Folk Songs of French Canada

FOLK SONGS OF FRENCH CANADA

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FOLK SONGS OF FRENCH CANADA

BY

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THE present volume is the fifth work published by the Yale University Press on the Oliver Baty Cunningham Memorial Publication Fund. This Foundation was established May 8, 1920, by a gift from Frank S. Cunningham, Esq., of Chicago, to Yale University, in memory of his son, Captain Oliver Baty Cunningham, 15th United States Field Artillery, who was born in Chicago, September 17, 1894, and was graduated from Yale College in the Class of 1917. As an undergraduate he was distinguished alike for high scholarship and for proved capacity in leadership among his fellows, as evidenced by his selection as Gordon Brown Prize man from his class. He received his commission as Second Lieutenant, United States Field Artillery, at the First Officers' Training Camp at Fort Sheridan, and in December, 1917, was detailed abroad for service, receiving subsequently the Distinguished Service Medal. He was killed while on active duty near Thiaucourt, France, on September 17, 1918, the twenty-fourth anniversary of his birth.

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PREFACE

THE present volume is an outgrowth of the work of the Canadian National Museum. Both collaborators belong to the staff of this institution. In his study of Huron folklore Mr. Barbeau came to realize that some knowledge of European traditions was necessary to separate the native elements from those which the Indians owe to their white neighbors. This led to the independent investigation, by Mr. Barbeau and his assistants, of the whole subject of French Canadian folklore—tales, songs, beliefs and industries.

Out of the wealth of original material secured by these investigators for the Museum, we have selected for this volume some forty folk songs. In the separate introductions we have referred to all the accessible French parallels. It was our intention to avoid the two extremes of technicality and of sentimentalism, and we have tried to reach both the folklore student and the general reader who wishes to get a taste of a fascinating folk literature.

Mr. Barbeau is responsible for the French texts, the general introduction and the shorter explanations prefacing the songs, and for the musical transcriptions; Mr. Sapir, for the English translations of the songs and a revision of the explanatory matter. But each of the collaborators has gained far more from the counsel of the other than can be indicated by stating his separate share in the work.

A word as to the translations. Those interested in the problem of rendering the spirit of folk song into a foreign language may judge for themselves what measure of success has been achieved. While

extreme literalness is neither attainable nor desirable, we have allowed ourselves no serious departure from the original. The rhyme schemes, assonances and metrical forms have usually been preserved. The reader will bear in mind that the song burdens, which are printed in italics, and the repeated lines are given in full only in the first stanza.

In conclusion, we desire to thank the Director of the Museum, Dr. William McInnes, for permission to use the source material in this book of folk songs.

Marius Barbeau,
Edward Sapir.

Ottawa, February 28, 1924.

INTRODUCTION

FOLK SONGS were once part of the everyday life of French America. They seemed as familiar as barley-bread to the pioneer settlers of the St. Lawrence Valley; and they escorted through rain and shine the *coureurs-des-bois* in their early ventures along the trails and rivers of the Far West. So we read in our century-old chronicles of travel and exploration. The raftsmen on the eastern Canadian rivers, as late as forty years ago, enlivened the woods with the echoes of their rustic melodies; threshing and winnowing in the barn moved on to the rhythm of work tunes, as did spinning, weaving and beating the wash by the fireside.

Not many song records, however, have come down to us that antedate 1860. Larue, about this time, broached the subject in *Le Foyer canadien* of Quebec, and in 1865 Ernest Gagnon published his *Chansons populaires du Canada*. The idea soon went abroad that these efforts, modest though they were, had drained the fount of local tradition. When modern life hushed all folk singers alike, few doubted that song, tale and legend had vanished forever, along with most other relics of a bygone age.

We shared this illusion ourselves, until some significant survivals by the roadside piqued our curiosity. Our researches then unexpectedly disclosed wide vistas. It was no longer possible to believe that the traditions of a people could sink into oblivion from morning to night. The trails of the past were not so quickly obscured, their luxuriant byways not so easily forsaken. The newly recovered domain of French folklore in America has proved immensely rich.

Tales and anecdotes by the hundred and songs by the thousand have in the past few years of investigation fallen into our hands from all parts of eastern Canada and New England. Yet the work is far from done, the resources of the field are still unspent.

A small sheaf from this song harvest—forty-one numbers in all—is here presented to the reader; and we claim no higher merit for it than that it is fairly representative of the main types.

Our discovery lured us into the hope of spying folk songs in the making. Such compositions, according to a theory inherited from Grimm and still current in the English-speaking world, were the fruit of collective inspiration. A handful of singers would spontaneously burst into song on the spur of the moment. Genius, usually denied the individual, would at times grace the latent powers of the mob and give birth to poems and tunes that were worthy to pass on to posterity.

In the light of this presumption we chose our field of observation among the isolated and unspoilt settlers of the lower St. Lawrence Valley. There, among our rustic hosts assembled in singing parties, we might find the object of our quest—the song anonymously begotten from the midst of the motley crowd.

We were not wholly disappointed. The people were still fond of evening gatherings devoted to song, the dance and the old-time conviviality. Solo and chorus alternated freely while we took down the words and registered the melodies on the phonograph. From Charlevoix County in Quebec we passed to Chicoutimi; and, in the following summers, to Témiscouata, Beauce, Gaspé and Bonaventure. A few collaborators—MM. E.-Z. Massicotte, A. Godbout, A. Lambert, and others—extended the search to the neighborhood of Quebec and Montreal, even to New Hampshire. As a result, over five thousand song records, all from oral sources, are now classified and carefully annotated in the files of the National Museum of Canada, at Ottawa; and problems of origin have again come into their own.

Our expectation meanwhile was to find the country-folk in the mood of untrammeled utterance, in the yet unobserved process of song-making; we overlooked no likely opportunity, on the seashore or in the fields, by the fireside or in occasional festive gatherings. Our folk singers were genial and talented, their memory was prolific and their stock of songs nearly inexhaustible. But they lacked the very gift which was to enlighten us in our quest. They would not give free rein to impulse or fancy, they would not tread new paths, would not venture beyond the mere iteration of what had passed down to them ready-made from their relatives and friends, from untold generations of peasant singers. Nor was this due to an unlucky star, for all the country-folk we met were much alike; they were not creators of rhymes or tunes, but only instruments for their preservation. True enough, we heard of some poets of the backwoods who could string rhymes and stanzas together on a given theme to suit the local demand. But these were without mystic power. Their manner seemed not unlike that of ordinary poets, but far cruder. They plodded individually over their tasks and tallied their lines to a familiar tune. The outcome was invariably uncouth and commonplace. There was nowhere a fresh source of inspiration; only imitation, obvious and slavish.

There is thus a wide discrepancy between our observations and the theory of Grimm *et al.* on the mysterious flashes of the communal spirit in the folk songs of the past. This we could no longer ignore. How puzzling it all seemed when set beside the report of American negroes and humble peasants of the Balkans still indulging in spontaneous poetic effusions when gathered together for group singing! Our folk singers were not their inferiors; we found them keenly intelligent, if uneducated. Their conservatism still resisted the blight of industrialism, they remained faithful to the tradition of their ancestors who, in the days of Richelieu, landed on these shores from the northwestern provinces of France. If illiterate folk

truly possess the collective gift of lyric utterance, why not they as well as their forefathers or the Serbians or the negroes of the lower Mississippi?

The reader may decide as he will. For our part, we have lost all faith in the century-old theory as applied to the French field in America. Tabulating our five thousand song variants and comparing them with the records from the French provinces, we find that, say, nineteen out of twenty songs are ancient; they have come with the seventeenth-century immigrants from overseas to their new woodland homes. The remainder form a miscellaneous group from the pen of unknown scribes and clerics or from the brain of rustic bards.

Among the first—the songs from ancient France—we count our most valuable records, and they are many. The bulk is of a high order for both form and content. The style is pure and crisp, the theme clear-cut and tersely developed. There prevails throughout a fragrance of refinement, sometimes there is a touch of genius. Here is decidedly not the drawl of untutored peasants nor a growth due to chance, but the work of poets whose mature art had inherited an ample stock of metric patterns and an ancient lore common to many European races.

Our folk songs as a whole were an indirect legacy from the troubadours of mediæval France; so we were at first inclined to think. But we had reasons to demur. Troubadour and minstrel songs were written on parchment mostly for the privilege of the nobility; they belonged on the whole to the aristocracy and the learned, not to the people; they affected the mannerisms, the verbosity and the lyrical finesse of the Latin decadence; and they were preferably composed in the Limousin and Provençal dialects of southern France. The troubadours themselves labored between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, while many of our best songs belonged to the two hundred years that followed. What is more, upon going through collections of their poems we failed to meet the familiar

landmarks; the spirit, the technique and the themes had little or nothing in common with those of our records. They were two worlds apart; and we fail to see how the chasm can ever be bridged.

The origin of our songs, the folk songs of ancient France, still remains a problem. If our experience in the North American fields serves to dispel a few current misconceptions, it has not gone far enough to unravel the puzzle of ultimate authorship. Our only surmise is that, while the troubadours journeyed from castle to castle and penned their meticulous lines for the lords of the land, another class of poets sang their songs among the common people, who were not so easily beguiled by a more fashionable art.

We have read of the humble *jongleurs de foire* and *jongleurs errants* of the ancient days, whose pranks were sometimes derided in the manuscripts of the troubadours and the minstrels. Their profession was naturally the butt of society. But as they were not apparently addicted to writing, no tangible evidence is left to vindicate their memory. A student of mediæval France, Jeanroy, has already pointed out that while the troubadours had their day in the south, an obscure literary upheaval, freer from Latin influence, took place in the *oïl* provinces of the Loire River, that is, in the very home of most of our traditional lore. Who were the local poets if not the jongleurs of the north themselves? And if their art was oral, why should it not have taken root in the soil among the older traditions of the time? Why should not our folk songs be their work, now partly recovered or disfigured?

Whatever these Loire River bards be called, they were no mere upstarts, if we take their lyrics into account. At their best they composed songs which not only courted the popular fancy but which, because of their vitality and charm, outlived the forms of academic poetry. Their prosodic resources, besides, were not only copious and largely different from those of the higher literature, but they went back to the very bedrock of the Romance languages. Unlike the

troubadours, who were the representatives of mediæval Latinity, these poets had never given their allegiance to a foreign language since the birth of the Low Latin vernaculars in France, Spain, Portugal and Italy. They had inherited and maintained the older traditions of the land. Thus we find that the metric rules in their songs are comparable to those of Spanish, Portuguese or Italian poetry rather than to the rules proper to Limousin and written French verse. In other words, the folk songs of France as recovered in America mostly represent an ancient stratum in French literature, one that was never wholly submerged by the influx throughout the Middle Ages of Neo-Latin influences from the south.

The folk singers we consulted by the score were not poets, with the best will in the world. They proved most disappointing when approached in that light. It was merely their wont to rehearse what had come down to them from the dim past. They would give us a song five centuries old next to one dating back two generations. Some Gaspé fisher-folk would call the age-worn *complainte* of "The Tragic Home-coming" by the name of Poirier, a singer still remembered by the elders. Others claimed that the canticle of "Alexis" was as much as a hundred years old, while it is more nearly a thousand. It soon became evident that their notions of origin were not worth serious consideration.

One endowment, however, was strikingly their own. This is their memory. Not every one could sing; and only a few, at this late day, could boast of an extensive repertory. But we can only admire the gifts of the best singers we have known, such as Saint-Laurent, de Repentigny, Rousselle, Lambert, Mme. Dorion, Hovington, Soucy, Louis "l'aveugle," Mme. Bouchard, and many others. Without the slightest effort they dictated to us from day to day numerous songs ranging in length from ten to seventy and, in rare cases, over one hundred lines. Both Saint-Laurent and de Repentigny exceeded

three hundred songs each, while others were not far behind. And yet folk memory is not as retentive as it used to be; reading and writing have played havoc with it.

The only rich havens of folk tales and folk songs now left among the French settlers in America lie in rather isolated districts—the more remote the richer, as a rule. Peasants, lumbermen and fisherfolk in their hamlets recite the ballads without faltering, whereas the chance singer in town is unable to muster more than scraps, unless he is country born and bred.

Songs were learned from relatives and friends early in life, almost invariably between five and sixteen years of age. Octogenarians delighted in the songs of their teens and groped in vain for those of their maturity. Thus, in one way at least, youth stubbornly survived into old age. And it seemed strange for human memory to surrender, as repeatedly happened, a whole ballad or a chantey that had not been sung in the last fifty or sixty years.

There was often some difficulty in remembering the very existence, or the initial lines, of a song; not in its full utterance, once a hint was furnished or the notion of it had flashed upon the mind. Aware of this, most singers resorted to a mnemonic device as a guide to their mental stores. One would think of his mother's and his father's songs, or those from other sources, one after another, as they had marked the course of his life. François Saint-Laurent, a fisherman from La Tourelle (Gaspé), never experienced any trouble in listing his possessions, for they were all neatly sorted out in his memory according to the cardinal points. Now he would dig out his songs of the north or of the south, then of the northwest, the west, and so forth. The hitch occurred only when the three hundredth number was reached, for the assorted piles were spent and the only one left was a "heap in the corner," a mixed lot without mental tag.

The work of collection in our field had to proceed with discrimi-

nation; judicious elimination was a necessary part of the experience. The songs, particularly at points within reach of town, were not all of folk extraction. A singer's repertory was like a curiosity shop; trifles or recent accessions vied with old-time jewels. The French "romances" of 1810 or 1840 recurred from time to time. They were once the fashion. Not a few found their way, in print or otherwise, into America and filtered down into the older strata of local lore, where they still persist, such as the satires on Bonaparte, long after their demise in the homeland. Compilations printed in Canada and ballad sheets imported from France (*imageries d'Epinal*) spread their influence to many quarters. The archaic canticle of Saint Alexis, for instance, might occur in two forms; the first, out of the *Cantiques de Marseilles*, the oldest song-book known in Canada, and the second from hitherto unrecorded sources of the past. Many songs, moreover, would pass from mouth to mouth until they no longer remained the exclusive favorites of school or barracks. Some singers would be on the lookout for just such novelties as a folklorist is careful to dodge.

The songs as they come from the individual interpreters are not all in a perfect state of preservation; far from it. Centuries have elapsed since their inception and have left them with many scars. Words, when they do not belong to the current vocabulary, are at times deformed; the lines are not infrequently mangled, the rhymes lost; and the stanzas do not always appear in their proper sequence. The student is thus confronted by a question of method in gathering and preserving his materials. If these are faulty, must he rest satisfied with single versions? Must he publish his records as they stand, blunders and all?

While the integral presentation of these documents may be a matter of choice or circumstances, everyone will agree on the value of as many versions as can be compiled, particularly when they issue from divergent sources. The peregrinations of a song cannot be

understood without them. No two recorded occurrences or versions are quite the same, unless they are directly related; their variations increase in proportion to the lapse of time and to their distance from each other. To a folk song these versions are like the limbs to a tree. They appear in clusters at the top, but can be traced to older branches which ultimately converge to a single trunk at the bottom. Our few Charlevoix versions of "The Passion of Our Lord," for instance, were fairly uniform throughout, although somewhat different from those of Témiscouata, across the St. Lawrence. A real gap, however, intervened between them and the Acadian records from New Brunswick. Upon comparison we found that both forms were fairly ancient and went back to a bifurcation that had taken place long ago in the ancestral home overseas.

Flaws and local deviations cannot long escape scrutiny. Being sporadic, they tend to eliminate each other in the light of many versions from widely scattered areas. A song can thus be rendered more satisfactory in every way and may even be restored according to the original intention of the author who fashioned it long ago.

The French field in the New World may appear to an outsider as somewhat lacking in variety. But let us not be deceived! The nine thousand original settlers who landed on these shores before 1680 were, it is true, mostly from northwestern France, that is, from *oïl* provinces. They embarked at Saint-Malo, on the English Channel, or at La Rochelle, on the Atlantic, according to their place of origin—Normandy or the basin of the Loire River. Aunis, Poitou and Anjou, on the very frontiers of *oc*, in the south, furnished large numbers, and the northernmost districts not a few. The immigrants belonged to many stocks and spoke various dialects. Never quite the same in the past, they still preserve part of their individuality. The French Canadians of Quebec and the Acadians of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia or Louisiana, have long felt their differences, even, at times, to the point of mutual antipathy. Quebec itself,

though more compact, consists of three groups—those of Quebec proper, Three Rivers and Montreal—which are not interchangeable. This variety of tradition cannot be ignored by the folklorist, else valuable historical clues might be lost, variants neglected and the local sources confused in a hopeless tangle.

The best claim to recognition of the French folk songs of America undoubtedly rests in their comparative antiquity; for they have largely remained unchanged since the days of Henri IV and Louis XIII, three or four centuries ago. Sheltered in woodland recesses, far from the political commotions of the Old World, they have preserved much of their sparkling, archaic flavor. And, in the years to come, they cannot fail to contribute materially to the history of the folk songs of France and of the rest of Europe.

THE PRINCE OF ORANGE

POLITICAL songs had small chance to thrive in old France. Their epigrams were often aimed at the mighty that ruled over the land in the centuries preceding the Revolution, but it was not with impunity. Songs and ditties were the favorite newsbearers of the time. They swept over whole provinces with the rapidity of wildfire, their catching tunes and rhymes coaxing the popular fancy. Taken up by malcontents, they might have turned into mischievous weapons; the officers of the law could not afford to sit and listen.

As early as 1395 an edict would have silenced the satirists of the day who dared to take advantage of the King's prolonged insanity. "Be it heralded in the name of the King [Charles VI]!" ran the decree.* "We forbid all the scribes, makers of songs and sayings, fiddlers and other entertainers, to compose, utter or sing in public or private any saying, rhyme or song alluding to the Pope, our lord the King, the Princes of the Kingdom . . ., under pain of formal apology [*amende volontaire*] and two months in confinement with rations of bread and water."

There is evidence, however, that in spite of all censorship not a few songs had run the gauntlet at various times and become firmly embodied in the lore of the country. *The Three Poisoned Roses, Biron,* and *Prince Eugene* (The Capture of King Francis), to mention but a few that are still remembered by Canadian folk singers, gave wings to news of treasonable color; they told of kings, of "ladies debonair," of queens unfaithful and of queens that poisoned their rivals. We even hear† of five peaceful villagers who were apprehended in a country inn of Anjou, early in the eighteenth century, for singing the prohibited lines of the Biron ballad.

The ancient song-makers also indulged at times in the more legitimate sport of satirizing the traditional foes of France—the King of England, the Prince of Orange, the Duke of Marlborough.

Songs on Guillaume d'Orange were not only familiar at the Court and

* Leroux de Lincy, *Recueil des chants historiques français,* II, 149, 150.

† S. Trébucq, *La chanson populaire en Vendée,* II, 182, 183: la chanson de Biron fut si populaire que "bien longtemps après la mort du maréchal, il était défendu sous les peines les plus sévères de chanter les strophes qui la composent. . . ."

in the towns, but in the remotest provinces as well. From Savoy to Brittany various fragments have come down to the modern compilers.* Here he is heard bewailing his defeat on the battlefield; there, at the Siege of Mons in 1691, he is implored:

A mon secours, grand prince d'Orange,
Comte de Wurtemberg, prince du Canada!

From Brittany comes another tale:

Le grand prince d'Orange
A la guerre est allé,

which is possibly the same as *Le Prince d'Orange—1554*, partly quoted by Leroux de Lincy.† A song of that name is said by A. Loquin‡ to have been

1 C'est le prince d'Orange.
Très matin s'est levé.
Il appelle son page:
"Mon more est-il bridé?"
Que maudit soit la guerre!
"Mon more est-il bridé?"
2 "Ah! nani dà, mon prince,
Où voulez-vous aller?"
3 "Je veux aller en France
Ou le roi m'a mandé
4 Par une lettre close
Qu'on m'avait envoyé'."
5 J'ai parti sain et sauf
Et j'en reviens blessé
6 De trois grands coups de lance
Qu'un Anglais m'a donnés.
7 J'en ai ung à la cuisse,
Et l'autre à mon côté,
8 Et l'autre à ma mamelle.
On dit que j'en mourrai.

published in the sixteenth century and to have circulated all over France.

Unconcerned about these historical questions, some folk singers of Canada—Edouard Hovington (of Tadousac), François Saint-Laurent (of La Tourelle, Gaspé), and Joseph Rousselle (of Saint-Denis, Kamouraska)§—have in recent years given us excellent versions of *The Prince of Orange*.

* Julien Tiersot, *Chants populaires des Alpes françaises*, p. 44.
† The Leroux de Lincy version.
‡ *Mélusine*, IV, 51.
§ This last record is from the Massicotte Collection.

If the name of "le prince de Londres" is substituted for that of "le prince d'Orange" in the Kamouraska version, it may be due to the fact that the singer also knew *Les glas de Françoise*, a hybrid composition thrice recorded in eastern Quebec, in which our song is incongruously combined with that of *Le médecin de Londres* and of *Malbrouck*.* We also find in the same record that the three blows, one of which sank in the head, were from a French instead of an English lance.

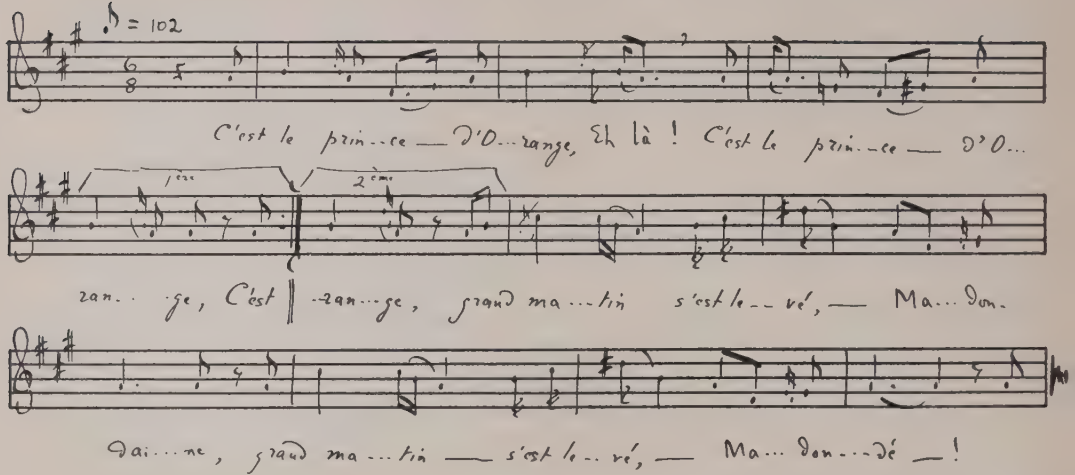
In the absence of other documents, we cannot restore the ballad to its original form with any degree of certainty. It is fairly clear, however, that the de Lincy French version is only a fragment, for it lapses abruptly at the eighth line with the words, "*On dit que j'en mourrai.*" It fails to make a humorous point, and its hostile intention is more than obscured by the refrain, "*Que maudit soit la guerre!*"

It is likely that the same song has developed in slightly divergent ways in France and in Canada. While the French variant tends to assume the form of a ballad, its Canadian parallel is distinctly of the work-song type; indeed, it is one of the most effective canoe or paddling songs yet recorded, in spite of its exceptional historical theme. With its swinging rhythm (6/8) and its incisive, archaic melody, it was well suited to mark the dip of the paddles and to cheer the canoemen to renewed effort.

The meter is practically the same in all the versions. It consists of lines of twelve syllables divided by the cæsura into two equal halves, the first of which concludes with a "mute," the second with a rhyming *é* throughout the ballad.

* "C'est la belle Françoise," recorded by E.-Z. Massicotte (singer: Joseph Rousselle); "Les glas de Françoise" and "Qu'avez-vous donc, Françoise?" recorded by the author in Bonaventure County (singers: Mme. Daniel Huard and Paul Langlois, of Port Daniel).

LE PRINCE D'ORANGE



1 C'est le prince d'Orange,
Eh là!
C'est le prince d'Orange; ‖ grand matin s'est levé,
Madondaine!
grand matin s'est levé,
Madondé!

2 A-t appelé son page: ‖ "Mon âne est-il bridé?"

3 —"Ah oui, vraîment, beau prince! ‖ Il est bridé, sellé."

4 Mit sa main sur la bride, ‖ le pied dans l'étrier.

5 A parti le dimanche, ‖ le lundi fut blessé.

6 Reçut trois coups de lance ‖ qu'un Anglais 'i a donnés.

7 En a-t un dans la jambe, ‖ et deux dans le côté.

8 Faut aller qu'ri' le prêtre ‖ mais pour le confesser.

9 "Je n'ai que fair' de prêtre: ‖ je n'ai jamais péché!

10 "Jamais n'embrass' les filles, ‖ hors qu'à leur volonté;

11 "Qu'une petit' brunette, ‖ encor j'ai bien payé,

12 "Donné cinq cents liards, ‖ autant de sous marqués."

TRANSLATION

1 'Tis the prince of Orange blood,
Eh la!
'Tis the prince of Orange blood,
Arose at the sun's flood,
Madondaine!
Arose at the sun's flood,
Madondé!

2 Called his page and said,
"Have they bridled my donkey red?"

3 "Yes, my prince, 'tis true,
He's bridled and saddled for you."

4 To the bridle put his hand,
And foot in the stirrup to stand.

5 Rode away on Sunday,
Was wounded on the Monday.

6 Received by grievous chance
Three blows of an English lance.

7 In's leg the first one sank
And two were in his flank.

8 Off, while he's yet alive,
And bring a priest for to shrive!

9 "What need have I of priest?
I've never sinned i' the least.

10 "The girls I have never kissed,
Unless themselves insist.

"Only a little brunette,
And well I've paid my debt.

"Five hundred farthings paid,
And all for a little maid."

PRINCE EUGENE

THERE is such a marked affinity in theme, treatment and function between *Prince Eugene* and *The Prince of Orange* that we can hardly doubt the probability of their contemporaneous origin. It seems more than likely that they were patterned either on a common archetype or on each other, though internal evidence alone may not suffice to indicate which is the earlier of the two.

The hero, a prince, departs on an adventure in the company of his page, whom he summons to his service. Ever gallant, he escorts "ladies three" to their homes after sunset; again, he kisses a little brunette or other willing beauty. He encounters enemies, is grievously wounded, and before death he utters defiant words, which bring the narrative to a close. This is the theme which both songs have in common.

The trend of the story in *The Prince of Orange* is openly satirical. An outsider and a traditional foe, the hero was not under the shelter of the law, and his slanderers had nothing to fear. Eugene, on the other hand, was a prince of the French Court, perhaps no other than the King himself. Ambiguity and a clever allusiveness were therefore imperative, if the penalties of a well-known decree were to be avoided. Chivalrous and bold, the prince nevertheless goes down to defeat at the very moment that he is wooing his damsels. Their hospitality cannot fail to give the listeners something to think about. His virtuous protest is too belated to appear convincing, especially as the refrain of the song is *Vive l'amour!* It was not worthy of a proud nobleman, moreover, to appeal for help in the heat of the battle to his "handsome page," a mere boy, whose rebuke sounds pointedly humorous. An additional touch appears in some versions. "Go, tell my mother, boy . . ., Go, tell my wife . . .," commands the prince, and concludes with the words, "Go, tell the ladies fair that they have lost their lover!" Incidental though they seem, these points may in the intention of the author have had more weight than the obvious theme of daring achievement.

The resemblance between the two ballads is not confined to the adventure itself; it extends to the form of the narration. The meter is the

same (6+6), the refrains follow approximately the same scheme, and both ballads are monorhymed, the one in *é*, the other in *i*.

Both of an exceptional historical type, they have undergone similar rhythmic treatment (6/8) in the melody, and have become work songs. In Canada they seem to have been favorite paddling songs. Old Hovington sang them consecutively, as if one had reminded him of the other.

A few comparisons may enable us to throw light on the identity of Prince Eugene and the time of his death.

Every student of folklore knows with what facility proper names shift on the lips of folk singers, whether through adaptation or faulty transmission. That of Prince Eugene, we should not forget, is not found in all the variants of our ballad; it is "le roi Eugène" in the Hovington record, and "un nommé Eugène" in that of Belleau (as reported by M. Massicotte). In other forms of the same song, as we shall see, the name of Bois-Gilles or Bougie, or a simple reference to "le roi" is substituted. Little importance therefore attaches to the name itself.

We turn to another ballad, that of *M. de Bois-Gilles** from Brittany, or *Bougie et Lancorne*† from Canada, as it is essentially a variant of *Prince Eugene*, with identical wording in places. To quote the Breton text:

Ce fut à la male heure, || un jour de vendredi,
Que M. de Bois-Gilles || prit congé de Paris
Pour convoyer deux dames || jusque dans leurs logis.
La conduite finie, || étant pour reparti':
"Restez, restez, Bois-Gilles, || restez, Bois-Gilles, ici!"
—"Non, ma dame m'espère || à souper cette nuit."

A more definite description of the names and place is given in the narrative. While Eugene's enemies were unnamed, those of Bois-Gilles are thus described:

Dis-moi, dis-moi, mon page, || qui sont tous ces gens ici.
C'est M. de Vendôme,‡ || votre grand ennemi.

* Jean Richepin, *Journal de l'Université des Annales*, 12e année, no. 11, pp. 485, 486.

† In the Barbeau Collection: (*a*) "Bougie et Lancorne," or "Monsieur de Lancorne," sung by Charles Samson, an old fisherman of La Tourelle (Gaspé), in 1918; (*b*) "Laucorne," by Frank De Raîche, of Port Daniel (Bonaventure); and (*c*) "Monsieur la Lucorne," by Pierre Le Courtois, of Nouvelle (Bonaventure).

‡ Or "Monsieur de Lancorne" in the Canadian record from Samson.

Instead of the indefinite "sur ces côtes," the battle takes place "auprès de la grand-borne," a frontier somewhere—what frontier we may see later.

The close similarities between the ballads preclude the possibility of separate origin. One descends from the other, beyond a doubt; it is fair to suppose that the chances are in favor of *M. de Bois-Gilles* antedating *Prince Eugene*, owing to its greater precision in details.

Bois-Gilles or Bougie and Eugene are thus one and the same. We may now examine their possible connection with the royal prisoner spoken of in *La Prison du roi François*, "one of those rare monuments of folk-literature," to use the words of Doncieux,* who has studied it, "on which an absolutely definite date can be inscribed."

Francis I was captured by Charles V, after the battle of Pavia, not far from the French frontier, and was imprisoned in Madrid.† His dangerous illness in the dungeon gave rise in Paris to the rumor of his death, in 1525. Misconceptions found their way into song, and a travesty on the King's misadventures, *La Prison du roi François*, soon traveled all over France‡ and became part of the permanent lore of the country, even invading that of Piedmont and Catalonia. The first six stanzas of this ballad have also been sung to us, in 1922, by two folk singers of Port Daniel, Bonaventure County (Tranquille Langlois and Paul Langlois).

Though far removed in part from *Prince Eugene* and *M. de Bois-Gilles*, the ballad of *La Prison du roi François* offers such analogies as to invite attentive comparison. Its opening lines are not materially different from those of *M. de Bois-Gilles:*

1 Quand le Roi départit de France, || à la male heure il départit.
2 Il départit jour de dimanche || et jour de lundi il fut pris.

A further parallel in wording appears in the summons from the august prisoner to the courier after his defeat:

* George Doncieux, *Le Romancéro populaire de France*, 1904, p. 58.

† Doncieux, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-60.

‡ The ballad of "Le Condamné," of which Millien has given two versions, is also a variant of the same song, although with a different ending (A. Millien, *Chants et chansons populaires du Nivernais*, I, 241, 242): "C'est un petit château de pierre, *Vive la guerre!* Que l'on n'y voit ni nuit ni jour, *Vive l'amour!* . . ."

Beau postillon . . .
retourne-t'en vite à Paris.
Va dire à la Reine ma mère || et va dire à Montmorency . . .
Va dire à mon cousin de Guise || qu'il vienne ici me requérir.

The function of the two variants, as indicated by the refrains, must have been the same. The alternative *Vive le Roi!* and *Vive Loys!* in *La Prison du roi François* remind us of *Vive l'amour!* or *Vive le jour!* and *Vive la fleur de lis!* in *Prince Eugene*—the "fleur de lis," moreover, was the King's crest. Other versions of *La Prison du roi François* approach our ballad still more closely with the refrains of *Vive la rose!—Vive la fleur de lis!* or *Vive la guerre!* and *Vive l'amour!*

Monorhymes in *i* are fairly uniform in the three songs. Undue importance should not be attached to the metrical differences, *Prince Eugene* and *M. de Bois-Gilles* having twelve syllables (6+6) to the line, and *La Prison du roi François* sixteen (8+8). On close examination the student will notice that the predominating tendency in *La Prison du roi François* is away from the sixteen-syllable line; indeed, the lines also consist of less than fourteen syllables in the two Canadian records from Bonaventure. In his restoration Doncieux was forced in several places to introduce syllables or words in brackets to fill in the gaps, as in:

16 Qu[e l'] on fasse battre monnoie || [tout] aus quatre coins de Paris;

The process of padding the lines at some time or other is also apparent.

3 Rens-toi, rens-toi, grand roi de France, || rens-toi donc, car te voilà pris!

gains much in vigor when shortened to a twelve-syllable line, as in the related songs:

Rens-toi, grand roi de France! || Rens-toi, te voilà pris!

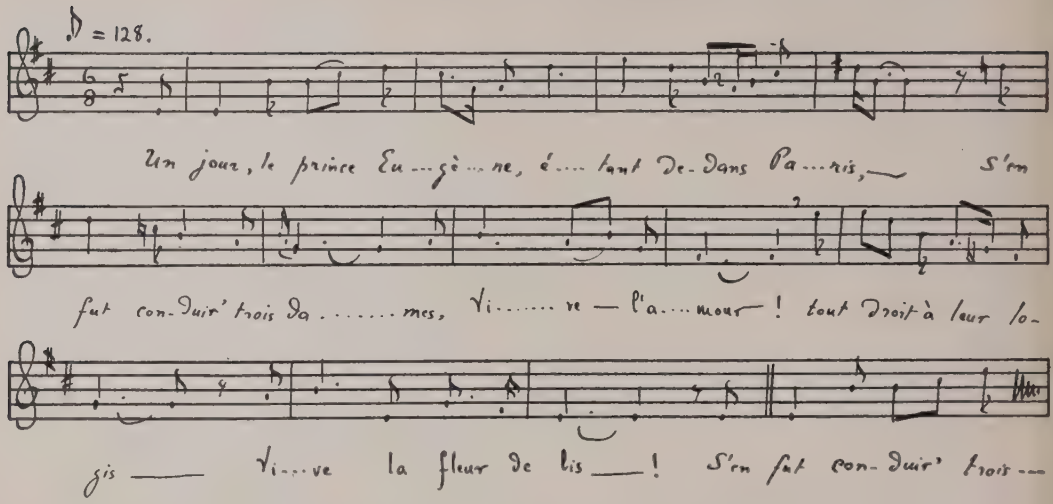
In the light of these comparisons we may tentatively conclude that *Prince Eugene* and *M. de Bois-Gilles* are mere variants of the same song, *Prince Eugene* being possibly a derivative form, and that *La Prison du roi François*, whether imitative or original, should also be included in the genealogical series. Its decidedly inferior prosody, in spots, if not due to later deterioration, would point to its being a free adaptation of some older model in vogue at the time—possibly *M. de Bois-Gilles* or *Prince Eugene*.

On the other hand, it may have been the first version to gain currency, the others following close on its heels, and Eugene or Bois-Gilles may be no other than Francis I. The final date of 1525 for *La Prison du roi François* suggests an approximate date for the others.

It is now possible to assert, moreover, that *The Prince of Orange*, if de Lincy's date of 1544 for it is correct, was roughly the contemporary, though not the forerunner, of *Prince Eugene* and *M. de Bois-Gilles*.

The following words are from four versions obtained in the eastern section of the Province of Quebec—those of Hovington (Tadousac), Belleau (Lévis), Barbeau (Beauce), Rousselle (Kamouraska) and Saintonge (L'Islet). Other versions, more recently recorded in Bonaventure, Gaspé, Berthier and Batiscan, have not been utilized here.

LE PRINCE EUGENE



1 Un jour, le prince Eugène, ‖ étant dedans Paris,
S'en fut conduir' trois dames
Vive l'amour!
tout droit à leur logis.
Vive la fleur de lis!

2 S'en fut conduir' trois dames ‖ tout droit à leur logis.
Quand il fut à leur porte: ‖ "Coucheriez-vous ici?"

3 —"Nenni, non non, mesdames, ‖ je vais à mon logis."

4 Quand il fut sur ces côtes, ‖ regarda derrièr' lui.

5 Il vit venir vingt hommes, ‖ ses plus grands ennemis.

6 "T'en souviens-tu, Eugène, ‖ un jour, dedans Paris,

7 "Devant le roi, la reine, ‖ mon fils t'as démenti?

8 "Arrête ici, Eugène, ‖ il faut payer ceci."

9 Tira son épée d'or, ‖ bravement se battit.

10 Il en tua quatorze ‖ sans pouvoir s'y lasser.

11 Quand ça vint au quinzième, ‖ son épée d'or rompit.

12 "Beau page, mon beau page, ‖ viens donc m'y secourir!"

13 —"Nenni, non non, mon prince, || j'ai trop peur de mourir."
14 —"Va-t'en dire à ma mère || qu'elle a perdu son fils;
15 "Va-t'en dire à ma femme || qu'ell' n'a plus de mari;
16 "Mais va tout droit lui dire || qu'ell' prenn' soin du petit.
17 "Quand il sera en âge, || il vengera ceci."

TRANSLATION

1 There was the prince Eugene in Paris town one day,
Escorted ladies three
(*Long live our love!*)
on their returning way.
Long live the lily flower!

2 On their returning way escorted ladies three.
And coming to the gate,
"Sleep here and welcome be."

3 "Sleep here and welcome be," they told him at the gate.
"My ladies, no and nay!
I'm turning home straight.

4 "Straight home I must be turning, ladies. No and nay!"
Here in the land he came
and looked far and away.

5 He looked far and away, coming in the land,
And enemies he saw,
twenty in the band.

6 Twenty in the band were foemen coming down.
"And can you well recall,
one day in Paris town—

7 "One day in Paris town, can you recall, Eugene,
You gave my son the lie
before the king and queen?

8 "Before the king and queen you gave my son the lie.
You'll pay for this, and well!
You cannot pass me by.

9 "Look to your life, Eugene, for you shall pay to me!"
He drew his golden sword,
he fought with bravery.

10 He fought with bravery, with a drawn sword of gold,
Killing of the band
fourteen without a hold.

11 Fourteen, without a hold, of enemies he slew,
But at the fifteenth man
his sword was broke in two.

12 He broke his sword upon the fifteenth enemy.
"My page, my handsome page,
come, give a help to me!

13 "Come, then, and give me help, good page, my handsome page!"
"Nay nay, my prince, I fear,
I fear death is the wage.

14 "Greatly, my prince, I fear to have my life undone."
"Go tell my mother, boy,
that she has lost her son.

15 "Go tell my mother, boy, that she has lost her son.
Go tell my wife, saying
her husband's far agone.

16 " 'Lady, you have no husband,' tell this to my wife,
And tell her well to keep
my little son in life.

17 "She shall with a sweet care raise up our little son,
So may he this revenge
when he is well grown."

