



The Invercauld Arms Hotel.  
Bengullabin on left and Cairnwell in middle distance.



[Photo by Mrs. Sheriff Smith, Selkirk.]  
The "Wade" Bridge. Portion of Parish Church on right.

POETRY AND SONG.

AMONG the songs and poems the scene or setting of which has been laid in Glenshee, the most widely known and familiar is *The Lass o' Glenshee*. It is the composition of Andrew Sharpe, the author of a once popular and pathetic ode entitled "Corunna's Lone Shore."

It is a poem consisting of seven double verses, and the train of thought has been utilised in the shorter and more modern song entitled *The Crooked Bowbees*. We give the first and last verses :—

LASS O' GLENSHEE.

Tune, "Bonnie Dundee."

When honey-dip'd bells on the heather were spreading,  
An' Highland hills hum'd wi' the far-travell'd bee,  
I found a fair maiden, as hame I was ridin',  
A-hiridin' her sheep on the Hill o' Glenshee.  
The rose on her cheek satly press'd by a dimple,  
Blush'd red wi' the light o' her lovely bit e'e;  
She look'd aye inchantin', aye sweet an' aye simple,  
My heart soon belonged to the lass o' Glenshee.

After much fervent persuasion on the lover's part, and maidenly hesitation on that of the fair shepherdess, she at length consented to become his bride, and make her home in the Fair City, and the song concludes :—

Weel Bertha may boast o' her lasses aye bonny,  
Since Scotland for beauties has gien her the groe,  
But search ilka corner I doubt if aye's ony,  
Could stand near the lassie I brought frae Glenshee;  
To match wi' my Jenny, O wha is't wad venture,  
She's sweet as the zephyr that plays round the pea,  
She's spotless an' pure as the robes o' the winter,  
When spread out to bleach on the Hill o' Glenshee.

POETRY AND SONG.

87

The modern version, *The Crooked Bowbees*, by Mr. Anderson, Aberdeen, has gained great popularity, and still finds a place in the programme of many ballad concerts.

It will be noted that the song is cast on similar lines to the other love duet, known as "Huntingtower," the theme being the return of a lover from some distant land, after several years' absence, bronzed and bearded beyond recognition. In various ways he tests the sincerity and fidelity of his sweetheart, and after receiving the strongest proofs of her constancy and devotion, he reveals himself as her youthful lover, come home to claim her for his bride.

The song, which has stood the test of popular taste for upwards of a century, is so generally known that it is unnecessary to reproduce it. The author of the original was a cobbler in Bridgend, Perth, like many other Scottish poets, almost entirely self-taught, who displayed a natural talent for the fine arts of music, painting and poetry. As these accomplishments brought "little grist to the mill," but interfered considerably with his occupation of cobbling, it is pitiful to record that his latter years were not so free from anxiety and distress as they should have been. Sharpe died at the age of thirty-five in 1817, and was laid to rest in Kinnoull Churchyard, where his tombstone can be seen inscribed with the following lines composed by himself :—

"Halt for a moment, passenger, and read,  
Here Andrew does in his daisied bed,  
Silent his flute and torn off the key,  
His pencils scattered, and the Muse set free."

In 1820, Robert Morison, the famous Perth printer, edited and published a volume of Sharpe's poems on behalf of the poet's widow.

THE SHEPHERD OF GLENSHEE.

This song was composed by William Thomson, who was born in Kennoway, Fife. He was appointed post-master in his native village just a century ago, and contributed occasional pieces to various periodicals. One of these is the love lyric entitled "The Shepherd of Glenshee," which, besides giving voice to a lover's feelings of affection and adoration, paints in

vivid colouring the phases of nature as these can be viewed in Glenshee :—

## THE SHEPHERD OF GLENSHEE.

I wander over hill and dale;  
I breathe the healthful mountain gale;  
Far from the city's busy throng,  
I listen to the warbler's song;  
I guide and tend my fleecy flocks,  
Amongst the muirs, around the rocks,  
And wander unconfined and free,  
By bank and burn amid Glenshee.

While roaming o'er the mountain side,  
I mark the season's onward glide;  
See winter clothe the hills with snow,  
And make the rivers overflow;  
Behold the sunshine and the showers,  
In spring renew the leafless bowers;  
And list the hum of busy bee,  
Among the blossoms in Glenshee.

When summer shines on horn and height,  
And fills the bosom with delight;  
When bloom adorns the sylvan dell,  
And purple heath flowers deck the fell;  
At gloaming grey amid the glade,  
I wander with my mountain maid;  
And there is none like her I see,  
The fairest flower in all Glenshee!

