scholars (such as James Reeves, who, in the introduction to his anthology, *The Idiom of the People*, gives a very clear picture of the folk-song scene

before the first World War). Duncan and Greig, like the best of their colleagues, although believing the music to be of greater importance (25), faithfully recorded such texts as they found. Their interest in the words is clearly shown in Greig's weekly articles in the *Buchan Observer* (Greig 1963) and Duncan's meticulous annotations such as those to *Auld Widow Greylocks* and *Be Kind to Your Nainsel', John* referred to in note 18. When it comes to the basic differences between 'the Scottish songs that mostly fill the books' and the true folk-song (1), Duncan's opinion probably shocked a good many of his audience. There are still many Scots today, particularly in exile, who ignore true folk-song, seeming to think that what Scottish country singers really sang were the 'book songs'.

In saying that traditional airs 'must not be florid or in any way elaborate' (3) Duncan may have been thinking of the distinction between folk-song and art song or of the editorial elaborations of such as Dean Christie, but the remark throws an interesting sidelight on the type of folk-singing with which he was most familiar. Dr Alexander Keith, the final editor of *Last Leaves*, maintains that the style of singing of the people from whom Greig and Duncan mostly collected, was down-to-earth, straightforward and with little ornamentation.[60] Greig and Duncan do not appear to have collected to any appreciable degree from the travelling people (*cf.* Henderson and Collinson 1965:2), and had they done so would probably have taken account of their more ornate singing style.[61]

The impression of common time in a triple-time air perceived by Duncan in such tunes as *Under the Moon* (4) is surely subjective and might not meet with general acceptance. What he seems to have in mind is that songs of this type, found frequently enough in most parts of Britain, have a basis of four syllables to one triple-time bar. To achieve this, one of the three beats must necessarily be sub-divided to take two syllables; but does this really give the effect of common time? It is perhaps worth noticing (though it is not particularly apparent in *Under the Moon*) that airs of this kind usually have a mazurka lilt rather than that of a waltz.[62] The remark following this song (5) about time forms being only approximate indications of actual accentual effects is very apt. Not all Duncan's contemporaries were so perceptive.

In dealing with melodic form (6), perhaps he does not make it completely clear that, on repetition, a given phrase may be, and frequently is, varied. When this is so, it is now customary to put a tick after the letter used in the formula and a double tick for a still further variation: thus the formula for the air of *The Emigrant's Farewell* (15) with its 'specially Celtic' shape would now be written ABBA', the third line being an exact repetition of the second, and the last a variant of the first.[63] On the question of tunes with a second strain, Duncan's remarks (7) are on the whole sound, though he seems to forget that in the case of airs which originated as dance tunes, acquiring words at a later date—and there are some such to be found in his collection *e.g. Sodger's Joy* (*Miscellanea:* 56)—the second strain may well be as much part of the original as the first. This is not true, however, of *The Gadie Rins*, as here the second strain shows far

more modern characteristics than the almost pentatonic first: it is interesting to note that today most traditional singers when singing this song use the first strain only. The account of the perplexities of variant forms with which Duncan completes this section of his lecture (8) is an especially vivid and succinct expression of ideas on a subject that has continued to exercise its fascination from his day to our own.

Duncan's notes give particularly full consideration to the topic of folk-music's independence of harmony. His remarks on the harmonic thinking of the trained musician (9) were much more applicable then than now and the change in today's musical outlook in this direction has partly come about through musicians learning to appreciate the beauties of unaccompanied melody in folk-song.

The subject of the pentatonic or five-note scale (10) and its various modes has been and will long continue to be of profound interest to musicologists. Since Sir Hubert Parry wrote about it, pentatonic music has been discovered in a number of other parts of the world, for example the Andes (Harcourt 1922), various parts of the Soviet Union, particularly among the Uralian and Turkic-speaking peoples (Eshpai 1933 and 1938; Zatayevich 1933) and many areas of Africa south of the Sahara (Nettl 1965: 41; Mbabi-Katana 1965). Pentatonic tunes may possibly exist in the music of all the Celtic races (11) but recent examination has shown that there is little pentatonic influence in Wales (Crossley-Holland 1968: 62), and a preliminary survey of Breton folk-song collections does not show it to be particularly strong there either.[64] In England, however, though there are few purely pentatonic tunes,[65] pentatonic origin is strongly felt in many.[66] This may be accounted for by the direct importation of many airs from Scotland and Ireland, or it may be that English folk melody was originally pentatonic but has moved further away from pentatonism than the music of the more remote areas of Scotland and Ireland. The fact that eight years or so after this lecture was given Cecil Sharp unearthed a great vein of pentatonic melody of British origin in the Appalachian Mountains of America may well support the latter view (Sharp 1932: I. xxxiv).

The Laird o' Drum, chosen by Duncan as his pentatonic example, is in the commonest of the five pentatonic modes (see note 37), as are also *Mormond Braes* and *Under the Moon* among the other illustrations. That he originally intended to give an example of the next commonest pentatonic mode, is shown in a letter he wrote to Greig a month before the lecture (25 Jan. 1908) in which he says:

> You kindly offered to do what you could to make the Wagner lecture a success, and I send herewith two songs for accompaniments. 'The Baron o' Brackley' is intended as a typical Mixo-Lydian, and 'Good Nicht' in this form as a minor pentatonic. I mention this, so that you may keep it in view, though I fear it is a troublesome task to harmonise *mixolydically*, and to do the thing *pentatonically* would still farther clip one's wings. I see you have not scrupled to use the 4th and 7th in 'The Laird o' Drum', though not obtruding them; and I suppose that is inevitable.