THE THREE POISONED ROSES

THE trials of highborn lovers in bygone days have come down to us in many a song, tragic or trifling. But few possess a more graceful candor than the tale of royal amour and revenge recounted in *The Three Poisoned Roses* or, as the critics* usually call it, *La Marquise empoisonnée.*

A tragedy in the private lives of a king, a queen and a marchioness of France is here told with such unconcerned straightforwardness and inaccuracies as to make us wonder how it was ever allowed to secure a permanent hold in oral tradition. It lingers in many quarters to this day. More extensively remembered than *Prince Eugene* and *The Prince of Orange,* it has been recorded at least ten times in the past fifty years in different parts of northern and southern France,† and, what is more surprising, twice as many times in the eastern counties of Quebec alone.‡

From our Canadian versions we might readily have reconstructed, as in the case of *Prince Eugene,* a document more closely approximating the lost original and adhering to prosodic rules, had we by comparison eliminated the individual defects of each single record. For illustrative purposes, however, we prefer to follow rather closely a lone version taken down at Tadousac, in 1916, from Edouard Hovington, a singer whom we already know.

A folk song handed down through many generations nearly always undergoes a steady process of deterioration. The older the song, the more garbled its contents as a rule, the more at variance also with the traditional metrical scheme after which it was patterned. It is by sheer accident that certain songs retain a greater degree of accuracy than others of the same age. Both *The Prince of Orange* and *The Three Poisoned Roses,* as given here, are single versions obtained from the same singer; yet the first, probably the

* Doncieux, *op. cit.*, pp. 295, 302.

† Doncieux, *op. cit.*, has made an analytical study of the seven versions gathered in the French provinces. Additional French references have come to our attention: that of "Lou Rey, lou Morki e lo Morkijo" in Chaminade et Carré, *Chansons populaires du Périgord*, pp. 62, 63; and those recently published in A. Millien, *Chants et chansons populaires du Nivernais*, I, 119, 121.

‡ In Chicoutimi (Hovington), Témiscouata (Léveillé, Soucy), Gaspé (Saint-Laurent, Miville, Therrien, F. M., Ouellet, Denis) and Bonaventure (several records).

more ancient of the two, is quite well preserved, while the second shows the wear of time. Among the feminine rhymes and assonances we notice a few obvious deviations from the norm: "femme" with "avantage," "Reine" with "richesses," and "jolies" with "marquise." Instead of "d'avoir femme si belle" rhyming with "avec elle," as in Doncieux' analysis, we find "d'avoir tant joli' femme," coupled with "j'en aurais l'avantage," which is clearly inaccurate.

But we need not point out all the lapses from the rules. Suffice it to say that the pattern of the present ballad consists of the following archaic features: masculine cæsuras and feminine rhymes (or assonances), fourteen-syllable lines with the cæsura after the eighth syllable, and two-line stanzas without refrain (in most of the versions).

Few historical ballads have aroused more speculation among folklorists and historians than *La Marquise empoisonnée*. To identify the king, the queen and the unfortunate marchioness was not so easy as one might suppose. There were several plausible alternatives. Unanimity, however, prevailed as to the king having been a Bourbon. Leroux de Lincy, de Puymaigre, Bladé and Bujeaud in turn suggested Henri IV and Gabrielle d'Estrées, Louis XIV and Mme. de Montespan, and Louis XV and Mme. de Vintimille. The critics* now seem agreed, however, and Doncieux' review of the controversy is the most convincing.

The beautiful Gabrielle d'Estrées was still unwed when she first met Henri IV. It was imperative to screen the consequences of the king's interest in this lady, so a husband—le sieur de Liancourt—was provided for her. Anxious moments impended about the Easter of 1599, when she suddenly died in circumstances that were generally mistaken for suspicious. The enamored king publicly mourned her. And there ends the truth.

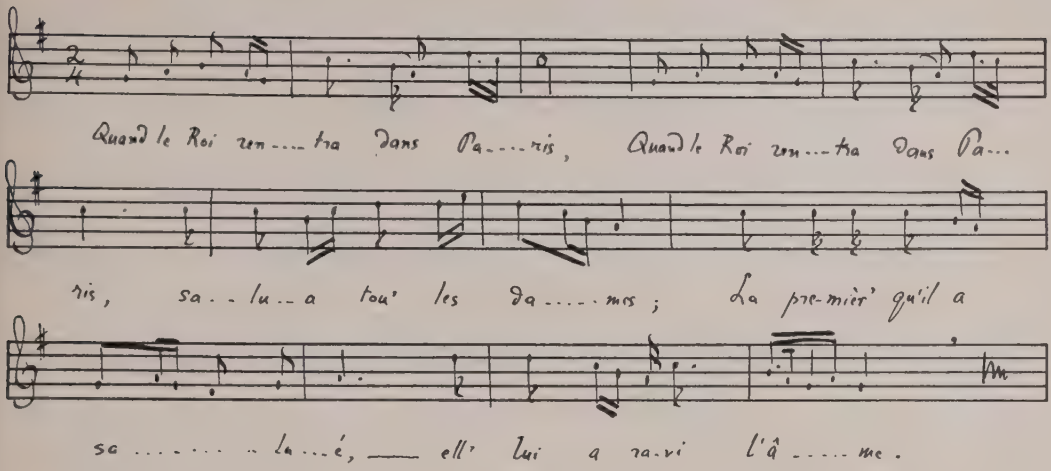
But the ballad-maker of the day, an outsider, a man of the street, concerned himself with presumptions and rumors rather than with the unfamiliar secrets of the Court. He desired to give the public a good ballad that would meet its fancies and expectations. It mattered little if Mlle. d'Estrées was not a marchioness, if her mock-husband, later divorced from her, was not a nobleman, if she died of childbirth while attending to her Easter

* Julien Tiersot, *Histoire de la chanson populaire en France*, p. 38; Doncieux, *op. cit.*, p. 299; Jean Richepin, *op. cit.*, 12e année, no. 5, p. 206.

duties, if the queen, Marguerite de Valois, long estranged from the king and living in retirement, could not have been involved in a mysterious poison affair. More suitable for ballad-maker and ballad-singer were the familiar notions of a beautiful lady of noble lineage, a marchioness, her peerless paramour, the humbled queen's jealousy and the poisoned flowers often heard of in the folk tales. Once set to a fetching tune, the dramatic story of courtly license was lost even to its author; it had started on its long, anonymous way to posterity. And this had already taken place in the year 1599, in the Ile-de-France.

Here, in a nutshell, we have the whole spirit of the folk song. The folk song chronicles no mere event, it harbors no transient deed, but leaps up here and there, awakened by a flash of human interest. It expresses an impulse that cannot be trimmed to fit a morality with which it is not concerned.

LES TROIS ROSES EMPOISONNÉES



1 Quand le Roi rentra dans Paris, || salua tout' les dames;
La premièr' qu'il a salué', || ell' lui a ravi l'âme.

2 "Marquis, t'es plus heureux qu'un roi || d'avoir tant joli' femme.
Si tu voulais m'en fair' l'honneur || j'en aurais l'avantage."

3 —"Sire, vous avez tout pouvoir, || pouvoir et la puissance;
Car si vous n'étiez pas le Roi, || j'en aurais la vengeance."

4 Le Roi l'a pris', l'a-t emmené' || dans sa plus haute chambre.
Nuit et jour ell' ne cess' d' pleurer || pour son honneur défendre.

5 "La bell', si tu voulais m'aimer, || je t'y ferais princesse.
De tout mon or et mon argent || tu serais la maîtresse."

6 —"Gardez votre or et votre argent; || n'appartient qu'à la Reine.
J'estim'rais mieux mon doux Marquis || que toutes vos richesses."

7 La Rein' lui fit faire un bouquet || de trois roses jolies,
Et la senteur de ce bouquet || fit mourir la Marquise.

8 Le Roi lui fit faire un tombeau || couvert de pierre grise;
A fait marquer tout alentour || le nom de la Marquise.

TRANSLATION

1 When the king came in to Paris town,
He bowed to the ladies fair,
And the very first enflamed his heart
Of the ladies debonair.

2 "You are happier than a king, my lord,
The husband of her to be;
And do me the honor and bear with me
For her lover in secrecy."

3 "You have the power and the might.
Command, and I obey.
And were you not the king of France,
I were revenged today."

4 The king he took and led her away
To the topmost room and high,
And all the day and all the night
She never ceased to cry.

5 "Beautiful lady, give your love,
And you've a princess' treasure,
All my silver and all my gold,
All at your own pleasure."

6 "Keep your silver and keep your gold,
The treasure of the queen,
And dearer to me my sweet Marquis
Than your gifts all unclean."

7 The queen bade make her a bouquet
Of lovely roses three;
Their lovely scent the lady brought
To die for jealousy.

8 The king bade make her a coffin of elm
And a stony monument,
Whereon her name was graven round
As in a circle bent.

THE WICKED KNIGHT

THE Wicked Knight is the French counterpart of the Anglo-Scottish broadside *Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight** or *The Outlandish Knight* and of a considerable number of songs recorded in Scandinavian, Germanic and Slavic countries, as well as in France, Italy and Spain.

In the opinion of Doncieux† and other scholars who preceded him, the ballad of the Elf-Knight is to be traced to Scandinavian sources, or more precisely to a *lied* that has been recorded in Flanders and The Netherlands. From its original home it started on its rambles throughout Europe, leaking out of one language into another, sometimes retrogressing under a new garb, and losing at every turn some of its former features. From The Netherlands it seems to have traveled in three main directions: first, into northern Scandinavia and England and into Hungary; secondly, into Flanders and France; and thirdly, into Germany, thence into Slavic countries and Italy, and from Italy to Spain.

In tracing its migrations students have been guided by the structure and contents of the story and by the derivation of the hero's names—Halewijn, Hollemen, Oldemor, Romor, Rymer, Ulver, Olbert, Elf [-Knight]. The Norwegian philologist, S. Bugge, derives the names from a common nucleus, *olv-*, which in turn is said to go back to Holev(ern) or Olev(ern), ultimately Holophernes, the Assyrian general of Biblical memory.

The original *lied* from The Netherlands, indeed, seems almost too consistently similar to the story of Judith and Holophernes—introduced into the Bible from an ancient Judaic tale‡—to be an entirely independent creation; hence, genetic derivation or descent from a common source seems likely. In both narratives a courageous and beautiful maiden makes up her mind to visit the handsome hero from whose bedside no bride has ever returned. Before meeting the fate of other victims she cunningly distracts the brigand, decapitates him, and with the bleeding trophy returns home triumphantly, to be greeted as a heroine and savior.

The theme of our song therefore bids fair to be an ancient one. But the

* Of which Child has compiled six versions in *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (I, 4).

† *Op. cit.*, "Renaud le tueur de femmes," pp. 350-365.

‡ *Cf.* Doncieux' account.

theme and the form are different things, to be considered independently. While the Asiatic archetype would be thousands of years old, only a few centuries separate us from its European diffusion. Scholars have not even suggested a date for the Scandinavian *lieds* on the mediæval Holophernes. But it is obvious that a long time must have elapsed between their inception and their subsequent migrations throughout Europe and back into Asia.

The French "complainte" alone will take us back to an epoch vaguely preceding the sixteenth century.

Twenty-five versions at least had been compiled for France by Doncieux, Child, Rossat, and Millien;* and seventeen versions have in recent years come to our attention in Canada. This total of over forty French versions shows a fairly extensive diffusion within the range of a single language. It is not impossible that, after spreading from northern Scandinavia to England, the ballad may again have invaded the British Isles in its Gallic form; for of the two English branches of the song, one—presumably the earlier—is a mere adaptation of the Danish model, while the other† is essentially the same as *The Wicked Knight* ("Renaud le tueur de femmes").

The seventeen Canadian records, all secured east of Quebec, show plainly that the ballad was an old one when the pioneers brought it over from the French provinces to the shores of the St. Lawrence, presumably in the middle of the seventeenth century (1608-1673). For it had already undergone such changes and disintegration as argue the lapse of many generations.

The hero, for instance, bears the name of Renaud or Dion (Guillon, Léon) in various versions, in both France and Canada. If Renaud be conceded as the original name, the other can be traced to a misconception. Long ago, our ballad and that of *La fille du roi Loys* were merged and the name of Déon or its equivalents, which belonged to the second, was the only one retained in the amalgamated variant. That the confusion antedated the

* To the sixteen versions compiled by Doncieux for France must be added the following: four versions recorded in French Switzerland by A. Rossat (*Les chansons populaires recueillies dans la Suisse romande*) in *Publications de la Société suisse des Traditions populaires*, 13 (1917), pp. 68-72; four variants in A. Millien, *Chants et chansons populaires du Nivernais* (I, 133-137); and a reference to its existence in Emile Guimet, *Chants populaires du Lyonnais* (*Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts de Lyon*, vol. 22, p. 85).

† Versions of which were recently published by Cecil Sharpe.

seventeenth century is made clear by the fact that not only are both names found in Canada, but the compound and component songs as well.

The variations and decay of the French branch of the ballad in the various records is our best proof of its age. The songs previously cited in this collection, in spite of their dates,—1525, 1544, 1599,—were all in a far better state of preservation than *The Wicked Knight.* They at once disclosed their fundamental features, though they were sometimes at variance with each other. But this is not the case here, and we are confronted with problems at every step. Thus, we might not concur in Doncieux' opinion as to the prosodic frame of *The Wicked Knight,* the place and order of several hemistichs and the elements that are genuine or interpolated.

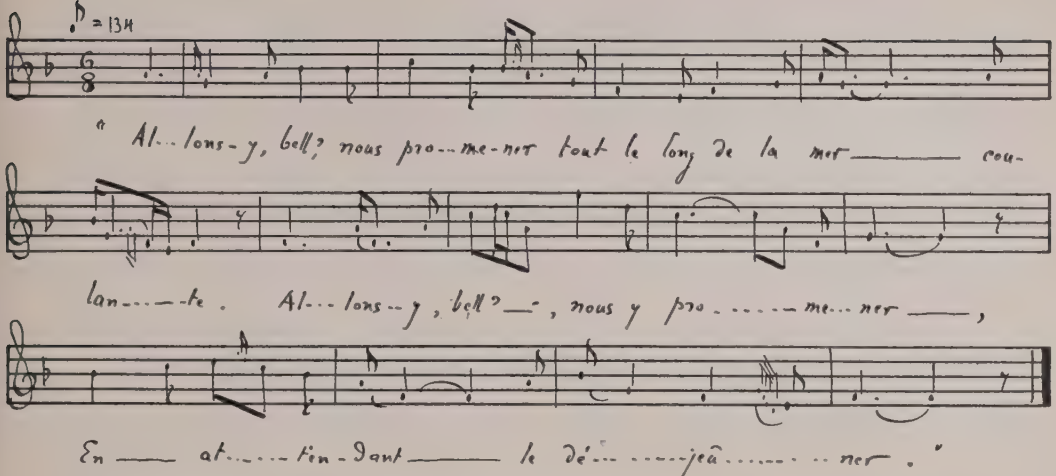
To touch on only one point—the prosodic structure: Our song may or may not consist of quatrains with twin masculine rhymes, as Doncieux has it. For our part, we have provisionally adopted another scheme, already familiar and more consonant with the facts under our own observation. The stanzas appear to consist of tiercets after a common folk type: a first line of sixteen syllables with a masculine cæsura at the eighth (8+8) and a feminine unrhymed ending, and two shorter lines of eight syllables each with masculine rhymes. Not only do the Canadian versions so far examined justify this choice, but more emphatically so do the French versions available to us here—those of Bujeaud* and Champfleury et Weckerlin† for Poitou-Aunis and the Lyonnais.

While there is no doubt that the present form of the "complainte" must have originated in northern France (France d'oïl), we do not agree with Doncieux' view that it could not date back farther than the seventeenth century. Everything points to its being far older, indeed, than the sixteenth-century ballads of *Prince Eugene* and *The Prince of Orange.*

The present Canadian version is merely a provisional transcription first published in 1917, before we had recorded the better versions now at our disposal.

* J. Bujeaud, *Chants et chansons populaires des Provinces de l'Ouest,* II, 232, 233.
† Champfleury et Weckerlin, *Chansons populaires des Provinces de France,* p. 172.

LE MÉCHANT GUILLON



1 "Allons-y, bell', nous promener ‖ tout le long de la mer coulante.
Allons-y, bell', nous promener
En attendant le déjeuner."

2 Mais quand ils fur'nt dedans le bois: ‖ "Mon beau Guillon, que [j'ai donc soif!
—"Tu ne mangeras ni boiras
Avant d'y voir couler ton sang."

3 Mais quand ils fur'nt sortis du bois, ‖ le beau galant dit à la belle:
"Tu coucheras dans la rivièr'
Où seize femmes sont noyé's.

4 "Car c'est ici, bell' Jeanneton, ‖ qu'il faudra t'y déshabiller."
La belle ôta son blanc jupon
Pour aller voir la mer au fond.

5 Quand ell' s'y fut déshabillé', ‖ le beau galant s'approcha d'elle;
C'est pour tirer son bas du pied.
Dedans la mer ell' la poussé.

6 Dedans la mer à s'y noyer || une branche il a-t attrapée.
La belle a pris son grand couteau,
A coupé la branche à fleur d'eau.

7 "Tends-moi la main, bell' Jeanneton!"— || "Pêche, Guillon,
Si tu en prends, n'en mangerons; [pêche poissons!
A nos parents en porterons."

8 —"Ne veux-tu pas, bell' Jeanneton, || que j'aille revoir mon
—"Non, non! Guillon, méchant garçon! [père?"
Va-t'en donc voir la mer au fond."

9 "Comment vont tous ces gens parler || en te voyant arriver
—"Ils apprendront la vérité, [seule?"
Mais que tu voulais m'y noyer."

10 "Qui dans le bois te conduira?"— || "C'est ton cheval, mon
A grand tourment nous emmena, [beau Guillon!
A pas lents me ramènera."

11 "Voici, la bell', voici les clefs || de mon château, de mes
—"Je n'en ai que fair' de château, [richesses."
Ni de château, ni de Guillon!"

12 "Retourne-t'en, bell' Jeanneton, || tout droit au logis de mon
Tu lui diras que je suis mort; [père.
Bell' Jeanneton n'a pas de tort."

TRANSLATION

1 "Beautiful girl, come walk with me
Along the length of the rolling sea.
Come, beautiful girl, and walk with me,
Breakfast still will waiting be."

2 When they were come within the wood:
"My handsome Guillon, I'm athirst."
"You shall not eat, you shall not drink,
You'll see your own blood flowing first."

3 When they were come out of the wood,
Said handsome Guillon, "Lay you down
For your thirst in the river where sixteen maids
Have laid themselves to drink and drown.

4 "Here it is, fair Jeanneton,
That I will have you to undress."
The maid took off her petticoat
To go to the sea-floor's wilderness.

5 And when the maiden was undressed,
The handsome knight fell on his knee
To pull her stocking from her foot.
Quick she pushed him into the sea.

6 To stay his drowning under the wave
He seized a bough that drooped below;
She took her knife and cut it off
At the level of the water's flow.

7 "Give me your hand, sweet Jeanneton!"
"Fish, Guillon! There's many a fish.
Catch a few and let us eat
And bring our folks a savory dish!"

8 "And will you not, sweet Jeanneton,
My father I should see again?"
"No, no, Guillon, you're a wicked knight!
Go down deep to the watery plain."

9 "But what will your people say to you,
When it's all alone they see you come?"
"The truth is what they will learn from me;
Who tried to drown me will ne'er come home."

10 "And who's to take you through the wood?"
"It is your horse, my handsome knight.
Slow will be his homeward steps
Who brought us hither in galloping flight."

11 "Beautiful girl, here are the keys
Of castle and treasure, silver and gold."
"Of castle and treasure, silver and gold
No more than of lying knight I hold."

12 "Return, my beautiful Jeanneton,
To my father's mansion straightaway;
And you shall tell him I am dead
And Jeanneton's not wronged today."

THE PRISONER AND THE GAOLER'S DAUGHTER

THE love adventure so charmingly narrated in our ballad is another instance of a folk theme which cannot be given a definite time and place. It has the freshness and the graceful simplicity which characterize the folk songs of the best period.

Unlike the archaic tale of *The Wicked Knight* it has not wandered far from its birthplace—one of the northern provinces of *oïl* in France.* It cannot claim a great antiquity. It is not known to have crossed the French border at more than a few points, a version having been recorded in Flanders (presumably in French) and three in Northern Italy.† More than eighteen versions have been compiled in France, chiefly from the northern provinces; and about ten have come to us in northeastern Quebec (Charlevoix, Chicoutimi and Bonaventure counties). One of the versions from Franche-Comté, in France,—Beauquier's‡ *La belle Françoise*—differs enough from the others, except near the end, to be considered as a different composition.

More recent in style and character than *The Wicked Knight*, it may be said in a general way to belong to the same period as the historical ballads of the type of *Prince Eugene*—the sixteenth century—in spite of the more primitive character of its theme.

Its prosody, though somewhat different from that of *The Wicked Knight*, belongs to the same general type. The first line of the stanza exceeds the other two by nearly one half (comprising fourteen stressed syllables with masculine cæsura at the eighth, and feminine unrhymed ending—8+6); the last two lines of eight syllables each are coupled by a masculine rhyme.§

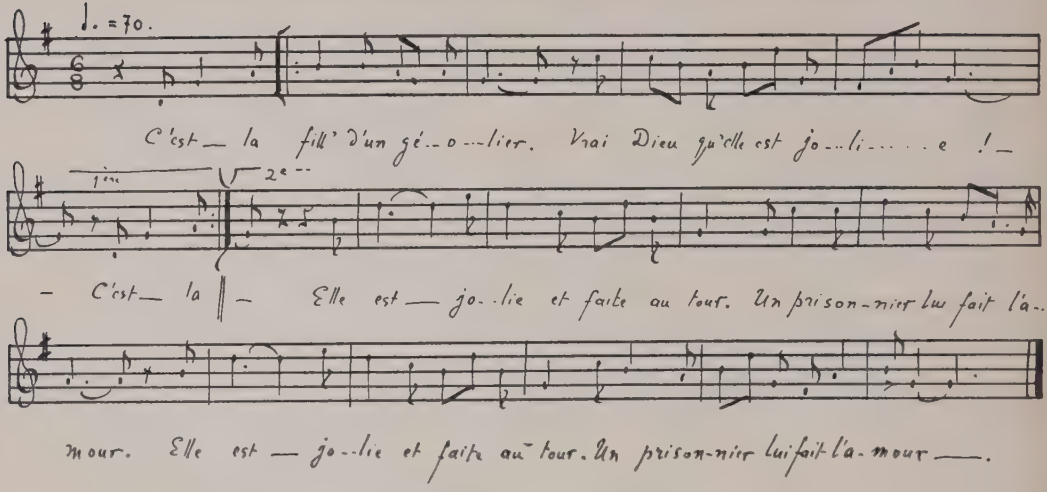
* Doncieux (*op. cit.*, XXVIII, "Pierre et Françoise," pp. 330-337) favors a central or eastern province in *oïl*.

† Decombes, in his *Chansons populaires d'Ille-et-Vilaine*, "Dans la prison de Lyon" (pp. 344-346), more than seven versions; Doncieux, in his *Romancéro* (pp. 330, 331), has listed thirteen versions in all; and later, A. Millien, in his *Chants et chansons populaires du Nivernais* (I, 229, 233) has quoted two melodies and several variants.

‡ Charles Beauquier, *Chansons populaires de Franche-Comté*, pp. 267, 268.

§ The text here presented is a provisional one derived from the few versions recorded in 1916.

LE PRISONNIER ET LA FILLE DU GEÔLIER



1 C'est la fille d'un géolier. ‖ Vrai Dieu! qu'elle est jolie!
Elle est jolie et faite au tour.
Un prisonnier lui fait l'amour.

2 C'est par un dimanche au matin, ‖ s'en va trouver le juge;
A ses genoux ell' s'est jeté':
"Donnez sa grâce au prisonnier!"

3 Le juge la prend par la main: ‖ "Levez-vous, Marguerite!
Le prisonnier, il en mourra;
Un autre amant il vous faudra."

4 De là la bell' s'est en allé' ‖ au logis de son père,
Leva le traversin du lit,
Les clefs de la prison a pris.

5 En courant la belle aussitôt ‖ s'en va ouvrir les portes.
"Amant, sortez de la prison;
Les port's en sont à l'abandon."

6 —"Asseyons-nous dessur ce banc; || parlons d'amour ensemble."
Tourne la tête derrièr' lui,
Aperçoit le bourreau venir.

7 "C'est donc ici, chèr' Marguerit', || qu'il me faudra mourire.
Prends cet anneau d'or de mon doigt,
Choisis un autre amant que moi."

8 —"D'un autre amant je ne veux pas, || Jules, mon ami Jules!
Je veux mourir entre tes bras;
Je n'puis survivre à ton trépas."

9 Mais en montant sur l'échafaud, || aperçoit Marguerite,
Le prisonnier dit au bourreau:
"Couvrez m'ami' de mon manteau."

10 Le bourreau répond à l'instant: || "Tu pens' encor à ta mie?
J'ai un bout d'corde à mon côté
Qui te la f'ra vite oublier."

11 Mais quand il fut sur l'échafaud, || la belle a tombé, morte.
Les juge ont fini par s'entendre:
"Voilà des amours tendres!
Qu'on donn' sa grâce au prisonnier,
Que dans la ville en soit parlé!"

TRANSLATION

1 'Tis the daughter of a prison guard—
Faith, but she is pretty!
Maiden there's no lovelier,
Beloved of a prisoner.

2 And of a Sunday in the morn
She's to the judge and prays;
Sinks before him on her knees:
"Oh give the prisoner release!"

3 The judge he takes her by the hand:
"Stand up, Marguerite!
The prisoner will die, and you
Will have a lover and love anew."

4 The maiden rose, she hastened away
To her father's prison lodge;
She raised the bolster of the bed
And with the prison keys she fled,

5 And to the prison gates away
To open for her lover.
"Leave prison, lover, for my side!
The prison gates are open wide."

6 "Here let us sit and here
We'll tell of love together."
Turned her head and she was dumb,
Saw him, saw the hangman come.

7 "And it is here, dear Marguerite,
That I shall have to die.
Take this golden ring from me,
Another shall your lover be."

8 "Another ne'er shall lover be,
Another ne'er shall come;
'Tis in your arms I wish to die,
Nor wait till in a grave you lie."

9 Up the scaffold stepping slow,
He saw his Marguerite.
To hangman said the prisoner,
"Take my mantle, cover her."

10 The hangman, mocking, answered him,
"And of your sweetheart thinking still?
There's a bit of rope hangs at my side,
It makes forget when snugly tied."

11 But when he stood on scaffold high,
The maiden swooned in death.
The judges one to another said,
" 'Tis tender love discoverèd.
Release and grace for the prisoner,
The tale be told each villager!"

THE PRINCESS AND THE HANGMAN

NOT many folk songs can compare with this "complainte" for somber beauty. The boldly contrasted episodes are outlined with rapidity. The melody creates an atmosphere of impending tragedy and enhances the severity of the narrative.

There is a strange, awful determination in the behavior of the self-possessed parricide. Awkwardly expressed, this tale of woe would be utterly crude and revolting. Here its cruelty fascinates. The effect of the narrative, moreover, is not to produce horror so much as helpless wonder at the turns of fate. We can hardly escape an unwilled sympathy for this haughty princess, who would rather die an ignominious death than take a hangman's bribe. We fancy an unknown, a fearful reason for the slaying of her father, perhaps a supreme duty.

The quality of a folk song, we are told, is what saves it from oblivion. Yet the undoubted artistry of *The Princess and the Hangman* does not seem to have secured it any considerable degree of popularity in France, at least among the folk singers of the last century. For its Gallic form was clearly about to pass beyond the range of recovery when we recently obtained it from three singers in the isolated counties of Charlevoix and Gaspé in northeastern Quebec. It has not since been found anywhere else in Canada; we have also failed to discover it in the song collections from France so far perused.

Failing parallels for the body of the song, we have traced certain European analogies for the closing episode, the hangman's love and the rebuke of the princess. A similar ending is to be found in another song, quite different in other respects, recorded in northwestern France by Bujeaud,* and by Millien. A beautiful maiden, Françoise—or "la Fille d'un prince qui s'appelle Marie"—would rather die on the scaffold than be converted to a new religion at her parents' command. The hangman offers to save her life for a price, but he meets with defeat.

* J. Bujeaud, *loc. cit.*, II, 144, 145; A. Millien, *loc. cit.* (Nivernais), I, 152.

(Bujeaud:) . . . Au chaffaud faut monter.
Quand elle fut montée
Prète à tomber au bord,
Le bourreau la regarde
D'un air triste et dolent.

. . . "C'est vos beaux yeux, Françoise,
Qui m'y charment le cœur.
Si vous voulez, Françoise,
N'nous marierons tous deux. . . ."

(Millien:) "Bourreau, fais ton office || de moi quand tu voudras."

Two other records, alluded to in Bujeaud's collection (p. 145), seem to have been variants of our "complainte." The first, *Le parricide*, is reproduced in M. Rathery's study of the folk songs of Italy (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 mars, 1862).

. . . Quand elle fut au haut du gibet,
Elle se mit à chanter.
Elle chanta si bien
Que le bourreau devint amoureux d'elle.
"Toinetta, dit-il,
Voulez-vous m'épouser?"
"Plutôt que d'être femme d'un bourreau
J'aime mieux que mon col. . . ."

The other parallel was recorded in Brittany by Dr. Roullin (*Comité de la Langue, Bull. 1853*, no. 4).

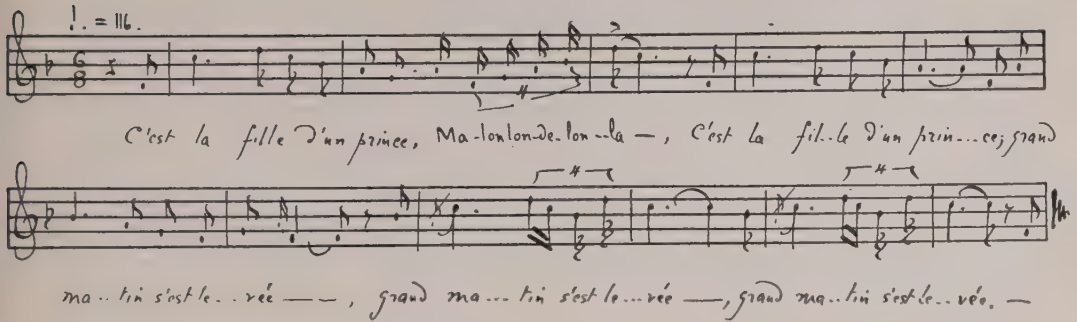
We have recently discovered, to our surprise, that our song must be traced back to Italian sources, an occurrence which is seldom repeated in French balladry. *La parricida*, of which C. Nigra* gives five versions (from Veneta, Alessandria, Piedmonte and Monferrato), is no other than *The Princess and the Hangman*, but for the stanzas in our Canadian variant referring to the stake in the ground. It seems far more at home, indeed, in the northern provinces of Italy than in France, if we are to depend upon the usual criteria of recurrence and diffusion. We do not, therefore, hesitate

* *Canti popolari del Piemonte*, pp. 80-84.

to concur in Nigra's opinion as to its single origin in the South, and we only wonder at its total disappearance in France after it had no doubt tarried in both its southern and northern provinces, as our Canadian survivals clearly indicate. The three singers from whom we obtained our records in 1916 and 1922 belong to the unmixed stock of seventeenth-century emigrants from Le Perche and other northwestern provinces. The formal perfection of our text, moreover, leads us to believe that it must have been the work of some unknown poet or jongleur of the best folk song period, for it does not show the flaws common in most folk song adaptations.

The Princess and the Hangman was given by the singers as a "complainte," not as a work or dance song, as one might have surmised from its refrain. Their statement is corroborated by the broad, slow rhythm of the melody. Its stanzas consist of single lines monorhymed in *é*, the first hemistich duplicated around an interior refrain, the last thrice repeated. As in the alexandrine, the lines consist of twelve syllables, with a cæsure after the sixth; but the traditional form here differs from the classic in so far as the mute ending the first hemistich is not included in the reckoning, although not elided.

LA PRINCESSE ET LE BOURREAU



1 C'est la fille d'un prince,
Malonlondelonla
C'est la fille d'un prince; ‖ grand matin s'est levé',
grand matin s'est levé'. (*bis*)
2 Dans la chambr' de son père ‖ ell' s'est mise à chanter.
3 "Ah! taisez-vous, blondine, ‖ laissez-moi reposer."
4 Mais la chanson finie ‖ son père elle a tu-é.
5 Ell' l'a pris à brassée, ‖ dans la cav' l'a jeté.
6 Ell' a fermé la cave, ‖ le bourreau est entré.
7 "Ah! dites-moi, blondine, ‖ où est votr' père allé?"
8 —"Il est allé en guerre; ‖ le roi l'a commandé."
9 —"Ah! dites-moi, blondine, ‖ viendrez-vous l'y chercher?"
10 —"Ah oui, certes! dit-elle. ‖ Qui voudra m'y mener?
11 —"Montez dans mon carrosse, ‖ je vous y mènerai."
12 Quand ell' fut sur ces côtes, ‖ vit un poteau planté.
13 Ell' demande à sa dame: ‖ "Pour qui c' poteau planté?"
14 —"La fill' qu'a tué son père, ‖ qu'a-t-elle mérité?"
15 —"A mérité la corde ‖ ou bien d'être brûlé'."
16 Quand ell' fut dans l'échelle, ‖ bourreau l'a regardé'.
17 —"Ah! dites-moi, blondine, ‖ voudriez-vous m'aimer?"
18 —"Ah non, certes! dit-elle, ‖ il vaut bien mieux mourir,
19 Que la fille d'un prince ‖ un bourreau l'épouser.
20 Bourreau, fais ton office, ‖ de moi n'ai' pas pitié!"

TRANSLATION

1 'Tis a princess high-born,
Malonlondelonla
'Tis a princess high-born
Arose in the early morn.

2 For her father in his room
She made a song to bloom.

3 "Still, still! my daughter, cease!
Oh let me sleep in peace!"

4 And when she'd sung the lay,
Her father she did slay.

5 With strong arms threw the dead
In the dungeon for a bed.

6 She swings the gate in place,
Scarce hears the hangman's pace.

7 "Oh tell me, blond-haired,
Where has your father fared?"

8 "He's to the wars and away,
King's called him to the fray."

9 "Oh tell me, blond of hair,
And will you seek him there?"

10 "And sure I will," said she,
"But who's to go with me?"

11 "Come in and ride with me
To yonder country."

12 Up to the hill they rode,
High up a stake stood.

13 To her lady turned round,
"For whom the stake in the ground?"

14 "When a father she has slain,
What then the daughter's pain?"

15 "The rope around her neck,
Or to burn up at the stake."

16 She was mounting steps of the dead,
The hangman stopped and said:

17 "Hear me, blond of hair,
Love me your life to spare."

18 "Oh no, I'd rather die,
I would rather hang high

19 "Than a princess to be," she said,
"And a hangman low to wed.

20 "Hangman, to your duty!
I shall not want your pity."

WHITE AS THE SNOW

SCHOLARS are agreed in their estimate of *White as the Snow* ("Blanche comme la neige" or "Celle qui fait la morte pour son honneur garder") as one of the outstanding folk ballads in the French language. It has, indeed, seldom been equalled, in its *genre*, for poetic beauty.

A beautiful princess of feudal days is ravished from her lovely bed of roses by the youngest of three roving knights. In the Paris hostelry where she is conveyed she drops dead in the middle of the feast. "Ring, oh ring the bells!" The easily deceived, romantic men-at-arms kneel to an unlikely prayer and bury her under a gray apple tree in her father's garden. Three days later she rises from her grave to her father's arms, for she had "played the dead three days for the sake of purity." The unknown poet has in a few strokes conjured such a graceful picture that his ideally unreal characters appeal to us somewhat like the quaint personages of an ancient Gobelin tapestry.

Of the popularity of *Blanche comme la neige* one may form an idea from the wide range of its diffusion and the favor it has found among the singers of the past centuries. Folklorists have already compiled more than eighty independent versions of it in France, Canada, northern Italy (Piedmont), Spain (Catalonia) and Switzerland.* And, more remarkable still, it has passed into the Breton and Basque languages at the French frontiers. Scholars, too, have shown an unusual interest in this ballad. We may mention the controversy engaged in in the eighties between C. Nigra, the noted Italian folklorist, and A. Loquin† on the debatable point of its original prosody; the brief, though pithy, analysis of Doncieux;‡ and the recent review by

* About forty-five versions have been listed for France, chiefly by E. Rolland (*Recueil de chansons populaires*, III, 58-63), Decombes (*Chants et chansons populaires d'Ille-et-Vilaine*, pp. 150-153), Doncieux (*loc. cit.*, pp. 269, 270), and A. Millien (*Chants et chansons populaires du Nivernais*, I, 222-228); eight for Italy, six of which are by Nigra. A. Rossat (*loc. cit.*, pp. 63-68) has since found nine in French Switzerland; and about twenty versions have come to our notice in Canada, since 1916.

† *Mélusine*, VI, 217-219.

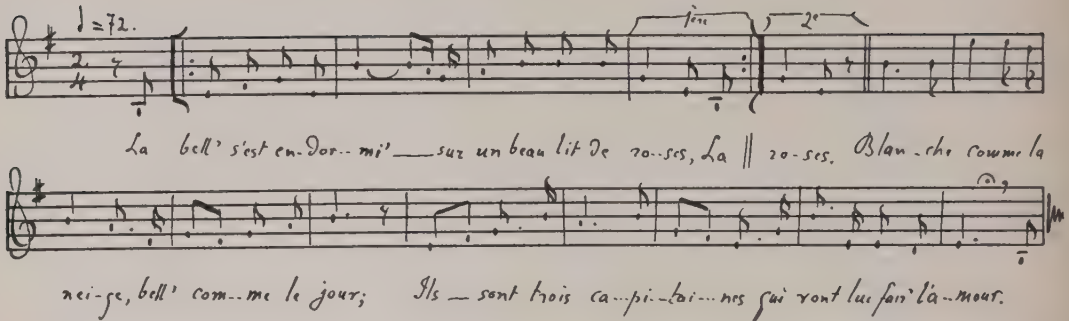
‡ *Loc. cit.*, pp. 269-279.

Jean Richepin in which the poet sums up his remarks with the words, "On y trouve un grace incomparable et une rare élégance."*

Well known as it is to folk singers in Canada,—we have obtained about twenty records in various parts of Quebec,—it may seem strange that it had not come to the attention of the educated Canadians until a few years ago and that it is not to be found in their folk song anthologies. The following text of *Blanche comme la neige* cannot be considered either perfect or final, although some of the gaps in the individual versions have been filled by comparing several of the available records.

* *Journal de l'Université des Annales*, 12e année, no. 5, p. 205.

BLANCHE COMME LA NEIGE



1 La bell' s'est endormi' ‖ sur un beau lit de roses, (*bis*)
Blanche comme la neige, ‖ belle comme le jour;
Ils sont trois capitaines ‖ qui vont lui fair' l'amour.

2 Le plus jeune des trois ‖ la prend par sa main blanche:
"Montez, montez, princesse, ‖ dessus mon cheval gris;
A Paris je vous mène ‖ dans un fort beau logis."

3 Tout aussitôt rendus, ‖ l'hôtesse lui demande:
"Ah! dites-moi, la belle, ‖ dites-moi sans mentir,
Et'-vous ici par force ‖ ou pour vos bons plaisirs?"

4 La belle a répondu: ‖ "Je suis un' fille sage.
Au château de mon père ‖ les gens du roi m'ont pris,
M'ont pris, m'ont emmenée ‖ à ce fort beau logis."

5 Finissant ce discours, ‖ le capitaine rentre:
"Mangez, buvez, la belle, ‖ selon votre appétit;
Avec un capitaine ‖ vous passerez la nuit."

6 Au milieu du repas, ‖ la belle a tombé morte.
"Sonnez, sonnez les cloches, ‖ tambours au régiment!
Ma maîtresse, elle est morte ‖ à l'âge de quinze ans."