I love to mark, begemm'd with dew,  
In shady dell, the violet blue;  
I joy to view the crystal stream  
In morning's cloudless radiance gleam;  
But clearer, sweeter, lovelier far  
Than opening rose or shining star—  
Than all I know, than all I see,  
The blossom that adorns Glenshee!

A tasteful little volume of poetry by Lady Ashmore was published a year or two ago. It is entitled *Songs of Glenshee and Other Poems*.

The place of honour is given to a series of poems that are associated in different ways with the Glen. Besides these, there are other graceful and suggestive compositions on such

themes as *Memories of the War, Biblical Narratives, and Border Story*.

The first of those relating to Glenshee is called "The Royal Road," and it portrays a little inconspicuous wayside incident on the journey of the King and Queen to their Highland home :—

## THE ROYAL ROAD.

"The King and Queen are passing to-day"—  
The word, like wild-fire, went all through the land—  
And, gathered in groups by the King's Highway,  
Are his loyal subjects on either hand.

Far up in Glenshee, in a lonely spot,  
Where silence is broken by mountain rills,  
Stands an old grey cottage with garden-plot,  
Half hidden in a fold of the purple hills.

There a lame child waits, full of trembling hope—  
She has heard by chance that the Motor-Car  
May pass by her home, on the heather slope,  
When the King and Queen go back to Braemar.

She has heard of flags—and no flag has she—  
But oh! she can cheer as well as them all,  
And throw a white rose from Prince Charles's tree,  
Where the King and Queen can see it fall.

When the longed-for moment at last has come,  
The Royal Car passed and she tried to stand—  
But alas! excitement had made her dumb,  
And the rose was still in her small, hot hand.

She forgot to throw and forgot to cheer,  
Yet the happiest heart in all Glenshee,  
Is the heart of the child who boasts "Twas here  
The King and the Queen waved their hands to me."

Two of the poems deal with the sentiment of the love of home, one of the strongest and most abiding in the human heart. Many Scottish poets have treated of it, but none more feelingly than that other Perthshire poet, Nicoll, who penned the lines :—

"There's nae hame like the hame o' youth—  
Nae ither spot see fair;  
Nae ither faces look see kind  
As the smilin' faces there."

And it is not surprising to find that to natives of the Glen, who may have travelled far, the fairest spot on earth is their early home on the slope of the rugged hill, and among the green and yellow patches of the tilled land.

The first of these poems is entitled *Exiled*, which depicts the feeling in the heart of a Highland colonist in the Far West :—

## EXILED.

O'er here are mighty mountains,  
Waving woods and fairy fountains;  
But to me,  
There is nothing like the heather  
And the hills we roamed together  
In Glenshee.

All around are flowers in splendour,  
But no blossoms bring such tender  
Thoughts to me,  
As the bluebells and the gowans  
And the red, red of the rowans  
In Glenshee.

Here are many waters gushing,  
But no roaring river rushing  
Calls to me  
Like the one, when shades are falling,  
That across the sea is calling  
From Glenshee.

"Oh come home!" I hear it saying,  
While I keep on hoping, praying,  
That might be—  
For such memories are waking,  
That my heart is almost breaking  
For Glenshee!

The other piece called *The Hills of Home* attributes the same sentiment to one who has gone to reside somewhere in the Lowlands, but who finds more beauty in his native heather hills than in the tamer and trimmer landscapes of the South.

## HILLS OF HOME.

In green Glenshee the mountain snows  
Have hardly melted ere one knows  
That spring has come all unawares,  
While birds are singing everywhere,  
And countless bracken-curle unfold.  
Then on the hills, when heather blows,  
The emerald becomes the rose,  
And thyme and myrtle scent the air  
In green Glenshee.

Though here a stately river flows,  
The graceful silver birch-tree grows,  
And all the hills and woods are fair  
With many a blossom rich and rare—  
Yet none to me can be like those  
In green Glenshee.

## THE LOVER.

The following verses, the setting of which is the Royal Route through Glenshee and Glenbeg, appeared a short time ago in one of the local newspapers. They constitute one of a series, entitled "Songs of Perthshire," by Miss Mary Stewart.