The same applies to *Mormond Braes* here shown with Greig's accompaniment (Plate II).

The reason why *Good Nicht an' Joy be wi' ye a'* (*Songs B* No 9), among other illustrations, was omitted on the night is not known, but as it was obviously intended, it is given here.[67]

♩ = M. 84

Oh, this is my de - - part - in' nicht, The

morn's the day I'm gaun a - wa'; An' since it's sae that

I maun gae, Good nicht an' joy be wi' ye a'.

It would not be generally agreed today that the two 'rules' mentioned by Duncan (12) are always observed. As regards the first, 'that the melody ends on the fundamental note of the mode', some scholars still hold that the final note of any folk tune must be regarded as the key-note or tonic; but more and more it is being realised that this is not necessarily so. Some tunes, including a number of Duncan's collecting, can be considered circular: the end sounds distinctly unfinal, seeming to lead back into the beginning again.[68] *The Baron o' Brackley*, given later in the lecture (17), is an example of this.

The second rule, 'that the final descends upon that note [*i.e.* the fundamental note of the mode], and generally by one degree', was one given by J. A. Fuller Maitland in one of the lectures he had sent Duncan to peruse at the latter's request (J. A. Fuller Maitland *Lectures*). Duncan at first was obviously doubtful about this and says in a letter to Fuller Maitland (19 Apr. 1906), 'I am indeed puzzled by one of your remarks that "every melody in a mode must descend upon its final by one degree". I do not think this would apply to many of our tunes that seem to be distinctly Dorian or Mixo-Lydian.' However in a later letter (18 May 1906) he says, 'I have certainly found that the characteristic of distinctly modal tunes forming their cadences by a descent of one degree on the final is considerably more prevalent here than I had thought; yet the number of exceptions is not small.' The number of exceptions is certainly quite considerable even in airs that Duncan, and indeed Fuller Maitland, would surely have considered 'old'. Many tunes have the type of rising cadence found in *Ca' the Yowes*—to quote a well-known example. *The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow* and *The Beggar Laddie*, both of which were used to illustrate this lecture, have rising cadences. As for descent upon the final by one degree being 'against the harmonic tendency', it is difficult to understand why he made this remark. Fuller Maitland in the lecture referred to above says, '. . . we get a law that no tune can be modal which rises to its keynote. Of course

the converse is not true, for many modern tunes, such as "God Save the King", descend upon their keynote by one degree'. Again in a letter to Duncan (24 Apr. 1906) he says:

> Of course 'Drink to me only' never professed to be anything but a modern tune, but supposing its origin to be obscure, it might be held to conform to the cadence-rule by its descent at the close: but this phrase in the second strain [here he has written out the first four bars of the second strain] shows at once that it dates from a time when the arpeggio of the tonic harmony seemed an agreeable thing to dwell on.

Many of the early scholars, because of the modality of folk-song, believed sincerely in its plainsong origin and tried, as Duncan appears to be doing here, to enforce the rules of the latter on the former. A moment's reflection on the real nature of traditional folk-song and its manner of transmission will show the folly of trying to impose on it any rules from outside. There are no rules, only tendencies, and these must be discovered inductively, as Duncan in fact realised—to judge by the analytical methods described in *Characteristics*. There he says:

> *How to proceed.* (1) Take airs that are certainly very ancient, as given in the books. (2) Take traditional forms of airs, *unarranged.* (3) Turn the modern arrangements to account, in cases where they are certain, by observing the tendency of their changes, in contrast to the original. Then it is an inductive investigation of the features that distinguish them.

We come now to the detailed study of the heptatonic or seven-note modes. Duncan first deals with the Æolian (13) of which he gives *The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow* as an example. In fact, since the sixth note of the scale does not appear in this tune and as it is only this note which distinguishes the Æolian from the Dorian, we cannot truthfully say that it is in either mode; it is in the hexatonic mode that Professor Bronson aptly calls Dorian/Æolian (Bronson 1959–73: 1.xxviii, 2.xi–xiii). It is only comparatively recently, however, that such hexatonic or six-note modes have been regarded as modes in their own right, and Duncan was not alone in labelling airs of this kind as Æolian: the earlier issues of the Folk-Song Society's *Journal* abound in examples.[69] This type of hexatonic tune is remarkably common in the collections of both Greig and Duncan, but real examples of the Æolian mode are comparatively rare and even when one does come across a true Æolian tune it often seems to have been imported from England or Ireland. The following example, however, *The Clear Caller Watter*, noted in September 1905 from his brother George (*Airs:*55), shows no signs of external origin and contains all seven notes of the Æolian mode. It is curious that Duncan should have overlooked it as a possible instance.

Fare-weel the gill - stoup and fare - weel the co - gie, O;

Fare - weel the [punch - bowl] that maks my heart sae vo- gie, O;

Fare - weel tae por - ter, it's ow - er dark an' mud-dy, O; For
I maun leave them a' for the clear, cal - ler wat - ter, O.

Passing on to the Dorian mode (14) Duncan states that it is less frequent than the Æolian; but in fact it is more so, as was pointed out by Greig in *Folk-Song in Buchan* (Greig 1963:55), and the Dorian/Æolian hexatonic referred to above is far commoner than either. The example given of a Dorian air, *The Emigrant's Farewell* (15), is a good one, as is *The Blaeberries* mentioned in note 63.