7 "Où l'enterrerons-nous, || cette aimable princesse?
Au jardin de son père || dessous un pommier gris.
Nous prierons Dieu pour elle || qu'elle aille en paradis."

8 Mais au bout de trois jours || son père s'y promène.
"Ouvrez, ouvrez ma tombe, || mon pèr', si vous m'aimez!
Trois jours j'ai fait la morte || pour mon honneur garder."

TRANSLATION

1 On a lovely bed of roses sleeps a lovely maiden,
White as the snow and beautiful as day;
Their love it is three men-at-arms have come to say.

2 'Tis the youngest of the three, he takes her white hand.
"Princess, come with me on the back of my steed away,
To Paris let us go and in a mansion stay."

3 And they have come within, sadly turns the hostess:
"Tell me, lovely maiden, tell me true to hear—
Is it willing you have come and have you shed no tear?"

4 And maiden to the hostess: "Innocent am I.
'Tis from my father's castle knights have ravished me
And fled and brought me here in a beautiful hostelry."

5 Her plaint was at an end, the man-at-arms returned:
"My sweetheart, eat and drink with goodly appetite,
'Tis with a man-at-arms you'll pass a pleasant night."

6 Now they are at the feast, and dead the maiden falls.
"Ring, oh ring the bells, and drum a dirge for her!
My mistress she is dead upon her fifteenth year."

7 "Where shall we bury her, this beautiful princess?"—
"In the garden of her father, under an apple tree.
With God in paradise we pray her spirit be."

8 Three days she's in the ground, her father walks above.
"Father, if you love me, open, open the grave!
I've played the dead three days my honor for to save."

THE TRAGIC HOME-COMING

THIS dismal "complainte" brings to our attention an interesting and complex problem in the history of European oral traditions—that concerning the age of the oldest surviving folk songs and ballads in the French language. For we seem to be confronted here with one of the ragged and time-worn relics of mediæval days.

Not many traces remain of its former migrations. Less than twelve records, so far as we know, are available for comparison: one in Bujeaud's* collection for the Loire provinces, another in Rossat's† monograph for Switzerland, and probably ten from Canada (three from Les Eboulements, one from the neighborhood of Quebec, and about six from Gaspé and Bonaventure counties). Two or three other songs, bearing the hallmark of a much later date, also elaborate the same weird tale. One of these, *Le soldat tué par sa mère*, was found by Millien‡ in Nivernais (France), and several versions of two others were also recorded by C. M. Barbeau in Gaspé and Bonaventure counties (Quebec) in the summer of 1922.

The legend of the long absent warrior-son, who returns home unrecognized and is murdered by his mother, was well known among country folk, according to Bujeaud; and Alexandre Dumas is quoted as stating that Joachim Werner, the German poet, had derived the theme of his drama, *The Twenty-fourth of February*, from a similar tradition current among the mountaineers of the Gemmi, in Switzerland. As if unknowingly to add to the probability of this assumption, Rossat later produced a Swiss version without the melody, recorded in an old manuscript song book; we say "unknowingly," for he stated in his introduction to the text that he had found no parallel. These scattered outcroppings of the old ballad plainly indicate that at one time its geographic range must have been wide, at least in France.

It is within the song itself that we find the most convincing proofs of age and decay. While the Canadian records of the older branch of the

* J. Bujeaud, *loc. cit.*, "Ce sont les filles d'un Maréchal," Poitou and Aunis, pp. 237-239.

† A. Rossat, *loc. cit.*, "Le fils assassiné par sa mère," pp. 95, 96.

‡ A. Millien, *loc. cit.*, I, 286, 287.

ballad are closely alike and seem therefore to go back to a single version imported from northwestern France in the middle of the seventeenth century, the corresponding European forms stand far apart in wording and phraseology. This alone indicates that there has been a prolonged period of differentiation. There is enough in common in these ramifications, however, to show that ultimately they derive from the same source. The plot, the situations and the characters are identical; other features coincide, and some lines are similar. One of the opening hemistichs, for instance, is: "Au bout de quatorze ans finis" (Bujeaud), "J'ai bien resté quatorze ans" (Rossat), "Au bout de quatorze ans passés" (Canada). The following stanza is the only one that closely corresponds in the three forms:

(Poitou, III:) Quand le messieu y fut rentré,
La belle s'est mise à tant rire:
"Vous êtes, je crois, mon neveu,
"Qu'il y a quatorze ans je n'ai veu."

(Switzerland, 5:) La tante qui était là || toujours y me regarde:
—Vous ressemblez mon neveu,
C'est bien quatorze ans que j't'ai vu."

(Canada, 6:) A chaque pas mais qu'il faisait || sa tante le regarde:
"Ah! je crois bien par vos doux yeux
Que vous êtes un de mes neveux."

In no other case are the three records so closely analogous, though at several points two of them agree. There was sufficient ambiguity in the prosody to prevent the folklorists from reaching the same conclusion as to the original form of the ballad. Bujeaud's stanzas appear in quatrains of eight syllables to the line, with masculine rhymes in the last two only. The more appropriate three-line stanza is in Rossat's transcription, the first line containing fourteen syllables with a mute ending and a cæsura at the middle (7+7), the last two lines rhyming, but with only seven syllables each. Our Canadian records, on the other hand, belong to the following pattern: a line of fourteen (8+6), and two lines of eight syllables; the first line has an odd feminine ending (the cæsura is masculine), while the remaining lines have masculine rhymes.

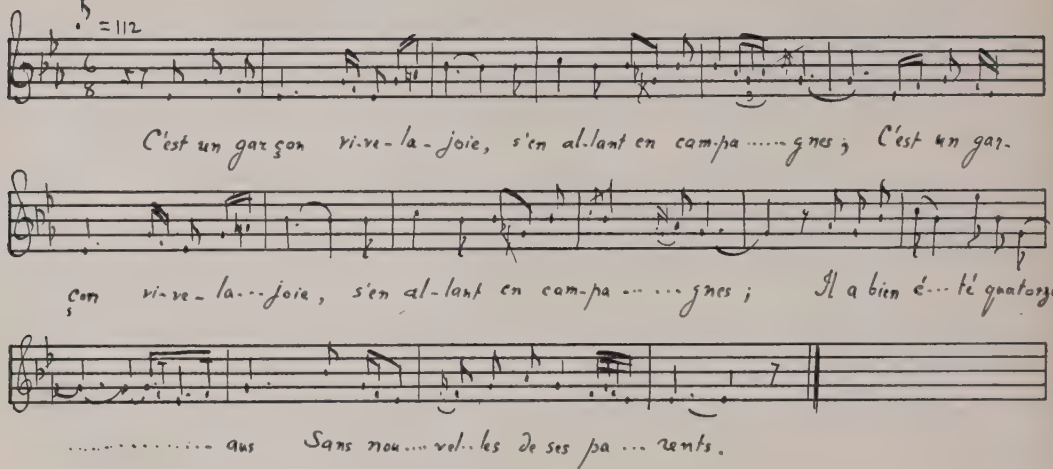
The question naturally arises: How and at what rate has the process of

disintegration and readaptation in folk songs taken place? This delicate problem cannot be lightly disposed of, in the absence of positive evidence; and the arbitrary choice of a few words in a reconstructed version to indicate a definite period, in the manner of Doncieux, remains unconvincing, as the reliability of these very criteria is usually more than questionable. Suffice it to say that two or three centuries have meant little in the way of mutation for most of our Canadian songs after their isolation from the mother stem. Word-for-word parallels in equivalent records of to-day from both sides of the Atlantic are the rule rather than the exception. A remarkable degree of fixity is everywhere apparent; changes are slower than might have been anticipated. When an old song has given rise to several variants they are generally found in both the old and the new world, which shows that the changes must antedate the separation. These early mutations themselves could not have been the work of a day or of a single man. They are the accumulated result of numerous oral transmissions and readaptations in spheres of culture that differed somewhat from one another. In *The Wicked Knight, The Princess and the Hangman* and *The Tragic Home-coming,* by far the most significant period of differentiation—and presumably a lengthy one at that—seems to have preceded the seventeenth century. This was before our Canadian versions branched off to lead their own life.

The comparative correctness of our variant of *The Tragic Home-coming* does not necessarily bring us much nearer the lost original than Bujeaud's or Rossat's version, each of which is prosodically perfect, on the whole, though different. Minstrels or folk poets, at various times and places, must have set to work on the old "complainte," which perhaps no longer seemed sufficiently intelligible or up-to-date. The present version probably goes back to the French feudal period, for we have found no trace of the old minstrelsy along the St. Lawrence; the archaic prosody and style, as a creative tradition, may have been lost even in France before the early colonial period.

No approximate date of origin, therefore, can here be attributed to this ancient ballad. It is safe, however, to ascribe it to a period vaguely antedating the sixteenth or the fifteenth century.

LE RETOUR FUNESTE



1 C'est un garçon vive-la-joie, ‖ s'en allant en campagnes;
Il a bien été quatorze ans
Sans nouvelles de ses parents.

2 Au bout de quatorze ans passés, ‖ fut voir son capitaine.
"Mon capitain', je voudrais bien
M'en retourner dans mon pays."

3 —"Mon cher enfant, j'ai grand pitié ‖ de ta pauvre indigence.
Quand tu iras dans ton pays,
Tu ne seras pas reconnu."

4 Le premier logis qu'il a fait, ‖ c'est au logis d'sa tante.
"Bonjour, madame de céans!
Pourrait-on loger ici en payant?

5 "Tenez, madame de céans, ‖ voici ma valise;
Elle est remplie d'or et d'argent,
De riches bagu's et de diamants."

6 A chaque pas mais qu'il faisait, || sa tante le regarde:
"Ah! je vois bien par vos doux yeux
Que vous êt's un de mes neveux."

7 —"Si je suis un de vos neveux, || n'en dit's rien à ma mère.
N'en parlez point jusqu'à demain,
Jusqu'à demain de grand matin."

8 Le deuxièm' logis qu'il a fait, || c'est au logis d' sa mère.
"Bonjour, madame de céans!
Peut-on loger ici en payant?

9 "Tenez, madame de céans, || voici ma valise;
Elle est pleine d'or et d'argent,
De riches bagu's et de diamants."

10 Le lendemain, de grand matin, || s'en va droit chez sa sœur.
"Bonjour, ma sœure de céans!
Où est allé le gros marchand?"

11 "Ma sœur, il a pris son départ; || trop tard tu es venue."
Elle a tiré le rideau blanc,
Trouvé les draps tout pleins de sang.

12 "Hélas! ma sœur, qu'as-tu donc fait? || Tu mérites la corde.
Tu as tué ton pauvre enfant;
Voilà quatorze ans qu'est absent."

13 —"Ah oui, ma sœure de céans! || raison veut que je meure."
A dégaîné son grand couteau,
Se l'est passé dans les boyeaux.

TRANSLATION

1 Hail-fellow-well-met, a soldier boy
Is fighting everywhere.
It's thirteen years and all of a year
And never news of his folks to hear.

2 Fourteen years and then he went
His captain for to see.
"Captain, 'twould be fine for me
To go back to my own country."

3 "Dear boy, dear boy, I pity you
For your great poverty.
You'll stand at your own people's door,
But they will never know you more."

4 Into a dwelling first he came,
The dwelling of his aunt.
"Good day, my woman living here,
May one pay for room and cheer?

5 "Look, my woman living here,
And see this bag of mine;
'Tis filled with silver and with gold,
With rings and diamonds untold."

6 With every step and every turn
She looked upon him well.
" 'Tis by your sweet eyes I can see
A nephew mine that you must be."

7 "And though your nephew I must be,
My mother nothing tell,
Nothing till the day is done,
Nothing before to-morrow's sun."

8 Into a second house he came,
It was his mother's house.
"Good day, my woman living here,
May one pay for room and cheer?

9 "Look, my woman living here,
And see this bag of mine;
'Tis filled with silver and with gold,
With rings and diamonds untold."

10 'Twas early morn and off she went
Her sister for to see.
"Good day, my sister living here,
And when's the merchant to appear?"

11 "Too late, too late you've come to see,
He's long been on the way."
She drew aside the counterpane,
The sheets were bloody with clot and stain.

12 "Sister, my sister, what have you done?
There's a hangman's rope for you.
You've killed your child who left us here,
'Tis the thirteenth year and all of a year."

13 " 'Tis true, my sister living here,
'Tis true that I must die."
Suddenly she grabbed her knife
And in her bowels stabbed the knife.

THE RETURN OF THE SOLDIER HUSBAND

THIS beautiful ballad unfolds in words few, natural and moving, a human drama which is not easily excelled for the artistry of its telling. It early strayed away from its humble haunts among country folk into the paths of the novelists and the poets. Richepin described a version of it known to him as "one of the most beautiful poems ever written in any language."* Others, less explicit in their eulogy, had long before him proved their partiality for the ballad in a manner still more memorable. Balzac, in one of his masterpieces, *Le Colonel Chabert,* Zola, in *Jacques Damour,* and Guy de Maupassant, in an incisive short story, *Le Retour,* have transplanted the little folk theme of their acquaintance into more extensive backgrounds of their own creation. Tennyson has retold it in *Enoch Arden.*

Elaborated on a theme not far removed from that of *The Tragic Home-coming,*—the unfortunate return of a forsaken, long-absent relative,—it is treated in an entirely different fashion. The poet, living in a more recent period, was no longer striving for realistic mediæval effects. Unlike his predecessors he did not indulge in the familiar thrill of the bloody ending. His tastes were more subtle. Bare simplicity and powerful, open strokes were still in his manner, but he had developed something new, the reserve and style of a decadent. And his wonderful poem, perhaps a lucky accident, moves to a refined and deeply impressive climax—an endless, haunting torment in a soul forever deprived of love and hope in a homeless world.

That *The Return of the Soldier Husband* originated far later than *The Tragic Home-coming* admits of no doubt. The available records all stand fairly close to the reconstructed original, and the variants themselves do not preclude a comparatively modern date, that is to say, the sixteenth or possibly the seventeenth century. For comparison with our text and with the more widely divergent variants of *The Tragic Home-coming,* let us quote the first stanza—quite typical of the others—in Bujeaud's collection from the western French provinces.

Quand le marin revient de guerre
Tout mal chaussé, tout mal vêtu,
Pauvre marin, d'où reviens-tu? . . .

* Jean Richepin, *loc. cit.*, vol. 2, nos. 14-15, p. 67.

(Canada:) Quand le soldat arrive en ville
Bien mal chaussé, bien mal vêtu:
"Pauvre soldat, d'où reviens-tu?" . . .*

At the time of its migration to the American continent nearly three centuries ago, the ballad had lived and travelled long enough to have acquired its divergent endings, due to unskillful readaptations to suit cruder tastes. From an undefiled ballad it had been made over into a work song or even a comic ditty with the spurious refrains of *hourra!* or *coucou, cornard et coucou!* for we find these later forms in Canada as well as in France.

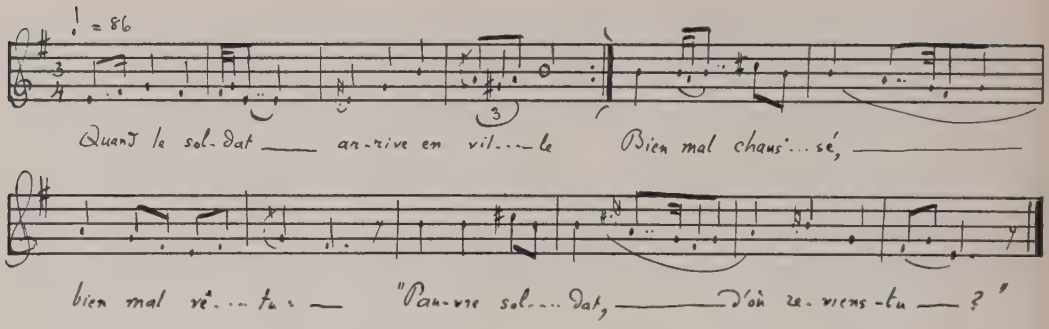
As was to be expected, the ballad could not fail to achieve popularity. From its birthplace somewhere in northern France it wandered through many provinces down to our time, and folklorists have already recorded over fifty-five versions of it in both the north and the east of France, in Switzerland, Italy (Piedmont) and Canada.† A German lied published by Erk and Boehme (*Deutsche Volkslieder*, I) is accepted by Doncieux as a mere translation, that is, an early anonymous translation, of a western French version.

The prosodic formula, for the first time illustrated in this collection, consists of tiercets of eight syllables to the line, the last two lines with rhymed masculine endings. There is a decided tendency to cut the lines into two even parts with a cæsura, and although this device here adds much to the rhythmic balance of the lines, it would seem altogether of an exceptional type. Our composite text embodies features derived from the earliest versions we have recorded in northeastern Quebec.

* J. Bujeaud, *op. cit.*, II, 89-90.

† Doncieux (*loc. cit.*, "Le Retour du mari soldat," pp. 407-416) has catalogued eleven versions for France and six for Piedmont—four of which are from Nigra. Tiersot has since added three versions for the Alpes françaises; Rossat (*op. cit.*, pp. 122-131) eleven for Switzerland; and Millien (*op. cit.*, I, 217) four melodies and several variants for Nivernais. Our Canadian collection already possesses more than eighteen versions.

LE RETOUR DU MARI SOLDAT



1 Quand le soldat arrive en ville (*bis*)
Bien mal chaussé, bien mal vêtu:
"Pauvre soldat, d'où reviens-tu?"

2 S'en fut loger dans une auberge:
"Hôtesse, avez-vous du vin blanc?"
—"Voyageur, a'-vous de l'argent?"

3 —"Pour de l'argent, je n'en ai guère;
J'engagerai mon vieux chapeau,
Ma ceinture, aussi mon manteau."

4 Quand le voyageur fut à table,
Il se mit à boire, à chanter;
L'hôtess' ne fit plus que pleurer.

5 "Oh! qu'avez-vous, petite hôtesse?
Regrettez-vous votre vin blanc
Qu'un voyageur boit sans argent?"

6 —"N'est pas mon vin que je regrette;
C'est la chanson que vous chantez:
Mon défunt mari la savait.

7 "J'ai un mari dans les voyages;
Voilà sept ans qu'il est parti,
Je crois bien que vous êtes lui."

8 —"Ah! taisez-vous, méchante femme.
Je vous ai laissé deux enfants,
En voilà quatre ici présents!"

9 —"J'ai tant reçu de fausses lettres,
Que vous étiez mort, enterré.
Et moi, je me suis marié'."

10 —"Dedans Paris, il y-a grand guerre,
Grand guerre rempli' de tourments.
Adieu, ma femme et mes enfants!"

TRANSLATION

1 One day the soldier comes to town,
One day the soldier comes to town,
His clothes in rags, his shoes are worn:
"Whence is it, soldier, you return?"

2 He sought him room within a tavern,
Sought him room within a tavern:
"Hostess, have you wine to drink?"
"And have you silver, man, to clink?"

3 "And as for silver, I've little enough,
And as for silver, I've little enough.
Take my old hat to pay for wine
And take this belt and cloak of mine."

4 And when he'd sat him down to table,
When he'd sat him down to table,
Filling glass and singing strong,
She wept to hear him sing the song.

5 "Oh, what is wrong, my little hostess,
What is wrong, my little hostess?
Is it your wine that you regret,
The soldier drinking in your debt?"

6 " 'Tis not my wine that I regret,
'Tis not my wine that I regret;
It is the lusty song that you
Are singing and my husband knew.

7 "I have a husband travelling,
I have a husband travelling;
He's been for seven years from me.
I well believe that you are he."

8 "Oh, wicked woman, be you still,
Oh, wicked woman, be you still!
I left two children in your care,
I see that four are playing there."

9 "Lying letters came to me,
Oh, lying letters came to me
To say that you were in the ground;
Another husband I have found."

10 "In Paris there's a mighty war,
In Paris there's a mighty war
And all the torturings of Hell.
My wife and children, fare you well!"

THE PENITENT AND THE DRUNKARD

FROM the domain of historic and anecdotic balladry we shall now pass to that of the didactic song, wherein grave listeners of a bygone age were edified with pious legends or religious teachings for the good of their souls. Miracles and heavenly visitations formed the theme of many a tale. Our Lord, the Virgin, unnamed angels and the Devil in person were in turn credited with supernatural interferences in the affairs of man, whose fate it is to be forever tossed between Good and Evil and whose favorite choice seldom fails to be pernicious. Once the premises were stated, preferably in narrative garb, there followed in their wake appropriate moral implications or outspoken teachings, easily within the grasp of saint and sinner alike.

A saintly Penitent, in the following dialogue, is rudely confronted with a blasphemous Drunkard. Each dilates upon the blessings of his own manner of life. The mediæval humorist to whom we are indebted for the satiric composition no doubt fulfilled his duty by vividly setting forth the spiritual benefits of lean repasts and the moral aftermath of less self-denying banquets. But with an ambiguity that was characteristic of his day he seems, rather perilously, to side with the sinner at more than one turn of the dialogue. The saint at times gets rather the worst of the argument, so that the listener is left to his own doubts at the finish. The holy one, after all, may have indulged in more earthly bounties than he would have us believe.

This dialogue is too much in the manner of the mediæval "conflicti" (*débats, jeux partis*) of the thirteenth century not to have somehow belonged to a popular cycle of the period and come down to us with many alterations.* Strangely enough, we have not yet observed its equivalent in the recorded

* *Cf.* Jeanroy, *Les origines de la poésie lyrique en France au moyen âge*, in which the author states that the oldest instances of "débats" ("partimen") known in French literature date from the years 1125-1150. It was particularly in vogue among the troubadours of Limousin and Poitou, in the middle of the thirteenth century. From these and other southerly provinces of France it spread northwards. While the "débat" in the north discloses its southern origin, it nevertheless remained more archaic, being less under the influence of Provençal culture ("civilisation courtoise") (pp. 46, 60). "Nos débats lyriques sont venus de Provence, mais ils ont admis des éléments que le Midi avait ignorés ou dédaignés" (p. 60). (*Cf.* M. Greif on diffusion in *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Literaturgeschichte*, N.F., I, 289-295.)

folk literature of France, although it is still remembered in the parishes of almost every part of Quebec, from the lower St. Lawrence to the Ottawa River.

There is another folk song, current both in the French provinces and in Canada, which embodies similar notions, but from the standpoint of the unchallenged drunkard alone. To quote fragments from European versions:

Si je meurs, que l'on m'enterre || dans une cave où il y a du vin,
Les pieds contre la muraille, || la tête sous le robin.

. . . . . .

Si par malheur j'allais aux enfers
J'attaquerais Lucifer.
Je lui ferais voir
S'il a le pouvoir
De m'empêcher de boir'.*

Adam Billaut, joiner in the town of Nevers, no doubt knew these traditional strains when he wrote his own bacchic stanzas (1614), in which we read:

Aussitôt que la lumière
A redoré nos côteaux,
Je commence ma carrière
Par visiter mes tonneaux.

. . . . .

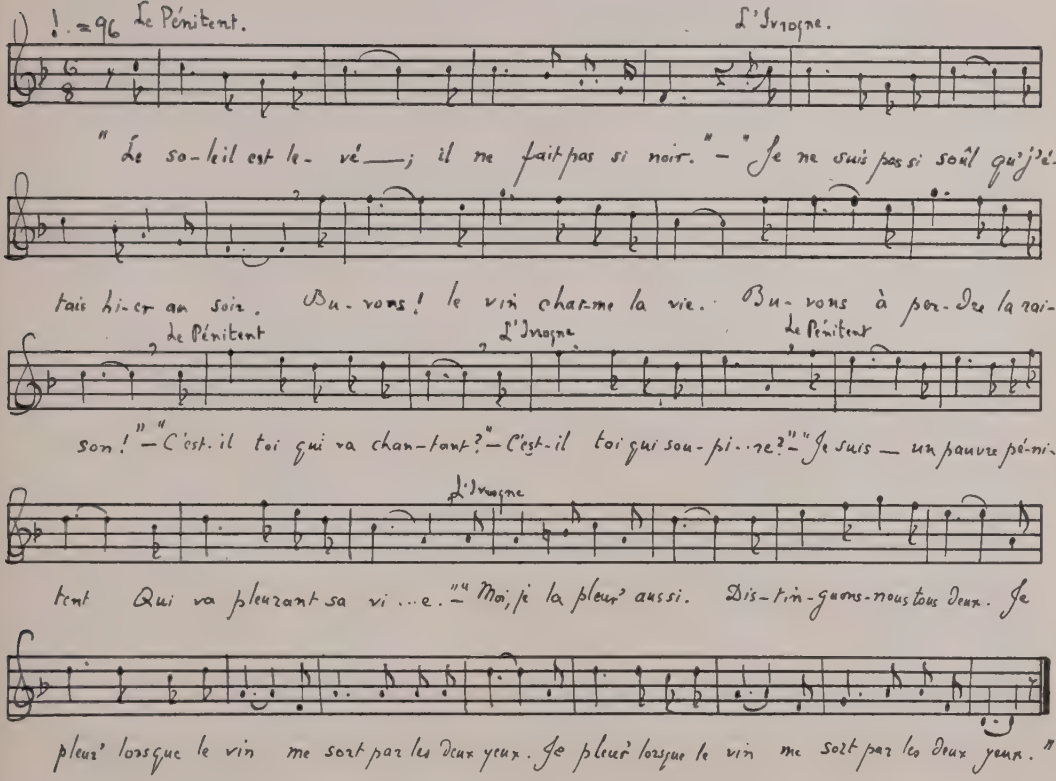
Ils [cent ivrognes] arrosent ma tombe
De plus de cent brocs de vin.†

The dialogue-song as here reproduced is from two of the earlier records secured, one from northeastern Quebec (Les Eboulements), the other from the neighborhood of Montreal (Beauharnois County). It is not possible as yet to disentangle fully the prosodic strands of the stanzas from the ragged lines brought down through centuries of disintegrating oral transmission. As it is, the lines oscillate in length from six to twelve syllables, with occasional twin rhymes, feminine or masculine. The melody itself shares in the irregularity of the rhythmic values, thereby accidentally fitting well with the wavering postures of the incorrigible Drunkard, who faces, in the performance of the folk singers, the wearied and recumbent Penitent.

* Emile Guimet, "Chants populaires du Lyonnais," in *Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts de Lyon,* xxii, 95.

† Weckerlin, *Chansons populaires,* II, 150.

LE PÉNITENT ET L'IVROGNE



1 *Le Pénitent.*

Le soleil est levé; ‖ il ne fait pas si noir.

L'Ivrogne.

Je ne suis pas si soûl ‖ qu'j'étais hier au soir.
Le vin charme la vie. ‖ Buvons à perdre la raison!

Le Pénitent.

C'est-il toi qui va chantant?

L'Ivrogne.

C'est-il toi qui soupire?

Le Pénitent.

Je suis un pauvre pénitent
Qui va pleurant sa vie.

L'Ivrogne.

Moi, je la pleure aussi. || Distinguons-nous tous deux.
Je pleur' lorsque le vin || me sort par les deux yeux. (*bis*)

2 *Le Pénitent.*

Je ne bois que de l'eau.

L'Ivrogne.

C'est ça qui te rend blême.

Le Pénitent.

Je ne fais qu'un repas || tout le long du carême.

L'Ivrogne.

Moi, j'en fais qu'un, aussi.

Le Pénitent.

Tu fais donc ton devoir?

L'Ivrogne.

Je commence le matin, || puis je finis le soir.

3 *Le Pénitent.*

Pens' donc! tu dois mourir.

L'Ivrogne.

Je dois mourir à table.

Le Pénitent.

Pens' donc à l'avenir;
Tu n'feras plus de farces.

L'Ivrogne.

Je ne crains que la soif.

Le Pénitent.

Tu ne crains pas la mort?

L'Ivrogne.

Comment l'appréhender? || Quand je suis soûl, je dors.

4 *Le Pénitent.*

Mais quand tu seras mort . . .

L'Ivrogne.

Parle-moi d'autre chose!

Le Pénitent.

On dépos'ra ton corps
Dans le fond d'une fosse.

L'Ivrogne.

Non non, tu as menti!

Le Pénitent.

Où le dépos'ra-t-on?

L'Ivrogne.

Dans le fond d'une cave, ‖ à travers les flacons.

5 *Le Pénitent.*

Ton âme ira au feu.

L'Ivrogne.

J'essaierai de l'éteindre.

Le Pénitent.

Ce feu ne s'éteint pas, ‖ car il brûle sans cesse.

L'Ivrogne.

J'apporterai du vin.

Le Pénitent.

Ce vin te brûlera.

L'Ivrogne.

Non non, j'en boirai tant ‖ qu'il me rafraîchira.

6 *Le Pénitent.*

J'enseigne à prier Dieu.

L'Ivrogne.

Et moi, j'enseigne à boire.

Le Pénitent.

Tu dois te faire un' gloire
Pour mériter les cieux.

L'Ivrogne.

Et moi, pour les gagner || je bois autant que deux.

7 *Le Pénitent.*

Adieu, ivrogne, adieu!

L'Ivrogne.

Adieu, franc hypocrite!

Le Pénitent.

Tu t'éloignes de Dieu
Pour suivre la barrique,
Parmi cinq cents buveurs || insensés comme toi.

L'Ivrogne.

Peux-tu me condamner? || tu bois autant que moi.

TRANSLATION

1 *The Penitent*

The morning sun has risen,
Gone is black of the night.

The Drunkard

Less drunk finds me the dawn
Than yestereve twilight.
Ah, wine's the charm of life!
Let's drink and keep us bright.

The Penitent

Is that you sings along?

The Drunkard

Is that you pushing sighs?

The Penitent

I am a penitent,
Heart heavy, streaming eyes.

The Drunkard

I too have streaming eyes,
Otherwise than you.

I weep 'tis when the wine
Eyelids trickles through;
I weep 'tis when the wine
Eyelids trickles through.

2 *The Penitent*
Water alone I drink.
The Drunkard
No wonder you're pale and bent!
The Penitent
I've but a meal a day
The whole of holy Lent.
The Drunkard
One meal a day for me!
The Penitent
Fulfilling the law divine?
The Drunkard
Swilling from morn till eve,
As full as a holy swine.

3 *The Penitent*
But think! there's death to come.
The Drunkard
I'll die over my cups.
The Penitent
But think! there's a beyond
Your farcical downs and ups.
The Drunkard
'Tis only thirst I fear.
The Penitent
You do not fear to die?

The Drunkard

Why fear? When I am drunk,
I sleep like pig in a sty;
Why fear? When I am drunk,
I sleep like pig in a sty.

4 *The Penitent*

But think! when you are dead . . .

The Drunkard

Tell me another thing.

The Penitent

In the bottom of a ditch
Your precious corpse they'll fling.

The Drunkard

No, no, a dreadful lie!

The Penitent

Where will your corpse be flung?

The Drunkard

In the bottom of a cellar
Flagons of wine among;
In the bottom of a cellar
Flagons of wine among.

5 *The Penitent*

Your soul will burn in flame.

The Drunkard

I'll try to put it out.

The Penitent

That flame will never die,
There is no room for doubt.

The Drunkard

I'll take along some wine.

The Penitent
'Twill burn you to a cinder.
The Drunkard
No, no, I'll drink enough
To keep me fresh and tender;
No, no, I'll drink enough
To keep me fresh and tender.

6 *The Penitent*
I recommend to pray.
The Drunkard
And "Drink!" 's what I advise.
The Penitent
Think well how you must fare
To merit Paradise.
The Drunkard
Then all I have to do
Is drink a fill for two.

7 *The Penitent*
Drunkard, fare you well!
The Drunkard
Farewell, my hypocrite!
The Penitent
God's road and barrel road
They are not one, they split;
You souse with riff and raff
Who've longer throat than wit.
The Drunkard
How dare you mock at me?
You drink enough for three!
How dare you mock at me?
You drink enough for three!

THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST

FOLK songs and tales of the countryside often recount, in the margin of the Scriptures, sundry errands of the Lord, treading once again the lanes of earth, now to grant the hopeful prayer of the upright, now to punish the evildoer in his deed of sin.

Seldom do these godly legends rise with more poetic grandeur than in *The Passion of Jesus Christ*, one of the most ancient and widely known religious "complaintes" in the folk repertory. The orthodox Gospel account was followed none too slavishly, other features being introduced from the popular notions which widely prevailed.

From its contents and diffusion we may assume that our song, while not the oldest so far reviewed here, is nevertheless one of the most archaic in some respects. Its uniform assonances in *an*+*e*, *en*+*e*, belong to a bygone type familiar in mediæval epic poetry, and many of its terms, though they have lingered until late in out of the way places, have the savor of a past age.

The theme itself was a favorite one from the very dawn of French literature, *La Passion*, *Saint Léger* and *Saint Alexis** being the earliest manuscript records, dating from the tenth century, that have come down to us in the vernacular. Originally independent of the written poem of the same name, our carol is likely to be connected with it in some indirect way that is now obscure. Cesar Nostradamus (1555-1629)† spoke of what may have been our song: "Quel plaisir est-ce d'ouïr réciter aux pauvres demandant l'aumône aux portes *la Passion du fils de Dieu*, . . . et autres belles et vieilles choses de diverse taille et mesure de vers!" Damase Arbaud‡ found one of its lines complete ("J'ai vu le soleil et la lune—qui se combattent ensemble") in the *Ludus Sti Jacobi*, a Provençal morality play of the fifteenth century, before which date he was inclined to place *La Passion*. Between Doncieux,§ who ascribes it to the first half of the sixteenth century, and Georges Doutrepont,|| who mentions the twelfth or thirteenth century, we should not venture to pronounce, however ultra-conservative, as in many

* Gaston Paris, *La vie de saint Alexis*, 1887, p. 31.
† In his *Histoire et Chronique de Provence* (1614).
‡ *Chants populaires de la Provence*, II, 40-49.
§ *Op. cit.*, "La Passion de Jésus-Christ," pp. 61-70.
|| *Mélusine*, V, 50-53.

other cases, may seem Doncieux' estimate. As in the previous instances, the origin of our document is credited to one of the northern French provinces, in spite of the fact that it was also extensively known in the south.

We know of over sixty versions of *La Passion*. Fifteen were first compiled by Doutrepont* and later incorporated in Doncieux' list of thirty-two numbers (thirty for France, two for Piedmont). We have noted fifteen other versions more recently published, four of which were recorded by Tiersot† in the French Alps, two by Rossat in Switzerland,‡ three by Millien§ in Nivernais, and two by Dardy for Albret.‖ Since 1916 we have obtained more than twelve records of it in the various parts, chiefly eastern, of Quebec.

The following text, although materially the same as that of any individual record, has been reconstructed from the earlier versions taken down in eastern Quebec. Their prosodic formula, as in Doncieux' analysis, consists of 8+6 syllables to a line.

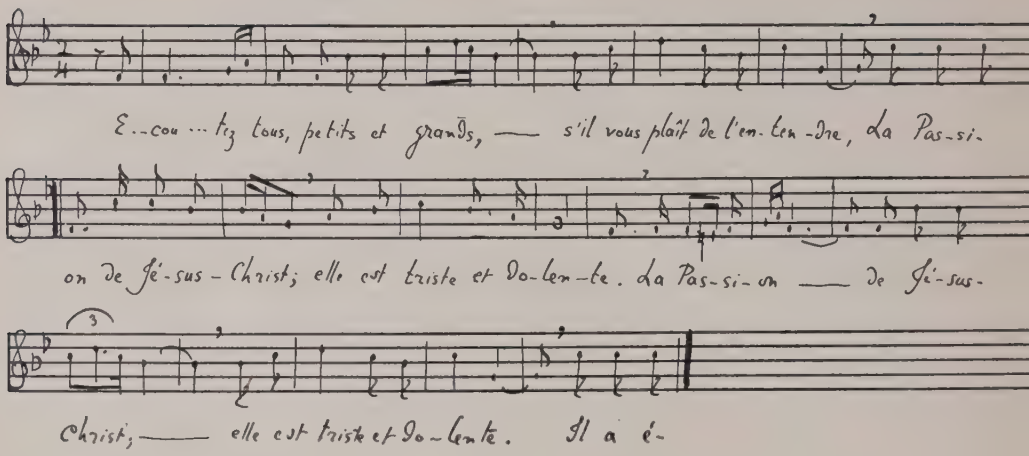
* *Mélusine*, V, 50-53.

† Julien Tiersot, *Chansons populaires des Alpes françaises*, pp. 91, 92.

‡ "La chanson populaire dans la Suisse romande," in *Publications de la Société suisse des Traditions populaires*, 14 (1917), p. 38.

§ A. Millien, *loc. cit.*, I, 13, 14. One of his versions is from a seventeenth-century manuscript.

‖ Dardy, *Anthologie populaire de l'Albret*, I, 30-35. His second variant shows many differences. Another song on the same theme is also quoted in pages 37-39.



1 Ecoutez tous, petits et grands, ‖ s'il vous plaît de l'entendre,
La Passion de Jésus-Christ; ‖ elle est triste et dolente. (*bis*)

2 Il a été sept ans nu-pieds, ‖ sept ans nu-pieds, nu-jambes; (*bis*)

3 Il a jeûné quarante jours ‖ sans prendre soutenance.

4 Mais au bout de quarante jours, ‖ il a pris soutenance.

5 La soutenance qu'il a pris', ‖ c'est une pomme blanche.

6 En donne à Pierre, en donne à Jean, ‖ en donne à Michel ange.

7 Il dit à Pierre, il dit à Jean, ‖ il dit à Michel ange:

8 "Avant qu'il soit vendredi nuit, ‖ tu verras chose' étranges.

9 Tu verras mes deux pieds cloués ‖ et mes deux bras s'étendre;

10 Tu verras mon côté percé ‖ par le fer d'une lance;

11 Tu verras mon sang découler || tout le long de mes membres;

12 Tu verras mon sang ramassé || par quatre de mes anges;

13 Tu verras ma mère à mes pieds || qui s'ra triste et dolente;

14 Tu verras la mer surmonter || et les rochers se fendre;

15 Tu verras la lune et l' soleil || qui se combatt' ensemble;

16 Tu verras les oiseaux du ciel || qui en crieront vengeance;

17 Tu me verras monté au cieux || par quatre de mes anges;

18 Auprès de mon père célest' || on chant'ra les louanges."

TRANSLATION

1 Harken all, both young and old,
If you please to hear it sung,
To the Passion of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
It is sad and harrowing.

2 Barefoot he was for seven years,
Barefoot and bare of limb.

3 Fasting he was for forty days,
He took no food to him,

4 But at the end of forty days
Took food for sustenance.

5 He took an apple white to him,
It was for sustenance.

6 Gives some to Peter, some to John,
And gives to Michael the Angel,

7 He says to Peter, says to John,
And says to Michael the Angel,

8 "Before the coming of Friday night
Thou shalt see things that are strange,

9 Thou shalt see my two feet nailed to a cross
And my two arms shall be strained.

10 Thou shalt see the side of my body pierced
By the iron of a lance,

11 Thou shalt see my blood is trickling down,
Down my limbs it runs,

12 Thou shalt see four angels of my blood
All a-gathering,

13 Thou shalt see my mother at my feet,
Sad and sorrowing,

14 Thou shalt see the mounting of the waves
And the rocks shall burst asunder,

15 Thou shalt see the waning of moon and sun
For a sign and for a wonder,

16 Thou shalt see the birds of the heaven fly
And crying out for vengeance,

17 Thou shalt see me rising unto Heaven
In the midst of four of my angels,

18 And by the side of my father in Heaven
Will be singing of Evangels."

OUR LORD IN BEGGAR'S GUISE

THE parable of Lazarus and the Miser (Luke XVI) has undergone a peculiar and interesting evolution since its transfer into the lay field of European folklore.* It could not fail to appeal to the host of nomadic beggars at a time when beggary was, so to speak, a respectable and hereditary calling all over Europe.

