

**POEMS AND SONGS
CHIEFLY IN THE
SCOTTISH LANGUAGE**

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Poems and Songs Chiefly in the Scottish Language by James M. Neilson

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JAMES M. NEILSON

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CHIEFLY IN

The Scottish Language

BY

JAMES M. NEILSON

"SONG SWEETENS TOIL, HOWEVER RUDE THE SOUND"

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TO THE READER.



T is with mingled feelings of hope and fear that I launch this little paper frigate upon the waters of public opinion. While I fear that some may think me rash in trusting so frail a bark to the mercy of the winds, I am not without hope that "calm seas, auspicious gales" are in store for it. I know that many friends will bid me God speed in my venture, but I also know that it is the public alone that can make or mar me; and to them I would say,

"Gentle breath of yours my sails
Must fill, or else my project fails,
Which was to please."

In selecting from my manuscripts the pieces contained in this volume, I have endeavoured to offer as much of a variety as possible, in the hope that pages rejected by some readers, may not be displeasing to others. I have also withheld, with one or two exceptions, all pieces dealing with subjects of merely local interest, and offer a bill of fare that, it is hoped, will be more acceptable to general readers.

I have not attempted to soar into the loftier regions of

the muse, and even in the humbler walk I have chosen, I may be deemed an intruder. Still, there may be some little touch of nature, or some other mark of merit here and there in the book to show that I am not altogether unworthy; and should I only succeed in securing a place within the outer circle of minor Scottish Poets, I shall think that my early efforts have not been fruitless and in vain.

J. M. N.

THORNLIEBANK, *December, 1876.*



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POEMS AND SONGS.

THE MAY-DEW GATHERER.

“Tis sweet May morn ; wake drowsy girls !
Come ere the sun has stolen the pearls—
The dewy pearls, that glisten sheen
On May's soft lap and mantle green.
Come barefoot, come, each little lass,
With crystal dew 'mong flowery grass
Bathe hands and feet till all aglow,
And gaily o'er your shoulders throw
The shining drops ; with dew-filled palm
Lave cheek and brow, 'tis Beauty's balm.”

—JANET HAMILTON.

I.

“I'm up with the lark, you see, mother, to-day ;
I'm ready to trip to the hill
With Julia and Sue, my companions in play,
And merry we'll gather the first dews of May—
We wish to be prettier still ;
And grandmother says, what I've heard you say too,
That our cheeks will be rosy when bathed with the dew.”