As an example of the Mixolydian mode (16) he mentions *Scots Wha Hae*, but this might well be considered a circular tune in the Ionian or major mode ending on the fifth degree of the scale and leading back into the beginning. *The Baron o' Brackley* (17), Duncan's Mixolydian illustration, is again in fact hexatonic and could again be taken as circular: indeed Greig's harmonisation makes it so. Many will feel that the real tonic is E flat rather than B flat; and even if the latter is taken as the tonic, since the note D (the third degree of the mode) does not occur in the tune at all it is what Bronson would call Mixolydian/Dorian. If E flat, however, be accepted as the tonic, then it is Ionian/ Mixolydian as it lacks the distinguishing seventh degree. A clearer example of the Mixolydian mode, listed by Duncan in *Characteristics*, is the following air to *The Duke o' Athole's Nurse* (*Airs:* 11):

I am the Duke o' A - thole's nurse, And my
post it is ve - ry well be - com - ing, I wad gie a' my
half year's fee, For ae sicht o' my le - man.

Duncan mentions briefly that traces of Lydian and Phrygian modes are to be found (18), and in a side-note and again in *Characteristics* he suggests *Sir Niel and McVan* as a possible instance of the latter. The chief characteristic by which the Phrygian mode can be recognised is a minor or flattened second degree of the scale. Let us look rather more closely at the version of this tune that Duncan had in mind (*Airs:* 22):

In fact it only uses five notes and is pentatonic. If, as Duncan always assumed, the final note, B, is the tonic, we find there is no second degree at all, let alone a flattened one; it cannot, therefore, really be said to have Phrygian influence, rather is it an example of what he calls the minor pentatonic. But many would see this as another circular tune with E as the tonic, in which case it is an example of the different and rarer pentatonic mode that lacks the third and sixth degrees of the scale (the one that, keeping to the black notes of the piano, has A flat as the tonic—see note 37). It is possible that Duncan in his enthusiasm for modality was anxious to find examples in all the Gregorian modes. Not finding a tune with a minor second, he contented himself with a tune that lacked the second altogether, perhaps imagining that if it had had one, it could have been minor!

With regard to the actual writing of modal tunes, Duncan rarely goes against his own dictum about setting them down 'according to the old way' (19) (except that he sometimes puts sharps or flats in key signatures for notes that do not occur at all in the tunes). In this he was in advance of most of his contemporaries, as was Greig who writes to him (11 Nov. 1905):

> It is provoking at this time of day to find men who should be experts clinging to conventions that only serve to misinterpet. It shows that they cannot feel the modes. And indeed the ear of the modern musician must be educated to feel them. He will not take these old melodies at their word, but must drag them into a notation that quite travesties their meaning & message. *We* will try to do justice by the old tunes when we come to print them. Mixo-Lydians and Dorians won't masquerade as modern majors & minors with disfiguring accidentals.

He was presumably referring to the custom of the Folk-Song Society in its *Journal* of using the nearest modern key signature and correcting where necessary with accidentals. Duncan expressed his views quite forcibly in the postscript of a letter to Fuller Maitland (19 Apr. 1906):

> I observe that the Folk Song Journal prints the modal tunes in the major or minor scale, with the necessary accidentals to correct it. I do not know the reason of this practice, but have always felt this objection to it, that it seems to misrepresent the great fact that these

> melodies are purely diatonic, with different notes of the scale taken as the key-note, but with no real accidentals in use, and no chromatic effect realised.

Fuller Maitland, replying to Duncan's criticism, says (24 Apr. 1906):

> The question of notation is very difficult. Poor 'Martyrs'[70] (to return to that instance) has suffered by being printed in the natural scale, for the absence of a printed natural before the Bs has no doubt led many people to print them as flats! We want above all to get the intervals right, whatever we call them!

The Folk-Song Society seem to have adopted this policy deliberately to avoid the possibility of modal music being misread by musicians unaccustomed to it. Frank Howes, a later editor of the Folk-Song Society's *Journal*, in a letter to P. N. Shuldham-Shaw (25 Jan. 1974) writes:

> Now on modal notation I can offer you some ideas but not certainties. I, like you, wondered when I came on the scene why the signatures could not be more veracious, but I accepted the convention because it was the convention and therefore making life easier for everyone concerned. I would suggest as reasons for the use of key signatures (1) that the growing interest in the modes, as shown by Stanford and Fauré, was embedded more in plainsong than in folk-song and that plainsong had its own notation. It was not until people like Woodward started publishing plainsong tunes in the *Cowley Carol Book* and such that plainchant was studied by other than specialists and ecclesiastics. (2) Indeed only a generation before, the modes were regarded with positive horror by *e.g.* George Macfarren. . . . Something of his attitude can be found in the preface to Chappell's *Pop. Music of Olden Time* and Wooldridge's comments in the preface to his revision. (3) The fact that to get the folk songs into circulation piano accompaniments were provided by all the pioneers would be a strong influence against outlandish key signatures. I think that our pioneers appreciated the modes, *e.g.* Sharp in *Some Conclusions*, but the sort of consideration I have just alleged would deter them from adding to their obstacles.

