National Children’s Folksong Repository

Child's first collection was published in 8 volumes in 1857-58. 1859 Knickerbocker E&S Ballads The article in it's entirety is below.

A 7 page article/review that was in an 1859 Knickerbocker Magazine, supposedly, that is the same year as the demise of the magazine which is not necessarily known for it's literary pedigree. It has a section devoted to the work done by F J Child, which is part of the wonderment or should I say confusion over the article. The dates do not agree with the release of the Child Ballads. Child's first collection was published in 8 volumes in 1857-58. It is probably the FIRST version of The English & Scottish Ballads, which IIRC was published quite a while before the classic limited edition series from the 80's.

In 1857 Little Brown published the eight-volumes of Child's _English and Scottish Ballads._ This as part of an English poets series. Dissatisfied with it, he then set to work on the "definitive" ESPB. It is this early set the Knickerbocker review must refer to.

1859.]  

ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH BALLADS.

That law which is said to have been discovered by political science in regard to
human government, that it develops from the most simple to the most complex forms, and from the most complex to the simplest again, in its first part at least, if not in its last, is true of poetry. A Milton could not have sung except after a Homer, and the civilization which made Milton possible, made another Homer impossible. Only when the world was young could such a minstrel as Homer sing; only when nations are young are their best ballads written.

Nations, like men, progress from childhood to old age, and ballads are the natural product of the earlier period, as epics and dramas are of a later. To say this is to authenticate the widest variance between the one and the other, to disclose the secret of the complex and elaborately artistic forms of modern poetry, and to hit upon the secret of the power and also the weakness of these simpler and earlier ones. Of these, in most instances, the origin, like the source of the Nile, is hidden in obscurity. We only know that, sung or recited at first by wandering minstrels, the stream of oral tradition has borne them along from distant periods to our own time. Of historical and border ballads we may certainly say that they were not written prior to the occurrence of the event which they commemorate; and here and there in border and other ballads, an allusion will serve to fix reasonably definite limits of time within which they must have been written. For the most part, however, the date of early ballads is as obscure as their authorship invariably is. The strong throb of a human heart-beat is felt along their lines, but no name appears of him who first sang the Hunting of the Cheviot, or read the riddles of Captain Wedderburns remarkable courtship.

For example, the best known of all ballads, those which relate to Robin Hood, were common in their earliest forms more than five hundred years ago, but we can say no more than this either of their origin or authors. And in old dramas and other out-of-the-way corners of literature, we find fragments of still older ballads, here a refrain, there a bacchanalian catch or a few lines from a simple ditty, of which the original has long ceased to exist, pushed aside into forgetfulness by the tide of new and fresher ones which occupied the popular thought, just as in out-of-the-way places and secluded corners of the continent of Europe we find Basques and Finns, fragments of that earlier race which once covered the land from the Caspian to the Bay of Biscay, but were afterwards superseded by the successive waves of the great tide of Aryan races which rolled down over Europe from the central plains of Asia many hundred years ago.