It found expression in the Romance languages—so it is presumed—in the form of a religious "complainte," *The Miser and the Leper* ("Le Mauvais Riche et le Ladre"), very popular to this day among the mendicants of northern and southern France, of the Spanish peninsula† and of Piedmont (Italy), and still remembered in Switzerland‡ and Canada.

The far more restricted diffusion of *Our Lord in Beggar's Guise* ("Jésus-Christ en pauvre"), its looser treatment of the parable and its prosodic accord with *The Miser and the Leper* all concur to justify Doncieux' conclusion§ that, while it is clearly a derivative form, it partly refashions the theme, bringing it into line as it does with several other mediæval legends current throughout Christendom on the transfiguration of the beggar into Jesus Christ. The Lazarus theme was not only a commonplace in the pulpit but more than once appeared in secular literature and even on the stage, for instance in a fifteenth-century play entitled *Nouvelle moralité du Mauvais Riche et du Ladre, à douze personnages.*

The persistent divergences between the Canadian and the French records, although mostly of a minor order, would imply as usual that the song, particularly as preserved in Canada, has suffered the blight of old age. The concluding stanzas are considerably at variance, the French versions limiting the divine forbearance to the mystic span of three days, instead of indefinitely postponing retribution as in our version. On the other hand, the original cadence of fourteen syllables to the line (7+7)—a common pattern in the more ancient Romance dialects—is obscured in spots, the

* Doncieux, *loc. cit.*, pp. 372, 373, gives references to English, German and Slavic adaptations. Child's English ballad entitled "Dives and Lazarus" bears the date of the sixteenth century (*The Eng. & Scott. Popular Ballads*, III, no. 56).

† Sophie Jewett, *Folk-Ballads of Southern Europe* (N. Y., 1913), pp. 204-208.

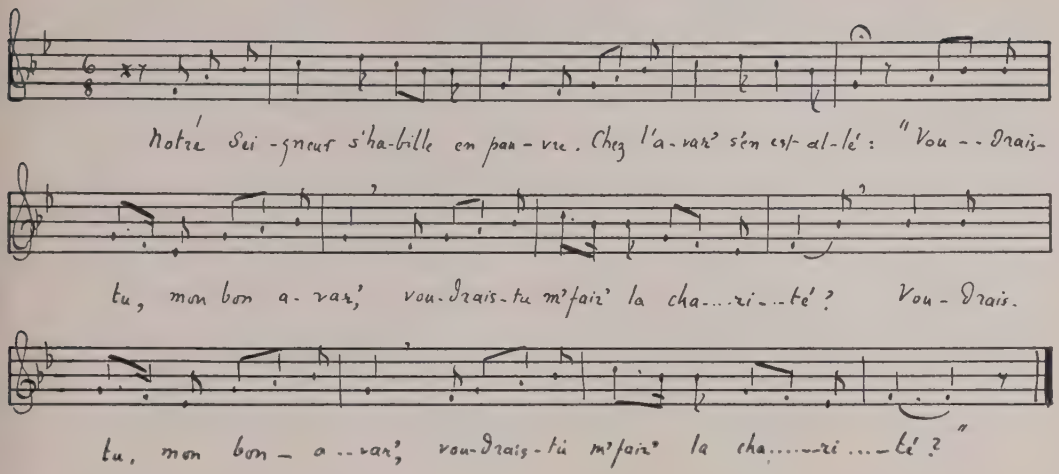
‡ A. Rossat, "La chanson populaire dans la Suisse romande," *loc. cit.*, 14, p. 39.

§ *Loc. cit.*, "Jésus-Christ en pauvre," pp. 366-375.

hemistichs swaying from six to eight, or even to nine, syllables, not to speak of other elisions. Doncieux, however, misses the mark when he concludes from a few stray occurrences that the lines were intended to rhyme in pairs; the chances, indeed, are in favor of the whole poem having once rhymed in *é* throughout, as in our records. Nor, in view of the time required to develop divergences in the versions, can we concur in his assumption that the ballad, which originated in northeastern France, could not be more than three hundred years old, for it seems to belong more appropriately with an older stock, for which we should not venture to suggest even an approximate date for lack of evidence.

Of the forty versions now available, so far as we know, a list of nineteen is to be found in Doncieux' No. XXXI, four in Tiersot's *Alpes françaises* (pp. 92-94), four in Millien's Nivernais Collection (I, 17-21), one in Dardy's *Anthologie populaire de l'Albret* (I, 13-15), about ten in our Canadian collection and two in Rossat's Swiss records (*loc. cit.*, 14; *cf.* footnote, p. 39).

NOTRE SEIGNEUR EN PAUVRE



1 Notre Seigneur s'habille en pauvre. ‖ Chez l'avare s'en est allé:
"Voudrais-tu, mon bon avare, ‖ voudrais-tu m'fair' la charité?"
(*bis*)

2 —"Que dis-tu, pauvre bonhomme? ‖ Je n'ai rien à te donner."
—"Les miett' qui tomb' sous la table, ‖ fais m'en donc la charité."

3 —"Les miett' qui tomb' sous ma table, ‖ j'ai mon chien pour les [manger."
—"Ton chien peut vivre au lièvre, ‖ et moi, pauvr', je crèv' de [faim."

4 La dame ouvr' la port' de sa chambre, ‖ entend ce pauvre homme [parler.
"Rentrez ici, mon bon pauvre; ‖ avec moi vous souperez."

5 Mais quand ils eur'nt bien soupé, ‖ il demande à se coucher.
La dame ouvr' la port' de sa chambre, ‖ aperçoit un' grand' clarté.

6 "Ah! dites-moi, mon bon pauvre, || la lune s'est-ell' levé?"
—"Ce n'est pas la lun', madame, || c'est votre grand' charité.

7 "Votre place est dans le ciel; || elle sera bien gardé',
Pour vous et pour vos hôtes, || ceux que vous logerez.

8 "Madame, vous êtes enceinte || d'un homme qui sera damné.
Dieu, dans sa miséricorde, || a voulu vous protéger."

TRANSLATION

1 Our Lord is clothed in beggar's guise,
Unto a miser gone is He:
"Wouldst thou, my miser dear,
Wouldst thou give me charity?"

2 "What sayest thou, my poor man?
It is nothing I can give to thee."
"The crumbs that under the table fall,
Give me them in charity."

3 "The crumbs that under my table fall,
I have my dog to eat them up."
"Thy dog may live on hare of the field,
And I, poor man, from hunger drop."

4 The lady opens wide her door,
She hears this humble beggar speak.
"Oh, come in here, my poor man!
I have bread that thou and I shall break."

5 'Tis when they'd taken food and drink,
He asks to lay him down abed.
The lady opens wide her door,
Beholds the dark illuminèd.

6 "Oh, tell thou me, my poor man!
Is it the moon in clarity?"
"Dear lady, it is not the moon,
'Tis the full light of thy charity.

7 "In the heavens is thy place,
And well it shall retainèd be
For thee and for thy several guests,
Such guests as thou shalt have to thee.

8 "Lady, thou art pregnant now,
'Tis of a God-foredoomèd man,
But thou shalt be forever safe—
Such mercy is in God's plan."

THE MISER-WOMAN AND THE CRUCIFIX

THE song of *The Miser-woman* stands in a puzzling relationship with our previous number. One might at first sight be tempted to discard it as a negligible variant or as a mere imitation of this song. But when once its artistic vulgarity has been ignored, features of decided interest appear, implying a wider geographic compass and presumably a greater age.

The beautiful "complainte" of *Our Lord in Beggar's Guise* seems confined to France, but the present legend reappears in at least two closely related songs, the one entitled *The Miracle of the Crucifix*, well known in France, Canada, Belgium and as far southeast as Portugal;* the other, our present record, remaining as yet with a single French parallel from Nivernais.† Instead of the greedy inn-keeper of our song, the host in *The Miracle of the Crucifix* is a ploughman (or a kindly lady), who welcomes the beggar to the best in the house and the next day finds in the beggar's vacant bed a picture of Christ for a reward and a blessing, or else a crucifix of fine silver.

These carols are both to be traced back to an ancient legend diffused, no doubt, in many parts of Europe and also known under the name of *The Miracle of the Crucifix*. Théodoric de Thuringe, a monk living in the thirteenth century, wrote of Saint Elizabeth, the Queen of Hungary, that one day she had given her room in hospitality to a wandering leper. The king, in a fit of temper, lifted the bed sheets only to behold the sight of the crucified Redeemer.‡ It is not likely that the folk belief was even at that date at all near the beginning of its wanderings in Europe.

* Le comte de Puymaigre, *Romanceiro, choix de vieux chants portugais*, "Jésus mendiant," pp. 63, 64; Doncieux, *loc. cit.*, footnote, p. 374; Millien, *loc. cit.* (Nivernais), I, 74.

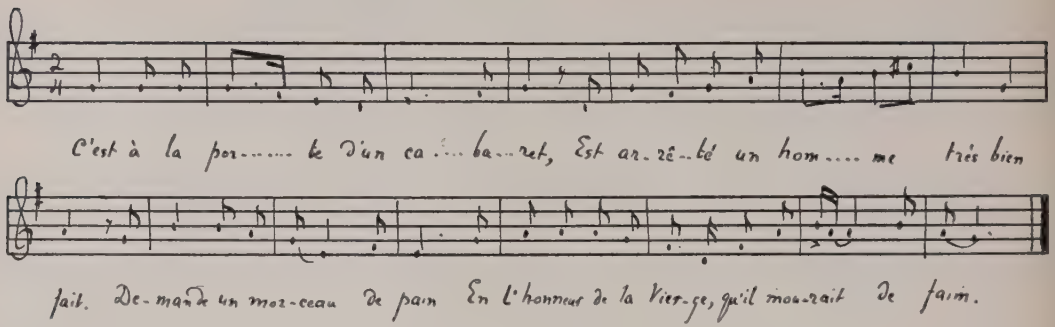
† A. Millien, "Le pauvre et l'hôtesse," *loc. cit.*, I, 75. 1.—"Jésus en pauvre s'est allé. "Madame l'hôtesse, j'ai bien faim. Faites-moi la charité d'un morceau de pain." 2.—"Le pauve, on achète le blé. On le paye trop cher pour qu'on le puisse donner. Allez ailleurs en demander; ici, vous n'aurez rien." 3.—"Malgré tout votre argent, La mort vous prendra tous. Pensez bien à votre fin! Je vous jure, madame, que vous serez morte demain." 4.—"Au secours, voisins! Voici un sorcier . . ." etc.

‡ De Montalembert, *Histoire de sainte Elizabeth de Hongrie*, VIII; *cf.* Doncieux, *loc. cit.*, p. 374.

The prosodic uncertainty of this song,—only once recorded in Canada,*—its lack of style, and its general crudeness, in themselves suggest that it is either a garbled version of some ancient carol now all but lost, or a more recent adaptation by some unskillful minstrel of a cantilena in vogue in a dialect neighboring the south. Whatever it is, it deserves the attention of the folklorist as a peculiar relic of mediæval flavor and as an example often sung to unwilling donors by the mendicants, whose very name is still that of "Jésus-Christ" in certain provinces of France.

* By M. E.-Z. Massicotte, from a folk singer named Joseph Rousselle, Kamouraska County, P. Q.

LA FEMME AVARE ET LE CRUCIFIX



1 C'est à la port' d'un cabaret,
Est arrêté un homm' très bien fait.
Demande un morceau de pain
En l'honneur de la Vierge, || qu'il mourait de faim.

2 La dam' lui répond à l'instant:
"Oh! va-t'en, misérable! || Je n'ai pas de pain.
Va-t'en ailleurs gruger.
Le pain que j'achète, || il m'en coûte assez."

3 "Madam', vous en avez du blé
A cueillir, cette année, || une infinité.
Je dis même que le pain
Sera dix sous la livre, || l'année qui vient."

4 La dame s'est écrié':
"Oh! venez, tout le monde! || Voilà un sorcier!"
Ils l'ont pris, ils l'ont lié;
Dedans les basses-fosses, || ont été le garotter.

5 Le lendemain avant-midi,
Croyant trouver un homme, || ils trouv'nt un crucifix.
D'un côté, il est beau et dolent;
De l'autre, il est tout sanglant.

6 L'archevêque il faut avertir,
Pour emporter à l'église || le saint crucifix.
On a fait le procession
Partout dans la ville, || avec dévotion.

TRANSLATION

1 'Twas in the dark of a tavern door
A stranger bowed his head,
A very comely man.
He begged a piece of bread,
"For by the Maid, of hunger
I am nearly dead."

2 And soon the lady answers him,
"O wretch, away from here!
I have no bread to give;
Stuff belly anywhere!
The bread that I have bought
It costs me very dear."

3 "O lady, you have wheat in the field
This year for harvesting,
Exceeding bounteous yield.
The bread will even bring
Ten farthings for the pound
For next year's profiting."

4 The lady then did cry aloud,
"Oh come, all ye around!
Here is a sorcerer."
They took him and they bound,
And in a dungeon down
They put him underground.

5 And on the morrow, coming noon,
Thinking to find a man,
They found a crucifix
That fair and sad began,
But on the other side
The cross all bloody ran.

6 Archbishop must be told at once,
So he may take away
In church the holy cross,
And on that holy day,
Procession gathering,
In all the town they pray.

THE DUMB SHEPHERDESS

THE Virgin's appearances on earth, as related by the folk songs, are of two descriptions. In her miraculous visitations she at times rescues the faithful, shelters the innocent, punishes the guilty and foils the Devil. At other times she wanders about in beggar's guise, like her divine Son, bestowing eternal reward or punishment for the deed of hospitality withheld or granted.* It is in the former, the more characteristic, rôle that she will be revealed in the following "complaintes" of *The Dumb Shepherdess* and *The Maiden sold to the Devil.*

Popular recognition, at least as vouched for by oral tradition, has failed the ballad of *The Dumb Shepherdess*, graceful and tenderly appealing though it is. Our ten or twelve versions of it from various parts of Canada—chiefly the eastern sections of Quebec—do not atone for its practical disappearance in the older provinces of France. It has so far come to our attention only six times in oversea collections. One Provençal version is given by Damase Arbaud;† another, from Gascony, by Bladé;‡ one from Velay and Forez, by Smith;§ and three or four from Nivernais, by Millien.||

The large majority of these versions being in French, it is likely that they originated in a province of *oïl*, possibly somewhere on the upper Loire River. Of the only two Provençal records one, that of Arbaud, by its prosodic distortions and mixture of dialects, clearly indicates a northern origin. We quote the opening stanzas of *La Muto* in its Provençal form:

1 L'y avie 'no bargeireto
Que gard' au champ
Uno tant belo damo
Li vai davant.

* In a Swiss version of *Our Lord in Beggar's Guise* the name of the Virgin is even substituted for that of Jesus Christ (A. Rossat, *loc. cit.*, 14 (1917), p. 39).

† *Chants populaires de la Provence*, 1862-1864, II, 53-55.

‡ Bladé, "La bergèro mudo," *Poésies populaires de la Gascogne*, I, 177-181; the author also states that a French version of this "complainte" was sung in Armagnac.

§ Smith, "La bergère muette," in *Romania*, no. 13, pp. 110-112. "La circonstance de la lettre," adds the author, "se retrouve dans la complainte de saint Alexis qu'on chante dans notre pays, laquelle complainte semble n'être qu'un extrait rythmé de la légende du saint laissée par Jacques de Voragine" (*cf. Romania*, no. 15, pp. 442-444).

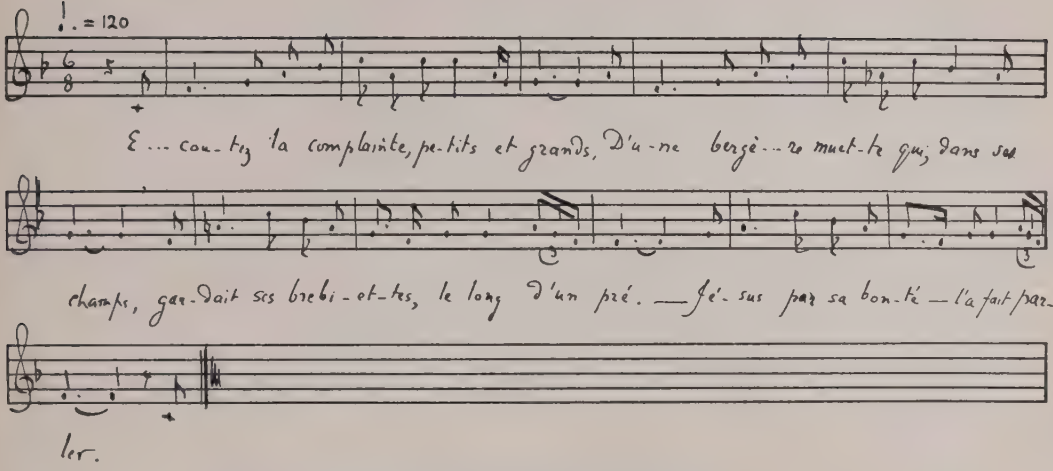
|| *Loc. cit.*, I, 57, 58. One of the melodies quoted here is fairly close to that which is current in Canada.

2 —Ah! digo, bargeireto,
Belle Isabeau,
Veux-tu que je te prenne
Un des agneaux?

3 —A moun per', à ma mero
Parler me faut. . . .

The pleasing echolike cadence of its ten-syllable lines (6+4) will no doubt make our readers share in our regret for the disappearance of this old Romance type of verse from the modern French. The academic French line of ten syllables has an exactly reverse structure—4+6 syllables.

LA BERGÈRE MUETTE



1 Ecoutez la complainte, || petits et grands,
D'une bergère muette || qui, dans ses champs,
Gardait ses brebi-ettes, || le long d'un pré.
Jésus, par sa bonté, || l'a fait parler.

2 Un jour, la sainte Vierge || lui apparut. (*bis*)
"Bonjour, joli' bergère, || grande Isabeau.
Voudrais-tu me donner || un des agneaux?"

3 —"Ah non, certes!" dit-elle, || "sont pas à moi.
A mon père, à ma mère || j'en parlerai.
A mon père, à ma mère || je leur dirai."

4 Ell' s'en est retournée || bien promptement.
"Mon père, y-at une dame || dans mon troupeau.
Grand Dieu! ell' me demande || un des agneaux."

5 Son père, aussi sa mère, || fur' bien surpris
D'entendre la muette || parler ainsi.
A Dieu firent prière || qu'il ait merci.

6 "Va lui dire, ô bergère, || dans ton troupeau,
Qu'ils sont à son service, || grands et petits,
Que tous sont pour lui plaire, || jusqu'aux plus beaux."

7 La bergère, elle est morte || avant trois jours.
Ell' tenait une lettre || dedans sa main,
Ecrite du grand maître, || Dieu souverain.

8 Son père, aussi sa mère, || n'ont jamais lu.
A fallu que l'arch'vêque || y soit venu
Parler à la muette, || grande Isabeau.

9 "Ouvre ta main, bergère, || ouvre ta main,
De la part du grand maître, || Dieu souverain!"
A bien lu la lettre, || a bien compris.

10 Qu'en chante la complainte || le vendredi
Gagne les indulgences, || le paradis.

TRANSLATION

1 Hark ye to the complaint,
Grown and little,
Of a dumb shepherdess,
Who in her fields
Did guard her little sheep
Along the mead!
'Twas Jesus, out of goodness,
Made her speak.

2 One day the holy Maid
To her appeared.
"Good day, sweet shepherdess,
Big Isabeau!
And would you give to me
One of the lambs?"

3 "Ah, no indeed!" she said,
"They are not mine.
To father, to my mother,
I'll speak of it;
To father, to my mother,
I'll tell of it."

4 She came back to her home
Straightaway.
"My father, there's a lady
In my flock.
O God! she asks of me
One of the lambs."

5 Her father, mother too,
They were amazed
To hear the speechless maiden
Speaking thus;
To God they made a prayer
For his mercy.

6 "Go tell her, shepherdess,
In thy flock,
That they are at her pleasure,
Big and little,
That all are for her pleasing,
Even the best."

7 The shepherdess was dead
Before three days.
A letter she was holding
In her hand,
Writ by the sovereign master,
Mighty God.

8 Her father, mother too,
They could not read.
It had to be the bishop
Came to them
To speak to the dumb maid,
Big Isabeau.

9 "Open, shepherdess,
Open thy hand,
For the sake of the sovereign master,
Mighty God!"
And well he read the letter
And understood:

10 "Whoever sings on Friday
This complaint,
Is freed of sinful taint,
Gains Paradise."

THE MAIDEN SOLD TO THE DEVIL

OUR ballad may either be a survival which has been robbed by time and usage of almost every vestige of its original style or the awkward recital by an unskillful minstrel of a familiar legend—the child sold to the Devil by a selfish father and cleverly rescued at the last moment. In the total absence, so far as we are aware, of any other French or Canadian version, it is impossible to acquire a sound perspective of its historical drift and to ascribe its origin to any period or province. That it is French, and not Canadian, is the only safe guess. Its consistent lack of stylistic distinction, however, argues in favor of a low artistic birth. The song-maker's prosodic plan—not easy to diagnose (8+8?)—was apparently vague even at the outset.

Far more valuable is the legend itself. Refashioned though it is in the manner of an independent story, it is indirectly affiliated with an ancient semi-pagan folk tale still remembered in France and Canada—the tale of a child heedlessly promised to an unknown visitor, the Evil One, by the fisherman seeking good luck in fishing. The mother outwits the claimant at the appointed date.* Still more directly related is it to an old folk song, one of the most archaic in our Canadian repertory, that of *Le Docteur bien misérable* or *Le Docteur de l'Orlemagne* (*Allemagne*), which is no other than the familiar legend of Dr. Faust at the earliest stages of its literary evolution. The ending in both songs is analogous as far as the conflict between the Virgin and the Devil is concerned, for, in the old record, the Doctor had sold his soul to Satan in exchange for an inexhaustible purse, signing the deed with his own blood, and when his turn came to pay, he successfully sought the protection of the Virgin. It should also be remembered in this connection, that one of the earliest ballads in English literature, dating back to the thirteenth century, is that of *Inter Diabolus et Virgo*,† another instance of the traditional conflict between the mother of Christ and the fallen angel.

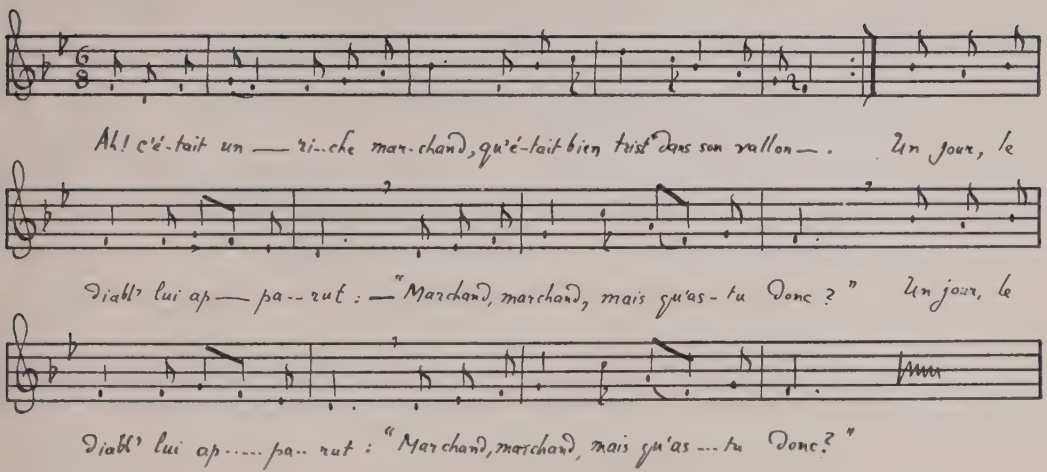
* *Cf.* the cycle of "Robert le Diable" (*Encyc. Britannica*, and *The Handbook of Folk-Lore*, by C. S. Burne, p. 346). For a closer parallel of our song, *cf. Russian Folk-tales*, by W. R. S. Ralston, pp. 362-364.

† Louise Pound, *Poetic Origins of the Ballad*, 1921, p. 185.

The only version so far secured of *The Maiden sold to the Devil* was communicated by M. E.-Z. Massicotte, a Montreal historian and folklorist, who collected it from V.-F. de Repentigny, an excellent folk singer from Beauharnois, who had recently learned it in Montreal.*

* *The Journal of American Folk-Lore*, no. 123 (1919), "Le marchand et le diable," pp. 21, 22.

LA FILLE VENDUE AU DIABLE



1 Ah! c'était un riche marchand ‖ qu'était bien trist' dans son [vallon.
Un jour, le diabl' lui apparut.
"Marchand, marchand, mais qu'as-tu-donc?"

2 —"Il n'y a pas encor deux ans ‖ mais que ma femme est décédée.
Avant, j'étais riche marchand.
A présent, y-a du changement."

3 —"Marchand, pourquoi te démonter? ‖ Tu as encore un' joli' [fille.
Si tu voulais me la donner
De l'argent je te donnerais."

4 Le marchand s'en alla trouver ‖ sa fille dans sa chambrette.
"Ma fille, il faut s'habiller;
En promenade nous faut aller."

5 La jeune fille s'est habillé'. ‖ Elle a voulu fair' sa prière.
"Bonn' sainte Vierge, conservez-moi!
Mère de Jésus, préservez-moi!"

6 Dans leur chemin ils fir' rencontre || d'une jolie chapelle.
"Arrêtez, mon père, arrêtez!
Ça ne peut pas vous retarder."

7 La jeune fille s'est endormi' || à l'image de la saint' Vierge.
La sainte Vierge s'est avancé',
Derrièr' le marchand a monté.

8 De tant loin qu'il la voit venir, || le diable se déchir', se lamente.
"Marchand, marchand, tu m'as trompé;
Tu n'as pas ta fille à tes côtés."

9 La sainte Vierge s'est avancé: || "Retire-toi, méchant disciple!
Car tu croyais, dans ton esprit,
D'avoir l'enfant de mon Fils."

TRANSLATION

1 Oh once there was a merchant wealthy
Sitting sadly in his valley.
One day the devil came to see,
"Merchant, why this misery?"

2 "Two years or less have slipped away,
My wife is resting in the grave.
A wealthy merchant I was wont to be,
But nowadays a change has come to me."

3 "Merchant, mend your countenance!
You have a lovely daughter still.
If you but give the maid to me,
Then give I silver plenteously."

4 Made haste the merchant for to find
His daughter in her little room.
"Daughter, dress! and you must know
That promenading you're to go."

5 The maiden dressed, and on her knees
To Mary made a little prayer,
"Holy Virgin, pity me,
So I may well preservèd be!"

6 They did encounter in the road
A pretty little chapel house.
"Stop, my father, while I pray,
I shall not greatly slow the way."

7 The maiden fell in slumber by
The image of the holy Virgin.
Blessed Mary, pace by pace,
Ascended to the merchant's place.

8 The devil saw her come afar,
He tore his robe, he made lament,
"Now I am cheated of my due,
For there's no daughter come with you."

9 Mary, coming pace by pace,
"Away, thou wicked one!" she cried,
"Who in thy spirit didst conceive
To take a child and Jesus grieve."

THE MIRACLE OF THE NEW-BORN CHILD

IN marked contrast with the shortcomings of the previous song stands the ballad of the babe miraculously speaking to its mother. Its style places it in the lineage of true folk songs of the higher type. The veiled allusion in the refrain to youth and the chance which is natural in groves where the birds warble amorously, helps to give the song an elusive charm.

The theme of the babe miraculously endowed with the gift of speech to denounce a crime is widely known in Europe. De Puymaigre (*Romanceiro, choix de vieux chants portugais,* pp. 232-236) and Liebrecht (*Zeitschrift für Volkskunde,* p. 211) have compiled a number of instances; T. F. Crane too (*Chansons populaires de la France,* p. 256) has discussed the topic.*

The story of an infanticide mother also appears in the traditions of several western European countries. Folklorists have traced it in a few songs of France, Switzerland, Germany, Italy and Greece.† Fourteen versions of three or four variants of it—wholly different in form and content—are found in the collections of France and Switzerland;‡ and at least a dozen records of as many variants have come to us in the eastern parts of Quebec.§

The following text is from two combined versions, those of Mme. Zépherin Dorion, of Port Daniel (Bonaventure), and V.-F. de Repentigny, of Beauharnois County (near Montreal).

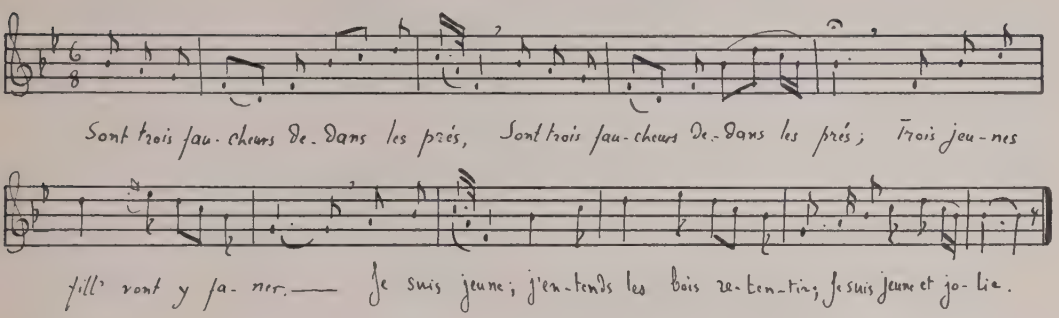
* *Cf.* Doncieux, *loc. cit.*, p. 184, who mentions it incidentally in his discussion of "Dame Lombarde."

† De Puymaigre, *loc. cit.*, refers to Schiller's famous poem, which has been translated in *Ballades et chants populaires de l'Allemagne*, p. 229; also to more distantly related folk songs of Venetia (*Volkslieder aus Venetien*, p. 67) and Greece (as translated by M. de Marcellus, "La Perdrix").

‡ E. Rolland, *Recueil de chansons populaires*, I, no. LXV, p. 141; de Puymaigre (pays messin), I, no. 22, p. 112; *ibid.*, two other variants, pp. 67-69; Carnoy, *Littérature orale de Picardie* (Somme), pp. 364, 365; Bladé, *Poésies populaires de la Gascogne*, II, 226-229; *ibid.*, a fragment of another variant, II, 365; Bladé quotes: Combes (pays castrais), 35, and Daymard (Haut-Quercy), 21, 22; Rossat, *loc. cit.*, 13 (Switzerland), p. 38, and also p. 44; A. Millien, *loc. cit.*, I, gives more than five versions and variants from Nivernais in pages 90-93, and three others in pages 257-262. All the refrains, in Millien, are different from those recorded in Canada.

§ The first of these was obtained in 1918 by M. E.-Z. Massicotte from V.-F. de Repentigny (*The Journal of American Folk-Lore*, no. 123, 1919, p. 21). C. M. Barbeau more recently recorded the other versions of the same song—and of two others, related to the first—in Bonaventure and Gaspé counties.

LE MIRACLE DU NOUVEAU-NÉ



1 Sont trois faucheurs ‖ dedans les prés; (*bis*)
Trois jeunes fill' ‖ vont y faner.
Je suis jeune; j'entends les bois retentir;
Je suis jeune et jolie.

2 Trois jeunes fill' ‖ vont y faner. (*bis*)
Celle qu'accouch' ‖ d'un nouveau-né

3 D'un mouchoir blanc ‖ l'a env'loppé;

4 Dans la rivière ‖ ell' l'a jeté.

5 L'enfant s'est mis ‖ à lui parler.

6 "Ma bonne mèr', ‖ là vous péchez."

7 —"Mais, mon enfant, ‖ qui te l'a dit?"

8 —"Ce sont trois ange' ‖ du paradis.

9 L'un est tout blanc, ‖ et l'autre gris;

10 L'autre ressemble ‖ à Jésus-Christ."

11 —"Ah! revenez, ‖ mon cher enfant."

12 —"Ma chère mère, || il n'est plus temps.

13 Mon petit corps || s'en va calant;

14 Mon petit cœur || s'en va mourant;

15 Ma petite âme, || au paradis."

TRANSLATION

1 They are three mowers in the field
And in the field are mowers three,
Three girls have come to turn the hay.
I'm young, have an ear to hear the woodland revelry,
I am young and fair to see.

2 Three girls have come to turn the hay,
To turn the hay are maidens three,
And one a mother's come to be.

3 And one a mother's come to be.
A little babe, so young a maid—
In kerchief white the baby laid.

4 In kerchief white the baby laid,
The babe she laid in kerchief white,
And into the sea by moonlight.

5 And into the sea by moonlight,
By moonlight threw it into the sea.
But the little babe said plaintively,

6 But the little babe said plaintively,
Plaintively, without a tear,
"You are sinning, mother dear.

7 "You are sinning, mother dear,
Oh you are sinning, mother dear."
"My child, my child, how did you hear?

8 "My child, my child, how did you hear,
And who, my child, has told of me?"
"In Paradise 'twas angels three.

9 "In Paradise 'twas angels three,
Angels three and angels bright,
The one was gray and one was white.

10 "The one was gray and one was white,
Such angels have I seen above,
And one did shine with Jesus' love.

11 "And one did shine with Jesus' love,
The brightest of the angels three."
"My child, my child, come back to me.

12 "My child, my child, come back to me,
My little child, come here, come here."
"It is too late, my mother dear.

13 "It is too late, my mother dear.
The time has come and I must drown;
My little body's sinking down.

14 "My little body's sinking down;
Too late, my mother, you are crying,
For my little heart is dying.

15 "For my little heart is dying,
For my little heart is dying,
And my little soul is flying."

THE BLASPHEMER CHASTISED

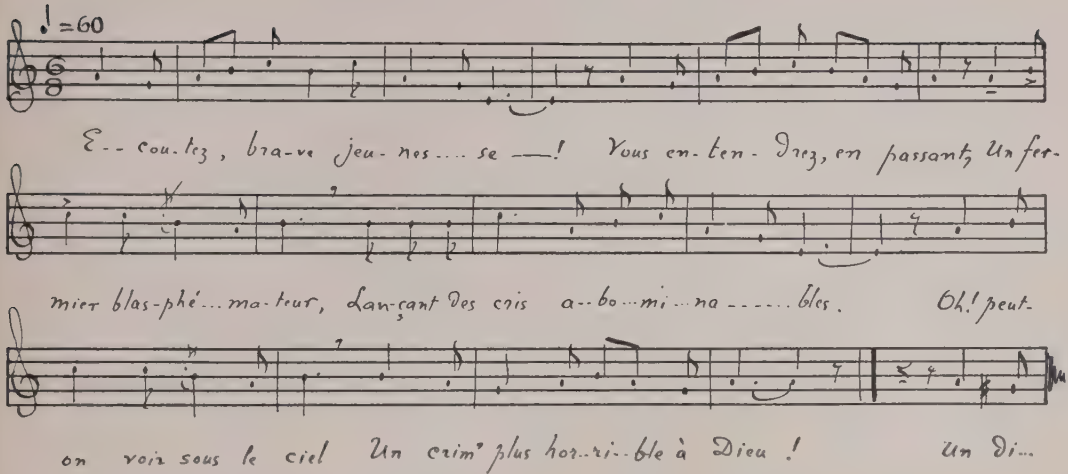
IF there is one song rather than another in the present collection that has a chance of proving native to Canada, it is the following. It unmistakably bears the stamp of a peasant origin. Its awkward style reminds one of many a "complainte" and local song that still enjoys a certain vogue in the by-ways of Quebec. It is because it exemplifies a type that it deserves a place here.

The song-maker, with all his rustic art, explored no new avenues nor did he follow the spontaneous dictates of his unspoiled nature, as he should have done were folk songs made in the ways laid down by certain theorists. His stencils, formulæ and general notions were borrowed from the traditional stock and are the more in evidence for the failure of his technique to conceal them or strictly to conform to their standards. He begins in the familiar strain, "Harken ye!" and concludes with a timeworn morality. Measuring his rhythmic spans, as song-makers of his kind do, upon a tune already familiar to him, he was led unawares to adopt an ancient Romance type of line no longer known in modern French verse but still preserved in the Iberian peninsula: the prosodic figure of 14 (7+7) and 7 syllables; in the last, shorter lines of each stanza the song-maker strove for rhyme. We are without positive clue as to the rest, save that the fairly regular alternation between masculine and feminine endings and cæsura may have been necessitated by the guiding melody.

The folk anecdote narrated in the song is in the ancient European manner: a blasphemer, angered to the point of "shooting up to the divine Light," is changed into a werewolf for punishment.

The song, a single version of which is known to us, was recorded by Mr. Massicotte from Joseph Rousselle (Saint-Denis, Kamouraska), in 1918.

LE BLASPHÉMATEUR CHÂTIÉ



1 Ecoutez, brave jeunesse! ‖ Vous entendrez, en passant,
Un fermier blasphémateur ‖ lançant des cris abominables.
Oh! peut-on voir sous le ciel
Un crim' plus horrible à Dieu!

2 Un dimanche, avant la messe, ‖ il s'en va dedans son champ.
Il jurait, il blasphémait: ‖ "Jésus-Christ, la Sainte Vierge!"
Il fait des injures à Dieu
Qui vous dressent les cheveux.

3 Par ici passait un prêtre ‖ qui revenait de prêcher.
Il l'a entendu blasphémer. ‖ Aussitôt lui a dit: "Mon frère,
Changez de vie promptement;
Redoutez le jugement!"

4 —"Je ne crois ni Dieu ni diable," ‖ répondit le scélérat.
"Je vois qu'il n'y en a pas: ‖ je ne ramass' point d'avoine,
Ni org', ni avoin', ni blé
Pour nourrir tous mes bestiaux."

5 ———————— || il a pris son pistolet,
Droitement il a tiré || au Flambeau qui nous éclaire;
En disant: "Dieu souverain,
Permettez qu'je vienne en chien!"

6 Ce malheureux hérétique || a été puni sur-le-champ.
Devant l'prêtre et les religieux || son corps a changé de forme:
Comme un véritable chien,
La tête comme un chrétien.

7 Ne murmurez pas, mes frères, || contre le Dieu tout-puissant.
Tout vient de sa sainte main, || la pluie et la sécheresse,
L'abondance et la cherté.
Il ne faut pas murmurer.

TRANSLATION

1 Harken, all ye good young men!
In passing on your way you hear
A dreadful farmer swearing and cursing
With oath and blasphemy and jeer.
Oh can one under Heaven see
A crime more thick with deviltry?

2 One Sunday, coming soon the Mass,
He goes off in his fruitless field,
Swearing and cursing with blasphemy,
"Jesus Christ!" for the stony yield,
To God himself makes reprimand,
So that your bristling hairs up stand.

3 A priest was passing on this way,
Coming from the holy Mass,
And heard him curse and heard him swear,
And turned to him and said, "Alas!

But if you will not change, my son,
I fear a judgment shall be done."

4 "I put no faith in God or devil!"
Said the blasphemous villain.
"I see there is no God in Heaven
Since that I have no manner of grain,
Nor barley, oats, nor rye to give
To all my hungry beasts to live."

5 And then this wretched heretic
Did take a pistol in his hand
And shoot up to the Light divine
That sheds effulgence on the land,
And said, "Almighty God, I pray
You make a dog of me today."

6 And then this wretched heretic
Received at once a punishment.
Before the priest his body took
The form and smooth habiliment
As of a speechless dog instead,
Yet Christian was still his head.

7 My brothers, 'tis not well to God
To murmur grumbling words and vain.
All things come from his holy hand,
The drought as well as dropping rain,
He gives both scarcity and fill,
We may not question God's will.