The Glas-Maol or Grey Hill is the highest summit in the district, having an altitude of 3502 feet. It takes its name from its rocky appearance, the stoney slopes being coated with lichens which provide sustenance for coveys of ptarmigan. The Brighty Burn, a tributary of the Isla, which has been already referred to in connection with the excursions of the caterans, rises on the south-eastern shoulder. The alternative title of the song might be "Love's Longing" :—

Oh, as ye cam' round by the Glas Maol,  
And doon by the Glen o' the Shoel,  
Oh, saw ye a lass at the cross roads  
An' was she no speirin' for me?

Her een's like the flo'er o' the bluebell,  
Her hair's like the gowd o' the corn,  
Her smile's like the sun as it sparkles  
On Gulbin's top at the morn.

My heart stoons wi' langin' tae see her,  
Tae look on her dear face sae fair;  
My heart is wi' her in the Highlands,  
And, oh, but I fain wad be there!

Sae, if ye gang back by the Glas Mhoil,  
And up by the Glen o' the Shee;  
It's oh, will ye stop at the cross roads  
An' speak tae my lassie o' me?

#### THE AULD BRIG'S PLEA.

The public road south of the Spital was made by General Wade's engineers in the first half of the eighteenth century. The hump-backed form of the bridge gave plenty of scope for the winter floods to pass through. The roadway, not more than twelve feet wide, served its purpose when the traffic was light, except for two months of the year. But it was not suited for modern requirements, and has been considerably widened. A portion of the original road can be seen at the eastern base of the Cairnwell, alongside the stream. It was frequently blocked in winter, and a new road was laid along the shoulder of the hill, and this necessitated the construction of the Devil's Elbow. Another of Wade's bridges can be seen on the Clunie Water, but it is not now in general use. The musings of the Spital Brig deserve a place in the Garland of Glenshee Song:—

#### THE AULD BRIG'S PLEA.

Oh! I hae viewed the swollen flood,  
And hear't the Boreal blast;  
And I hae stayed the summer trade  
A hummer year by-past.  
The lumbrin' coach, the crackin' wain,  
Hae crossed my humpit-back;  
And mony royal retinnes  
Gaed princin' ower the track.  
But noo thae cars an' charabancs  
Come birlin' up the road;  
And I am growin' auld an' fraid,  
An' canna' thole their load.  
For motor tractor's awfu' draught  
Wade never thocht to plan;  
Nor dreamt to gauge for mod'rn craft,  
Like lang-span'd charabang.

My back is scard'd wi' mony a tare,  
Forby the strain and stress,  
The burdens that I'm ca'd to bear,  
Words canna' weel express.  
Folk say I'm antiquated noo,  
For fashions change wi' time;  
And metal girders, laid in rows,  
Tak' place o' stann an' lime.

It's no for me to br'ak my her't,  
Or raise an unco stoor;  
They'll need a brig o' braider mak',  
Wi' less o' curvature;  
Sae, when they rule to tak' me doon,  
And set the lattice trig,  
I'm fain ye'll hae a kindly thocht  
For Wade an' his Auld Brig!

T. D. M.

There is one poem which, so far as we know, has never been published. Some of the more elderly inhabitants were taught it, in the learning days of their youth. It is an epic, which has in it a good deal of the fire, and not a few of the finer touches, of true poetry; the subject being one most popular in the locality, viz. :—*The Battle of the Cairnwell* (Cairnwell).

The mountain gale unheeded twists  
The golden locks of Allac Bane,  
As breathless still she stands and lists  
And thinks she hears the words again.

The faltering sigh-borne word, " Farewell "—  
That closed her Allac's latest kiss;  
How sweet on fancy's ear it fell  
As if 'twere breathed on hymns of bliss.

For Allac felt, she knew not how,  
The sun rose on her bridal morn,  
And long before he kissed the dew,  
Her Allan from her side was torn.

For down the rocks, where Iola rolled,  
A roving band of cat'ran poured;  
And hill and dale, and byre and fold,  
Before the opening dawn were scored.

The cross-tar\* flow, the signals wave,  
The cat'rans on the Cairnwell brow;  
Glenshee, the generous and the brave,  
Arise to check the common foe.

The brave Cam-rusaidh led the train,  
The archer-chief, and by his side  
Young Allan bounded up the Glen  
And left behind his bonny bride.

Behind the mountain's rocky brow,  
The ruffians lurked among the heath,  
And he who dared to pass below  
Rushed on the barbed points of death.

Cam-rusaidh, cautious, marked their state,  
While Iola's sons arose in sight,  
" Here for our comrades let us wait  
And in a body join the fight."

" Let onwards wait, come on, Glenshee,"  
The brave but reckless Allan cried,  
" Who follows not, a coward he"—  
" We follow all," Glenshee replied.