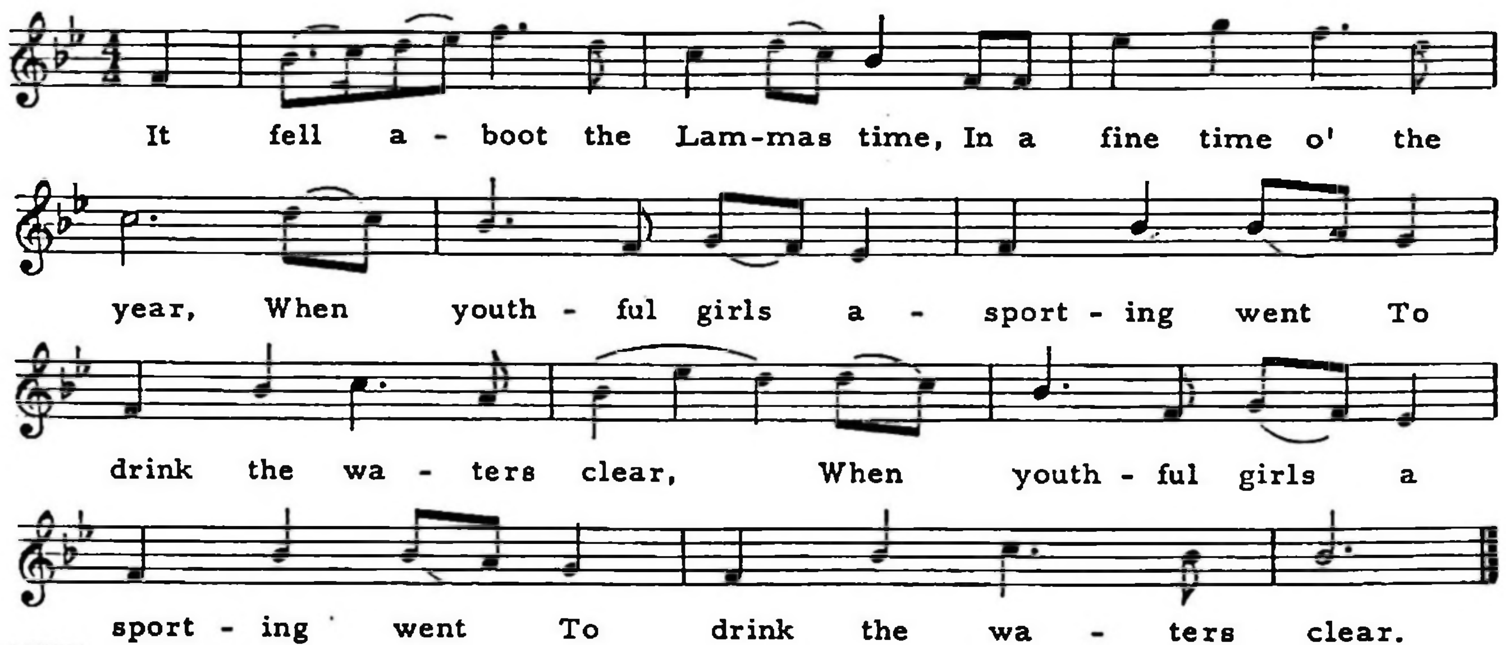
Duncan mentions 'the occasional use of the flat 7th in a major tune' (20) and gives *The Beggar Laddie* as an example. In correspondence with Greig about this song (16 Jan. 1907), he remarks:

> I am glad you like this particular air independently of the flat 7th. I did not, however, think of the melody itself; it was just this very flat 7th, and its remarkable emphasis from its position, that drew me to it. I wanted something to show that the flat 7th had an accepted place in the ears of folk-singers; even if it was not original here, it still shows that they took it naturally and sang it easily. It transgresses the rule of Modal cadence and can hardly be set down as Mixo-Lydian; but just all the more strikingly illustrates my point.

Actually, in *Airs* (p. 2) Duncan puts 'Mixo-Lydian?' against it and today, with less reliance being placed on the 'rule of Modal cadence', most people would regard it as a straightforward Mixolydian tune, since the seventh is consistently flattened: it is not just a chromatic flattening of an otherwise sharp note. Quoting Cecil Sharp (21), he brings up the question of the intonation used by traditional singers particularly with

regard to the seventh degree of the scale. Folk intonation was noted and commented on by a number of the early collectors. Percy Grainger in his brilliant transcriptions from phonograph cylinders frequently marks a note ♮♯? or something of a similar nature (*JFSS* 3 [1908] *passim*). Herbert Hughes collecting in Ireland about this time describes the quarter tones deliberately used by Irish singers (Hughes 1909:1.2–3) and an early attempt at accurate notation of pitch both in staff and sol-fa notations is shown by Dr Alfred Daniell's transcription of *Lliw Gwyn Rhosyn yr Haf* (*JWFSS* 1 [1910], No 14, reproduced in *Caneuon* 1961: No 22 p. 29).

With reference to his discussion of passing notes (22), Duncan states that 'a smooth flowing melody always suggests a modern origin'. *Pitcaithley's Wells* (*Songs B:* No 10), listed in *Characteristics* as an example of an air with modern features, shows this clearly.



It is perhaps worthy of comment that many of the tunes in the Greig–Duncan collection which contain a fair number of passing notes are tunes with wide currency outside Scotland and may well be importations from other areas where the smoother type of melody became established at an earlier date than in Scotland.

