

me," said the Scottish patriot, Fletcher of Salton, "the making of a nation's songs, and I care not who may make its laws." And so, to-day, more than six hundred years after the event, the air to which Bruce's army marched to the Field of Bannockburn, together with the words so appropriately wedded to it by our national bard, fires the Scotsman's blood with the old martial spirit; just as

"When he hears the bagpipe sound
His heart will bound like steed for battle."

Scottish music is not "music without words; the airs and the words connected with them are inseparably interwoven and in this fact lies one of its special charms.

But Scotland has two literatures, the one clothed in the old garb of the Gael, which may and may not have been the language spoken in the Garden of Eden; the other in the more modern dress shared by her in common with the rest of the great English-speaking world. We hope in the course of these articles to present our readers with selections from both; but with the latter, which is the larger, and, therefore, the more important, we propose to deal first, although the other may be equally interesting. Portraits of our subjects, and also views of scenes familiar to their works, will appear from time to time. Many of the founders of the Scottish Muse are practically unknown to the generality of our countrymen to-day; many of them have been coolly appropriated by the compilers of such works as "English Men of Letters," "The English Poets," and such like. Thus, not only are we supposed to succumb to

our country's identity being gradually lost in the term "England" when the larger and more comprehensive term "Britain" is really meant, but we are supposed to allow our best men to be picked from amongst us and individually labelled "Englishmen." Some who will object to the term *Scottish-Canadian* as not being Canadian enough, can see nothing *un-British* in writing or speaking of the "*English*," instead of the *British* Parliament; the *English* instead of the *British* Government, or the *English* instead of the *British* Army. No wonder they appropriate our great men! But "*Nemo me impune lacessit*."

What is supposed to be the oldest fragment of Scottish poetry, written in the Scoto-Saxon dialect, is a narration of the events in the national history immediately following the death of Alexander III, events well-calculated to inspire the national muse of a freeborn people. The author is not known; the piece itself was preserved by Andrew Wyntoun, who lived in the beginning of the fourteenth century, and to whom we shall have occasion to refer later on. The fragment is not lacking in some of the true characteristics of Scottish poetry, pathos and simplicity.

Quhen Alysander oure Kyng was dede
That Scotland led in luwe and lé;
Away was sons of ale and brede,
Of wyne and wax, of gamyn and gle;
Our gold was changed into lede,
Cryste borne into virgynyte,
Succor Scotland and remede,
That stad is in perplexyte.

But the first unbroken series of writers in the Scottish vernacular begins with John Barbour, who held the office of Archdeacon of Aberdeen in the year 1357. It is on record that he was chosen by the Bishop of Aberdeen as his commissioner at Edinburgh, when the ransom of David II. was being debated. "Barbour's Life of Bruce," his only existing work, will no doubt be known to not a few of our readers. The present writer well-remembers it as being, along with Blind Harry's "Life of Sir William Wallace," his first loves in book-lore; and many a Sabbath hour was stolen from the study of his Bible and his shorter Catechism lessons, in order to literally devour the contents of "Barbour" and "Blind Harry." The following apostrophe to freedom, from Barbour's Life of Bruce, will serve to illustrate his animated style:



ABERDEEN CATHEDRAL.