THE KING OF SPAIN'S DAUGHTER

IN the leisurely days of old, folk songs and tales provided a favorite entertainment for all, high or low, on land and on the sea, under the open sky and by the fireside in the long winter evenings. Songs were not all of uniform gravity; they were not all to remind one of picturesque historical anecdotes, of dismal tragedies or romantic adventures. They might only casually, as the moment dictated, visit the sphere of moralizing and religious examples. But even as life was made up of shifting hours of work, rest, joy, love and feast, so the familiar melodies chimed in the panorama of an endlessly changing existence in the peaceful countryside, in the crowded thoroughfares of the bourgeoisie, or in the sophisticated boudoirs and exotic gardens of a walled-in nobility.

Ever since man was banned from Eden, work has remained a punishment, a dire law to the many. And the penalty for the sin of Adam has not grown lighter with the lapse of millennia. In a past epoch work was only an incident in life and starvation a too often-recurring accident. Work was the mere provider of necessities, by no means banishing enjoyment out of life; yet, slight as it might be, it was made more attractive by a spontaneous concentration, an artistic refinement unfamiliar to the present generations. Work songs of all kinds sustained the rhythm of the hand in toil, while the mind escaped on the wing of fancy to the enchanted realm of wonderland. Now that labor is sullen under its crushing, mechanical burden, now that profit and luxury have become the very essence of human endeavor, an ominous silence has invaded the workshop. The hand drags heavily while the mind, spiritless in its inertia, staggers amid junk piles and oil-spattered walls. Unable as we are fully to realize the importance of the work songs in the past, we may now wonder at their number, hundreds and hundreds left idle by the wayside, even among the descendants of the country folk that once sought a new home in the woodlands of America. In the whole French repertory of Canada there is, indeed, hardly a type of song better known and more copiously exemplified in our collections. *The King of Spain's Daughter* (or *The Diver*), *I'm not quite of Peasantry*, *If Papa knew*, and others in this volume will serve as illustrations.

The song of *The Diver* has long won its way to fame in several Euro-

pean countries, and beyond. Its history, from its inception, is exceedingly complex. Scholars of various nationalities have labored at its complete elucidation, so that we may now rely on such studies or summaries as are available in *Mélusine* (II, 178, 179, 223-230) and particularly in Doncieux' *Romancéro* ("Le plongeur noyé," XXV, 312-324).* We shall sum up the conclusions arrived at by Doncieux.

The theme of *The Diver*, he claims, goes back to twelfth- and thirteenth-century Italian chronicles, which speak of a famous Sicilian diver named Nicholas, whose repute bordered on the legendary. Pontanus (1426), then Fagello (1498-), elaborated on it in Latin; Simon Goulard later translated Fagello's poem for his *Trésor des Histoires admirables* (Geneva, 1620, vol. II). Hence, from Goulard's translation, the birth of our song and its growth to fame.

Doncieux' hypothesis as to this last point, however, does not seem convincing, for reasons to be explained in a moment. In the first place, the manuscripts of troubadours in mediæval times and the more recent scripts in printed form have not exerted any marked influence on oral literature† at any period, particularly at such a date as 1620, when printed books were still a novelty and a luxury. The two currents of written and oral literature seldom intermingled; exchanges were few. What was in books remained enshrined in books; the folk literature lived in the meandering stream of an age-long oral tradition. Popular as is said to have been the Sicilian legend of the diver Nicholas—granted that the identification is final—it had already had centuries in which to wander abroad and invade France, particularly through the seafaring populations of the south and west coasts. The stilted seventeenth-century translation, buried as it was in a compilation of two jealously guarded volumes, is sure not to have amounted to much. It could hardly have been more than a trivial incident in the life of the legend, important only to present-day seekers for bookish evidence.

* Also T. F. Crane, *Chansons populaires de France* (261, 262). Earlier studies are by Dr. H. Ullrich, in his *Die Tauchersage in ihren litterarischen und volksthümlichen Entwickelung*, 1885; *cf.* also *Archivo per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari*, VII, 9; VIII, 3. The Mélusine articles are signed by Val. Schmidt, W. Goelzinger, F. Liebrecht and K. Gaedeke.

† *Cf.* the careful study of G. Huet, in *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, Paris, jan.-fév. 1916, p. 13.

It is especially when we consider the varied career, the many forms and variations, of the French song of *The Diver and the Gold Ring* that Doncieux' assumption as to its genetic relation with the Goulard record of 1620 inspires doubts. At that date the song was presumably already entering on its independent Canadian career, with the several variants that still characterize it. The early bifurcation of the song into the authentic and the contaminated branches (*La fille du roi d'Espagne* and *Isabeau s'y promène*, or the like) must have been well established even then, since *Isabeau*, the derived form, is still better known along the St. Lawrence than the original *La fille du roi d'Espagne*, which we give here. *Isabeau* is further differentiated into several forms, with different refrains as work or dance song, all of which are unmistakably from France. And we know what variations mean as evidence for the age of a song.

The diffusion of *The Diver* to other European countries, moreover, is the most extensive of any of the songs we have so far studied. Doncieux* lists forty versions for France, and twenty-nine for Italy (Piedmont and Venetia). Italy has borrowed the song from France after lending her the theme. More than twenty records of it from France,† Switzerland‡ and Canada§ have since been added. It has circulated in Brittany in three different translations (*gwertz*).‖ And Doncieux also describes the genealogies of other adaptations discovered in Lithuania and Asia Minor. It was translated into German verse by the poet Uhland (*Die Königstochter*) and was more freely utilized by others, Schiller foremost among them (*cf. Der Taucher*).

The one-line stanzas with refrains in *The King of Spain's Daughter* consist of twelve syllables uniformly rhymed *é*, with a "mute" cæsura after the

* *Op. cit.*, pp. 312-314; Crane, *op. cit.*, pp. 261, 262.

† Dardy, *Anthologie populaire de l'Albret*, I, 199-201. A. Millien, *loc. cit.*, I, 128-132 (Nivernais), gives seven versions with their melodies; in one of these we find a refrain identical with ours: "Oh, joli cœur de rose. . . . Joli cœur de rosier."

‡ Rossat, *op. cit.*, 13, p. 62.

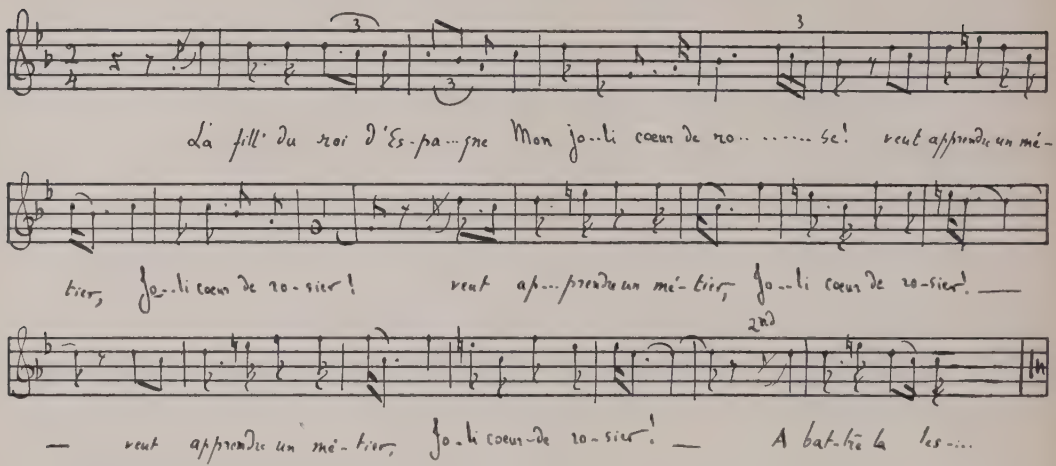
§ We cannot yet give in exact figures the number of Canadian versions in our possession. The song, especially in its contaminated form (*Isabeau*), is one of the most popular among the French Canadians. For a number of years it has also spread among the educated classes in the medium of print.

‖ H. Guillerm, *Recueil de chants populaires du pays de Cornouailles*, pp. 67-69; Bourgault-Ducoudray, *Trente mélodies populaires de Basse-Bretagne*, pp. 32-38, "Un jour, sur le pont de Tréguier" (translated from the Breton).

sixth syllable (6+6). The good state of preservation of the individual versions, which have not on the whole drifted very far apart, implies a moderate age for the original song, which, moreover, in Doncieux' opinion, must have been composed by a poet living along the seacoast, possibly in Brittany.

The following Canadian text is principally from Ovide Soucy's version, recorded by the author in 1918, near Rivière-du-Loup (Kamouraska).

LA FILLE DU ROI D'ESPAGNE



1 La fill' du roi d'Espagne
Mon joli cœur de rose!
veut apprendre un métier,
Joli cœur de rosier!
veut apprendre un métier,
Joli cœur de rosier!

2 A battre la lessive, || la battre et la couler.

3 Un battoir on lui donne, || un beau banc à laver.

4 Au premier coup qu'ell' frappe, || l'anneau d'or a tombé.

5 Ell' s'est jetée à terre, || ell' s'est mise à pleurer.

6 Mais par ici luy passe || son gentil cavalier.

7 "Que donneriez-vous, belle, || si j'allais le chercher?"

8 —"Un doux baiser, dit-elle, || deux, trois, si vous voulez."

9 Le galant s'y dépouille, || à la mer s'est jeté.

10 Dès la première plonge, || la mer en a brouillé.

11 Dès la seconde plonge, || l'anneau d'or a sonné.

12 Dès la troisième plonge, || le galant s'est noyé.

13 Sa mère à la fenêtre, || qui ne fait que pleurer:

14 "Faut-il pour une fille || y voir mon fils noyé!"

TRANSLATION

1 The king of Spain his daughter
My pretty rosy heart!
Will have a trade be taught her,
Pretty heart of rose!
Will have a trade be taught her,
Pretty heart of rose!

2 And she's to beat the wash,
To beat and scald and splash.

3 She's given a beater for smashing,
And a fine bench for the washing.

4 At the first good rapping she—
Her gold ring drops in the sea.

5 She fell to earth in a heap,
And set herself to weep.

6 Is passing now right here
Her gentle cavalier.

7 "And what would you give to me,
If I looked for it out in the sea?"

8 "A sweet little kiss," said she,
"Or two, if you wish, or three."

9 He disrobes him gallantly,
And dives down into the sea.

10 With his first dive and tumble
The sea is all in a jumble.

11 With his second dive as he sank
The ring went clink and clank.

12 With his third dive down
He stays in the sea to drown.

13 Standing the window by,
His mother does naught but cry.

14 "Is there any maid so renowned,
My son must needs be drowned?"

I'M NOT QUITE OF PEASANTRY

THIS marching song has been renowned for many years among soldiers, students and artists. It was sung at the Celtic dinner held in Paris, in 1884, under the ægis of Ernest Renan, and it has often graced the programmes of noted operatic singers. In Canada it is heard in schools and among educated people in festive assemblies rather than at large in the ordinary sphere of folk songs. We may not be far afield in presuming that it has invaded Quebec rather late, together with a host of modern songs imported from France in the last two centuries by visitors and casual immigrants. The version that follows was, indeed, obtained from an official of the Montreal Law Courts, M. Tison, whose great-grandfather—a good singer, it is said—settled in Canada about the time of the Conquest (1760).*

The song, however, is much older than the probable date of its entry into Canada might lead one to believe, for it has had time to undergo interesting variations in form and content. In approximately thirty French versions so far listed† there is little accord as to the name of the place mentioned in the opening lines. Here it is "tout le long de la verte Seine" or "dans la plaine"; there it is La Lorraine, Rennes or Varennes, and so forth. The fateful flower is either "une verveine" (vervain) or a "marjolaine" (marjoram) or "une rose de marjolaine," as in our song. The refrain also varies; now it is "Avec mes sabots, dondaine," then "Tir'ton joli bas de laine . . . car on le verra."‡ By far the most significant, though the least popularly known, version of the song is that of *Les sabots d'Anne de Bretagne,* which alludes to the marriage of the Celtic princess to the King of France, in 1491. Let us quote for comparison:

* It was collected by M. E.-Z. Massicotte.

† E. Rolland, *Recueil de chansons populaires*, I, 235-237 (Vendée, Mézières); II, 131-143 (seventeen versions from various parts of France); Tarbé, II, 186 (Marne). *Cf.* T. F. Crane, *op. cit.*, p. 270; Bujeaud, *op. cit.*, I, 88 (Poitou); Jean Richepin, *Journal de l'Université des Annales*, *loc. cit.*, I, no. 4, p. 152; Ad. Orain, *Glossaire patois du Dép. d'Ille-et-Vilaine*, pp. 145-150 (three versions from Montreuil-sur-Ille; one from Morbihan, Brittany); a few from Canada.

‡ In one of Orain's versions the refrain is the same as in our Canadian form (*op. cit.*, pp. 149, 150).

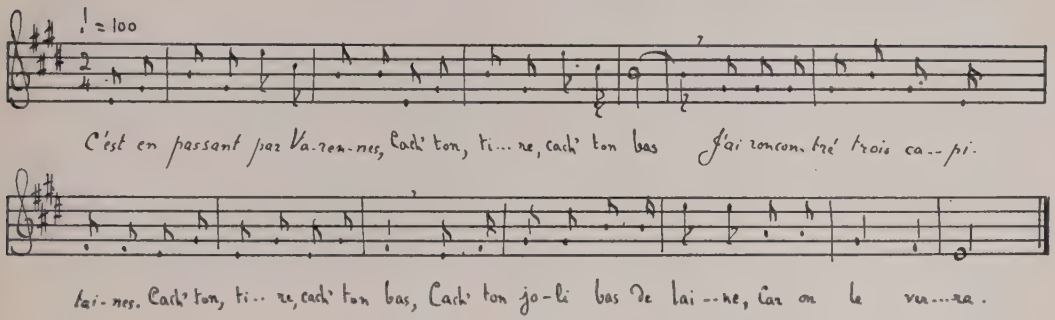
C'était Anne de Bretagne
Avec des sabots
revenant de ses domaines.
En sabots, mirlitontaine,
Ah ah ah!
Vive les sabots de bois.
L'on vit trois beaux capitaines
Offrir à leur souveraine
Un joli pied de verveine.
"S'il fleurit tu seras reine."
Elle a fleuri, la verveine;
Anne de Bretagne fut reine.
Les Bretons sont dans la peine;
Ils n'ont plus de souveraine.*

Which of the two leading variants is the original form remains a problem for further study. That of Anne de Bretagne, however, has the decided advantage of locating the theme in time and place, which at once forces a presumption as to the origin of our less explicit variant, *I'm not quite of Peasantry*.

The prosody is the same in all the forms: seven syllables to the line and the rhymes uniformly feminine—*eine, aine*.

* Ad. van Bever, *Les Poètes du Terroir*, I, 348.

JE NE SUIS PAS SI VILAINE



1 C'est passant par Varennes,*
Cach' ton, tire, cach' ton bas
J'ai rencontré trois capitaines.
Cach' ton, tire, cach' ton bas,
Cach' ton joli bas de laine,
Car on le verra.

2 J'ai rencontré trois capitaines.
Ils m'ont traité de vilaine.

3 Je ne suis pas si vilaine,

4 Puisque le fils du roi m'aime.

5 Il m'a donné pour étrennes

6 Un beau violon d'ébène,

7 Une rose de marjolaine.

8 Si ell' fleurit, je s'rai reine,

9 Si ell' flétrit, je s'rai vilaine.

* *Veillées du bon vieux temps* (1920), Montréal, pp. 18, 19.

TRANSLATION

1 By Varennes going carelessly,
Hide your, dingle, hide your stocking,
Captains coming I met three,
Hide your, dingle, hide your stocking,
Hide your pretty woolen stocking,
People will be looking.

2 Captains coming I met three,
As I were low-born spoke to me.

3 As I were low-born spoke to me,
Yet I'm not quite of peasantry,

4 Yet I'm not quite of peasantry,
For a kingly youth's in love with me.

5 For a kingly youth's in love with me,
Has made me gifts of a holiday.

6 Has made me gifts of a holiday,
A violin of ebony,

7 A violin of ebony,
A rosebud beautiful to see,

8 A rosebud beautiful to see,
And if it flowers, queen I'll be,

9 And if it flowers, queen I'll be,
And if it fades, all peasantry.

IF PAPA KNEW

THE Latin we hear of in this piquant little *jeu d'esprit* is not of the scholastic brand, nor are the lessons which the pretty maid, an only daughter, would have received from the lips of the gallant mariner on the high seas. These allusions to schools and Latin, so unusual in the folk songs, are possibly due to a minstrel who cared little for pedantic learning and who had wasted none of his youth over languages which even birds "that flit and fly" can talk "to a degree." None the worse is the ditty for the flippant Latin, however. Its grace and humor are only the more Gallic and its airy style is so purely in the folk vein that it could never be mistaken for the product of the artificial classicism of the cap-and-gown guilds at the time of the French Renaissance.

Fresh and youthful though it is with its smart eight-syllable lines, it has none the less passed through a long oral history. It has assumed so many forms as work song, paddling song or dance song, both in France and Canada, that it must have drifted away from its original purpose only gradually, in the course of three or four centuries at the least. One of the northern provinces was no doubt the place of its birth, since its structure and rhymes could not have been so well preserved had they known the vicissitudes of adaptation.

The refrain of "Sautez, mignonne, Cécilia!" though coupled with the least interesting and archaic of all the melodies recorded, seems to predominate. We find it in Champagne,* in Berry,† in the Loire provinces generally,‡ in Finistère§ and in Canada,‖ together with other forms.¶

* Champfleury et Weckerlin, *Chansons populaires des provinces de France*, p. 212.

† H. Gay, "Chansons populaires du Berry," in *Revue du Berry*, 1908, p. 277.

‡ Bujeaud, *op. cit.*, I, 81.

§ E. Rolland, *Recueil de chansons populaires*, II, 48.

‖ E. Gagnon, *Chansons populaires du Canada;* also in our collections.

¶ E. Rolland, *loc. cit.*, I, 17, 18, quotes three versions of the "La destinée, la rose au bois" variant, one from Lorient (Brittany), the two others from southern France (Haute Saone, Dijon); de Puymaigre quotes a fragment from the pays messin, *loc. cit.*, p. 463; Cl. Servettaz, *Chants et chansons populaires de la Savoie*, pp. 161, 162, gives a version of the variant "Frappant du talon," and refers to two other records from the French Alps, those of Ritz, *Chansons populaires de la Haute-Savoie*, p. 100, and of Tiersot, *Chansons populaires des Alpes françaises*, p. 259.

Another ending is substituted in some of these records:

"Mais, la bell', qu'est-ce qui lui dira?"
—"Ce sont les oiseaux des bois."
—"Que disent les oiseaux des bois?"
"Que les femmes ne valent rien
Et les hommes encor bien moins.
Pour les fill's, ils en disent du bien."*

Or, again, in the Bujeaud version for the western provinces:

4 "Puis il me dit en son latin
Que les hommes ne valent rien;
5 Que les hommes ne valent rien,
Et les garçons encor bien moins.

Fragments of our theme, moreover, are to be found in various songs,† some of which are obviously contaminated and of a decidedly inferior quality, such as the familiar *La destinée, la rose au bois*, so often heard in Quebec and reproduced in printed song-books.‡

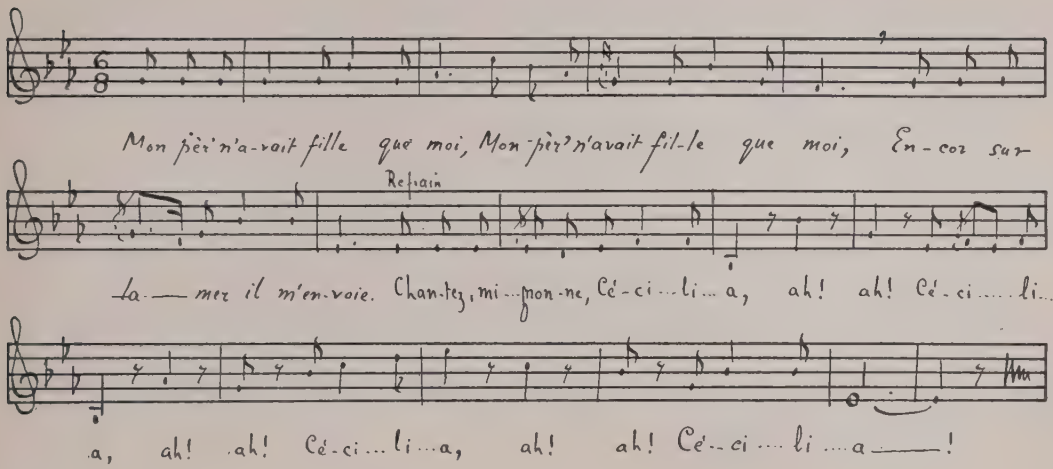
Our text for *If Papa knew* was obtained in 1916 from Louis "l'Aveugle" (Simard), a semi-professional singer and beggar of the northeastern districts of Quebec.

* Champfleury et Weckerlin, *loc. cit.*

† De Puymaigre, *Chants populaires recueillis dans le pays messin*, p. 328; the author also refers to two Catalan variants of our song (*cf. Romancerillo catalan*, de Puymaigre, pp. 157, 330, 331).

‡ *Chansons canadiennes*, anon., p. 74; also in our collections and elsewhere.

SI MON PAPA LE SAVAIT



1 Mon pèr' n'avait fille que moi; (*bis*)
Encor sur la mer il m'envoi'.
Chantez, mignonne, Cécilia!

2 Encor sur la mer il m'envoi'.
Le marinier qui m'y menait,

3 Il devint amoureux de moi.

4 "Ma mignonnette, embrassez-moi!"

5 —"Nenni, monsieur, je n'oserais,

6 Car si mon papa le savait,

7 Fille battu' ça serait moi."

8 —"Mais qui, la bell', le lui dirait?"

9 —"Sont les oiseaux qui vol'nt en l'air."

10 —"Les oiseaux de l'air parlent-ils?"

11 —"Ils parlent quand ils sont appris;

12 Ils parl'nt français, latin aussi.

13 Grand Dieu! que les homm's sont badins!"

TRANSLATION

1 No daughter had father but only me,
No daughter had father but only me,
Yet off he sent me over the sea.
Sing, my little Cecily!

2 Yet off he sent me over the sea,
And the mariner that brought me, he—

3 And the mariner that brought me, he
Just goes and falls in love with me.

4 Just goes and falls in love with me.
"Kiss me, my darling girl," says he.

5 "Kiss me, my darling girl," says he.
"Never, never, it cannot be,

6 "Never, never, it cannot be,
For if my papa heard of it, he—

7 "For if my papa heard of it, he
Would spank his daughter, and that is me.

8 "Would spank his daughter, and that is me."
"And who's to tell, if never we?

"And who's to tell, if never we?"
" 'Tis the birds that flit and fly from the sea.

" 'Tis the birds that flit and fly from the sea."
"Birds that have words! how can it be?

"Birds that have words! how can it be?"
"They talk if they learn in Arcady.

"They talk if they learn in Arcady,
Talk French and Latin in high degree.

"Talk French and Latin in high degree."
"Heavens! how comical men will be!"

A-ROLLING MY BOWL

POPULARITY and print even more than desuetude tend to rob a folk song of some of its most engaging features. They flatten it down to a level of mediocrity; and in Canada they have reduced to the commonplace such pretty work songs as *A-rolling my Bowl* and *At Saint-Malo.*

Familiar at first among canoemen, these ditties have for more than a generation passed into the small repertory of every household, school and shop. Among the earliest to be published, back in the fifties, they have since obstinately occupied the forefront—the shop-window, we should say—of every Canadian song-book, large or small. They have taken upon themselves a significance somewhat analogous to that of the maple leaf or the beaver on the flags of our national celebrations. What they gained on the surface they lost in depth. They must at one time have had variants in tune and text; they must have shared in the inimitable musical quality of the best folk melodies, unspoiled by the sluggish throats of the "educated" class. But it is almost too late to discover them in uncontaminated form even in their former haunts. A blighting uniformity has come over them.

Yet *A-rolling my Bowl* is a graceful, witty song, whose pretty imagery is enlivened with a playful turn in the last stanzas. Its melody is bright and rollicking, though restricted in scope and color. Many an echo in the wilds of America has been awakened by the coming of the first white man with his fanciful evocation of its "three white-feather ducks a-bathing," and "the son of the King" and his "gun of silver, silver-bright" taking aim at the black and killing the white. For three centuries it has escorted as paddling song, with alternating solo and chorus, the pioneer canoemen, "coureurs-des-bois," and discoverers on their rambles up and down the rivers and across the prairie, the waste land and the mountain. And now it looks as though it had come to the end of its course, like the birch bark canoe or the "travois." The virgin forest and river, once its congenial background, have been defaced forever by ubiquitous lumber camps, drifting logs, dykes, sawmills and forest fires.

So characteristically Canadian is our song in some ways that we are apt to forget that it is an old-country possession as well. Our list of versions, though yet incomplete, includes at least twenty-nine versions from France

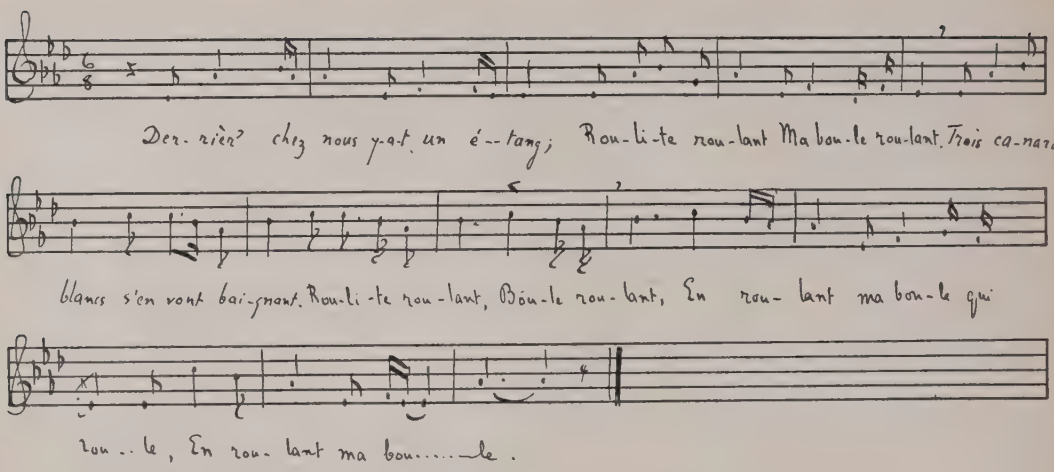
and a fair number from Canada; and we know of parallels published by Nigra for northern Italy.*

While the refrain *"Rouli, roulant, ma boule roulant, en roulant ma boule"* is the only one extensively known in Canada, several other forms were also found in both France and Canada, some of which are still remembered by the older folk singers, such as: *"Levez les pieds gaillardement!"* or *"Gaillardement, je suis brune, gaillarde brune, je suis brune gaillardement,"* or again *"V'là l'bon vent, v'là l'joli vent, v'là l'bon vent, m' amie m'attend."*

The following version was recorded in 1916 from Edouard Hovington, an old canoeman of Tadousac, P. Q. He was nearly ninety years old. As it differs slightly from the current printed records and was learned before song-books were in circulation, we presume that it is an authentic and uncontaminated version.

* T. F. Crane, in his *Chansons populaires de France*, p. 270, gives several references, to which we add others: E. Rolland, *loc. cit.*, I, 249-254; II, 147—six versions from Lorient, and Retonféy; de Puymaigre, *loc. cit.*, 396; de Beaurepaire, *Etude sur la poésie populaire en Normandie*, LXXXVIII; Ch. Guillon, *Chansons populaires de l'Ain*, 542; J.-F. Bladé, *Poésies populaires de la Gascogne*, III, 212; *Mélusine*, I, col. 459 (Lorient); A. Orain, "Les canards blancs," 101-103; J. Bujeaud, *loc. cit.*, I, 134, 135; Jean Huré, *Chansons et danses bretonnes*, p. 15; L. Lambert, *Chants et chansons populaires du Languedoc*, I, 349, 350—two variants; A. Millien, *loc. cit.* (Nivernais), II, 22-29, with eleven different melodies and refrains; M. Stoober, *Elsässisches Volksbüchlein*, p. 162. For Italian versions, see C. Nigra, *Canti popolari del Piemonte*, p. 334. In Canada, it was published in the fifties in *Recueil de chansons canadiennes et françaises*, pp. 67, 68; in Larue, *Le Foyer canadien*, I, 340, who also cites a French version by J.-J. Ampère; in E. Gagnon, *Chansons populaires du Canada*; and elsewhere.

EN ROULANT MA BOULE



1 Derrièr' chez nous ‖ y-a-t un étang;*
Roulite roulant
Ma boule roulant.
Trois canards blancs ‖ s'en vont baignant.
Roulite roulant,
Boule roulant,
En roulant ma boule
Qui roule,
En roulant ma boule.

2 Trois canards blanc ‖ s'en vont baignant.
Le fils du roi ‖ s'en va chassant,

3 Avec son grand ‖ fusil d'argent.

4 Visa le noir, ‖ tua le blanc.

* Note the cæsura after the fourth syllable—a feature which may not yet have been accepted for this type of line by the critics.

5 "O fils du roi, || tu es méchant!

6 Tu as tu-é || mon canard blanc.

7 Par ses deux yeux || sort'nt les diamants,

8 Et par son bec || l'or et l'argent,

9 Et par sous l'aile || il perd son sang,

10 Et tout's ses plum's || s'en vont au vent.

11 Y sont trois dam's || les ramassant;

12 Et nous ferons || un lit de camp;

13 Nous coucherons || tous deux dedans,

14 Et nous aurons || des p'tits enfants;

15 Nous en aurons || des p'tits, des grands."

TRANSLATION

1 Behind our cabin's a little lake,
A-roly pololy,
My bowlie rowlie.
Two ducks go bathing and a drake,
A-roly pololy,
Bowlie rowlie,
Rolling my bowl
For to roll,
A-rolling my bowl.

2 Three white-feather ducks a-bathing go,
The prince he comes with a gun and a bow.

3 The son of the king, the king his son,
He comes to hunt with a silver gun.

4 With his gun of silver, silver-bright,
Took aim at the black and killed the white.

5 His aim was black and white the duck.
"O son of the king, you have wicked luck.

6 "You are very wicked, O son of the king,
Killing my duck was a wicked thing,

7 "My duck you've killed, my duck was white."
His eyes are a-gleam with diamonds bright.

8 Oh from his eyes the diamonds leak,
Gold and silver from his beak,

9 His beak is dripping golden rings,
And blood is dripping from his wings,

10 The white duck's wings are dripping blood,
The wind is white with feather-flood,

11 With all his feathers the wind is thick.
Three ladies gather up and pick,

12 Three ladies gather the feather yield.
"And we shall make us a bed in the field,

13 "A feather bed we'll gather and heap,
For two to snuggle, two to sleep.

14 "We'll sleep on a bed of white duck's feather,
Little children have together,

15 "Little children will befall,
Children big and children small."

AT SAINT-MALO

BUT for our song the name of Saint-Malo would have long disappeared from the memory of the Canadian country-folk. Yet few towns in all France had meant so much to their pioneer ancestors, as it was from its ancient port that nearly one half of their number had gazed for the last time upon the mother land. The individual recollections of the uneducated never pass on to posterity unless embodied in a formal work of art, humble though it may be. Without that vehicle even the most momentous historical events fade away within a few generations.

It is not as the port on the sea wherefrom remote ancestors once sailed for the new world that Saint-Malo is here recalled to memory. For *At Saint-Malo* is not a pious hymn or a patriotic outburst. As an everyday work or canoe song it merely tells of "vessels three" that "did come a-sailing, laden with oats and laden with wheat" and of "three ladies in the market street" approaching "to bargain groats."

Why is it that the song is so popular in Canada, where it is almost a national favorite? Popular caprice is not easily fathomed. Merry and smart though it is, the song is by no means of exceptional merit; yet so eminent an authority as Julien Tiersot has declared it the best on record for the text.* A stimulus for its rebirth may have been due, in the thirties, to ferments of rebellion and to a pronounced racial awakening. The name of Saint-Malo, well known to historians and politicians, may have sounded like a patriotic catchword, no matter what the contents of the song. So it was printed and rehearsed everywhere. "A Saint-Malo, beau port de mer," sounded like the name of a dear relative to most Canadians, though a good half of the pioneers, in fact, were not from Normandy, but from the provinces of the lower Loire (Anjou, Poitou, Aunis, Berri); they had not sailed from Saint-Malo, but from La Rochelle, on the west coast.

Oddly enough for a patriotic song, *At Saint-Malo* was not a lofty effusion, but a rather trivial narration of bold gallantry. The ending, now lost in our Canadian versions, has been supplied from French records by Doncieux.† It runs as follows:

* G. Doncieux, *Romancéro populaire de la France*, p. 514.

† Doncieux (*op. cit.*, "Le bateau de blé et la dame trompée," pp. 452-454) has com-

7 —"Entrez, Mesdames, vous verrez!"
8 La plus jeune a le pié leger,
9 Dedans le bateau a sauté.
10 Voilà que le vent a soufflé.
11 Le bateau s'est mis a voguer.
12 "Arrête, arrête, marinier!
13 Je suis femme d'un conseiller."
14 —"Quand vous seriez femme du Roë,
15 Avec vous je coucherai."

And other versions from Brittany continue with the lines:

"Jamais enfant n'avez porté.
S'il plaît à Dieu, vous en aurez
Avec un maître marinier!"

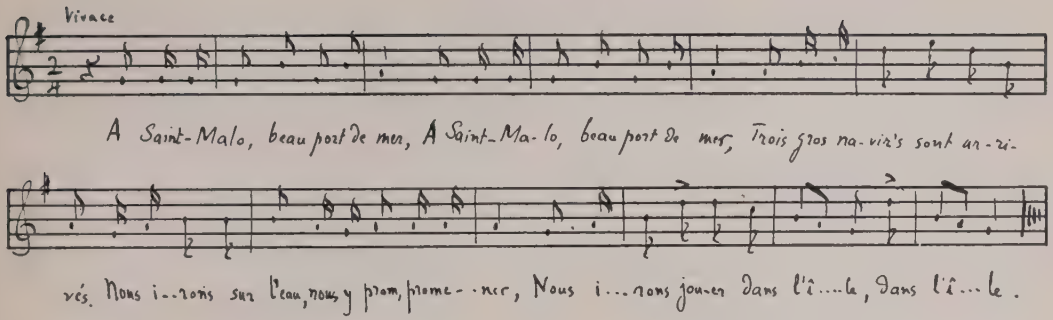
The name of Saint-Malo itself is not an essential feature of the song. We hear of the port of Nantes instead in three French records; and the authentic form, according to Doncieux, was no other than

Devant Bordeaux est arrivé. . . .

Printing and popular abuse in town and school have impoverished our canoe song to a still greater extent than *A-rolling my Bowl*. Interesting variants in tune and words were once found as well as in other folk songs; all traces of them have not yet disappeared. But most of the versions that may still be recorded in Quebec are identical, and the melody, shallow in the first place, has now grown stale and stereotyped. The present record, which we owe to the courtesy of Miss Loraine Wyman, of New York, was obtained from Grégoire Quirion, in 1918, in the neighborhood of Percé (Gaspé). It contains little, if anything, that differs from those previously published in Canadian song-books.

piled thirteen versions, chiefly for northwestern France, the birthplace of the song, to which may be added the earliest record for Canada, that of Larue, *Le foyer canadien*, I, 338, 339, and that of Champfleury et Weckerlin, *Chansons populaires des provinces de France*, p. 156. *Cf.* also F. Arnaudin's "A Bordeaux . . ." in *Chansons populaires de la Grande-Lande*, I, 159; and A. Millien, *loc. cit.* (Nivernais), II, 71, 72.

À SAINT-MALO



1 A Saint-Malo,* ‖ beau port de mer, (*bis*)
Trois gros navires ‖ sont arrivés.
Nous irons sur l'eau, nous y prom-promener,
Nous irons jouer dans l'île, dans l'île.

2 Trois gros navires ‖sont arrivés,
Chargés d'avoine, ‖ chargés de blé.

3 Trois dam's s'en viennent ‖ les marchander.

4 "Marchand, marchand, ‖ combien ton blé?"

5 —"Trois francs, l'avoine; ‖ six francs, le blé."

6 —"C'est bien trop cher ‖ d'un' bonn' moitié."

7 —"Si j'le vends pas ‖ j'le donnerai."

8 —"A ce prix-là, ‖ on va s'arranger."

* Note again the cæsura after the fourth syllable in the eight-syllable lines.

TRANSLATION

1 To Saint-Malo, port on the sea,
Did come a-sailing vessels three.
We're going to glide on the water, water, away,
On the isle, on the isle to play.

2 Did come a-sailing vessels fleet,
Laden with oats and laden with wheat.

3 Laden with wheat and laden with oats,
Three ladies came to bargain groats.

4 Three ladies came in the market street.
"Merchant, tell me the price of wheat.

5 "Merchant, tell me the price of your grain."
"Three francs for the oats, and little to gain.

6 "Six francs for the wheat, and the oats are three."
"And even the half's too dear for me.

7 "The grain's too dear by more than a half."
"If it will not sell, I'll give it like chaff.

8 "And I'll give it like chaff, if it will not sell."
"Why, then we'll come to terms right well."

SEVEN YEARS AT SEA

PERHAPS no other sailors' chantey can compare with *Seven Years at Sea* for fame and historical interest. It is one of the most extensively travelled songs of the European folk repertories. Best known on the shores of Brittany and Poitou, where it seems to have originated, it has spread across France and followed along the seacoast into neighboring countries, north and south.

E. Rolland* and Kr. Nyrop†, in the early eighties, compiled and commented upon a number of French and Scandinavian (Icelandic, Danish and Norwegian) versions. Mila had previously (1882) discussed nine Catalan versions. Le comte de Puymaigre,‡ in his study of *A nau Cathrineta*, spoke of four distinct Portuguese forms. Doncieux' *Romancéro*, in 1904, contained a remarkable survey of its migrations and of sundry controversial points. The English *Folk Song Journal* has lately brought to light, we believe, some British records of the chantey which had escaped notice. In Doncieux' bibliography are listed over twenty-six French records,§ more than eleven for Spain and Portugal, six in the Breton language, and four for Scandinavia (two for Iceland, and one each for Denmark and Norway). The same song has since been found in Switzerland,‖ and we have in recent years recovered several versions in various parts of Quebec.

Doncieux' analysis and conclusions are so thorough that we can do no better than to summarize them.¶ From internal evidence—the structure and the contents—*Seven Years at Sea* must have originated in northwestern France, presumably on the seacoast of Brittany and Anjou, which is still its main center of distribution. From here the mariners brought it to the shores of Provence and Gascony. A folk singer is the most likely medium for the transmission of a Provençal version into Catalonia. Divergent endings char-

* *Mélusine*, II, 527, 528, and *Recueil de chansons populaires*, I, 301-303.

† *Mélusine*, II, 475-478.

‡ *Romanceiro, choix de vieux chants portugais*, pp. 173-178.

§ A. Millien, *loc. cit.*, I, 220-222, has since recorded a Nivernais version beginning with the words, "C'est un petit navire d'Espagne."

‖ Rossat, *op. cit.*, no. 14, p. 128.

¶ Doncieux, *op. cit.*, pp. 247-251.

acterize the southern branch of the song. The sailor boy is no longer a paragon of devotion. When he climbs the rigging, it is without a notion of sacrificing his life for his captain in the event of failure to see land. The Catalan song, in turn, was adapted to the Portuguese in the guise of *A nau Cathrineta*, a famous sixteenth-century ship, the pride of Portugal in her day. Portuguese writers,* in their enthusiastic appreciation, have hailed the chantey as of fantastic import, nothing less than the embryo of the maritime epic of their nation!