Regarding the statement that 'the peculiarity of the melodic sixths is especially marked in the cadences' (23), it should be said that this feature does not seem quite as common as he suggests considering the number of tunes in which the sixth degree is lacking altogether. Possibly what he is referring to is the type of cadence where the final 'doh' is approached from the 'lah' below. This happens mostly in 'major' pentatonic and hexatonic tunes that lack the seventh. An instance of this type of tune is *The Braes o' Invernessie* (*Songs B:* No 5) which is also an example of 'a tendency to harp on the notes of a common chord, especially on the tonic'.

In *Characteristics* this is given as an example of the older type of tune in the Ionian or major mode. It is an interesting tune as it combines certain old features, such as the lack of the seventh, with more modern elements such as a rather harmonic structure.

♩. = M. 66

As I cam in by yon bon-ny wa - ter -
- side, An' in by the braes of In - ver -
- ness - ie, 'Twas there I spied a weel - faur'd
maid, I bade her busk an' be my lass - ie.

The modern tendencies referred to are by no means limited to tunes in the major: some of the other modal airs such as *The Emigrant's Farewell*, already quoted in other connections, have a good many passing notes and some have distinct harmonic tendencies. As Duncan says in a letter to Fuller Maitland (18 May 1906), 'I presume we must recognise that popular music—apart from changes in transmission—was less likely to be careful of the strict rules and I suppose modal tunes would still be composed after modern influences were telling on the composers' tendencies so that the tunes would show a combination of both styles.'

In his praise of Scottish song near the conclusion of his lecture (24) Duncan is for once being somewhat chauvinistic. Far from thinking what Duncan calls the 'irregularities' a sign of the inferior nature of English folk-song, many would take the 5/4 and other constantly shifting rhythms as an indication of its superiority to the four-squareness of the North-East airs. With regard to the question of piano accompaniment (26), both Duncan and Greig, knowing the real tradition, seem to regret that it was necessary in order to make the songs acceptable to their audiences. Greig referring in a letter (14 Nov. 1907) to *The Gadie Rins* says, 'in fact I sometimes wish we could do without accompaniments altogether'. How happy they would have been today when unaccompanied folk singing is widely accepted. However, Duncan's remarks on arrangements and arrangers are possibly even more true now than ever before, as side by side with the acceptance of unaccompanied singing go arrangements perpetrated by instrumental performers who think nothing of deliberately altering and cheapening the original melodies to suit their very limited harmonic capabilities. The arrangers of earlier years were certainly more faithful to their originals than many, though not all, today. Greig's own accompaniments show commendable simplicity and taste, although it might be felt that there is rather too much duplication of the melody in the piano part, and there are occasions when they take the songs out of their original mode.[71]

Mormond Braes (Plate II) illustrates one of his more successful accompaniments as well as his beautiful calligraphy of words and music.

In common with virtually all his contemporaries, Duncan believed that folk-song was fast dying out and his wish to 'garner it while yet there is time' (27) was strong and sincere. Fortunately folk-song is a sturdy growth and has a habit, not of dying, but from time to time of disappearing underground. One has only got to dig down a little and there it is, very much alive, as various more recent collectors have proved. Greig and Duncan would surely have been delighted to know that the work they carried out with such fervour and with such success is still continuing today. They might have been surprised but certainly they would have been gratified to learn that so many young people in Scotland are taking a real pride and a lively and serious interest in their own heritage of genuine traditional music and song, and that their own work is at last receiving the appreciation it has long deserved.

NOTES

1 The photograph of the Reverend James Bruce Duncan (1848–1917) which is reproduced in Plate I has kindly been supplied by his grandson, Mr Paul Duncan. For a brief account of his life, see Duncan 1966, and for his work on folk-song, see Shuldham-Shaw 1966 and 1973.

2 The notes are not dated, but the material relates closely to the report in *The Aberdeen Free Press* (Monday, 5 Nov. 1906) of Duncan's lecture on 'Folk Song in the North East' given at Alford on the previous Friday.

3 Greig to Duncan, 20 and 24 June 1907, and Duncan to Greig, 22 and 28 June. The letter of 22 June is available only in Duncan's shorthand draft or copy (998/13/49).

4 The duet does not, as the newspaper report claims, include 'all the airs sung': *The Beggar Laddie* and *The Baron of Brackley* are not represented.

5 Greig wrote to Duncan in a letter of 30 Jan. 1908: 'Harking back to your lecture, I may say that Mary w[oul]d like to sing "Mormond Braes", if you can fit it in. Her version of it is strictly *pentatonic*. I have in a way taken that song in hand & always like to take any opportunity that offers of extending its vogue; & Mary has got identified with it.' Duncan replied (1 Feb. 1908): 'I fully intended to include "Mormond Braes" for Miss Greig . . . '

6 The report in *The Aberdeen Daily Journal* of Monday, 24 Feb., has the heading 'The Aberdeen Wagner Society' and is sub-titled 'Folk-Song in the North-East of Scotland'. The *Evening Express* report quoted in the text is an exact reproduction of the first and last of its three paragraphs but in between the *Journal* carried the following ineptly written account of the lecture itself:

'Mr Duncan dwelt [*sic*] with his subject very interestingly and exhaustively. He began by defining the meaning of the word "folk-song", and tracing through the older periods its various forms. The traditional was first heard in England some 200 years ago. The form then in vogue, however, was artistic, more than in the simple style that has obtained throughout the north-east of Scotland. Then the question was propounded as to how the airs were to be found. Folk-song, the lecturer said, was the heritage of the people. The singers of these old world melodies or chants or musical recitations were still to be heard, the difficulty was to get hold of the singers. Miss Broadwood, the secretary of the English Folk-Song Society, tells that she had noted down no fewer than 400 folk-songs from

one person's voice. Mr Duncan himself has an experience of 330 airs which he "took off" one voice. In speaking of the musical side, the lecturer dealt with the two classes—"narrative ballad" and "lyric". The idea contained in some of the songs that Burns, Lady Nairne, and others had "fined down" could all be traced to one or other of the older ballads. Patriotic sentiment was absent from these folk-songs, and very little of the convivial was introduced. The character of the music was quaint and simple; and there was an utter independence of harmony. The various musical scales in which the music was written were then detailed, special note being made of the "pentatonic", with the "fa" and "te" as in our present major scale amissing. There were no modulations, no chromatics, but the flat seventh was made frequently to do duty. In confirmation of the merit and character of Scottish folk-songs, their design and structure, and their emotional powers, Mr Duncan concluded by quoting from Dr Parry, who says that the highest level is reached in the music of the Scottish folk-song.'

7 *Under the Moon* and *The Emigrant's Farewell* were known to Duncan's mother, Mrs William Duncan *née* Elizabeth Birnie, and were noted down by Duncan's brother George Forrest Duncan when he was only a boy in 1875. *The Beggar Laddie* was recorded from George in 1905, and this was also known to Margaret from whom *The Laird o' Drum*, *The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow*, and *Bonny Wudny* (the tune of *The Baron o' Brackley*, see note 49) were recorded in the same year. Duncan took down the words of *The Gadie Rins* from Margaret (*Gillespie:* 252) but did not record the tune, evidently because it did not show any variation. As the points Duncan is making in his lecture relate to music, only the first verses of the words, and not the complete texts, are given with the music in the illustrations.

8 Some commas, hyphens and dashes have been added, some commas omitted, and some separate sentences run together without any indication of the change. The notes are written in Pitman's shorthand on seventeen folios of lined paper, all but one of which measure 8 in. × 6 in. Pages of deleted draft which are largely copied out at other points are not included in the numbering which runs: 1/2, 3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 9/deleted draft (*cf.* 10 and 15), 10/11, 12/13, 14/deleted draft (*cf.* 14 and 26; this folio measures 9·1 in. × 7·2 in.), 15/blank, 16/17, 18/19, 20/21, 22/23, 24/25, 25A/deleted draft (*cf.* 10–11), 26/blank, 27/28. Sometimes the draft material supplies improved readings which have been adopted. There are also a number of smaller deletions which are not mentioned individually here unless they have been accepted into the text. Duncan has written the title 'Folk Song in the North East' in long-hand on page 1, and a small piece of paper accompanying the notes has been marked by Duncan 'Notes for Folk Song Lecture (fuller than in lecture itself)'. It should be noted that, as Duncan does not always use standard outlines in his shorthand, there may be a certain ambiguity and it is possible that some have been misinterpeted.

9 This sentence opens: 'The word of comparatively recent origin', in MS. Duncan's definition of folk-song agrees in a general way with that of other researchers in Britain at this period (*cf.* Sharp 1907:2). For a more recent definition, see *JIFMC* 8 (1955):23, quoted Lloyd 1967:15 and Howes 1969:11, but the whole question of definition is still controversial.

10 The heading 'folk-song' does not occur in the second edition (Grove 1904–10). The third and fourth editions (1927–8, 1940) have the cross-reference 'Folk-Song, see English Folk-Song, Irish, Scottish, Welsh Music; Song, etc.' and the fifth and most recent edition has a long section on 'Folk Music' (1954:3. 182–422).

11 *i.e.* the smallness of the number of known records makes one suspect that very little recording was done.

12 'without ever hearing' for MS 'and never hear'.

13 The man of seventy referred to was almost certainly Robert Alexander, Quarrylea, Whiterashes, Udny, who learnt most of his songs in Culsalmond when young.

14 The singer was Henry Burstow; see *JFSS* 1 (1899–1904):139.

15 This singer was Duncan's sister Margaret (Mrs Gillespie).

16 '*Cyclopædia*' for MS '*Encyclopædia*'.

17 For this sentence the MS text has the two sentences: 'They have not attracted so much attention from collectors, and on the whole their words have not the merit and interest of the ballads. On the other hand, their composition has come down to quite recent, even present, times.' and the second of these is a replacement for the deleted sentence: 'Yet they have their own interest as an exposition of various phases of life.' The ideas Duncan had in mind are expressed more fully in the 1906 lecture notes (p. 9): 'Naturally the subjects of these old songs are connected with all the subjects of thought in old country life. Life is of course presented in many forms . . . Then the occupations of the country were celebrated. The farmer's life, the shepherd's, the farm-servant's, and even the herd laddie's, and the beggar's. . . . Notice that the occupations include those of the upper class, and the ballads were sung and probably composed by them as well as others. There are examples of some such songs composed in recent years; the merits are not large, but [they are] often set to striking tunes.'