During the last century, principally, the great body of English and Scottish ballads has been transferred from the memories of quasi-min-strels, reciters, and old wives, and from the pages of rare and illegible manuscripts, to the safer keeping of the printed page. Not that the first half of the eighteenth century quite failed to...
perform this duty. But while the collections of DUrfey, Ramsay, Dryden, Watson, and the London collection of 1723-25 preserved in their day many that might otherwise have fallen into oblivion, it is not to be forgotten that to Bishop Percys faithful and tireless zeal, his profound learning and benevolent genius, and the impulse which his publication of the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry gave to the study of this branch of our earliest national literature, we are principally indebted for the possession of such a various mass of ballads ballads of chivalry, of fairies, of magic, and ghosts, tragic ballads, ballads of love, of outlaws and foresters, ballads historical, satirical, and even moral as that from which these eight volumes have been compiled. What an impulse that was, may be read in the history of English literature. Four years later Herd published his collection of Ancient and Scottish songs, and eleven years after, Pinkerton his first collection. Then in 1783 the captious Ritson began his collections and publications, not ended till 1802, the Robin Hood ballads among them; and Carr and James Johnson gathered their musical museums before the century ended. Monk Lewis and Dalzell opened the new century, the nineteenth, with their handful, or perhaps it would be better to say, mouthful of song, but they were soon put out of sight by Sir Walter Scotts Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, Jamiesons Popular ballad and Evans Old Ballads, to say nothing of Hogg, Laing, Sharpe, Maidment, mere elephants beside those megatheriums, but together doing pretty nearly all that was done in the way of pumping venerable sybils, mutilating or deciphering bad manuscripts, or scouring scarce editions, for the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Then set to work Allan Cunningham, George R. Kinlock, William Motherwell, and Robert Chambers, four industrious men, two of them good poets themselves, and knowing a good ballad when they saw it, and four of them altogether too respectable gentlemen to be mentioned in the same paragraph with a certain individual whom for private reasons we put into a tight little sentence by himself. Peter Buchan. The last quarter of a century also has been made memorable by the formation and the labors of the various societies, the Percy Society especially, (another mark of the Bishops influence.) In the publications of the Percy Society are included the well-known collections of J. Payne Collier, Thomas Wright, J.O. Halliwell, and J.H. Dixon,

1859.] English and Scottish Ballads 499 and when to these are added those of S.C. Hall, Whitelaw, John Matthew Gutch, Rembault, Graham, Chappell, and the Howitts, there have been mentioned all the editors whose books are of the first importance, though there are fifty others who have now and then added a bucketful to the general stream.

And now if the reader wants to have in eight nut-shells the concentrated excellence, and the selected ballads from all these collections which not one in fifty of us can manage to gather or find time to read, let him betake himself to Professor Childs collection whose title is given below. &61482; It is the best in print. We fail to find the essay which on the publication of the first volume the editor promised those who should remain faithful purchasers till the last.
Professor Child has shown himself competent for the task, and the special essays of Percy, Ritson, and Hallowell, Gutch, Chambers, and Scott, together with his own brief but admirable historical or critical introductions to these ballads, have not removed the necessity which we hope he will yet feel imposed upon him of gathering up into one general view all that is now known of the minstrels, and their minstrelsy, and of discussing at large their origin, history, and characteristics, and their value as indications of national peculiarity, with more than the scope and eloquence, and less than the prejudice, personal and national, of Motherwell’s essay.

Its special excellences as a compilation are the comprehensive judgment shown in its selections. It contains all the authentic ancient ballads, the best of the more modern ones, and none of the imitation, not even Percys, Scotts, Jamiesons, Leydens, or Cunninghams; and to say this is to give it the highest praise. With a proper sentiment, the author has declined to imitate the example of some early editors who, more anxious to trick out these ancient memorials of the race in the fleeting fashions of their time, than to preserve

500 English and Scottish Ballads  [November, their priceless integrity, both mixed up different versions of the same ballad and confused others which perhaps had nothing more in common than the original story, and in all cases were successful in removing the traces of that lusty vigor and homely simplicity which are their peculiar charm. Professor Child chooses the best version for the place of honor, leaving inferior versions to follow, or collating them in foot-notes, or gathering them into appendices.