Peculiar deviations characterize the ending in its Breton and Scandinavian forms. The rector of Babylon town, according to the Breton record, appears upon the scene to give extreme unction to the doomed sailors, one after another. The French original is still further distorted in its Icelandic, Danish and Norwegian forms. The captain is no other than the King of Babylon and all of the crew are his relatives but one. When the lots are drawn, the generous stranger relieves the situation by devoting himself willingly for the welfare of his hosts. Thereupon begins a gruesome banquet. The episodic reference to the three doves is also awkwardly modified. A miraculous dove brings a favorable wind that promptly drives the ship into port. Another miraculous ending is found in a contaminated Spanish and Portuguese "romance." Ever in search of human souls, the Devil betakes himself to the deck of the ill-fated ship, to bargain with the captain for his soul. But, unlike Dr. Faust, the worthy sailor declares that his soul belongs to God and his body to the salt sea.† The name of Babylon, it should be remembered, referred, in the ancient geographic nomenclature, to Cairo in Egypt.

Seven Years at Sea, whether in its French or in its English form, must have appealed to Thackeray's sense of humor, for he adapted it in an amusing rhyme entitled "Little Billee." The three Spanish sailors spoken of in the Breton variant here become three sailors from Bristol—Jim, Jack and Bill, the cabin-boy. Bill, in the topmost sail, perceives Jerusalem, Madagascar, North and South America, the British fleet at anchor and Admiral

* Almeida Garrett in particular (*Romanceiro*, III).

† Catalonia (F. Pelay Briz, *Cansons de la Terra*, IV, the Majorca version); Portugal (Garrett, *op. cit.*).

Napier, K.C.B.* Another English parody of the song appeared anonymously in *The Academy*, xxvi, 1884.†

The French and the Canadian records undoubtedly go back to the same composition. In thematic development they are, on the whole, one and identical. Their actual wording, though suggestive of parallelism, differs almost completely from beginning to end. In Doncieux' reconstructed form, the opening lines and refrain read:

1 Il était un petit navire,
Il était un petit navire || dessus la mer—ma lon lon la!
dessus la mer s'en est allé.
2 A bien été sept ans sur mere || sans jamais la terre aborder.

We find no trace of our Canadian refrain, *"Viv'rons-nous toujours en tristesse? Aurons-nous jamais la liberté?"* in any of the French versions so far observed. A few lines, evidently authentic, fail to appear in our document, such as: 9 *Quand il fut dedans la grande hune, a regardé de tous côtés,* and 12 *"Je vois les moutons dans la plaine, et la bergère à les garder."* Several of our lines (1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10), on the other hand, find no exact equivalent in Doncieux' text. The ending also is at variance. In the French record it reads: *"T'as gagné la fille à ton maître, || le navire qu'est sous tes piés!"* The Canadian song, as we shall see, ends with a joyful outburst on the part of the cabin-boy, who longingly contemplates the land and "the loveliest of maidens three."

No doubt can be entertained as to the prosodic rules. The rhyme in *é* prevails throughout the song, and the lines consist, at least in the author's intention, of sixteen syllables (8+8), with a feminine (*muette*) cæsura.

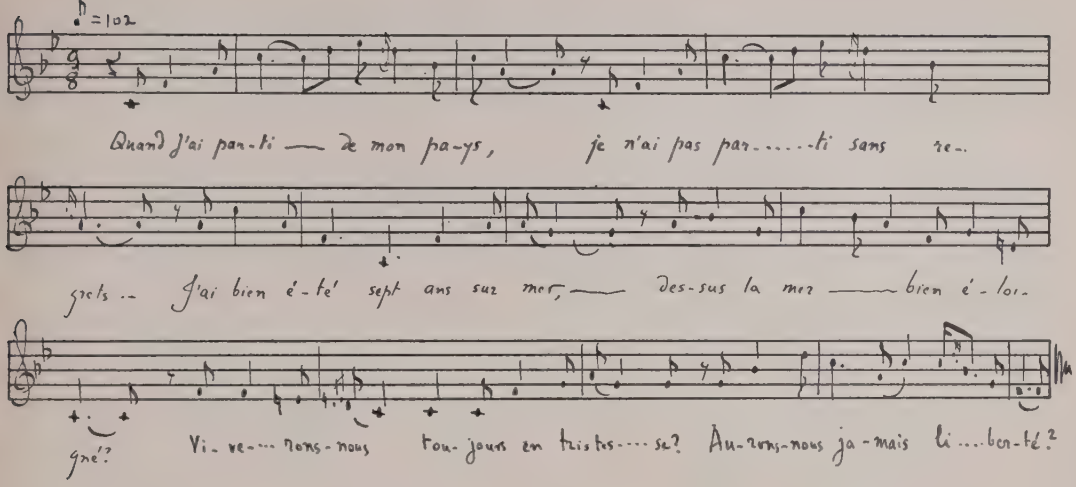
The age of *Seven Years at Sea*, on the other hand, is a debatable point. Doncieux finds the terminology fairly archaic, therefore suggests the sixteenth century as a date. For our part, we cannot agree with what seems an ultra-conservative estimate. Divergences so wide as those which distinguish the

* The best text of "Little Billee" is to be found in *The Bookmart*, 1888, an American periodical published in Philadelphia.

† French parodies are also known to us—for instance, a rigmarole-like song (the Georges de La Landelle version) current in the Paris studios of the last century (Doncieux, *op. cit.*, p. 247, and Weckerlin, *op. cit.*, II, 178), and a peculiar elaboration recently recorded in Ottawa, Canada.

French and the Canadian branches in themselves suggest a gap of several hundred years—the Canadian form no doubt remaining materially the same as at the time of its migration across the Atlantic, presumably in the seventeenth century. Still more conclusive is the fact that the Portuguese and Scandinavian imitations bear a definite date. *A nau Cathrineta* is evidently contemporaneous with the sixteenth-century Portuguese ship, for a song is not usually the work of an archæologist or historian who burrows in old papers. The Scandinavian parallels are no less ancient. The two Icelandic records—written, we presume—date back to the sixteenth century (Grundtvig-Sigurdhson, *Islenzk Fornkvædhi*, I), and the Danish one to the seventeenth (Grundtvig, *Acta comparationis litt. universarum*, 1880),* the Norwegian version being recent. The French original, therefore, must antedate its remote deviations by a safe margin, the definite extent of which it is not easy to determine.

* References from Doncieux' article.



1 Quand j'ai parti de mon pays, ‖ je n'ai pas parti sans regrets.
J'ai bien été sept ans sur mer, ‖ dessus la mer bien éloigné'.
Viv'rons-nous toujours en tristesse? ‖ *Aurons-nous jamais la [liberté?*

2 J'ai bien été sept ans sur mer, ‖ dessus la mer bien éloigné'.
Au bout de la septième année ‖ de provisions avons chômé.

3 Avons mangé nos chiens, nos chats, ‖ jusqu'aux courroies de nos [souliers.

4 Il a fallu tirer au sort, ‖ savoir lequel serait mangé.

5 Le capitaine a fait les pailles, ‖ la plus courte lui est resté'.

6 A-t appelé 'Tit-Jean, son page: ‖ "'Tit-Jean, veux-tu mourir [pour moi?"

7 —"Auparavant mais que je meure, ‖ dedans les hun's je veux [monter."

8 Quand il fut en haut dans les hunes, || il ne fit que rir', que
[chanter.

9 "Ah! qu'as-tu donc, 'Tit-Jean, mon page? || qu'as-tu à tant rire,
[à chanter?"

10 —"Courag', courag', cher capitaine, || je vois la terr' de tous
[côtés.

11 Je vois la vill' de Babylone, || je vois trois pigeons voltiger.

12 Je vois aussi trois demoiselles || dans un jardin se promener.

13 Si jamais je retourne à terre, || la plus jeun', je l'épouserai.

14 Si jamais je retourne en mer, || avec moi je l'emmènerai."

TRANSLATION

1 When I did leave my own country,
Regret was hidden in my heart;
I've been full seven years at sea—
Far sea and I, we cannot part.
Is it ever sad that we shall be,
And nevermore have liberty?

2 Far sea and I, we cannot part,
And I've been seven years at sea;
And when the seventh year was done,
No morsel of any food had we.

3 No morsel of any food had we,
'Twas when the seventh year was done;
We ate our dogs, we ate our cats,
We ate our shoestrings every one.

4 We ate our shoestrings every one,
'Twas after eating our dogs and cats.
And which man would we feast upon?
Our fate was sad, we drew our lots.

5 Our fate was sad, we drew our lots
To see which man we'd feast upon.
The captain cut a set of straws,
Himself pulled out the shortest one.

6 Himself pulled out the shortest one,
And 'twas the captain cut the straws,
But he turned around to Little Jack.
"Will you die for me and a noble cause?

7 "Will you die for me and a noble cause?"
Is what he turned to Jack and said.
"Oh let me in the rigging climb,
Captain dear, before I'm dead.

8 "Captain dear, before I'm dead,
Just let me in the rigging climb."
He stood aloft at the topmost sail,
Laughing and singing all the time.

9 Laughing and singing all the time
And standing aloft at the topmost sail.
"Tell me now, my little Jack,
Why you laugh and sputter and sing and yell.

10 "Why you laugh and sputter and sing and yell,
Pray tell me now, my little Jack."
"Courage, courage, captain dear!
I see land fore, right, left, and back.

11 "I see land fore, right, left, and back,
So courage, courage, captain dear!
I see resplendent Babylon town,
I see three doves are winging here.

12 "I see three doves are winging here
From old, resplendent Babylon town,
I see the loveliest maidens three
A-promenading up and down.

13 "A-promenading up and down
Are the loveliest of maidens three.
If ever again I come to land,
'Tis the youngest maid shall marry me.

14 "If ever I come back from the sea,
'Tis the youngest I'll take home with me."

THE BRUNETTE AND THE BRIGAND

SUCH commonplaces of the folk song as "A Paris y-a-t une brune" and "Sont trois (brigands)" do not jar on our sense of literary propriety. Brief and unobtrusive, they are somewhat in the nature of an empty formula, common to several songs of our acquaintance, and we pass to the essential parts of the narrative. The "three brigands of the town" who were bound to make love to the "maiden brown" are but a conventional plurality, the number of lovers dwindling to one as soon as the first stanzas are over. The humorous point of the composition hinges on the complacent manner in which the maiden sees herself bundled up on her ravisher's "horse of snow" and bids her family farewell.

Though not of the oldest and the best, *The Brunette and the Brigand* possesses the light grace and wit that were the endowment of the poets and minstrels of old France. It is remarkable for its direct and limpid simplicity. Its silver-bright images fire the imagination. Its prosody, looked at technically, is of interest. The lines consist of eleven syllables (6+5), a rhythmic pattern unknown in modern French poetry and, at best, exceptional in the older strata of the Romance languages.* The rhymes at one time must have all ended in *ent*, *ant*, for the first three lines (with *jour*, *amour* and *nous*) seem to be adventitious.

The diffusion of its variants, as preserved in the French collections from overseas, awaits further exploration. The only six French records of it that have come to our notice are from central western provinces situated in a line roughly running north and south: Nivernais, Saintonge or Bas-Poitou† and Albret. Dardy's version from Albret ends differently, and Millien's second and third variants are altogether independent compositions on the same theme. It is interesting to note that it is among the settlers of the Montreal district, a majority of whose ancestors are said to have come from

* Doncieux (*Romancéro*, XV-XVI) does not even mention it among the possibilities.

† A. Millien, *loc. cit.*, II, 55, 56, three versions from Nivernais: "Au château de Belle-fleur," "Comment l'aurons-nous?" and "Entre Paris et Saint-Denis"; Bujeaud, *loc. cit.*, I, 272, 273; C. Mendès, *Les plus jolies chansons du pays de France*, p. 33 (Saintonge) (the latter reference is from T. F. Crane, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-33); Dardy, *Anthologie populaire de l'Albret*, I, 121-123.

the Loire provinces, that M. E.-Z. Massicotte and others* have collected the Canadian versions. In spite of its likely popularity it seems not to have spread to the eastern parts of Quebec, which are more Norman in origin. It is only in Bonaventure County, where the French-speaking population is predominantly of Acadian extraction, that we have ourselves occasionally recorded it. The mention of La Rochelle,† the Loire River seaport, in two French versions, leads to the presumption that the author may have lived in its neighborhood. The fact that our Canadian versions recount "A Paris y-a-t une brune . . . Trois brigands de la ville" does not seriously militate against this hypothesis, for its opening lines are likely not to be authentic but borrowed from other songs‡ with a similar introduction.

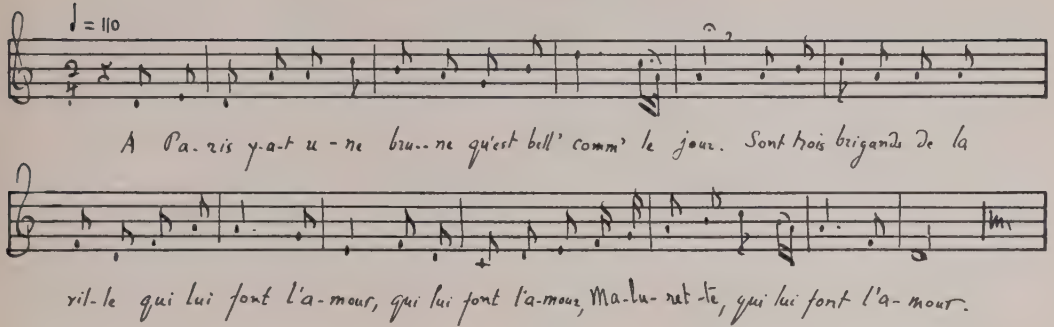
A work song with lively rhythm and cheery tune, *The Brunette* has found its way into the metropolitan circles of Montreal, where it has been a favorite for many years.

* Ernest Gagnon, *Chansons populaires du Canada*, pp. 170-174; *Veillées du bon vieux temps*, p. 45.

† Bujeaud: II. Trois garçons de La Rochelle || Vont lui faire la cour. C. Mendès: Je m'en vas à La Rochelle || Avecque mon galant.

‡ *A Paris y-a-t une brune mariée nouvellement*, and several others.

LA BRUNE ET LE BRIGAND



1 A Paris y-a-t une brune ‖ qu'est bell' comm' le jour.
Sont trois brigands de la ville ‖ qui lui font l'amour,
qui lui font l'amour,
Malurette,
qui lui font l'amour.

2 Ils se d'mand'nt les uns les autres: ‖ "Comment l'aurions-nous?"
Le plus jeune dit aux autres: ‖ "Moi, je sais comment.

3 "Je me ferai faire une selle ‖ toute en clous d'argent,
Et j'irai de porte en porte, ‖ toujours en sonnant:

4 " 'Enseignez-moi donc, madame, ‖ le chemin des grands!' "
—"Allez leur montrer, ma fille, ‖ à ces bons enfants;

5 "Allez jusqu'à la barrière, ‖ revenez-vous en!"
Le galant qu'est fort alerte ‖ par sa main la prend;

6 Il la fait monter en trousse ‖ sur son cheval blanc.
"Adieu, père! mais adieu, mère! ‖ et vous, tous mes parents!

7 "Me voilà bien enlevée ‖ par un d'ces brigands.
Si mon pèr' m'avait mariée ‖ à l'âge de quinze ans,

8 "Je serais dans mon ménage ‖ bien tranquillement.
Je f'rais bouillir la marmite, ‖ des pois, d'l'eau dedans."

TRANSLATION

1 In Paris there's a maiden brown,
The day's no lovelier,
And brigands three are of the town
Making love to her,
Making love to her,
Malurette!
Making love to her.

2 One of another asking they,
"We'll have the maid, but how?"
The youngest one has this to say,
" 'Tis I know well enow!

3 "I'll have a saddle made to me,
All silver-nailèd well,
I'll go from door to door and see,
Ever ringing bell.

4 " 'O lady, lady, can you tell
The roadway to the great?' "
"Daughter, show these children well
How they may gain the gate.

5 "And go no farther than the stile
And come away to me."
He takes her hand in a moment-while,
All ready with maid to flee.

6 He bundles the maid, all afeard and a-smother,
Upon his horse of snow.
"Farewell, father! farewell, mother!
Farewell, my kinsfolk, O!

7 "And now you see me ravished away
By one of these robber men,
And had I been married upon the day
When I was turned fifteen,

8 "Oh then I'd long have come to settle
In home that would long have been;
Oh then I'd now be boiling kettle
With water and peas within."

AT THE WELL, OH!

NOT many work songs are better known in France and Canada than *At the Well, oh!* or, as it is sometimes called, *The Water-cress Girl,* from the line "J'allais cueillir du cresson" occurring in several versions. Its refrain from the chorus of workers, alternating with a brief solo, and its alert tune made it well suited to mark the unison of manual rhythm in such prolonged and tedious tasks as fulling the homespun in the old-fashioned style. It has, indeed, proved to be the outstanding fullers' song in eastern Quebec. Eight fullers, disposed around a long trough in which the wet, soaped cloth lay spread, would bring down their long stampers in sets to the accompaniment of the staccato melody.

That *The Water-cress Girl* ("La fille au cresson") enjoyed a considerable popularity in the French provinces admits of little doubt, for a number of records of it are contained in various publications. Champfleury and Weckerlin, for their part, observed that it was a favorite ("fort connue") among the Dauphiné workmen, a statement which is as true of other parts, principally of the northwestern provinces, where it is likely to have originated. No less than fifty versions of it, compiled from manuscript and printed sources or gathered at first hand in Brittany, were included in Rolland's *Recueil,** in the eighties; twenty-five more have since appeared in Millien's Nivernais collection,† and from ten to twenty others are to be found in various compilations. If to these we add our Canadian contribution, we find that *At the Well, oh!* possibly excels all other folk songs in the number of records available for comparison.‡

* E. Rolland, *loc. cit.*, I, 1-16; II, 2-16.

† A. Millien, *loc. cit.*, III, 38-56.

‡ Champfleury et Weckerlin, *Chansons populaires des provinces de France,* p. 124 (Nivernais); *ibid.*, p. xvii (Dauphiné); Arbaud, *loc. cit.*, I, xxviii (from the *Poèmes et chants marins* de M. de Lalandelle, 173); A. Orain, pp. 141-144 (Ille-et-Vilaine); A.-J. Verrier, *Glossaire étymologique et historique des patois et parlers de l'Anjou,* II, 414 ("La normande angevine"); Beauquier, *Chansons populaires de Franche-Comté,* pp. 115, 116; Bujeaud, *op. cit.*, I, 92, 93 (Poitou, Aunis). Bujeaud also refers to P. Tarbé, *Romancéro de Champagne,* II, 200 (Ardennes, Marne); Jean Huré, *Chants et danses bretonnes,* pp. 26, 27. T. F. Crane, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-84 and 269, gives a long list of parallels, in which we find the additional references to: Mendés, *op. cit.*, p. 109 (Dauphiné); Beaurepaire, *Etude sur la poésie populaire*

The well-preserved text, consisting of twelve-syllable lines (6+6) and uniform *-on* rhymes, points to a comparatively recent origin, though we would not assume a later origin for it than the seventeenth century, when several of its variants seem to have migrated into Canada with the bulk of the French repertory. Its earliest forms on record are those of Ballard* (1711 and 1724) and of Mme. Favart's comedy "Les ensorcelés . . .," in 1757.†

Among the variants of our song we find one in which the maid, less recalcitrant, grants a kiss, two or three if they please, to her gallant rescuers, for fear, it may be, that she might plead in vain another time from the well bottom, or simply because she does not wince before the penalty, provided, as she herself earnestly urges, that the barons give a pledge of discretion.

The present record, slightly altered from its original form, was obtained in 1918 from Ovide Soucy, one of the best singers in Témiscouata, a county of the lower St. Lawrence. The equivalent of the long refrain, which is merely one of several found,‡ recurs in scattered parts of France and Quebec, east and west.§

en normandie, p. 36; J.-F. Bladé, *Poésies populaires en langue française recueillies dans l'Armagnac et l'Agenais*, p. 87.

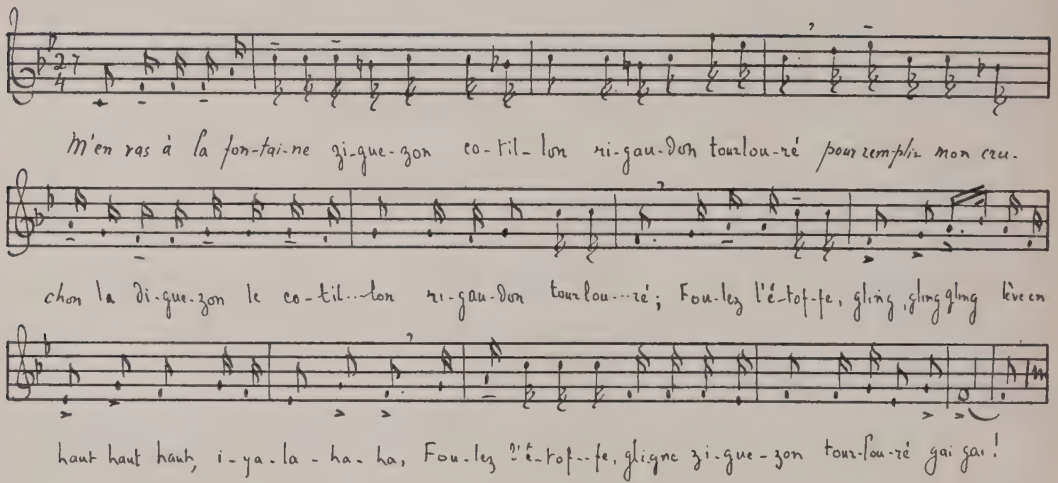
* Ballard, *Brunettes et petits airs tendres*, 1711 (in the 1726 edition, *cf.* tome III, pp. 296, 297); and *Rondes* (1724)—"Margoton va à l'iau."

† Quoted by Rolland: "Mergonton vè et l'iau" in the comedy entitled *Les ensorcelés ou Jeannot et Jeannette, par Mme. Favart et Messieurs Guérin et H . . ., représentée pour la première fois par les comédiens italiens du Roi, 1er sept. 1757.*

‡ Another refrain also in vogue in Canada is: "O gai, vive le roi . . . Vive le roi, la reine! . . . Vive Napoléon!" (Larue, *Le foyer canadien*, I, 355, 356; and *Recueil de chansons canadiennes et françaises*, anon., p. 20).

§ Two refrains in Millien's collection (*cf.* below) closely resemble ours: version *e*, "zon, oh j'ai du zi r'zon . . ." and version *n*, "V'la ti pas de la glinglin glon . . ."

À LA FONTAINE



1 M'en vas à la fontaine
ziguezon cotillon rigaudon tourlouré
pour remplir mon cruchon,
la diguezon le cotillon rigaudon tourlouré;
Foulez l'étoffe, gling gling gling,
Lève en-haut haut haut,
I-ya-la ha ha,
Foulez l'étoffe, gligne ziguezon tourlouré gai gai!

2 La fontaine est profonde, ‖ me suis coulée-r à fond.

3 Par ici-t il luy passe ‖ trois cavaliers barons.

4 "Que donneriez-vous, belle, ‖ si j'vous tirais du fond?"

5 —"Tirez, tirez!" dit-elle, ‖ "après ça, nous verrons."

6 Quand la bell' fut à terre, ‖ se sauve à la maison;

7 S'assit sur la fenêtre, ‖ compose une chanson.

8 "Ce n'est pas ça, la belle, ‖ que nous vous demandons:

9 C'est votre cœur en gage, ‖ savoir si nous l'aurons."

10 —"Mon petit cœur en gage ‖ n'est point pour un baron;

11 C'est pour mon ami Jacques ‖ qu'a d'la barbe au menton!"

TRANSLATION

1 I went off to the well, oh!
Zigazoon rigadoon tooraloor!
My little crock to fill,
Ladigazoon larigadoon tooraloor!
Beat the stuff a-gling-gling-gling,
Lift it up high, high,
Ee-ya-lah heh heh!
Beat the stuff a-gling a-zigazing
Tooraloor gay gay!

2 The well is down deep, oh!
I slid down steep.

3 Are passing on their course, oh!
Three cavaliers to horse.

4 "With what shall I be gifted,
Sweet maid, when you are lifted?"

5 "Just pull your very best, oh!
We'll see about the rest."

6 And when she's come to land, oh!
She slips under the hand.

7 On the window-seat she sings, oh!
She mocks the gentrylings.

8 "My dear, 'tis not the kind, oh!
Of thing we had in mind.

9 "Your heart is what we sought, oh!
The kind of thing we thought."

10 "My little heart's in debt, oh!
But not to baronet.

11 "It's all for lover Jack, oh!
Chin-bearded, whiskery-black."

THE REPENTANT SHEPHERDESS

IF we are to believe the song-makers, confession was not so holy a sacrament to some confessors as to others, particularly when the sinner was a pretty maid. At least, so we are told, this was the case with Father Desgrignons, who had only to blame his prickly beard for his penitent's fears. In other songs of the type—for there is almost a cycle of them—the story ends otherwise, as in the case of the lover who listens incognito to his sweetheart's confession, in ambush, for the very sin which she had at first been reluctant to concede.

So entirely inoffensive are these songs, even to the pious, that they seem to belong to the nursery rhymes rather than the class of out-of-door work songs, which they on the whole resemble.

Although the version here offered of *The Repentant Shepherdess* was recorded from a man—Pierre Cronier, an Acadian of Percé (Gaspé)—by Miss Loraine Wyman,* it is more usually from the women and children that we have heard it in other parts of Quebec, where it is very familiar. It may at times have been used as a dance song.

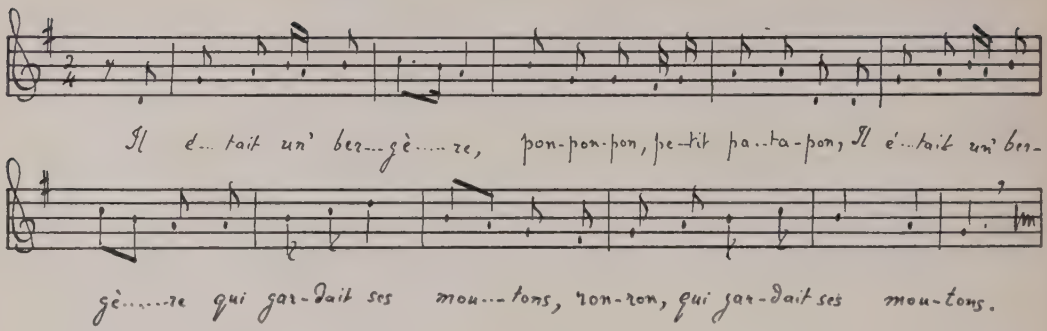
The Repentant Shepherdess was originally from the French provinces. No one could well be in doubt of this, even in the absence of printed parallels in the European compilations. The style, in its simplicity and naturalness, reveals a fashion which has well-nigh disappeared in France itself from the art of song-making and has never been transferred to the Canadian colony. A single reference from the literature, however, will again spare us an hypothesis as to its origin. This is Trébucq's† record from Vendée:

Il était un' bergère,
Et ron ron, petit patapon,
Il était un' bergère,
Qui gardait ses moutons,
Ron ron
Qui gardait ses moutons.

* *The Journal of American Folk-Lore*, no. 130 (1920), "Songs from Percé," pp. 328, 329.

† S. Trébucq, *La chanson populaire en Vendée*, 1896, p. 103.

LA BERGÈRE À CONFESSE



1 Il était un' bergère
pon pon pon, petit patapon,
Il était un' bergère ‖ qui gardait ses moutons,
ron ron,
qui gardait ses moutons.

2 Elle fit un fromage ‖ du lait de ses moutons.

3 Son chat qui la regarde ‖ d'un petit air fripon—

4 "Si tu y mets la patte, ‖ tu auras du bâton."

5 Il n'y mit pas la patte, ‖ mais y mit le menton.

6 La bergère en colère ‖ tua son p'tit chaton.

7 Ell' s'en va à confesse ‖ au Père Desgrignons.

8 "Mon père je m'accuse: ‖ J'ai tué mon chaton."

9 —"Ma fill', comm' pénitence, ‖ nous nous embrasserons."

10 —"Je n'embrasse personne ‖ qu'a d'la barbe au menton."

TRANSLATION

1 'Twas a shepherdess to keep,
Pon pon pon, petty patapon,
'Twas a shepherdess to keep
Her little flock of sheep,
Ron ron,
Her little flock of sheep.

2 They give the milk to squeeze
To a round, white cheese.

3 Her kitten's looking there
With a little roguish air.

4 "Don't put your paw in here,
'Twill cost you very dear."

5 She put no paw therein,
But only a little chin.

6 Angered through and through,
The maid her kitten slew.

7 Remorseful shepherdess
Must grievous sin confess.

8 "Father, hear my sin!
My kitten I have slain."

9 "God grant you bounteous grace!
For penance, let's embrace."

10 "I am of him afeard
That wears a prickly beard."

THE RANSOMED PETTICOAT

THE history of folk dances, even within the frontiers of a single country like France, is such a long and obscure one that we dare not venture the barest outline. Nor have its phases been sufficiently explored by investigators. Certain closet-room folklorists have framed facile classifications with a few strokes of the pen. But their categories hardly commend themselves to students whose criteria are founded on the observation of facts. For it is in the actual field of the song as a live entity that we may still find the safest hints as to its former functions. Not every song, for instance, can be made to fit into the twofold classification of Doncieux:* 1, the "complainte," and 2, the song intended for dancing, whose external mark is the refrain. For, in our own experience as well as that of many others, a song cannot be classed as a "complainte" for the sole want of a refrain. A "complainte"—so the name indicates and the singers themselves explain—is the narration of a tragic event, usually ending in death; it is in the nature of a dirge, a lament. And there are hundreds of songs without a refrain that emphatically fail to correspond to this description, such as drinking, love and obscene songs, ceremonial, dramatic, religious or didactic compositions, and not a few other varieties. Songs with a refrain, on the other hand, are a mixed lot, only a small fraction of which answers to the specific requirements of the movement of the folk dance. The bulk is utilized in various ways, mainly for entertainment; and quite a number fall under the denomination of work songs, for paddling, spinning, husking, and for the cadence of the hammer, the fuller and the cradle. Many songs in Doncieux' own set are uncritically set down as dance songs which are distinctly unfit for the practical demands of dance technique—at least the dance as remembered by recent generations.

* *Op. cit.*, p. xix: "Une seule distinction, au point de vue de la forme, est à faire; distinction d'une importance capitale, qui partage tous les chants traditionnels . . . en deux groupes affectés à des destinations différentes: ou bien le chant est fait pour accompagner la danse, et c'est alors une ronde ou chanson à danser . . ., ou bien il doit simplement être dit par la fileuse à la veillée, par le soldat pendant la marche, par le chemineau sur un seuil de porte, par le laboureur en plein champ, et nous lui reservons la nom de complainte. Une chanson a danser se reconnaît du premier coup d'œil à un signe infallible, c'est le refrain. . . . Partout où un refrain apparaît il y a danse; et réciproquement, si le refrain manque, la chanson est une complainte, réserve faite d'un très petit nombre de rondes monorimes, où le refrain absent est supplée par un redoublement du vers."

The dance melodies familiar to the Canadian country folk seem to be of three kinds: first, the instrumental tunes for the violin, the accordion and the jew's-harp, which were sometimes hummed for lack of available instruments;* second, the songs with a brief solo narrative in stanza form and a recurring refrain in jiglike style, intended for the accompaniment of the lively steps of the clog dance; and third, the round dances and biparty plays, slower in cadence and often devoid of refrain, which used to be enjoyed by all in the old-time evening gatherings and are now retained only by school children.

The Ransomed Petticoat, in its present Canadian form, is a rousing dance song of the second type, jiglike in rhythm. It is better known in the Montreal districts, where our collaborator, M. Massicotte, has recorded it for us several times, than in any other part of Quebec. The opening hemistich, however, varies in almost every individual case, names of localities being substituted for the words "d'un cantinier"; for instance: "Ce sont les filles de Repenty," "Ce sont les filles de Lorry," and so forth.

Its lines are framed after an old Romance pattern never assimilated by academic French: twelve-syllable lines with the cæsura after the eighth, the *i-* assonance being uniformly feminine, and the cæsura, by normal inversion, masculine. Each stanza consists of the repeated hemistichs of a single line plus the refrain.

To judge from the references at our disposal, the song has travelled all over France. Bujeaud† has found at least parts of it in the Loire provinces, de Puymaigre in the "pays messin,"‡ Tarbé in Champagne, Auricoste in the neighborhood of Châlons, Guillon in the Ain; Tiersot§ has recorded a divergent form in the French Alps (Savoie, Annecy, Bresse); Beauquier gave two versions from Franche-Comté, one of which is in dialect form;|| and Millien has more recently furnished four versions from Nivernais.¶

* Reference to the Mahé Collection, from Brittany, in *Mélusine*, VII.

† *Op. cit.*, II, 338 (Angoumois).

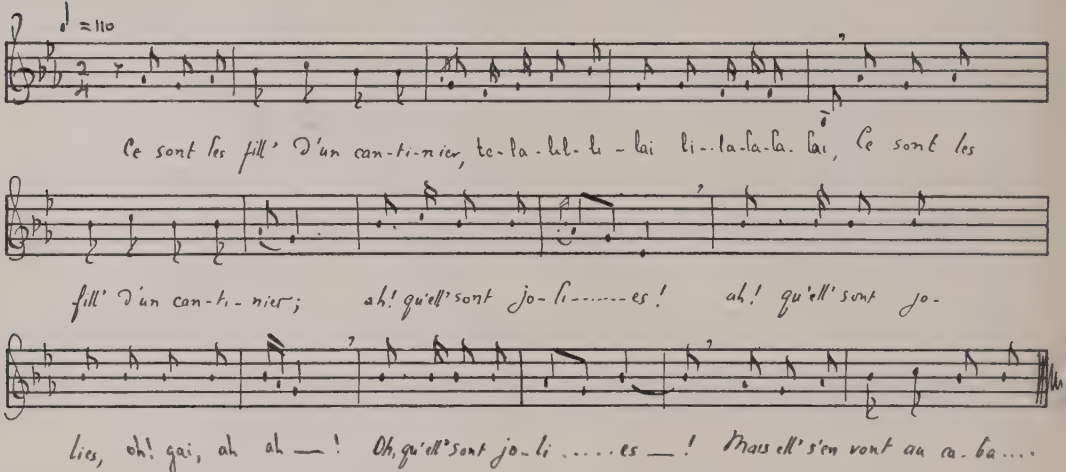
‡ *Op. cit.*, 305-308. De Puymaigre also furnishes references to Tarbé, *Romancéro de Champagne*, II, 266: two versions, "Filles de chez nous" and "Jeune fille dans l'embarras," and to the Auricoste version entitled "Filles de Châlons"; another version in part is also indicated in M. Fallot's *Recherches sur le patois*.

§ Julien Tiersot, *Chansons populaires des Alpes françaises*, 192, 193. M. Tiersot has furnished the Guillon reference.

|| Charles Beauquier, *Chansons populaires de Franche-Comté*, pp. 83-86.

¶ A. Millien, *loc. cit.*, III, 25-28.

LE COTILLON RACHETÉ



1 Ce sont les fill's d'un cantinier,
Telalillilai lilalalalai
Ce sont les fill's d'un cantinier; || ah! qu'ell's sont jolies!
ah! qu'ell's sont jolies!
Oh! gai, ah ah!
Oh, qu'ell's sont jolies!

2 Mais ell's s'en vont au cabaret, || boire chopine.

3 Ell's ont bien bu quatre-vingt pots, || cinq, six chopines.

4 Ell's ont mangé quatre-vingt pains, || cinq ou six miches.

5 Ell's ont mangé quatre-vingt veaux, || cinq, six génisses.

6 Mais quand le temps vint de payer, || bien triste mine!

7 "Otez-lui donc son cotillon, || et sa coiffure."

8 Mais son amant, passant par là, || tir' cinq cents livres.

9 "Remettez-lui son cotillon, || et sa coiffure."

10 —"Nous n'irons plus au cabaret, || boire chopine."

TRANSLATION

1 A sutler's maids are fair and slim,
Telalillilai lilalalalai,
A sutler's maids are fair and slim,
Ah, pretty girls and trim!
Ah, pretty girls and trim!
Ah! gai, ah ah!
Ah, pretty girls and trim!

2 Sweet daughters to the tavern go
To drink a pint or so.

3 Eighty wine tankards daughters drink,
Five or six pints to a wink.

4 Eighty round bread-loaves help along,
And five or six pints to a song.

5 Eighty cows will do for a meal,
Five or six calves make veal.

6 But, oh, when he said, "There's this to pay,"
Her face went sad with "Nay!"

7 "O then we must have her petticoat
And necklace under her throat."

8 'Tis well her lover came that way,
Five hundred pounds to pay.

"Give back this maid her petticoat
And necklace under her throat!"

"We'll nevermore to the tavern go
To drink a pint or so."

WHEN THE WINE WHIRLS

PROBABLY fashioned after *The Ransomed Petticoat*, and therefore of lesser importance, this song too is intended for quick-step dancing. Its uniform *i*-assonances are similarly feminine and, inversely, the cæsuras are masculine. Instead of thirteen syllables (8+5), its lines, however, consist of fourteen (8+6), another familiar folk pattern.

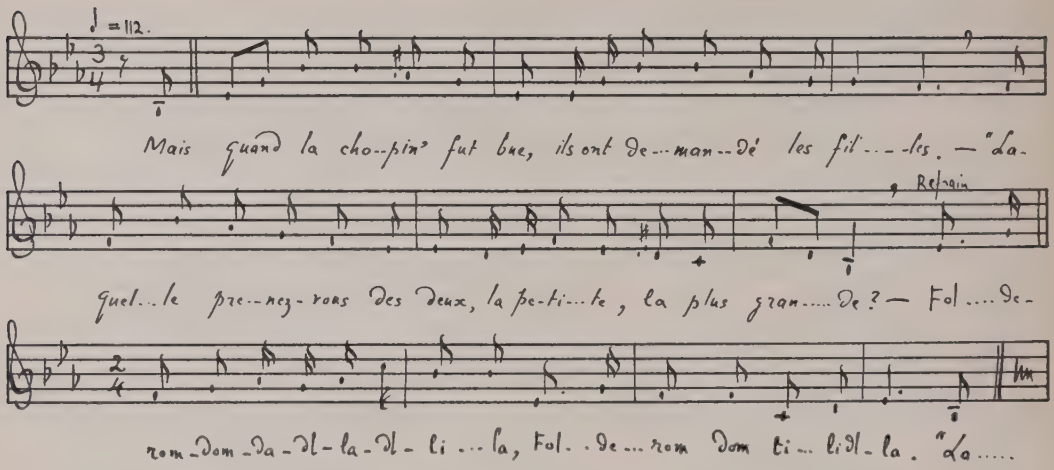
The only French parallels—five in all—that have come to our notice are from widely separated parts: Finistère (in Brittany); the neighborhood of Sédan, in the northeast; Boulonnais (in Pas-de-Calais); Loiret (in the center); and Montpellier (in Languedoc).* While some folk singers in Bonaventure County and the neighborhood of Montreal sometimes sing it, it is not a very familiar song in the Canadian repertory. The following version was recorded in 1919 by M. E.-Z. Massicotte from Mme. Major Dagenais, of Ile-Jésus, a Montreal suburb. Mme. Dagenais, an old woman of more than seventy, sang both *The Ransomed Petticoat* and *When the Wine Whirls* while her three aged brothers danced jigs by her side and around her at one of the popular folklore concerts given in Montreal, in 1919, by the Quebec Branch of the American Folk-Lore Society.†

When the Wine Whirls, like the preceding song, may be classed among the folk songs of the ancient authentic type. Its dry wit and light handling do not belong to the more recent folk creations. It is imbued with the jovial and caustic philosophy of depravity, and its concluding line, so far from being a balm to the woes of the little maid, adds the sting of mockery: "O weep not so, my little maid, We'll get you a richer one . . . a little boot-black lover for you."

