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Songs of the Hebrides.

PRESS NOTICES.

Ernest Newman, writing of the Hebridean Song Recitals, given by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser and her daughter, says: "Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser holds the highest place among British folk-song collectors. She has laboured hard in the collection and editing of Hebridean song. She has a poet's love of the islands and the peculiar phase of civilisation they represent; but she is also a very skilled musician, and the accompaniments she has arranged for these songs are equal to the best that has been done in any other field. The songs themselves have a strange beauty that grows on as the better we know them. They have a very definite physiognomy and a very definite soul, both of them the result of the constant pressure of a very definite environment upon a people virtually isolated from the general life of Europe. These islands seem to have produced some song-writers to whom it is not at all extravagant to attribute genius. There are melodies among these songs that are as purely perfect as any melody could be. Schubert and Hugo Wolf would have knelt and kissed the hands of the men who conceived them . . . for sheer beauty of invention, sheer loveliness in the mere fall of the notes, some of these melodies are without their superior, whether in folk-song or in art-song. Schubert himself never wrote a more perfectly satisfying or more haunting melody, for example, than that of the 'Sea-gull of the Land-under-Waves.'"

"It is to be hoped this is not their last concert of this rare music! . . . This music, from Eigg, Barra, Skye, the Uists, Islay, and the Lewes was generally of a more melodious, less rugged type than one expected. The lovely cradle songs for the heirs of the Macleods, the Macneils, and the Macleans of Coll have the gentle melody and simple movement that are found in Irish songs. The 'Hilts' sung over the spinning-wheel, the loom, the churn, the milking-pail (the last in a rhythm of seven beats) have a primitive vigour and humour, and the charm that belongs to a romantic world."—*The Times.*

"Making the hitherto untouched Hebrides her special domain, she has rescued from oblivion many especially fine airs . . . that well repay a closer acquaintance, for they have peculiarities that they share, so far as we are aware, with the music of no other land. . . . Their makers drew their inspiration from the sea, and there is a note in their music which we do not find in the more familiar type of Scottish ballad. Such songs as 'The Mull Fisher,' 'The Island Sheiling Song,' the quaint 'Seal Woman's Croon,' and 'Kishmul's Galley,' have a charm peculiar to themselves and quite irresistible." —*Daily Telegraph.*

"In national song Great Britain is richer probably than any other country. Certainly the amount of that song is greater, for it comes from at least four distinct sources in these islands, . . . and, as far as the music of the extreme North is concerned, a foremost place as collector is taken by Mrs. Marjory Kennedy-Fraser, a well-known Scottish musician."—*Morning Post.*

"Fortunately, all these songs have now been collected and published, but to realize all their fascination one must hear them from the collector herself."—*Manchester Guardian.*

"To hear some of these old melodies is to know the meaning of true inspiration."—*Glasgow Herald.*

"These curious folk-pieces reflect much of the humour, the pathos, and mysticism of the musical traditions of the Western Highlands and Islands, and have a high musical as well as antiquarian and historical value."—*Scotsman.*

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

"The feature of the evening's work was the rendering of Hebridean folk-songs, the words and music of which had been taken down by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser from the lips of old islanders."—*Glasgow Record and Mail.*

Granville Bantock writes: "This living record of song, preserved by oral tradition in lonely islands of the Hebrides, in wild lands o' mountain and moor, in the wrack and heather-thatched sheilings of fisher-folk and herdsmen, has for all who will hear it with the inner spiritual imagination born of sympathy, a message most poignant, which touches the very life of learned and simple alike. . . . When we use the piano as a medium of approach to understanding the peculiar idiom of Celtic music, the harmony and rhythm should be most subtly adapted to the mood or atmosphere, following it sinuously as the foam-wake whitens around the boat's keel, or the sail is trimmed to a favouring breeze. As an example of how this result has been achieved, Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's 'Songs of the Hebrides' takes foremost place. It is a classic work, unique in its knowledge and expression of the peculiar characteristics of Gaelic music."

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

"What songs are these! Songs of sorrow, and of rapture too, songs of the sea and of the soil, of birth and of death and of love. . . . The accompaniments are of great originality, beauty, and fitness. The work will do more to give Celtic folk-song an assured position in the art-world than any that have yet appeared. The work of Kenneth Macleod, the Gaelic Editor, calls for more than a passing word of commendation. A collector himself, he has given freely of his store of melodies, and has also fitted original verses of excellent quality to several songs when the original words obtainable were merely 'mutilated fragments.' . . . A new and individual note is struck; here is a man with a voice of his own and no echo of others, a writer who possesses the magic of style."—*The Celtic Review.*

"As for Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's recital, I consider it the most artistic entertainment, both in the devising and the execution, in which London has participated for a very long time. Her art is a conglomerate thing, it is not precisely creative and it is in part imitative, but it is wholly interpretative in the very highest sense. It is to be coupled with that of J. M. Synge, or that of Yvette Guilbert, or that of Phil May. There is no category for the unique, and Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's art is completely personal. . . ."—*Musical Standard.*

"To enthusiasts like Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser and Bourgault-Ducoudray the musician is much indebted. And with these names we may place that of Korbay, whose work has made famous the songs of his country."—*Musical Opinion.*

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

"Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's first volume of 'Songs of the Hebrides' is now well known, but there is now a second volume containing songs collected by her daughter Patuffa and herself in the Western Isles of Scotland. Kenneth Macleod (who is Gaelic co-editor of the songs) has cleverly said that 'The loom weaves nothing that endures save the song which it weaveth not.' And it was a 'Weaving Lilt,' the very latest fruit of this search for songs, that was the first to arouse a demand for repetition. Another favourite was a Reaping Song from Islay."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

"Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser has taken the trouble of research, and spent some time collecting a series of songs from the Hebrides, taking down the tunes as they were sung by the people of these western islands. She has skilfully used the old airs as themes for miniature compositions, and without impairing the quality of the folk-song, has contrived to produce an art-song. The haunting melodies exercised a potent charm upon the audience. The sea music is prominent in the melodies."—*Scotsman.*

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SEA RAPTURE (Kishmul's Galley)

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THE COOLIN OF RUM
SKYE FISHER'S SONG (Tir-nan-Óg)

BOOK III.—SEA JOY.

SEALWOMAN'S SEA-JOY
SEA MOODS: Barra Fisher's Sea Prayer
Sea Rapture
MYSTIC SEA RAPTURE (Land of Heart's Desire)

BOOK IV.—SEA-WRACK.

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BY

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AND

KENNETH MACLEOD.

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APPRECIATIONS.

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ERNEST NEWMAN,

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In the "Land-of-the-ever-young," maybe, old age will recapture its lost youth, and the weary heart will find a solace for all its sorrows. But whether the wanderer be musician, singer, Persian poet, or dervish, this new volume of Hebridean Song contains

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