The classification which would include all ancient ballads and the only successful modern ones, and which at the same time would exclude the greatest number of modern poems, is perhaps that which names the one objective and the latter subjective. How little we know of the minstrel or his moods. He, like his hearers, is entirely absorbed in the ballad which is ringing from his harp and lips. He does not open with an invocation to the nine muses, the three graces, or attendant choirs, but briefly, vigorously, dramatically strikes at once the action of the ballad, its time and place, or the character of the principal actor. There are no episodes, nor even those allusions with which the best of modern poets love to diversify their poems. If any allusions are introduced, they are of the briefest and most simple character, finished in a line. So, too, the old balladist will never be found tracking long metaphors through the labyrinths of his own consciousness. Indeed the reader shall search scores of them through and never find a single metaphor to reward his pains; and smiles are much more infrequent than in modern verse, besides being shorter and more vivid. The language, too, has a character of its own. Its words are of the simplest, often homely, sometimes coarse, but full of vigor and of the utmost simplicity. Unlike the fine subjective verse of Tennyson, these words do not half reveal and halve conceal the soul within. Such are used as reveal the whole thought, as picture the event described, even the wonders of elf-land, and the magic of north country
superstitions, vividly on the brain of the hearer and reader. The enthusiasm and energy of the best of them is wonderful. They are rigid with strength like an athletic arm, and the catastrophe comes like a blow from his fist. Nothing is tolerated which delays the conclusion. The secondary plots of the present drama, the episodes of the modern epic, the discursive eloquence, cannot trace their origin here. The hero himself, even if he be King Arthur, cannot indulge himself in verbosity, nor, as is the principal function of the modern dramatic or poetic hero, riot in declamation. He is terse and taciturn, asks few questions, and those short and sharp, and gets brief answers; and yet the knights are knights of courtesy. How much truer to the quick, immediate action and speech of healthy life is this characteristic of old ballads than the windy declamation, the obtruded and unnatural

1859.] English and Scottish Ballads 501 moralizing action of the modern stage and story, all which has its apotheosis in the infinite absurdities of the Italian opera.

Reading these old ballads, we may see what the world lost while it was gaining the long result of time, and accumulating its inheritance of a complex and highly-cultivated civilization. Here gleams the old truth which we have exchanged for the glitter of the conventional lie; here stands the majesty of naked fact which the prudish world has been affecting to hide from its wicked eyes with falsehood and frippery. Here naught is concealed; hate is hate, and it is honest and open. It does not work to its result with slow revenges, but first sends the hot word, follows it with the sudden blow, and there is an end of the matter. Love is love, and it is honest. Desertion does not follow the passion of the unrecorded bridal. The lover, like the hater, has but a single motive, and it is worked into action with equal directness. Each is as single-minded as a child. If two heroes quarrel, one or both dies. If lovers love and friends are kind, they marry and go amaying all their days. Of the cruel parent will not suffer their marriage, they love none the less, and it is the last gift of love. What to the prudish might seem unchaste thoughts, come from their simple heartedness and that unconsciousness of evil which is the badge of their innate purity. Burd Ellen say to Childe Waters:

My girdle of gold that was too large,  
Is now too short for mee;  
And all is with one childe of yours,  
I feele sturre at my side;  
My gowne of greene it is to straight,  
Before it was too wide.

We are told without reserve why Mary Hamilton was made to put on robes of red,  
To sheen tho Edinbruch town.  
And so it is always, the facts of life are not covered up out of sight, nor song and speech upon them made vulgar and immodest because rare and prohibited. They take their place beside other subjects of the minstrels song, and are to him neither more nor less than any other. This simplicity, directness, and truthfulness
of thought had it fit expression in a homely plainness of style. Romantic
adventure, wild superstition, or bold emprise, are alike clothed in the simple
language of an unlettered people.

Ballad-makers and ballad-singers sang to rude, brave men, whose hearts
were wont to beat steadily and stoutly, and were not ashamed of tears. So it
comes that the pathos of their songs which when they were sung went straight
from heart to heart, to us also is infinitely tender and touching. The sorrow they
sang was not of the sort that

502 English and Scottish Ballads November, could be comforted
with six months of black, three of dark grays, and then to colors again. Their
grief was remediless, and its voice of such a hopelessness of tone as befitted
the utter desolation of a broken heart.

What gushes of tender sympathy follow the exquisite pathos of those lines in
the Children in the Wood:
And when they saw the darksome night,
They set them down and cried.
Thus wandered these poor innocents,
Till death did end their grief;
In one another’s arms they died
As wanting due relief;
No burial this pretty pair
Of any man receives,
Till Robin Red-breast piously
Did cover them with leaves.