* E. Rolland, *Recueil de chansons populaires*, I, 59, 60 (three versions); *ibid.*, II, 54; L. Lambert, *Chants et chansons populaires du Languedoc*, I, 53.

† *Veillées du bon vieux temps*, p. 30.

LA GRANDE ET LA PETITE



1 Mais quand la chopine ils ont bu', || ils ont demandé les filles.
"Laquelle prenez-vous des deux, || la plus grande ou la plus [p'tite?"
Folderom-dom da-dl'la-dl'li-la,
Folderom-dom ti-li-dl'la!

2 "Laquelle prenez-vous des deux, || la plus grande ou la plus [p'tite?
La plus petite a des beaux yeux, || la plus grande est plus jolie."

3 La plus grande qui est en haut, || elle danse et ell' sautille;

4 La plus petit' qui est en bas, || elle pleure et ell' gémit.

5 "Ne pleurez donc pas tant, la bell', || vous en aurez un plus riche:

6 Vous aurez un frotteur de bott's, || un écureur de marmites."

TRANSLATION

1 Wine's in the head, merrily whirls,
They've come to ask for pretty girls.

"Now tell me, which of the maidens for you,
The big or the little, or which of the two?
Folderom-dom da-dl'la-dl'li-la,
Folderom-dom ti-li-dl'la!

2 "Now tell me, which of the maidens for you,
The big or the little, or which of the two?
The little maid has beautiful eyes,
But sweeter is she of the larger size.

3 "The little maid has beautiful eyes,
But sweeter is she of the larger size."
Up yonder's the bigger, sweeter maid,
She dances and skips on an escapade.

4 Up yonder's the bigger, sweeter maid,
She dances and skips on an escapade.
The little one is down below,
She weeps and sighs, she's all in woe.

5 The little one is down below,
She weeps and sighs, she's all in woe.
"O weep not so, my little maid,
We'll get you a richer one to trade.

6 "O weep not so, my little maid,
We'll get you a richer one to trade.
There's a dear little bootblack lover for you,
Or kettle-scrubber—one of the two."

THE LITTLE GRAY MOUSE

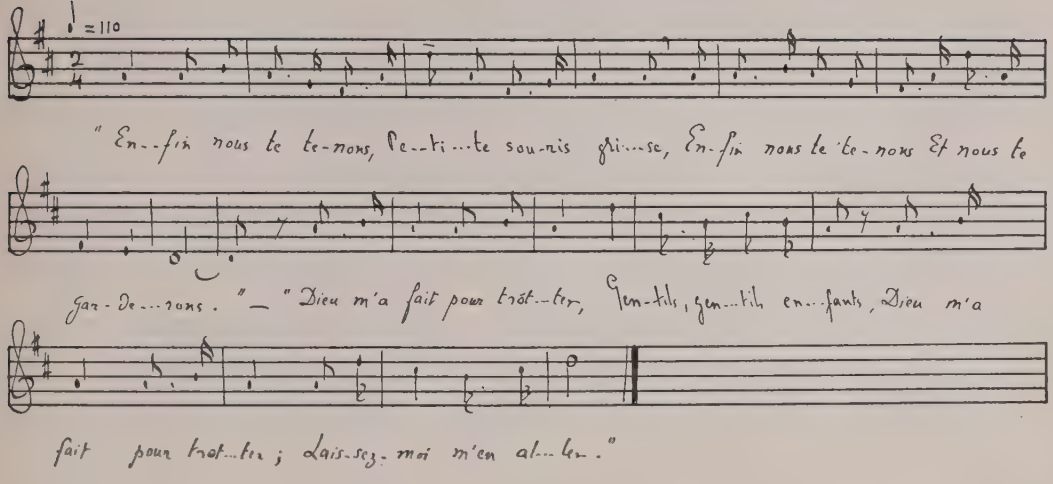
QUICK steps accompanied the lively cadence of the previous songs. Another kind of dance, slower in rhythm and suited for a party of dancers circling hand in hand, is represented by the present song—the round dance ("ronde") and play-party. *The Little Gray Mouse* is one of the very few play-parties known in the French repertory, a more typical one being *La Tour, prends garde*, which is supposed to allude to political events of the time of the Kings. While *La Tour* has filtered down long ago from the aristocracy and the schools to the country-folk, among whom folk-lorists have occasionally recorded it both in France and Canada, *The Little Gray Mouse* seems not to have strayed far from the convent schools.

Its only French parallel, to our knowledge, is from the southern town of Montpellier (Languedoc).* While it substitutes a little bird for the gray mouse of our record, its tune and stanzas are quite similar. It may have been written at a fairly recent date by a nun for her pupils. The present version—one of the three so far secured, the other two being mere two-stanza rhymes†—was found in a manuscript song-book dated 1878, prepared by a young Grey nun, Sister Ste. Georgia, of a Quebec orphanage.

It is likely to have been performed, rather than danced, by a party of schoolgirls gathered around one of their playmates, who impersonated the Little Gray Mouse. Its six-syllable lines, with a duplex refrain alternating with each successive stanza, is of a rather uncommon prosodic type in the ancient Romance folk traditions.‡

* L. Lambert, *Chants et chansons populaires du Languedoc*, I, 271, 272.
† *The Journal of American Folk-Lore*, no. 123 (1919), pp. 67, 68.
‡ Doncieux, *op. cit.*, p. xv.

LA PETITE SOURIS GRISE



1 "Enfin nous te tenons,
Petite souris grise,
Enfin nous te tenons
Et nous te garderons."

2 —"Dieu m'a fait pour trotter,
Gentils, gentils enfants,
Dieu m'a fait pour trotter;
Laissez-moi m'en aller!"

3 —"Tu voulais nous ôter,
Petite souris grise,
Tu voulais nous ôter
Notre bon déjeuner."

4 —"Je n'voulais qu'y goûter,
Gentils, gentils enfants,
Je n'voulais qu'y goûter,
Et non pas le croquer."

5 —"Tu nous a pris encor,
Petite souris grise,
Tu nous a pris encor
La pomme à couleur d'or."

6 —"Ell' m'était ordonné',
Gentils, gentils enfants,
Ell' m'était ordonné',
Car j'étais enrhumé'."

7 —"Voyez comme elle ment,
La petit' souris grise,
Voyez comme elle ment.
Faisons son jugement."

8 —"Le docteur m'avait dit,
Gentils, gentils enfants,
Le docteur m'avait dit:
'Ta poitrine s'emplit.' "

9 —"Puisque tu mens comm' ça,
Petite souris grise,
Puisque tu mens comm' ça,
Le chat te guérira."

10 —"Je ne veux plus mentir,
Gentils, gentils enfants,
Je ne veux plus mentir,
Je veux me convertir."

11 —"Puisque tu te répens,
Petite souris grise,
Puisque tu te répens,
Reprends la clef des champs."

TRANSLATION

1 "We have you now at last,
O little gray mouse,
We have you now at last.
O we shall hold you fast!"

2 "But God wants me to run,
My gentle, gentle children,
God wants me to run,
So quick let me be gone."

3 "But did you not wish to steal,
O little gray mouse,
But did you not wish to steal
All of our breakfast meal?"

4 "Only the taste of it,
My gentle, gentle children,
Only the taste of it,
Not nibble up every bit."

5 "You've taken from us anew,
O little gray mouse,
You've taken from us anew
The apple of golden hue."

6 "Prescribed was apple of gold,
My gentle, gentle children,
Prescribed was apple of gold,
For I had caught a cold."

7 "Oh see! she's telling a lie,
The little gray mouse,
Oh see! she's telling a lie,
We'll judge and she must die."

8 "The doctor said to me,
My gentle, gentle children,
The doctor said to me,
'You're choked up dreadfully.' "

9 "But if you lie like that,
O little gray mouse,
But if you lie like that,
We'll send for Doctor Cat."

10 "I shall not lie again,
My gentle, gentle children,
I shall not lie again,
But speak words true and plain."

11 "And since you have repented,
Little gray mouse,
And since you have repented,
Run! we have relented."

THE SONG OF LIES

IT is not clear what purpose was served by the following song of lies; it may have been intended as a work or dance song to begin with. But it is more suitable as a song for general entertainment, particularly for children. The chain of absurdities, some of which are not devoid of poetic fancy, no doubt provoked wonder and merriment in youthful circles. Another well-known song of the same type, "Compère, qu'as-tu vu?—J'ai vu une anguille Qui jouait avec des quilles" belongs still more distinctly to the nursery, as it is rhythmically unsuited to the cadence of manual work or of the dance. Both of these wonder songs can be heard in almost any part of Quebec. The versions utilized here were recorded by our correspondents, MM. E.-Z. Massicotte and A. Godbout, in the Montreal and Portneuf districts.*

The Song of Lies was also remembered in France, at least until recently. *Mélusine* included two versions of it in the eighties: one from Seine-et-Oise,† the other from Brittany, quite remote from ours in form, being in the Breton language, but composed in the same vein.‡ Adolphe Orain published a version from Ille-et-Vilaine,§ and E. Rolland two—the first from Finistère and the other from the Vosges.|| Beauquier gave three variants from Franche-Comté,¶ and A. Millien, as many as eight melodies from Nivernais.**

Its lines consist of fourteen syllables (8+6). The endings are feminine; the cæsuras, masculine. Doubt may be entertained as to its assonances, whether originally varied or uniform; as it is, *i* predominates (see stanzas 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17). The lack of certainty in this respect points either to age and decay or else to the song having been adapted from another language—possibly Breton.

* For a more detailed description, see *The Journal of American Folk-Lore*, no. 123 (1919), pp. 74-78.

† I, 51, 52.

‡ Recorded and translated by Emile Ernault (*Mélusine*, II, C. 498).

§ E. Rolland, *Recueil de chansons populaires*, V, 19, 20.

|| *Ibid.*, IV, 58-62.

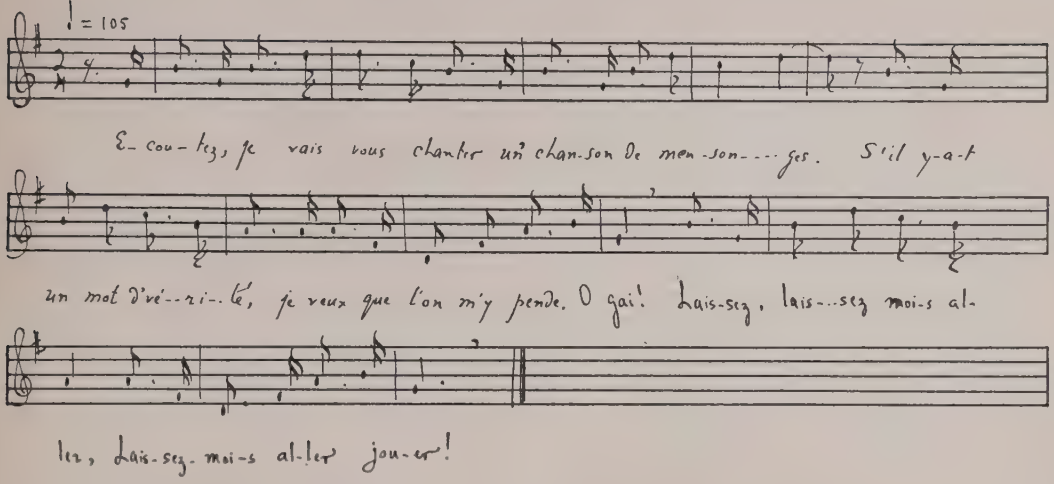
¶ Charles Beauquier, *loc. cit.*, pp. 357-361.

** A. Millien, *loc. cit.*, II, 287-293.

A close genetic relation, we should not forget, exists between our song (and *Compère qu'as-tu vu?**) and the group of rigmaroles, known all over Europe, which are called "randonnées" or "rengaines" in the French collections. Their chief characteristic consists in the addition of a new object in each successive stanza to an ever accumulating list. The rigmarole of *Dedans la ville de Paris, savez-vous ce qu'il luy a?*, being intermediate between the two types, may prove to be a historical link.

* Often recorded in Canada; also in France (F. Arnaudin, *Chansons populaires de la Grande-Lande*, I, 338-342).

LA CHANSON DES MENSONGES



1 Ecoutez, je vais vous chanter || un' chanson de mensonges.
S'il y-a-t un mot de vérité, || je veux que l'on me pende.
Oh gai!
Laissez, laissez-moi-s aller,
Laissez-moi-s aller jouer!

2 S'il y-a-t un mot de vérité, || je veux que l'on me pende.
J'ai mis ma charru' sur mon dos, || mes bœufs à ma ceinture.

3 C'était pour aller labourer || où y-avait pas de terre.

4 Dans mon chemin j'ai rencontré || un pommier chargé d'fraises.

5 Je pris un' branch', j'la secouai. || Il tomba des framboises.

6 Il est venu un' vieill' bonn' femme, || qui dit: "Laisse mes [figues!"

7 J'ai vu venir un petit chien, || qui me mordit l'orteil.

8 Il me mordit l'orteil, || me fit saigner l'oreille.

9 J'ai pris parti de m'en aller || retrouver mon ménage.

10 J'y ai trouvé mon coq qui carde || et la poule qui file.

11 J'n'avais qu'un petit chien barbet; || il coulait la lessive.

12 La chatte était sur le foyer || qui brassait la marmite.

13 Quand ell' voulut goûter la sauce || ell' se gela les griffes.

14 Les mouches qui sont au plancher || s'sont éclaté' de rire.

15 Il en tombe un' sur la marmite; || ell' s'est cassé la cuisse.

16 Faut aller chercher l'médecin, || le médecin des mouches.

17 —"Bon médecin, bon médecin, || que dit's-vous de ma cuisse?"

18 —"Votr' cuisse ne guérira point || qu'ell' n'soit dans l'eau [baignante.

19 Dans un vase d'or et d'argent || orné de roses blanches."

TRANSLATION

1 O listen, I shall sing for you
A song of pretty lies.
If I've a truthful word to say,
I'll let them hang me up, oh gay!
Let me, let me run away,
O let me off to run and play!

2 If I've a truthful word to say,
I'll let them hang me up.
With plow on back I walked away,
With cattle at my belt, oh gay!

3 With plow on back I walked away,
With cattle at my belt,
I walked away to work away
Where land was not at all, oh gay!

4 I walked away to work away
Where land was not at all,
And saw an apple-tree display
A cloud of strawberries, oh gay!

5 And saw an apple-tree display
A cloud of strawberries.
I made a branch to swing and sway,
And down came raspberries, oh gay!

6 I made a branch to swing and sway,
And down came raspberries.
And came a good old dame to say,
"You mustn't shake my figs, oh gay!"

7 And came a good old dame to say,
"You mustn't shake my figs."
I saw a dog that went astray,
He came and bit my toe, oh gay!

8 I saw a dog that went astray,
He came and bit my toe,
He came and bit my toes away,
So now I've bleeding nose, oh gay!

9 He came and bit my toes away,
So now I've bleeding nose,
And quick decide I cannot stay,
And quickly travel home, oh gay!

10 And quick decide I cannot stay,
And quickly travel home
To the cock and the hen without delay,
Who were busy to card and spin, oh gay!

11 To the cock and the hen without delay,
Who were busy to card and spin;
My water-spaniel, good for play,
Was washing the wash with lye, oh gay!

12 My water-spaniel, good for play,
Was washing the wash with lye,
While on the hearth the cat was gray
And stirring the kettle hard, oh gay!

13 While on the hearth the cat was gray
And stirring the kettle hard.
She tried the sauce: "Is it yea or nay?"
But froze her dipping claws, oh gay!

14 She tried the sauce: "Is it yea or nay?"
But froze her dipping claws.
The flies up there in silent array
Burst into laughing shrieks, oh gay!

15 The flies up there in silent array
Burst into laughing shrieks,
And one fell in the kettle spray
And broke a leg and a rump, oh gay!

16 And one fell in the kettle spray
And broke a leg and a rump,
So off they scampered a headlong way
Fly-doctor for to call, oh gay!

17 So off they scampered a headlong way
Fly-doctor for to call.
"Good doctor mine, oh quick and say
Whatever to do with rump, oh gay!

18 "Good doctor mine, oh quick and say
Whatever to do with rump?"
"Not leg nor rump recover may
Unless in water it bathe, oh gay!

19 "Not leg nor rump recover may
Unless in water it bathe,
In golden vase or silver tray
With roses heavenly white, oh gay!"

THE CURFEW

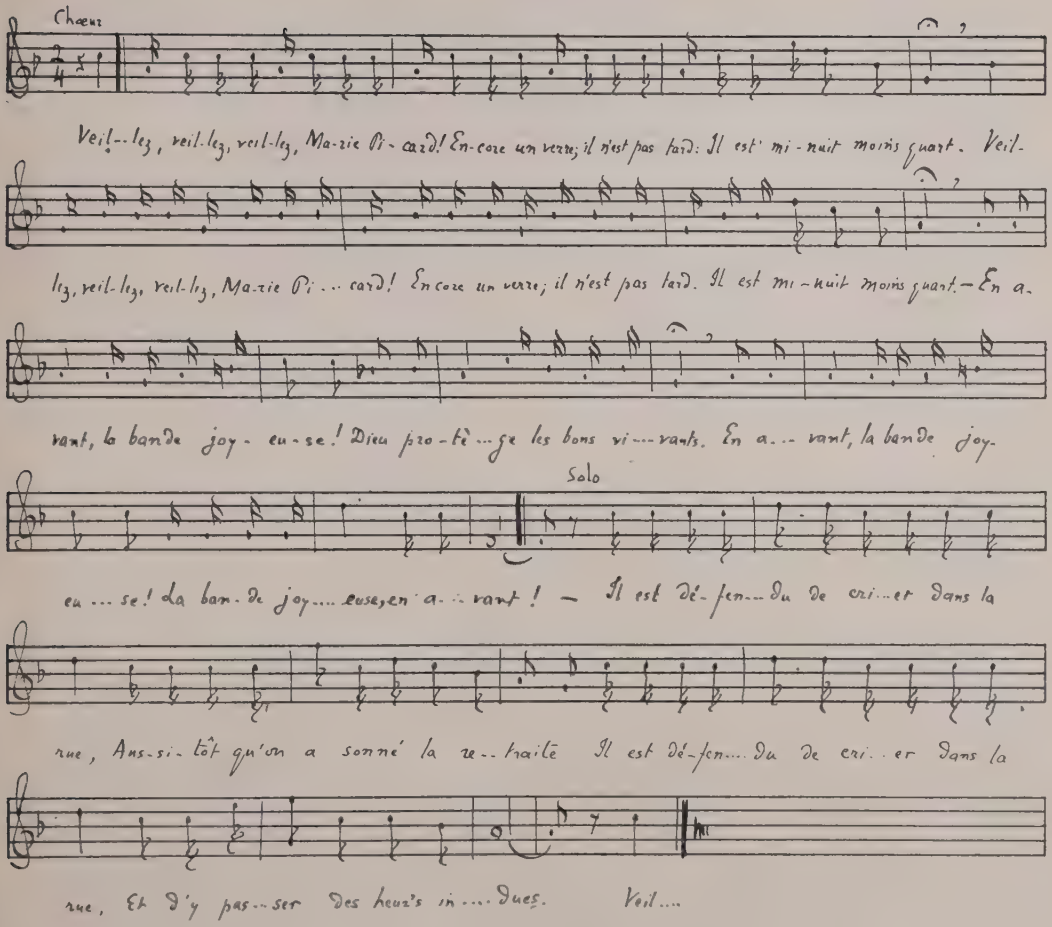
THE Curfew is a little scene of a rather exceptional type. Though a folk song, it does not seem quite at home in the repertory of the country folk singers. True, the above version was recorded from a peasant woman, Mme. Luc April, of Notre-Dame-du-Portage (Témiscouata);* but it is rather in town, on the streets of Quebec and perhaps of Montreal, that it is still occasionally heard, on the lips of college boys and university students elbowing the others off the sidewalk in their boisterous march. Its origin is undoubtedly to be found in the military barracks of France, where it is likely at one time to have proved a favorite marching song.

As to its age we remain utterly in the dark. No parallel has yet come to us from the French collections; in Canada we can vouch for only two records, the present one and another collected by M. Massicotte from a Quebec singer. Other occurrences have lingered in the schoolday recollections of one of the collaborators of this volume. Its lines are so irregular that the prosodic intention is very obscure. This may be due either to unskillful composition or to the wear and tear of time. No great antiquity, however, can be ascribed to it, if we rely only on the character of its melody, which is in the major mode and quite insipidly modern.

As sung by Mme. April and by university students, it sounded decidedly trivial, the whole of the dialogue flowing along at a uniform pace and with no indication of emotional differences. Upon analysis, however, it becomes evident that we have here a snappy and picturesque little drama, flavored with the town life of bygone days, the full significance of which has become blurred in the oral transmission. In the first scene the topers wish to prolong their night revelry at the tavern. Another band of pleasure-seekers marches past. But it is nearly midnight and the racket cannot be allowed to continue. From the ramparts rings the curfew. The signal brings only protest from the merrymakers. Before they submit, they jocosely threaten to ditch the little corporal who shouts from the housetops in an attempt to restore the midnight peace.

* The Barbeau-Wyman Collection, 1918; *Veillées du bon vieux temps*, pp. 54, 55.

LE COUVRE-FEU



Chœurs (*Les buveurs, à l'aubergiste:*)
Veillez, veillez, veillez, Mari' Picard!
Encore un verre; ‖ il n'est pas tard,
Il est minuit moins quart.

(*La bande joyeuse, dans la rue:*)
En avant, la bande joyeuse!
Dieu protège les bons vivants.
En avant, la bande joyeuse!
La bande joyeuse, en avant!

Solo 1 (*Le couvre-feu, par un caporal:*)
Il est défendu ‖ de crier dans la rue,
Aussitôt qu'on a sonné la retraite.
Il est défendu de crier dans la rue
Et d'y passer, ‖ des heur's indues.

Chœurs Veillez, veillez, veillez, Mari' Picard!
Encore un verre; ‖ il n'est pas tard,
Il est minuit moins quart.

En avant, la bande joyeuse!
Dieu protège les bons vivants.
En avant, la bande joyeuse!
La bande joyeuse, en avant!

Solo 2 (*Un joyeux compère, irrité:*)
Ce petit butor, ce petit caporal,
Qui veut nous empêcher d'crier de la sorte;
Ce petit butor, ce petit caporal,
Nous le jett'rons en bas des remparts.

Chœurs Veillez, veillez, veillez, Mari' Picard!
Encore un verre; ‖ il n'est pas tard,
Il est minuit moins quart.

En avant, la bande joyeuse!
Dieu protège les bons vivants.
En avant, la bande joyeuse!
La bande joyeuse, en avant!

Chorus (*The topers at the innkeeper's:*)
Keep awake, Marie Picard, keep awake, awake!
It's time another drink to take
For our midnight thirst to slake.

(*The merry troop in the street:*)
Forward march, O merrymakers!
God protect the pleasure-takers.
Forward march, O merrymakers!
Merrymakers, forward march!

Solo 1 (*The curfew is proclaimed by a corporal:*)
Let no one make alarum in the street
Soon's the bell is tolled for privacy.
Let no one make alarum in the street
Nor pass thereon at hours that be unmeet.

Chorus Keep awake, Marie Picard, keep awake, awake!
It's time another drink to take
For our midnight thirst to slake.

Forward march, O merrymakers!
God protect the pleasure-takers.
Forward march, O merrymakers!
Merrymakers, forward march!

Solo 2 (*A merrymaker, irritated:*)
This little churl, this little corporal,
Who thinks we'll not be shouting as we will,
This little churl, this little corporal,
We'll pick him up and roll him down the hill.

Chorus Keep awake, Marie Picard, keep awake, awake!
It's time another drink to take
For our midnight thirst to slake.

Forward march, O merrymakers!
God protect the pleasure-takers.
Forward march, O merrymakers!
Merrymakers, forward march!

I DRESSED ME ALL IN FEATHERS GAY

A LONG-FORSAKEN feature of ancient life is airily sketched in our little lay. The anonymous author gibes at his own varied fortunes. To sing for a living, roaming about free and careless like a nomad, attired in the fantastic feather-garb of a buffoon, this was his calling, an accredited one in monarchial France.

Better schooled and more ambitious, he might have aspired to the higher lot of a troubadour. His round might have led from castle to castle, instead of from hamlet to market square. Penning poems and songs in the classic vein, he might have been lucky enough to find favor with the nobility and to work his way up to the drawing rooms and the high table of the proud and wealthy lords of the land. His stanzas would have been too artificial to suit the popular taste, and his meticulous Gothic writing, couched on costly parchment at the patron's bidding, would have slumbered forthwith, to gather the dust of centuries, perhaps millennia, in exclusive family archives. Failing its many chances of obliteration and ruin, his manuscript might at last have been salvaged by twentieth-century scholars, whose wont it is to decipher rare characters. Precious relics of troubadour artistry have been unearthed in recent years by students of various nationalities.* Thousands upon thousands of long-vanished pen and ink songs grace the shelves and catalogues of most European libraries.

But such was not his destiny. As an ambulant minstrel, he trod the dusty roads with a fiddle, perhaps in the company of a muzzled bear. Drawing his songs from his memory, sometimes from his own heart and imagination, he knew not the use of quill and parchment. To the troubadour he stood in the same relation as the contemporary folk singer to the evening-dress artist. Crudeness and vulgarity were the blemish of minstrelsy at its worst. It often had to bear with exhibitions that now belong to the country circus. Troubadour poetry, on the other hand, erred in the opposite direction. Exoticism, transient mannerisms, excessive wordiness and lack of vitality are what brought it final oblivion. Pedantry was its curse. The minstrel at least could boast of having the people on his side, for he was one of their

* G. Paris, *Chansons du XV^e siècle*, 1865; Jean Beck, *Die Melodien der Troubadours*, Strasbourg, 1908; and *La musique des Troubadours*, Paris, 1910.

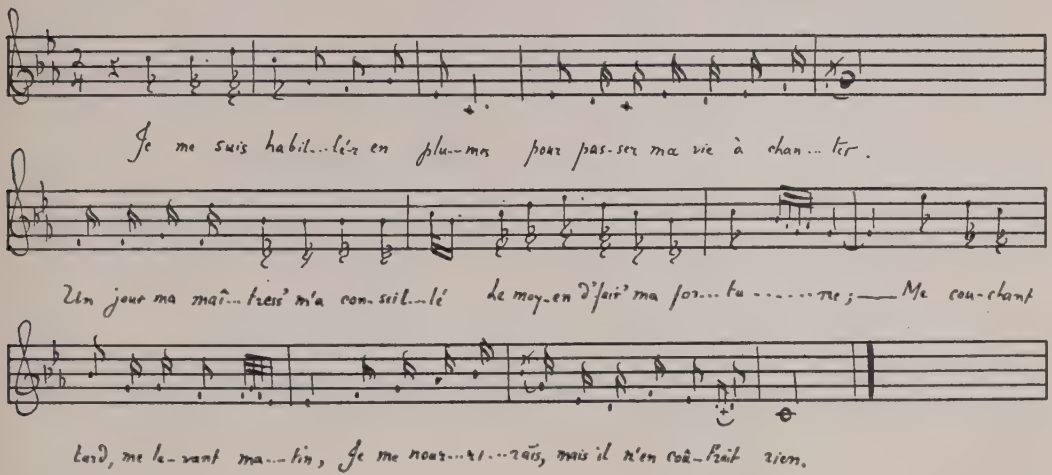
own, standing close to their heart. His craft was as uneven as nature itself, rising at a bound or tumbling to the dust. Popular favor he could win to such an extent that the span of centuries has not yet silenced the echoes of his distant voice, whether they bring us rare jewels of folk song or bagatelles defaced by age.

The minstrel-author of *I dressed me all in feathers gay* could not boast of high poetic feeling, but he was endowed with a keen sense of irony. Fate, he well knew, in turn smiled and frowned upon him. Good luck was his when, one morning, three fair damsels espied his bright plumage on a town lane. But a feathered bodice was not always a blessing, least of all in the country byways where hunters lie in wait for birds large and small. One day he was walking in the meadows and was all but killed. There drops the curtain on one of those nameless poets to whom we owe so many of our folk songs.

It was clear from the contents of our song that it could not be claimed as purely Canadian; for true minstrelsy was never transplanted to the new world. But we are saved an hypothesis as to its origin, as five versions of it were recorded in Nivernais by Millien.* Nowhere else have we found any trace of its former diffusion. Nor is it familiar in Canada, where we know of only the present record, from Luc April, a folk singer of Notre-Dame-du-Portage (Témiscouata), and one or two others from Bonaventure County.

* A. Millien, *loc. cit.*, II, 299-301, "L'habit de plumes"; the second melody given here is related to that which we have recorded in Canada.

JE ME SUIS HABILLÉ EN PLUMES



1 Je me suis habillé-r en plumes ‖ pour passer ma vie à chanter.
Un jour ma maîtress' m'a conseillé
Le moyen de fair' ma fortune;
Me couchant tard, me levant matin,
Je me nourrirais, ‖ mais il n'en coût'rait rien.

2 Un jour me prom'nant dans la ville, ‖ dans mon chemin j'ai [rencontré,
Dans mon chemin j'ai rencontré
Trois jeunes belles demoiselles,
Qui se disaient les un' aux autres:
"Ah! ce bel oiseau ‖ f'rait bien dans mon château!"

3 Un jour, me prom'nant dans ces plaines, ‖ j'ai bien manqué d'être [tué
Par un chasseur mal avisé:
M'a pris pour un oiseau sauvage.
J'aurais bien donné cent écus
Que mon habit de plum' ait été fichu!

TRANSLATION

1 I dressed me all in feathers gay
For passing through my life to sing.
One day my mistress, counselling,
Said would I have a lucky way,
To lay me late to bed and early rise,
So gain my sustenance yet pay nowise.

2 One day I walked i' the town and sung,
And walking on my way I met,
And singing on my way I met
Three ladies fair, three ladies young,
Who said each to the other two,
"How fine if this bird in my castle flew!"
And each said to the other two,
"How fine if this bird in my castle flew!"

3 One day I walked these meadows o'er,
And there I all but had me killed,
For a huntsman quick and overskilled
A wild bird he mistook me for.
'Twas there I'd gladly paid a hundred crown
If I'd not dressed me out in plume and down.

THE TRADES

A SATIRIC composition like *The Trades* could never be mistaken for a minstrel song. It lacks the inimitable simplicity and candor of typical folk artistry; its didactic trend, not to speak of its stylistic mannerisms, reveals the pen of some lettered commoner, a free-lance at odds with the evils of his day. The academic character of its prosody, moreover, renders the presumption of its literary origin more conclusive. Its rhyme scheme, its use of masculine and feminine endings, and its peculiar distribution of eight- and six-syllable lines do not belong to folk verse, though familiar elsewhere.

It can hardly be Canadian in origin, for the guilds that it reviews never thrived along the St. Lawrence, even in pre-Revolution days, when they monopolized the manual arts of France. The only closed corporations of the guild type that seem to have been established in New France were the "maîtrises" of Mgr. de Laval at Petit-Cap, below Quebec, and of Quevillon and his disciples at Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, below Montreal;* and these guilds, which demanded a lengthy period of training and progressive stages of advancement, confined their activities to sculpture, wood-carving and decoration, chiefly for ecclesiastical uses. New France was not yet a free country. Its sparse population lived under the bondage of colonial ties. Besides being administered chiefly as a fur-bearing expanse, Canada was claimed as a legitimate field for the trades of the old country. No independent industry was tolerated that infringed upon the privileges of entrenched monopolies; and historians report the eradication of a local felt hat industry in the early days, owing to the resistance, backed by the law, of the rival home guild.

Two variants of our song, which we have discovered in French sources, make a certainty of our hypothesis; a distantly related one was published by A. Loquin in *Mélusine* (II, 29) under the caption of *Les surprises du diable*.† A closer parallel entitled *La brouette de Satan* is to be found in

* Emile Vaillancourt, *Une maîtrise d'art en Canada* (1800-1823), avec une préface par E.-Z. Massicotte, Montréal, G. Ducharme, 36, rue Notre-Dame, 1920.

† Two versions of "Les mésaventures du diable," in Millien's Nivernais collection (*loc. cit.*, III, 15-18), are also related to our song—possibly derived from it, as they lack its original incisiveness.

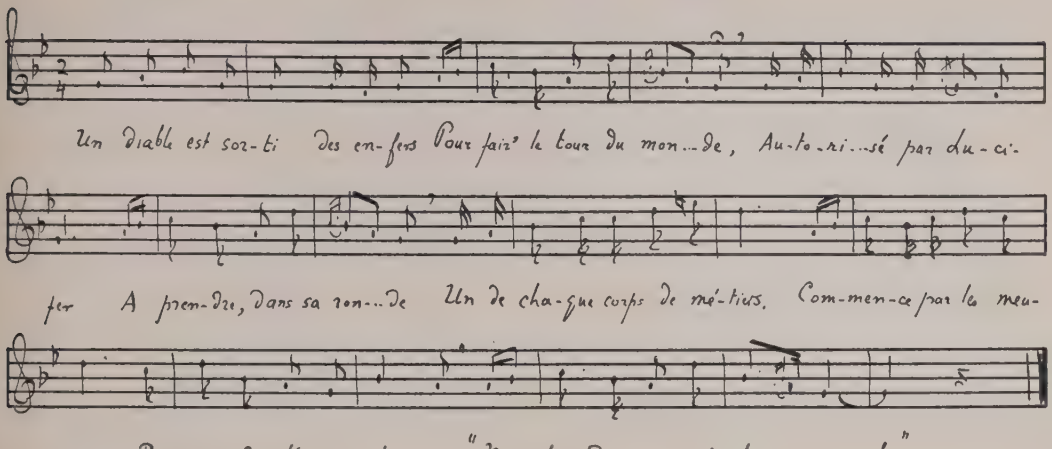
A.-J. Verrier, *Glossaire étymologique et historique des patois et parlers de l'Anjou* (II, 411). But our song and the kindred French versions must either go back to a common original or be derived from each other; for hardly a stanza or a line finds its strict equivalent in either of the variants. For illustration let us cite Verrier's first stanza:

Pluton, doyen des enfers,
  Va faire sa ronde
Et parcourir l'univers
  Pour purger le monde
Des accapareurs, voleurs,
Lapideurs, fraudeurs,
Et des banqueroutiers;
Financiers, banquiers
Vont aller en tête.
Vite à la brouette!

Though not one of the most extensively known songs in Canada, *The Trades* has come into our hands from regions as distant from each other as Charlevoix County and the Ottawa River. Two unlocalized versions had previously been published in anonymous compilations.* Some of the Canadian versions contain a peculiarly naïve and awkward stanza, evidently added as an afterthought by some "habitant" anxious to relieve his calling from Lucifer's call:

Et vous, bons cultivateurs
Qui n'êtes point de ce nombre,
Vous êtes des gens d'honneur;
Le diable n'a rien de contre:
Vos terres vous cultivez;
Honnêtement vous vendez
  A la bonne mesure:
Vous n'irez pas en voiture.

* *Chansons canadiennes*, pp. 86, 87; *Le Chansonnier des Collèges*, pp. 258, 259.



1 Un diable est sorti des enfers
Pour fair' le tour du monde,
Autorisé par Lucifer
A prendre, dans sa ronde,
Un de chaque corps de métiers.
Commenc' par les meuniers
Prenant double mouture.
"Montez dans ma voiture!

2 "Boucher coquin qui vend de tout
Pour du bœuf, de la vache,
Un diable arrive ici chez vous.
Ah! bonjour, maître Eustache!
Bien promptement, dépêche-toi,
Pour t'en v'nir avec moi.
Laisse-là tes fressures.
Monte dans ma voiture!

3 "Boulanger, c'est à votre tour!
Ne faites plus la miche.
Il faut laisser là votre four,
Aussi votre farine,
Et vos pains beaucoup trop petits.
Vos gâteaux à moitié cuits
Et votre pâte sûre
Vous mèn' dans ma voiture.

4 "Cantinier avare et fripon,
Ne faites plus le drôle.
Je vous déclare sans façon
Que vous êt's sur mon rôle.
Aucun bon vin vous ne vendez;
Le mond' vous enivrez
Avec l'eau presque pure.
Montez dans ma voiture!

5 "Vous, marchands maudits ici-bas,
J'ai pour vous une place.
Tous vos vols sont, n'en doutez pas,
Ecrits sur votre face.
Le prix vous vendez quatre fois;
Souvent c'est à faux poids
Ou à fausse mesure.
Montez dans ma voiture!

6 "Manchonnier, ne sois pas jaloux;
Je t'y ferai visite
En grinçant des dents de courroux;
J'ai connu ta conduite:

Tu vends des casques, des manchons,
Qui sont hors de saison,
Tout brûlés de teinture.
Monte dans ma voiture!

7 "Perruquier, barbier malfaisants,
C'est à vous que j'm'adresse,
Vous qui blessez tous vos clients
Par votre maladresse.
Avec vos rasoirs ébréchés,
La barb' vous arrachez;
Vous brisez la figure.
Montez dans ma voiture!

8 "Juge, avocat et procureur,
Le diable est à vos trousses.
D'un enfer tout rempli d'horreurs,
Vous n'êtes qu'à six pouces.
Vos plaidoyers et vos serments,
Surtout vos jugements
Gâtent les procédures,
Vous mèn' dans ma voiture.

9 "Vous ne serez pas oublié,
Docteur ès médecines.
Si les malades vous soignez,
Ce n'est que par la mine.
Par vos remèdes mal donnés
Vit' vous les envoyez
En terre, en pourriture.
Montez dans ma voiture!

10 "Pour trouver encor de ces gens,
Je ne suis pas en peine.
Luy a-t encor bien des méchants,
Mais ma voiture est pleine.
Vous voulez donc tous y monter?
Faudrait vous emmener
Tout droit à la brûlure?
Non! marche, ma voiture!"

TRANSLATION

1 A devil came up from Demonland
To have a look around,
He came at Lucifer's command
To take what could be found
Of sundry trades that profit win.—
"With the grinding miller we'll begin
Who charges a double fee.
Step into the coach with me!

2 "Butcher selling dog and cat
For ox-meat and for cow,
A devil's come to have a chat.
Dear sir, your health is how?
Hurry a bit, with a hop and a skip,
Just for to take a little trip,
And leave your fricassee!
Step into the coach with me!

3 "Baker, the music's come to you!
Don't wait to finish the loaf.
You'd better leave your oven too,
Your wretched floury stuff,

Your loaves that are teeny tiny to eat,
Your half-done cakes that are all of a cheat,
And your pastry vinegary.
Step into the coach with me!

4 "Sutler, greedy rascal a-clinking,
Never mind your jokes.
You're on my list, is what I'm thinking,
I tell you it's not a hoax.
You sell us never a decent wine,
Intoxicate the world like swine
With water unsavory.
Step into the coach with me!

5 "Accursed merchants hereabouts,
'Tis for you I've a lovely place.
All your robberies—who doubts?—
Are written on your face.
You've a way of charging a four-fold rate,
Most of the time at half the weight
Or at half the capacity.
Step into the coach with me!

6 "O be not jealous, my furrier;
I'll pay you a visit too,
And I'll gnash my teeth the wrathfuller
For knowing the ways of you.
Selling such caps and muffs, O treason!
Out of shape and out of season,
Faded horribly.
Step into the coach with me!

7 "Malevolent barber, maker of wigs,
Your attention I demand!

Your victims groan from the scratches and digs
Inflicted by your hand.
That razor, more than hatchet feared,
From many a face an innocent beard
Has hacked out savagely.
Step into the coach with me!