Wild flashed Cam-rusaidh's single eye,  
Proud throbb'd his heart on passion's thorn,  
" Then go," he said. " Like bullocks die,  
Glenshee's dupes, the cat'rans' scorn!"

" But if I by the morning's rays,  
As friend or foe, an arrow aim,  
A coward let me close my days,  
A coward as ye give the name."

Then down between two sheltering stones  
He sat. Young Allan sought his foe;  
And cheering cries and wailing groans  
Soon from the unequal combat rose.

Glenshee, from the height adown  
Behold the fierce unequal fray;  
They knew the quarrel was their own,  
But saw and felt their own the prey.

But fie! forget the part they bore,  
Blot out the deed in pity's tear;  
But they had one, the Miller Mhor,  
Remember him, his name is dear.

\* The cross of shame, because disobedience to its message implied infamy.

Shamed at his friends, he sought his foe,  
Strong was his arm, and great his might,  
And frequent fell his fatal blows,  
And many felt their deadly weight.

Deep drank his dick of cat'ran blood,  
As daring wild, he scour'd the bole,  
Till sixteen arrows appall'd the flood  
That kept aloft his gallant soul.

Keen fought Glenshee, scarce one to four  
Of what the hardy cat'ran were;  
But well they plied their little power  
And showed what native courage dare.

With nervous arm they bent the bow,  
And many a foeman nipp'd the heath,  
And many a Sheeman pointed low,  
And fast went on the work of death.

But oh! Cam-rusaidh's vow was pain,  
To many a friend his heart was sore,  
And oft he cursed the Iola men  
And oft the impassioned oath he swore!

At length the lingering shadows turned,  
The fatal oath-bound hour went by,  
His rose! revenge his bosom burned,  
" Revenge," he cried, " my friends, or die."

" And hear my simple counsel now,  
And only half-string bend the bow;  
Your arrows glide too strongly through,  
They pierce, but cannot hurt the foe."

Their shouts re-echoed through the hill,  
They hailed Cam-rusaidh to the strife,  
And plied their shafts with deadly skill  
Into the cat'rans' springs of life.

The captain of the lawless band  
Behold Cam-rusaidh's red locks wave,  
Full well he knew his fatal hand,  
His shafts a summons to the grave.

" The bounding deer's my arrow's aim,  
'Twill catch the eagle soaring high;  
But make me not Cam-rusaidh's aim,  
And safe my shafts shall pass him by"—

"Point at my heart, my bosom's bare"—  
The indignant, brave Cam-rusaidh cried;  
"Spare not, for I shall never spare";  
The arrow flew—the ruffian died.

Death danced exulting on the string,  
And drove the unerring shafts before,  
Till fifty dipp'd their eagle wing  
Into the cat-rans' vital gore.

The remnant fled, the gory vale  
Now stained, the trembling widows' tread,  
And lovers mourn the darling dead.  
And mothers join the crouching wail.

The mountain gale, unhooded, twists  
The golden locks of Alise Bane,  
As Allan's cold, pale lips she kissed,  
Those lips she ne'er should kiss again.

## SOME VICTORIAN TALES.

IN 1848, on the death of Sir Robert Gordon, who tenanted Balmoral Castle, the Prince Consort purchased the reversion of the lease from the Duke of Fife, and, a few years after, entered into full possession, when the old Castle was pulled down and the present imposing building erected according to the plans of Sir Gilbert Scott.

In the same year Queen Victoria and Prince Albert spent their first autumn holiday at Balmoral, and enjoyed many excursions among the neighbouring hills. The Queen's love of the Highlands increased year by year. She found, as many earlier Scottish Sovereigns found in the hunting palace of Kindrochet, recreation and rest

"Amid the mountain scenes sublime,  
After from Courtly care."

In August, 1849, Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort visited Ireland, where they were received in the chief towns with "Caed mile failthe." From Belfast they crossed over in the "Victoria and Albert" to the Clyde, and after spending most of the day seeing the sights of Glasgow and receiving addresses, they travelled to Perth, which they reached about four o'clock, and spent the night in the George Inn, now the Royal George Hotel.

Next morning they started on the long journey by road to Balmoral.

In Her Majesty's *Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands*, a brief but rapid description of the various stages and scenery of what has come to be known as the *Royal Route* is given. The passage is as follows:—

"Wednesday, August 15, 1849. At a quarter to eight we started. The two boys and Vicky were in the carriage with us. Alice followed with the ladies. It was a long journey, but