Who can gather the tears that have fallen over the tragic story of Helen
fair and Helen chaste, who fell
On fair Kirconnell Lee,
Kingsleys Three Fishermen, with all its elaborate and subtle effects of
language and metre and words, has less than the tragic pathos that stanza of Sir
Patrick Spens:
On! Lang, lang may the ladies sit,
Wi their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir PATRICK SPENS
Come sailing to the strand.
There is a justice of sentiment in these ballads regarding artificial and superficial
distinctions which is worth recovering. The finest manhood always has the
sympathy of the balladist. Distinctions of caste now and then appear, but not to a
sufficient degree to make the man less than man or the prince more. The poet
is careful to tell us of Robin Hood that he came of an earl’s daughter, though as to
the place of his birth,
It was na in the ha, the ha,
Nor in the painted bower,
But is was in the gude green wood
Among the lily flower.
But always the man of nature is superior to the man of circumstances. His manhood does more for him than his rank. Robin Hood loves best among his outlaws the men who have beaten him at broad-sword play or single-stick. After he had been pitched into the stream by Little John, and his hide had been tanned by Arthur Bland, he clothes them in garments of green most gay to be seen, and makes them foresters of merry Sherwood, and they were his most faithful followers.

One cannot help noticing, let us remark in passing, the peculiar unction with which those ballads were recited which related the discomfiture of bishop, friar, or priest. There is a deep historic stain in the coloring of the ballad of Robin Hood and the Bishop of Hereford. Perhaps it was not unusual for a bishop to indulge slyly in wine, beer, and ale, but no one will contend for the orthodoxy of the bishops fibs denying the presence of money in his portmanteau, or that it can be called an act of worship when he is made to dance in his boots, and to hold the dapple-grays tail in his hand while praying for Robin Hood. In the chivalric ballads, even Christianity is alluded to only in a geographical sense, and the Deity rarely invoked for any other purpose than to save us from the fowle fende.

Returning to the thought with which we set out, these ballads seem, as they indeed are, the product of a race in its youth. Their faults and their lackings are like the failings of youth, and their virtues, if never insipid, are also never acrid. Thus instead of justice we have generosity, for virtue innocence, for principle impulse, for propriety unconscious purity, for critical skepticism unsuspicous credulity, for keen sagacity open-eyed wisdom; but on the other hand, for liberty we have license, instead of law we have the right of might, for the subjection of the good citizen we have the recklessness of the bold outlaw, for persistent bravery we have a happy audacity, and while there is a plenty of external enthusiasm there lacks the strength of an inward spirituality. The faults are those which lean to virtues side, for they are the faults of childhood. The excellences are those of the heart and not of the head. But even here death unites what life divides:

The tane was buried in Marys kirk,,
   The tither in Marys quire,
And out o the tane there grew a birk,
   and out o the tither a brier.

And aye they grew and aye they drew,
   Until they twa did meet,
And every ane that passed them bye
   Said, Thaes been lovers sweet.
This fire hat belonged to Mrs. Lillie Hitchcock-Coit. She was made an honorary member of the Knickerbocker Engine Company Number 5 October 5th 1863.

AMERICAN HISTORY
Evaluate your own State Standards 8th grade history in comparison with the one listed here for California it says,
8.4 Students analyze the aspirations and ideals of the people of the new nation. Discuss daily life, including traditions in art, music, and literature, of early national America

AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC AND THE IRISH / SCOTTISH CONNECTION -- find the following roots of music:
MRS. LILLIE HITCHCOCK-COIT

A history of the old Volunteer Fire Department [1849-1866] should not wanting in completeness if it did not contain some reference to the lady whose name stands at the head of this sketch.

