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Irish melodies

Stevenson, John A.

Dublin, 1859

Preface.

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PREFACE.

HAVING undertaken to prepare this New Edition of MOORE'S IRISH MELODIES for the press, I deem it my duty to make a few brief observations on the manner in which I have acquitted myself of the trust so generously confided to me by our eminent publisher.

In the original edition the music was printed only in connexion with the first or second verses of each melody, the remainder being merely given in letter-press, but in this Edition the words of *all the verses* are accompanied by the music, together with the piano-forte part *in full*, an arrangement which, from its great expense, has not been hitherto attempted.

In the harmonized Airs, Sir John Stevenson's chaste and beautiful arrangements have been in all cases retained.

The instrumental pieces having been originally set for two performers on the piano-forte, did not obtain, from that circumstance, the same popularity accorded to the other portions of the work. Feeling that those precious reliques, having the national character so forcibly stamped on them, should be brought within the range of individual effort, I have reset them for the piano-forte in a form more likely to become popular than that of the original duet arrangement.

In the charming song, "The Last Rose of Summer," I have ventured, without altering the melody, to suggest a few graces of expression not found in the original, in the hope that they will assist the performer in the true delivery of this beautiful and most tender melody.

In the characteristic song, "Where's the Slave so Lowly," I have introduced the dirge at the end, in a harmonized form, retaining the original melody. This version, adopted at the Commemoration of Moore, given by me in Dublin, March,

1852, immediately after the Poet's death, was sung by nearly two hundred voices, and as it obtained much favour with the public, I have ventured to retain it in the present edition. Little need be said of the merits of the work, the sentiments and narrative of the songs being such as will ever recommend them to the universal praise and sympathies of mankind. Of the *Airs*, some are so ancient, that their origin is lost in remote antiquity; others were composed within the range of known history by the bards or itinerant musicians of Ireland; while many were produced at a comparatively modern period, mostly by Carolan, who is said to have been the last of the Bards of Ireland. Handel, Geminiani, and other eminent Musicians, have bestowed their tribute of fervent admiration on the beauties of this ancient music, whose strains are now inseparably wedded to the exquisite Poetry of Moore. These Melodies now form part of our national inheritance—something which Ireland may truly call her own, and which shall always be looked upon as one of the most interesting and happy efforts of genius ever bequeathed to any country.

The public will acknowledge that Mr. Duffy, to whose spirited enterprise Ireland is so greatly indebted, has spared no expense to make this edition of our National Music worthy of their patronage; and I feel confident that no former edition of the Melodies can excel this in the beauty of the type, paper, or letter-press.

J. W. GLOVER.

ROYAL IRISH INSTITUTION,
COLLEGE ST., DUBLIN,
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