

The sense, but not the inimitable melody of these stanzas may be gathered from the following translation :—

" Now, on the coming of Spring, the day will be a-stretching,
 Now, on the coming of Brigit's Eve, it is, that I shall raise
 my music,
 Since I took it into my head I shall never stop
 Until I stand in the West in the midst of the county of Mayo !

* * *

I solemnly declare it, that my heart rises up,
 Even as the wind is lifted, or as the mist is scattered,
 When I think upon Carra and upon Balla to the North of it,
 Upon the Bush of the Mile and upon the plains of Mayo."

The words thus sung held the appreciative listener in the spell of their sweet naturalness, and he asked the old man if he would teach him the song. "He taught it to me," continues Dr. Hyde, "and I went home, and with me a great part of 'The County Mayo' by heart." This popular lay, it should be explained, is also known under the title of "The Song of Killeadan." It was the first time that Dr. Hyde had heard it, and it was not until long afterwards that he learned who its author was. "I was another day," he tells in the quaint though pleasant style of the English version of his Irish-written preface, "fifteen years after this, handling and poking amongst the old Irish MSS. that are in the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin, and what should I meet there but a manuscript book in which were some of Raferty's poems, and amongst them my old friend 'County Mayo,' and it was then that I learned that Raferty was its author, and that many another sweet song he had composed as well as it."

Still later whilst taking a walk near Blackrock, Dublin, he was accosted by a blind man begging alms; and after giving a dole and proceeding a few paces, it occurred to him that the mendicant "had the face and mouth of an Irish speaker on him," and turning back, he spoke to the old man in Irish and was answered "with melody and taste in the same language," and thereupon ensued an interesting conversation, in the course of which Dr. Hyde ascertained much respecting Raferty from this chance acquaintance who happened to