

PREFACE.

In presenting this work for public favour, I have to apologise that I do so with considerable diffidence, as it was only at the earnest solicitation of several of my professional friends, that I have been prevailed upon to prepare it for publication, being fully aware of the difficulties which I had to encounter in this department of bagpipe music.

During several years, I have employed my leisure hours in compiling the manuscript, with no other view than private study or personal amusement. At the same time, my profession brought me in contact with many of the most eminent Performers of the present day; and hence, I had abundance of opportunities afforded me of hearing varied performances; from which sources I derived much information and matter for reflection, as to the best sets. If I am now found to differ from ordinary performance, that difference is the result of mature deliberation, as being more in accordance with musical composition adapted for the bagpipes.

I have inserted some of the *Airs*, only at the express wish of friends, who maintained that they should be found in such a work, to render it more complete. A number are also inserted which never appeared in print before; and those marked with an asterisk are original. The principles of music prefixed to this work, contain simple illustrations, which will be found useful, not only to the ordinary student, but also to such of my accomplished countrywomen, as appreciate our unrivalled native melodies, as they will thereby be enabled to peruse the *airs* on the piano, although there are no signatures prefixed.

In this work, as far as I could ascertain, I have asserted my native country's claim to those *Airs* that originally belonged to it, whether now adapted to English verse, or are known in English only by the complimentary names by which they were designated by Gow, and by other modern Compilers. In this department I acknowledge myself defective, and will feel indebted to such friends as may supply me with further authentic information.

The Index is composed of the original Gaelic designations by which the *Airs* have been known in the Highlands, with a free translation opposite. These designations consist generally of something peculiar or striking in the verse or verses to which they were composed; and for the purpose of rendering the Gaelic reading easy, I have omitted unnecessary silent letters, without any violation of grammatical propriety. I have inserted most of the complimentary names at the *Airs* betwixt parentheses.

The want of a uniformity of performance in this department of bagpipe music, has long been felt and regretted. I hope, therefore, that this attempt at a remedy will be favourably received by those who feel anxious that so desirable an end be attained,—yet, as it is a first edition, it is not expected that they will deem it unsusceptible of being improved; I shall, however, feel grateful at receiving beneficial suggestions towards a second edition, should that be called for.

WILLIAM GUNN.

48 GALLOWGATE-STREET, GLASGOW, 12th September, 1848.