18 The end of the second last sentence in the paragraph from 'for some of them' occurs as a deletion at the top of MS page 27 which apparently once followed on MS page 8 where the rest of the paragraph appears. Pages 8 and 27 have deleted numbers which cannot be clearly read but are probably 18 and 19. The final sentence of the paragraph is developed from a note written mainly in the margin at the foot of page 8 which reads: 'Some surprises in the relationship between the two as the absence of drinking and patriotic songs, and the occurrences of songs that have given origin to literary songs, such as *Auld Robin Gray* and *The Land o' the Leal*'. There is a more extended treatment of the ideas in the 1906 lecture notes: 'in the old folk-songs there is a curious absence of anything that glorifies drinking; our songs of that class, which are pretty numerous, are all the productions of well-known Scottish poets of a later time' (p. 8); 'And though these songs are often far from high poetic efforts, one often meets with strikingly beautiful expressions among them. It was the habit of Burns to seize hold of such expression[s] and weave them into his own songs. . . . The same thing was done by Lady Nairne. Mention the most notable instance of "the land of the leal", expression so much admired, which comes from an old and half-humorous song' (p. 9). In *Airs*, Duncan has detailed comments on the probable derivation of the two literary songs he mentions from *Auld Widow Graylocks* (pp. 255–6, *cf.* Greig 1963: articles 114, 116 and 119) and *Be Kind to Your Nainsel', John* (pp. 55–6, quoted Montgomerie: 1959:206 and Shuldham-Shaw 1966:74–5).

19 'the tunes' for MS 'them'; *cf.* deleted draft which has 'that is just the greater assurance that his tunes will be uncorrupted'.

20 'the singer' in draft only.

21 'so' in draft only.

22 'of its own beauty' from draft; text has 'of itself'. Both text and draft continue 'or calls prominent attention to itself': this has been omitted in order to secure grammatical agreement.

23 Apart from the four opening words, which are editorial, this sentence follows the draft omitting the opening words there which read, 'And so again, we may compare'. The text has, '(Give an example: say old air for *Auld Robin Gray* and the modern with its modulation)'. The old air and the modern one composed by the Reverend William Leeves are given together in Chambers 1862: 430–2.

24 The words after 'preceding' are editorial. *Under the Moon* is not mentioned in the text but was sung at the meeting. It is listed in *Characteristics* in illustration of '3 pulse rhythm, with note divided'. The quotation is from *Songs B* No 6/1; *cf. Airs:* 54.

25 '[The Gadie Rins]' is written in the margin at the end of this paragraph.

26 'for a four-line stanza to have only two different lines of melody, which may be combined in various ways' for MS 'to have only two lines of melody for a four-line stanza, and it is used in several ways'.

27 'alternately' for MS 'in alternate forms'.

28 In the MS this sentence ends 'AAAB (50), ABCB'. The number 50 refers to *The Water o' Nairn* in *Airs* which has the form indicated. The 'ABCB' that Duncan mentions here has been switched round

with the AABA form he mentions later (see note 31) so that the example of three different lines of melody comes between the opening discussion of two different lines and the final reference to four.

29 Fuller Maitland mentions this as a Celtic characteristic in *Lectures* 1 'The Celtic Element in British Folk Song'.

30 'third' for MS 'fourth'. Opposite this '[Stanza structure and other points]' is written in the margin.

31 For the first part of this sentence, the MS has only 'Other forms are AABA' followed by the memorandum '[Find others among my examples]' (see note 28 above). Below this and coming at the end of the paragraph is the note 'See Sharp, page 73, etc/(Putting this first)'.

32 'full of airs with two strains' for MS 'full of such'.

33 'discover' for MS 'discovers'.

34 This sentence is editorial. An insertion in the margin reads, '[*The Gadie* illustrating the modern tendency, and the chorus] Also the two strains under instrumental influence; also the absence of versions'. The tune is quoted from *Songs B:* No 12 where only the words 'O gin I were' are given; the verse has been completed from *Gillespie:* 252.

35 The quotation is given as in Sharp; the MS has a comma in place of the semi-colon and 'of harmony' in place of 'a harmony'.

36 'having' is from a deletion; the text has 'have'.

37 An easy way to find our usual pentatonic scale is to play the black notes on a piano or similar keyboard instrument. There are only five notes repeated in the same pattern in different octaves up the keyboard and the position of the bigger gaps between the notes is obvious. Any one of these five notes may be used as a home-note—a note on which the melody seems to want to finish, even if in fact it does not—thus giving rise to five different pentatonic modes, each with its own character determined by the position of the larger gaps in the scale relative to the home-note. In folk music of British origin the commonest of these five modes is that which, played on the black notes, has F sharp as its home-note—what Duncan would probably have called the major pentatonic. This is the only one dealt with in the lecture. The next most frequent, which Duncan calls the minor pentatonic, has E flat as its home-note. Then follow those with A flat, C sharp and B flat, the last being particularly rare.

38 The words after 'giving' are from a deletion; the text has 'giving a breadth and completeness that is very effective;'.

39 'and' for MS 'of'.

40 *Gala Water* is quoted in this connection in Grove (1879–90), 3: 444–5.

41 This sentence is editorial. The text has '[As example: "The Laird o' Drum"]' at this point, and also has the marginal note '[The Laird o' Drum]' some sentences before, opposite 'modern influence by introducing the 4th or the 7th or both as passing notes'. The quotation is from *Songs A:* 3; *cf. Airs:* 3.

42 Before this paragraph '[Shorten Modes very much]' is written in longhand.

43 'folk-songs' for MS 'they'.

44 This sentence replaces MS 'The experience of all folk-singers is pretty much the same in this matter.' In the third sentence of the paragraph, the words 'the modern minor' and 'the latter' replace MS 'it' and 'the modern minor'.

45 This sentence is editorial. The text has '[*The Dowie Dens*]' in the margin. The quotation is from *Songs A:* 1; *cf. Airs:* 23.