She is the patron saint of all pioneer firemen of the city, and if the survivors of that once sturdy brotherhood could have their most ardent wish gratified then the lot of Mrs. Hitchcock-Coit would be a supremely happy one in this life. From her earliest infancy, when as Miss Lillie Hitchcock, she romped in short frocks, she was curiously fascinated by the red shirt and warlike helmet of the firemen, and gloried in the excitement of a big blaze. As a child, still in her teens, she displayed extraordinary enthusiasm when the fire bell tolled out its alarms, and with an energy and speed that the most agile fireman might envy she hastened to the scene of the fire. She was always in the forefront on such occasions, and became such a conspicuous figure among the firemen who were battling to subdue the flames, that she became to be regarded as their mascot, and was made an honorary member of the Knickerbocker Engine Company, No. 5. The gold badge, presented to her when conferring the gift of honorary membership, she wears constantly, and as a girl attended many a fire wearing this emblem of the firemen's affection, and became so strongly identified with her company that she was regarded by the citizens with peculiar interest and affection. As years rolled by and Miss Hitchcock became older, she forsook the habit of following the engine, but the tie that bound her to her company was as strong as ever. In later life her interest in the firemen's cause has suffered no abatement. If any member of the company falls ill she gladdens the sick room by her presence and ministers to his wants, and should death claim him she sends a loving floral tribute as the final expression of her regard. At the annual [Knickerbocker Engine Co.] banquet, on October 17th, again she shows her mindfulness of the "old boys" of her company by gifts to adorn the festive board. It is no wonder that the firemen of No. 5 swear by her, and the companies vied with each other to do her honor in the old days. Among the priceless objects religiously cherished by the Exempts, and which now adorns their meeting room at Brenham place is a bust of herself presented to the Exempt Company a few years ago. Her name and record are lovingly and inseparably intertwined with the happiest associations of the old Volunteers, and as long as a memory of that organization shall last hers will be preserved.

Mrs. Hitchcock-Coit has numerous mementos of her association with Knickerbocker Engine Company. There is her fireman's hat and red shirt emblems of her honorary membership; there is her certificate of membership bearing date October 5, 1863, and which is beautifully etched in pen and ink, with exquisite skill and taste; and there is her gold badge. All of these she values for the memories they
Engine Engine number 9
Goin' down Chicago Line
If that train runs off that track
Do you want your money back?

Doctor Knickerbocker, Knickerbocker, number nine
He likes to dance and he keeps in time
Now let's get the rhythm of the hands [clap clap]
Now we've got the rhythm of the hands [clap clap]
Now let's get the rhythm of the number nine
One, two, three four five six seven eight nine

Doctor Knickerbocker, Knickerbocker, number nine
He likes to dance and he keeps in time
Now let's get the rhythm of the feet [stamp stamp]
Now we've got the rhythm of the feet [stamp stamp]
Now let's get the rhythm of the hands [clap clap]
Now we've got the rhythm of the hands [clap clap]
Now let's get the rhythm of the number nine
One, two, three four five six seven eight nine

Doctor Knickerbocker, Knickerbocker, number nine
He likes to dance and he keeps in time
Now let's get the rhythm of the hips [wolf whistle]
Now we've got the rhythm of the hips [wolf whistle]
Now let's get the rhythm of the feet [stamp stamp]
Now we've got the rhythm of the feet [stamp stamp]
Now let's get the rhythm of the hands [clap clap]
Now we've got the rhythm of the hands [clap clap]
Let's get the rhythm of the number nine
One, two, three four five six seven eight nine

Doctor Knickerbocker, Knickerbocker, number nine
He likes to dance and he keeps in time
Now let's get the rhythm of the lips [kiss kiss]
Now we've got the rhythm of the lips [kiss kiss]
Now let's get the rhythm of the hips [wolf whistle]
Now we've got the rhythm of the hips [wolf whistle]
Now let's get the rhythm of the feet [stamp stamp]
Now we've got the rhythm of the feet [stamp stamp]
Now let's get the rhythm of the hands [clap clap]
Now we've got the rhythm of the hands [clap clap]
One, two, three four five six seven eight nine