46 'On first hearing' for MS 'At first sight'.

47 This sentence is editorial; the text has '[*The Emigrant's Farewell:* Strathdon version]'. The quotation is from *Songs A:* 7; *cf. Airs:* 54.

48 'Mixolydian' for MS 'Æolian'.

49 This sentence is editorial. The text has only '[Mixolydian example]' in the margin, but *The Baron o' Brackley* was sung at the meeting and *Characteristics* lists '*Bonny Wudny* (to the last four verses of

The Baron o' Brackley)' as an illustration of the Mixolydian mode. The quotation is from *Songs B:* No 7/1–2; *cf. Airs:* 67 for the tune sung to the words of *Bonny Wudny*. Duncan notes (p. 68) that, 'The air ("arranged") is in Christie, 1.20, as "The Baron o' Brackley" ' and the words in *Songs B* are derived from Christie.

50 There is a marginal note, '[Phrygian: *MacVan*?]' and *Characteristics* has '*Sir Niel and MacVan* Phrygian?'

51 The text has '[Examples:]' at this point.

52 There is no indication in the text that an example should come here, but *The Beggar Laddie* was sung in the course of the meeting and it is listed in *Characteristics* as illustrating 'non-modal flat 7th'. The quotation is from *Songs B:* No 8/2, *cf. Airs* 2.

53 This paragraph has been deleted but restored by the word 'Stet' in longhand at the head. The direction is followed in shorthand by a memorandum, '[Add on passing note from Sharp, pages 84, 85]'.

54 'once' for MS 'one'.

55 The end of the sentence, from 'as', is editorial. The MS has '[The Dowie Dens for several of these points]' in the margin.

56 The text has '[Examples here:' and, in the margin, 'The Gadie Rins]'.

57 In the text, this sentence begins, 'But after all it is the airs to these old songs that are most valuable'. It is the first undeleted sentence on page 27 of the MS and originally followed the discussion of the words on page 8 of the MS (see note 18 above).

58 Duncan indicated by an asterisk that a sentence added at the foot of the page after the close of the lecture should be inserted here, but it has not been brought into the text since it would break the continuity of the paragraph. It runs: 'As to their present-day use it is of great importance that their character should not be destroyed by harmony itself however correct.' There is some doubt about the last word; it has been interpreted as 'correct' but, if it is this, Duncan has omitted to indicate the 't' sound.

59 This 'a' and the omission dots are not in Duncan's text but have been added by reference to the original. A note at the top of this page of the MS (p. 28), before the paragraph opening 'As to wider and higher uses', reads '[See Parry, page 80]'.

60 In conversation with P. N. Shuldham-Shaw.

61 In many parts of Europe gipsies have taken over the songs of the region giving them their own particular stamp by embellishing the melodies profusely with ornamentation (*cf.* Grove 1954:3. 859 *et seq.*). Something of the kind may well have happened among the travelling people in Scotland.

62 Since there are other more typical examples of this kind of tune, *e.g. The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow* given later in the lecture, it seems possible that Duncan particularly wanted to use *Under the Moon* somewhere during the course of the evening as it is somewhat of a rarity and has an attractive tune. One curious feature of it is that it can be barred in a variety of ways: if the bar lines are shifted one beat either to the right or to the left, the tune still makes sense and by and large the words still fit well. One could even bar it satisfactorily in 2/4 or 3/2, but one must assume that the method of barring chosen by Duncan best gives the type of accentuation he actually heard.

63 Another song that Duncan mentions in *Characteristics* as exemplifying both this 'Celtic' form and the Dorian mode is *The Blaeberries* (*Airs:* 19, reproduced in *FMJ* 1 [1966]: 86, 1st version). For this the formula would now be written ABB^1A^1.

64 A fairly detailed examination of over 700 Breton folk-songs shows less than 4½ per cent of them to have possible pentatonic tunes and most of these contain less than five notes, usually three or four and in one instance only two. For this reason they lack many of the true pentatonic characteristics. There is not even much pentatonic influence among the tunes of six or seven notes: it is evident in less than 8½ per cent of these.

65 *Lord Rendal*, 5th version, and *Swarthfell Rocks* (*JFSS* 2 [1905–6]: 31, 267) are two examples.
66 *The Holly and the Ivy* (Sharp 1911: 17) and *Barbara Ellen*, particularly the first of the two versions (*JFSS* 2 [1905–6]: 80), are good examples.
67 It may be significant that of the three songs included in a preliminary *Programme of Illustrations* (998/21/14) but not (to judge by the newspaper account) performed on the night, *The Emigrant's Farewell* and *The Braes o' Invernessie* are marked 'Tenor' on the copies and *Good Nicht an' Joy be wi' ye a'* is obviously in the tenor range. Possibly the tenor singer let Duncan down at the last moment.
68 In deciding whether a tune is circular or not, attention must be paid to the note a fifth above the final. If this is really felt as a dominant, then the final is almost certainly the key-note: if not, and particularly if the fourth above the final is strongly stressed, it is probably circular, as in the case of *Scots Wha Hae* mentioned later.
69 See the two versions of *Geordie*, *The Captain's Apprentice* and *John Reilly* (*JFSS* 2 [1905–6]: 27, 161 and 214).
70 A psalm-tune in the Dorian mode mentioned by Fuller Maitland earlier in the same letter.
71 See the accompaniments to *The Emigrant's Farewell* and *The Blaeberries* (*Songs A*: 7 and 9).

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