8 "Barrister, judge, attorney-at-law,
The devil is at your heels.
From the horriblest hell you ever saw
Is but seven turns of my wheels.
From your wearisome oaths and wearisome pleadings,
Sentences and court proceedings,
Earth delivered be!
Step into the coach with me!

9 "O we'll forget you never a bit,
My doctor of medicine.
You tend the sick like a hypocrite
With smiling words and thin.
Your remedies are good for little
But showing the easy way to settle
Down to eternity.
Step into the coach with me!

10 " 'Tis not a difficult thing to find
A-plenty of this rabble;
There's an endless troop of the wicked kind—
Little room's the trouble.
Is it all of you wish to come inside?
Is it all of you straight to the fireside
Of hell must riding be?
Ah, no! no more with me!"

THE BUTTERFLY THE CANDLE SEEKS

BALLADRY and lyrics are not merely categories that suit the scholar's bent for classification. Their apposition in folk literature has a deep historical significance. Predominant in some countries, the ballad is entirely wanting in others; conversely, the lyric. Their respective styles and attitudes toward life bear a close relation to cultural antecedents. The oral literature of the North American Indians, for instance, with the possible exception of those influenced by the more civilized Mexicans, shows comparatively little trace of lyric utterance. Narration holds the ground everywhere. The northern European tribes likewise, before they had wholly emerged from the darkness of prehistory, revelled in epic tales far more than in the semi-abstract poems familiar among the Mediterranean and Asiatic nations whose homes stand on the ruins of bygone civilizations. Thus balladry prevailed in Scandinavia—Denmark in particular—to such an extent that grave epic lays, in the absence of suitable lyrics, were adapted to the frolics of the dance. And so it did, to a somewhat lesser extent, among the Germans, the British and the Normans of northern France.* The ballad yields more and more to the lyric song as we proceed southward, until we find it as a merely intrusive element in Piedmont and Catalonia. It is missing in parts of Spain and in most of Italy.† The oral repertory of French Canada, derived from Normandy and the contiguous Loire River provinces, excels in poems of both types. Furthermore, it abounds in ballads and "complaintes" only in the eastern sections of Quebec, where the early colonial nucleus is supposed to have been predominantly Norman—from Perche, Maine, and so forth. The lyric type holds far more ground in the Montreal and Three-Rivers areas, where the more southern Loire River settlers (from Anjou, Poitou, Berry, Angoumois) resorted in larger numbers. The isolation of the country-side tends in itself to preserve an atmosphere of primitiveness suitable for the ballad, while the turmoil of the town favors the more studied strains of the lyric.

Love, dance and drinking songs are plentiful in French Canada. Fertile must be the imagination of the present day song-writer who desires to

* The list of selected ballads, together with their location and variants, in Doncieux' *Romancéro*, bears out this contention for France.

† Louise Pound, *Poetic Origins of the Ballad*, pp. 68, 72 and 170.

discover in the lyric avenues of thought and emotion that have not already been visited by his folk predecessors. Bacchic poems, though less numerous than those of love, must at one time have enjoyed universal favor. Even now that world-wide prohibitive cravings engender a new morality, the soberest of folk singers will not blush at the impropriety of eulogizing wine in the most irresponsible utterances of song. "What shall we do with all our *chansons à boire!*" whimsically remarked one of our veteran singers when, in 1918, the Canadian law of prohibition was published. For a long time to come, indeed, singers whose repertory was one-sided will have to sing to empty glasses, if they want to sing at all.

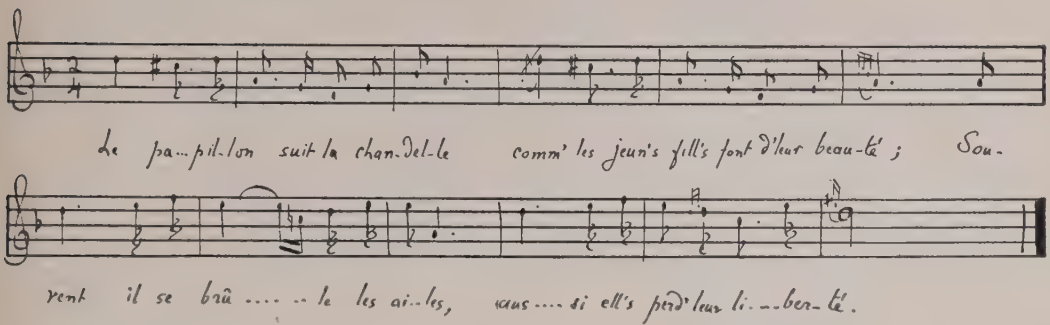
Drinking songs are not all of the same sort. But one pattern seems to predominate. A religious or philosophic maxim, sometimes a mythological reference, is gravely propounded in the first stanza. At times it is almost sacramental in tone; bacchic melodies in fact are known to have become church favorites, and the familiar canticle of *Au sang qu'un Dieu va répandre*, for instance, rests on nothing but a tavern tune of the seventeenth century. The mask falls in the second stanza of the bacchic song. Love uproarious shows his merry face. But something now happens, and it is not clear what—surfeit or disappointment? The third stanza takes it all for granted and proceeds to lavish praise on the virtues of liquor—sparkling, sweet and consoling.

In *The Butterfly the Candle seeks* the first lines are only vaguely moralistic and the familiar love theme is by exception skipped altogether, to yield to the "bottle mine, sweetest friend," and "the sparkling glass" pouring consolation over "my little sorrow." Although no other version of it but one, also from Canada, has yet come to our notice, it is clear that it is French in origin.* The style and the rhymes show the advanced deterioration due to age, and the lines are of a traditional type—sixteen syllables with mid-cæsura.

The following version was recorded from Luc April, at Notre-Dame-du-Portage (Témiscouata) in 1918, and is part of the Barbeau-Wyman collection.

* The second stanza of "Petits moutons" in Claude Servettaz' *Chants et chansons populaires de la Savoie* (p. 24) is, indeed, nothing but the opening theme of our song: "Le papillon suit la chandelle Comme l'amant suit la beauté. Mais s'il vient à brûler ses ailes, Il a perdu sa liberté."

LE PAPILLON SUIT LA CHANDELLE



1 Le papillon suit la chandelle ‖ comm' les jeun's fill's font d'leur
[beauté;
Souvent il se brûle les ailes, ‖ aussi ell's perd'nt leur liberté.

2 Bouteille, ah! que vous êt' aimable! ‖ Vous ne faites point de
[jaloux.
Vous êt' amoureus' de personne; ‖ cependant nous vous aimons
[tous.

3 Mais d'une main je tiens mon verre, ‖ de l'autr' je bénis le
[chagrin.
Oh, mes amis, trinquons! Nos verres! ‖ Allons dir' des nouvell'
[au cœur.

TRANSLATION

1 The butterfly the candle seeks,
As maids around their beauty flit;
Burn off his wings, poor butterfly,
And maids are tangled in a net.

2 O bottle mine, O sweetest friend,
Your beauty makes no jealousy;

It is not you that love a man,
'Tis you we love eternally.

3 My right hand holds the sparkling glass,
The other thanks my little sorrow.
Ah, my friends, let's clink away
And tell our news until the morrow!

THE SWALLOW, MESSENGER OF LOVE

THE incoherence of this tale of pining love is not its least quality. *The Swallow, Messenger of Love,* typifies a hoard of sentimental lyric utterances, in which the need of song to relieve pent-up feelings counts for more than the intellectual interest in the accompanying story. It is one of the most archaic songs of this collection, and its raggedness suggests the possibility that not a single line of its remote original may have remained intact. If its naïve love adventure unexpectedly breaks off into a drinking effusion in the last stanza, it is to conform with the hackneyed pattern according to which, in the bacchic songs, wine is the healer of all sorrow. But the disproportionate development of the usual premises here throws the bacchic conclusion out of place and cripples it, as it were.

The swallow as a messenger of love is the most valuable feature of our record, for it is derived from the similar nightingale (*rossignollet*) theme of early days. The *rossignollet,* indeed, appears as the consoler and messenger of aggrieved lovers in the earliest French literature.* It is of frequent occurrence in the troubadour manuscripts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The prosodic pattern of our song is also typical of the same remote period. Its ten-syllable line with cæsuras after the sixth syllable (6+4), once familiar to the troubadours, is uncommon in folk poetry. Doncieux† failed to notice it in any of the folk songs that came under his observation. The only instance given in his *Romancéro* of the twelve-syllable lines (8+4) in the second halves of our stanzas is that of *Dame Lombarde,* a ballad from northern Italy and Piedmont (pp. 174-184).

The Swallow, Messenger of Love, even in its present adulterated form, is of French extraction. Versions of it are to be found in such distant parts of Quebec as Levis, Montreal and Gaspé. But we can as yet cite only two fragments of it from abroad, in Beauquier's Franche-Comté compilation.‡ Of the feathered messenger theme alone, however, several variants have been recorded in the French provinces. Bujeaud has given several instances

* Charles Nisard, *Des chansons populaires,* I, 32.

† *Op. cit.,* footnote, p. xvi.

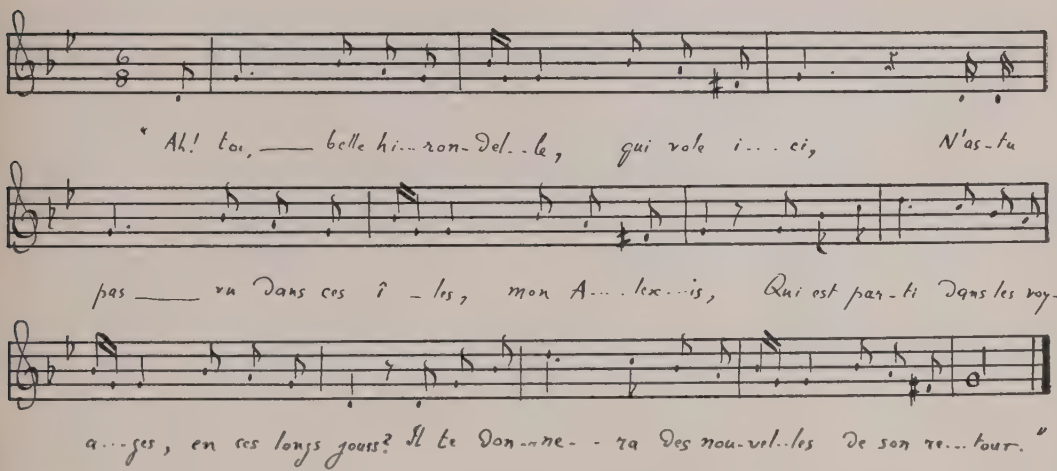
‡ Charles Beauquier, *op. cit.,* pp. 87, 88 and 371—"Hirondelle fidèle et sage, ‖ N'as-tu pas vu dans ces îles . . ."

of the "joli rossignol volage, messager des amoureux,"* of the "rossignolet sauvage, rossignolet charmant,"† which he obtained in the Loire River provinces. In Champfleury et Weckerlin, the "rossignolette" takes his flight and conveys a spoken message to the pretty sweetheart.‡ From the French Pyrenees, far to the south, several parallels are given by Julien Tiersot, in his *Chansons populaires des Alpes françaises.*§

The present record is from the collection of folk songs gathered by M. E.-Z. Massicotte.‖

* *Op. cit.*, p. 172.
† Pp. 293, 294.
‡ Champfleury et Weckerlin, *op. cit.*, pp. 118, 119.
§ Pp. 120, 135, 348. M. Tiersot also mentions a version from Morvan.
‖ *The Journal of American Folk-Lore*, no. 123 (1919), two variants, pp. 39-42.

L'HIRONDELLE, MESSAGÈRE DE L'AMOUR



1 "Ah! toi, belle hirondelle, ‖ qui vole ici,
N'as-tu pas vu, dans ces îles, ‖ mon Alexis
Qui est parti dans les voyages ‖ en ces longs jours?
Il te donnera des nouvelles ‖ de son retour."

2 L'oiseau qu'est tout aimable ‖ s'est envolé.
Avec son léger plumage ‖ s'en est allé,
A traversé l'eau et la mer ‖ sans se lasser;
Dessus les mats de cette flotte ‖ s'est reposé.

3 A-t aperçu la hune ‖ d'un bâtiment.
Alexis s'y lamente ‖ en naviguant.
"Parle-moi donc, amant fidèle, ‖ parle-moi donc!
Je viens de la part de ta belle, ‖ dans ces vallons."

4 L'amant plein de surprise ‖ d'entendr' parler,
De savoir des nouvelles ‖ d' sa bien-aimé':
"Tu lui diras, belle hirondelle, ‖ qu'à mes amours
Je lui serai chaste et fidèle ‖ à mon retour."

5 L'oiseau qu'est tout aimable || s'est envolé.
Droit à son vert bocage || a retourné.
"Consolez-vous, charmante Hélène, || consolez-vous!
Car j'ai de si bonnes nouvelles || qui sont pour vous:

6 "Votre amant sur la mer-e || est engagé
Pour faire un long voyage || de douze anné's.
Il m'a donné son cœur en gage || et ses amours.
Il vous sera chaste et fidèle || à son retour."

7 "Adieu, charmante Hélène! || nous faut partir.
Le verre et la bouteille || pour nous conduir'!
Je te salu', charmante belle, || salut à toi!
Si ton petit cœur est en peine || qu'il pri' pour moi!"

TRANSLATION

1 "O swallow, swallow, you that fly about and round,
In far-off isles have you not my Alexis found?
Now he is voyaging at sea, these weary days,
And he must tell you of his soon returning ways."

2 The bird is sweetly willing and he takes his flight,
Leaves all behind, away and away with feathers light;
Never tiring, crosses waters and the sea,
Till by a fleet of ships he settles warily.

3 Standing in the topmost rigging of a ship,
Alexis sings complaint, the billows rise and dip.
"Speak to me, O faithful lover, speak to me!
From your beloved I have come away to sea."

4 The lover's taken all aback to hear the swallow speak,
To hear of his beloved from the swallow's beak.
"O tell her, swallow dear, that I shall faithful be
To my beloved when I've come back from the sea."

5 The bird is sweetly willing and he takes his flight
Straight to his greenwood grove away with feathers light.
"O be consoled, charming Hélène, O be consoled!
Good news I bring for you, by sweet Alexis told.

6 "Your lover voyages about right busily,
He's taking twelve years for a voyage on the sea,
But he has taken oath of high fidelity
To his beloved when he's come back from the sea."

7 "Good-bye, charming Hélène! now I must leave you here!
Full glass and waning flask will guide us, never fear.
Charming Hélène, I bid you greeting! Hail to thee!
And if your little heart is grieved, O pray for me."

LOVERS' FAREWELL

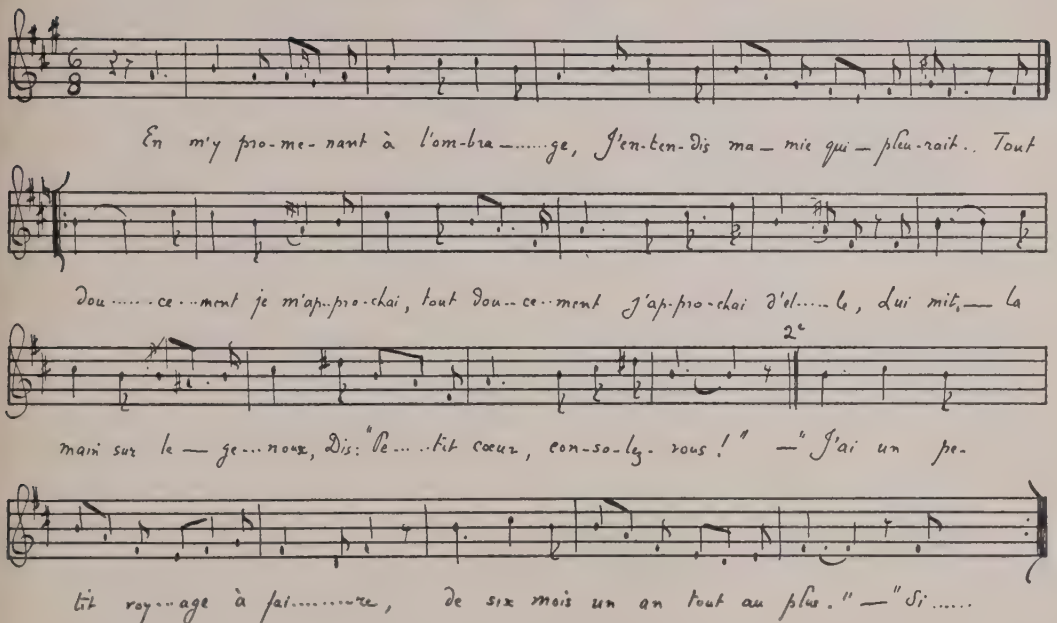
PARTING is one of the trials of lovers that find relief in song. The distant battlefields and the boundless seas, calling for recruits, often sundered sweet ties that would not again be mended, for love seldom endured through years of absence and intervening opportunities. Hence regrets at parting, oaths of fidelity or, at times, cruel remonstrances with the love-maker who was too lightly forsaking his pledges.

Songs of the sea are far from uncommon in the old repertory of Canada. They do not in themselves imply that the singers among whom they find favor are at home on the sea, for they may be heard as far inland as the Perche and Maine in France or the Ottawa River in Canada. *Lovers' Farewell* was first recorded from a typical *coureur-des-bois*, Edouard Hovington, of Tadousac, who was for many years in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company. Only two or three times since has it been recorded, in Gaspé and the neighborhood of Montreal. What a song of the sea plainly indicates, on the other hand, is that its anonymous author must have been familiar with his theme, hence either a sailor or one who dwelt on the seacoast. Peculiarly enough, the only French variants of it which we can cite are from the mountains of Savoy.*

Its texture indicates age, and its metric scheme is of the traditional pattern, sixteen (8+8) or eight syllables to the line in succession, with alternating feminines and masculines for the cæsuras and rhymes. It is likely to have originated either on the coast of Normandy or on the west coast, near the mouth of the Loire.

* Cl. Servettaz, *Chants et chansons populaires de la Savoie*, pp. 109, 110, "L'amant en voyage."

LES ADIEUX DES AMANTS



1 En m'y promenant à l'ombrage, ‖ j'entendis m' ami' qui pleurait.
Tout doucement je m'approchai, ‖ tout doucement j'approchai [d'elle,
Lui mit la main sur le genoux,
Dis: "Petit cœur, consolez-vous!

2 "J'ai un petit voyage à faire, ‖ de six mois, un an tout au plus."
—"Si tu reviens dans peu de temps, ‖ tu trouveras toujours la [même.
Si tu reviens dans peu de jours,
Nous accomplirons nos amours."

3 —"Belle, venez me reconduire ‖ jusqu'à l'embarqu'ment du [vaisseau."
Quand ça vint pour se dire adieu, ‖ le beau galant s'approcha [d'elle,
Quand ça vint pour se dire adieu,
Ils ont tous deux les larmes aux yeux.

4 Ah! que l'amour est difficile! || Dieu, qu'il est dur à cultiver!
Ah! qu'il est dur à cultiver, || qu'il soit pour l'un, qu'il soit pour [l'autre.
Ah! qu'il luy a du changement,
Entre la belle et son amant!

TRANSLATION

1 As I was walking through the shade,
I heard my well-beloved weep.
I crept up silently and soft,
Soft and silent as a sleep,
And on her knee my hand I hold,
Saying, "Sweetheart, be consoled!

2 "A little journey I must make,
'Tis but six months or a year."
"Let your coming home be soon
And you shall find me waiting here;
Oh let your coming home be sped,
That we may crown our love and wed."

3 "Sweetheart, come away with me
Until the vessel puts to sea."
When the farewell time is come,
My love and I meet tenderly;
At the time of soft good-byes
Both have tear-drops in our eyes.

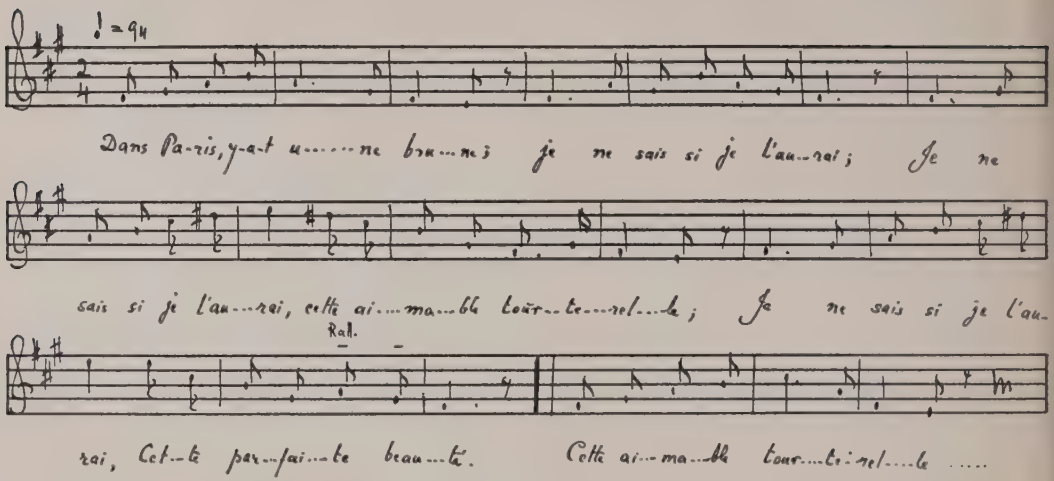
4 Ah, but love is difficult,
Difficult to cultivate!
Love is hard to cultivate
For lovers bound to lover fate.
Ah, what stormy trials hover
'Twixt the lady and her lover!

THIS LOVELY TURTLE-DOVE

THIS song is typical of hundreds of others in its charming triviality. Amorous effusions without end were composed in all possible metric patterns, short and long. The song collector is sometimes at a loss to understand how certain folk singers can remember for life so many love lyrics—over fifty or a hundred—which at first sight at least seem devoid of individuality. A Gaspesian singer, whose hoard of amorous songs swelled incredibly, remarked that these words of love are the language of young folk and that each and every one of them is likely to come in handy.

This Lovely Turtle-dove, in spite of its lack of substance, was not without a certain charm when heard on the lips of Vincent-Ferrier de Repentigny, a sturdy folk singer from Beauharnois County, from whom M. E.-Z. Massicotte has recorded it. Its stanzas are built up on an interesting and well-balanced pattern, familiar in such short songs. The two lines of sixteen syllables (8+8) with inverted masculine and feminine cæsuras and endings at first seem to baffle the ear by their somewhat indeterminate character. Then follow two shorter lines with resonant rhymes in a quick and soothing cadence. Well known as is this song in various parts of Quebec, it has not yet come to our attention in any of the French collections so far consulted.

CETTE AIMABLE TOURTERELLE



1 Dans Paris, y-a-t une brune; ‖ je ne sais si je l'aurai;
Je ne sais si je l'aurai, ‖ cette aimable tourterelle;
Je ne sais si je l'aurai,
Cette parfaite beauté.

2 Cette aimable tourterelle ‖ est toujours en me disant:
"Ah! que nous serions heureux ‖ d'être mari-és ensemble!
Ah! que nous serions heureux
D'être mari-és tous deux!"

3 —"Faisons nos promess's ensemble; ‖ n'attendons pas à [demain."
Je lui présente la main; ‖ ell' me présente la rose.
Ell' me dit en souri-ant:
"Soyez mon fidèle amant!"

TRANSLATION

1 In Paris there's a little brunette,
I know not if she's mine to be,
I know not if she's mine to be,
This lovely turtle-dovey-dovie;
I know not if she's mine to be,
This perfect little béautý.

2 This lovely turtle-dove, O she
Is ever and ever telling me:
"Oh, how happy we shall be,"
And then she heaves a little sigh,
"Oh, how happy we shall be
When we are married, you and I!"

3 "Then let us promise each to each,
Nor wait till comes the morrow day."
I give my hand to turtle-dove,
She gives me a rose, a rose away.
And turtle-dove she smiles to me:
"O be my lover faithfully!"

THE HEART OF MY WELL-BELOVED

THE iteration of the same poetic pattern in every stanza of our song produces a distinctive cadence that craves continuity. The problems confronting the pursuer who would not be outwitted by the clever evasions of his well-beloved soon arouse a deep human interest. For beauty and originality *The Heart of my Well-beloved* is not easily excelled. Its airiness cannot fail to evoke visions of ideal lightness and fancy. Combining lucidity, economy of means and youthful feeling, it ranks among the most beautiful lyric poems in the whole folk repertory of France.

When one of its earliest recorded versions (from the Aix district) was produced before the *Comité de la langue* appointed by the French Government in the fifties to save the folk songs of France, it provoked a lively debate, as some members, suspecting deceit, would not believe in its folk extraction.* Time and the general consensus of opinion have brought accord. Mistral, the Provençal poet, had known it from infancy and by his paraphrase of it in the "Magali" of *Mirèio* has brought it to fame among the literary classes. That at least another poet before Mistral had yielded to its charm becomes apparent in a Provençal record of "Magali," from Avignon.† Parts of this variant undoubtedly show traces of literary elaboration, in the following lines, for instance:

—O Magali, si tu te fais
La rose belle,
Je me ferai, moi, le papillon.
Je te baiserai.

Or again,

—O Magali, si tu te fais
L'arbre des mornes,
Je me ferai, moi, la touffe de lierre.
Je t'embrasserai.

If recognition from men of letters came late to *The Heart of my Well-beloved*, the humble folk within, and beyond, the frontiers of France have for generations held it as one of their treasured possessions. Records of it,

* Weckerlin, *Chansons populaires*, II, 55-58.
† Weckerlin, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

either in outline or in its present form, have come to us from varied sources and under different names, such as *Les métamorphoses*, *Magali*, *Les transformations*, and so forth. Arbaud* stated that it was very well known in Provence; Rolland included three texts of it from Brittany in his *Recueil de chansons populaires*;† H. Gaidoz introduced one from Carcassonne in *Mélusine*‡ and mentioned that to his knowledge variants of the *Métamorphoses* had appeared in several languages. Parallels from Morbihan, Bourbonnais, Savoy and Languedoc were produced by other authors.§ Bladé appended to his Gascon version several references to French and foreign sources, among which we note a record from Catalonia (Spain), one in Latin from the Engadine, and another from Roumania.|| Further variants of *Les métamorphoses* were compiled by Jeanroy, in his *Les Origines de la poésie lyrique en France;* for instance, a few from Italy—Tuscany, Sicily and south of Rome.¶ To these T. F. Crane added two or three numbers,** and mentions Nigra's versions for Italy and Child's *The Two Magicians*, where there is "a list of the two classes of popular tales containing the theme of our ballad."†† Arbaud also reminds us that Victor Leclerc had attempted to trace the song back to Anacreon.‡‡

* Damase Arbaud, *Chants populaires de la Provence*, II, 128, 135.

† IV, 29-33.

‡ I, 338 and following.

§ P. Laurent, *Mélusine*, VII, 63; Champfleury et Weckerlin, *op. cit.*, p. 90; Cl. Servettaz, *op. cit.*, 86, 87; and four from Languedoc, by L. Lambert, *op. cit.*, I, 353-356.

|| Bladé, *Poésies populaires de la Gascogne*, II, 360-365; De la Prade's "Pernette" (Forez); Allien et Batissien, *Ancien Bourbonnais*, II, 22; Jaubert, *Glossaire du Centre*, au mot "panseux"; Briz, for Catalonia, I, 252; for Languedoc, *Mélusine*, 20 juil. 1877; a Latin version from the Engadine, *cf. Romania*, III, 114; a Roumanian song "quite closely resembling" ours, *cf.* V. Alexandri, *Ballades et chants populaires de la Roumanie;* Mistral's "Magali"; Smith's version for Forez, in *Romania*, no. 25, pp. 62, 63.

¶ Footnote, p. 14; Rathery, *Revue des Deux-mondes*, 15 mars 1862, p. 362; Tigri (Tuscany), no. 859; Vigo (Sicily), no. 1711; Imbriany (southern Italy), I, 187; F. R. Marin, II, 403; Pelay Briz (Catalonia), I, 121, 128, 252; Montel et Lambert (France), 544-551; *Romania*, VII, 61 (Le Velay and Forez).

** Guillon (Ain); *Romania*, X, 390 (Calvados).

†† C. Nigra, *Canti popolari del Piemonte*, pp. 329 *sq.*; J. F. Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, II, 401.

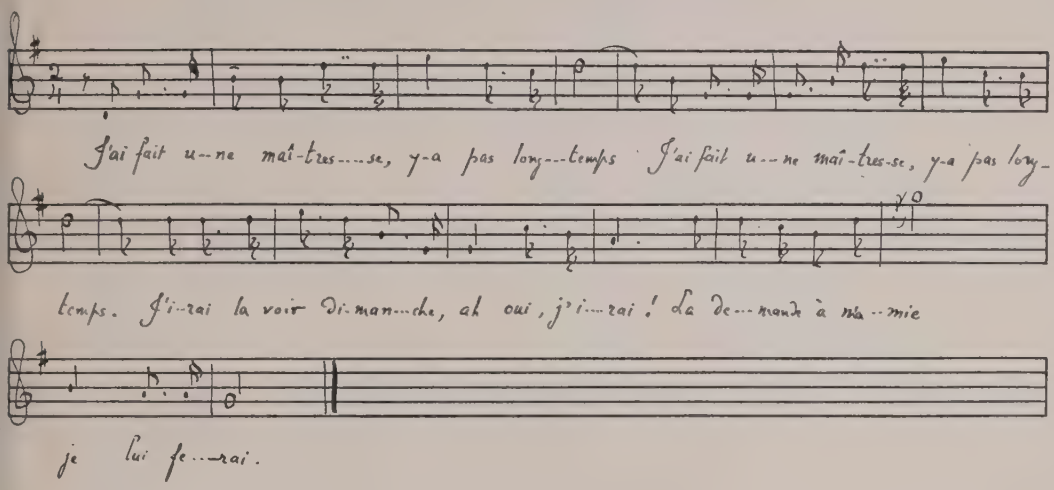
‡‡ Arbaud, *loc. cit.*, I, 128-135.

Le Cœur de ma bien-aimée has also been found in Canada, at least in the districts east of Quebec City. Two of its versions were recorded by Ernest Gagnon* in the early sixties, and it appeared in an early compilation entitled *Recueil de chansons canadiennes et françaises* (pp. 68, 69). The present text was taken down at Notre-Dame-du-Portage, in Témiscouata County, from an old singer named Alcide Léveillé (Barbeau-Wyman Collection, 1918).

The prosody here belongs to the old-fashioned troubadour pattern: 6+4.

* Gagnon, *op. cit.*, pp. 78, 137.

LE CŒUR DE MA BIEN-AIMÉE



1 J'ai fait une maîtresse ‖ y-a pas longtemps. (*bis*)
J'irai la voir dimanche, ‖ ah oui, j'irai!
La demande à m'amie ‖ je lui ferai.

2 —"Si tu y viens dimanche, ‖ je n'y s'rai pas.
Je m'y mettrai anguille ‖ sous un rocher.
De moi tu n'auras pas ‖ mes amitiés."

3 —"Si tu te mets anguille ‖ sous un rocher,
Je me mettrai pêcheure ‖ pour te pêcher.
Je pêcherai le cœur ‖ d'ma bien-aimé'."

4 —"Si tu te mets pêcheure ‖ pour me pêcher
Je me mettrai gazelle ‖ dedans un champ.
De moi tu n'auras pas ‖ de content'ment."

5 —"Si tu te mets gazelle ‖ dedans un champ,
Je me mettrai chasseure ‖ pour te chasser.
Je chasserai le cœur ‖ d'ma bien-aimé'."

6 —"Si tu te mets chasseure || pour me chasser,
Je me mettrai nonnette || dans un couvent.
De moi tu n'auras pas || de content'ment."

7 —"Si tu te mets nonnette || dans un couvent,
Je me mettrai prêcheure || pour te prêcher.
Je prêcherai le cœur || d'ma bien-aimé'."

8 —"Si tu te mets prêcheure || pour me prêcher,
Je me mettrai étoile || au firmament.
De moi tu n'auras pas || de content'ment."

9 —"Si tu te mets étoile || au firmament,
Je me mettrai nuage || pour te cacher.
Je cacherai le cœur || d'ma bien-aimé'."

10 —"Si tu te mets nuage || pour me cacher,
Je me mettrai en vierge || au paradis.
De moi tu n'auras pas || de content'ment."

11 —"Si tu te mets en vierge || au paradis,
Je me mettrai saint Pierre. || J'aurai les clefs.
Mais j'ouvrirai le cœur || d'ma bien-aimé'."

TRANSLATION

1 My heart found me a mistress long ago,
My heart found me a mistress long ago.
On Sunday shall I go to see her and
Will seek for this my well-beloved's hand.

2 "On Sunday come in vain, I'll not be there.
I'll turn into an eel, down in a pond,
And to your longing shall I not respond."

3 "If to an eel down in a pond you turn,
I'll turn into a fisherman and fish
My well-beloved's heart up in a mesh."

4 "And I, if to a fisherman you turn,
Shall turn into a deer upon the field,
And to your longing shall I never yield."

5 "If to a deer upon the field you turn,
I'll turn into a huntsman, hunting you,
My well-beloved's heart shall I pursue."

6 "If to a huntsman, hunting me, you turn,
I'll turn into a nun in convent close,
And so your longing shall I still oppose."

7 "If to a close-confinèd nun you turn,
I'll turn into a preacher, solemnly
To preach my well-beloved's heart to me."

8 "If to a preacher of my heart you turn,
I'll turn into a star upon the sky,
So shall I ever from your longing fly."

9 "If to a heaven-twinkling star you turn,
I'll turn into a cloud, so night and day
My well-beloved's heart be hid away."

10 "If to a cloud of darkening you turn,
I'll turn into a maid in Paradise,
Your longing shall be vain foreverwise."

11 "If to a maid in Paradise you turn,
I'll turn Saint Peter, open with the key
My well-beloved's heart right happily."

I WILL NOT HURRY

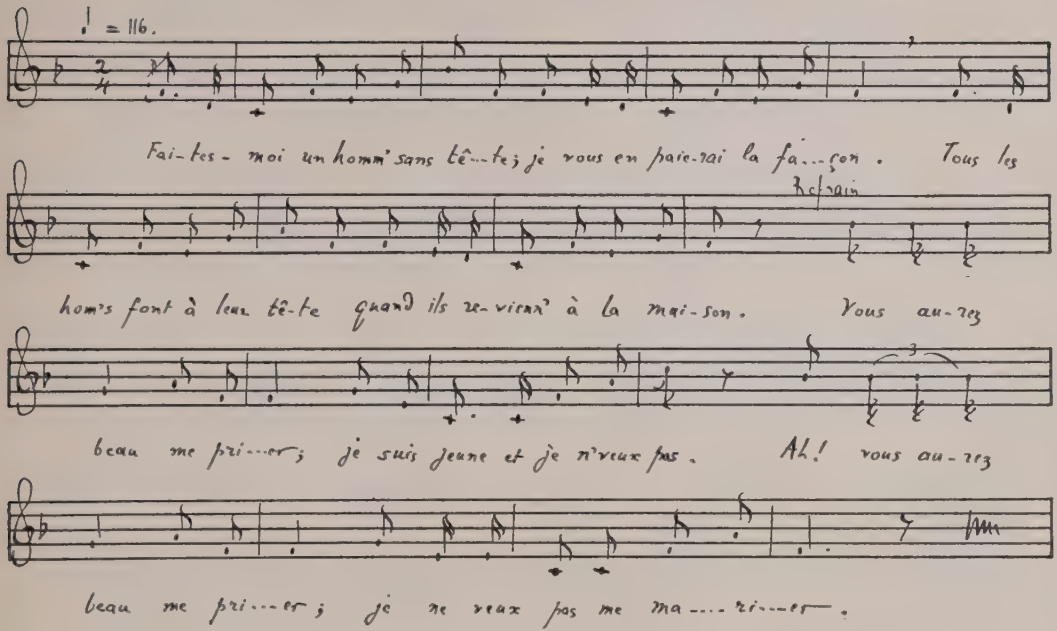
NOT all marriages were blessed with felicity; so much our folk songs would have us believe. Love lyrics were almost numberless, it is true, but they appear one and all to have been pre-marital effusions. While domestic congeniality was in no need of the Muse's encouragement, incompatibility readily turned to the outside world for relief, and relief was found in laughter and in biting satire rather than in sincere appeals for sympathy. Thus we might quote scores of songs on what is termed the "maumariés."

How this little maid who boasted "I will not hurry!" acquired all her wariness is a puzzle to us. Her epigrams on men and matrimony sound rather like the near-echoes of disappointment and spite than the genial outbursts one expects of blundering virginity. Our song, for all we know, is likely to be one more "maumariée," with this difference—that it is sailing under false colors.

Its age and diffusion remain unknown to us, as this is the only version of it that has yet come to our attention. Its prosody, as in the case of most of our folk songs, belongs exclusively to the folk technique, that is, fourteen syllables to the line with cæsura after the seventh syllable (7+7). It was recorded by M. Massicotte in the city of Montreal in 1918.*

* *The Journal of American Folk-Lore*, no. 123 (1919), pp. 54, 55.

JE N'VEUX PAS ME MARIER



1 Faites-moi un homm' sans tête! ‖ Je vous en paierai la façon.
Tous les homm's font à leur tête ‖ quand ils revienn'nt à la [maison.

Vous aurez beau me prier; ‖ je suis jeune et je n'veux pas.
Ah! vous aurez beau me prier; ‖ je n'veux pas me marier.

2 Quand j'entends parler ces filles ‖ qui voudraient se marier!
Oh! grand Dieu, quelle folie ‖ d'engager leur liberté!

3 La première anné' se passe; ‖ la second', comm'ci, comm'ça;
La troisième, on se dispute; ‖ la quatrième, on se bat.

TRANSLATION

1 Make for me a headless man
  And I shall pay your wizardry.
All the men are muddle-headed,
  Coming home from revelry.

What's the good of asking me?
  For I am young, I will not hurry.
O what's the good of asking me?
  I will not, will not, will not marry.

2 And when I hear these other girls
  A-chattering of marrying,
O then I say, "What folly, madness,
  Prisoning in wedding ring!"

3 First year passes quick enough,
  Second somehow, anyhow,
Third is bickering and stuff,
  Fourth is fisticuffs and row.

MARRY ME, MOTHER DEAR!

ALL the *maumarié* songs of France put together would not have changed pretty Julie's determination to have her own way and marry her youthful lover. Not even her mother's rebukes would lead her to believe that she was still too young to be "chattering this twaddle," for fifteen years of age was to the knowledge of all the proper age for matrimony. Resistance to her entreaties, moreover, does not seem to have been in real earnest, to judge from the mother's sudden "Then marry, the sooner the better!" in the sixth stanza.

This debate has found its way into various songs familiar in France and elsewhere. But here it assumes a garb that suits the rhythm of the spinning-wheel, particularly as regards its melody and refrain. Widely known in the old-world lore as is our theme,* it does not invariably appear archaic in its treatment. We should have been tempted to consider our song *Marry me, mother dear!* as a fairly recent composition; its prosody, though confusedly inconsistent, is not in the folk manner (4+6 and 6, with modern cross rhymes, masculine and feminine). Its diffusion† in France, particularly in the southern provinces and Italy,‡ however, gives it a place among actual folk songs, and, what is more, discloses as early a record from Savoy as 1555.§

* Julien Tiersot, *Chansons populaires des Alpes françaises*, pp. 302-304: "Ce thème—la fille pressée de se marier et en faisant confidence à sa mère, qui contrecarre ses projets—est des plus répandus et a donné naissance à un grand nombre de chansons, soit en français, soit en patois."

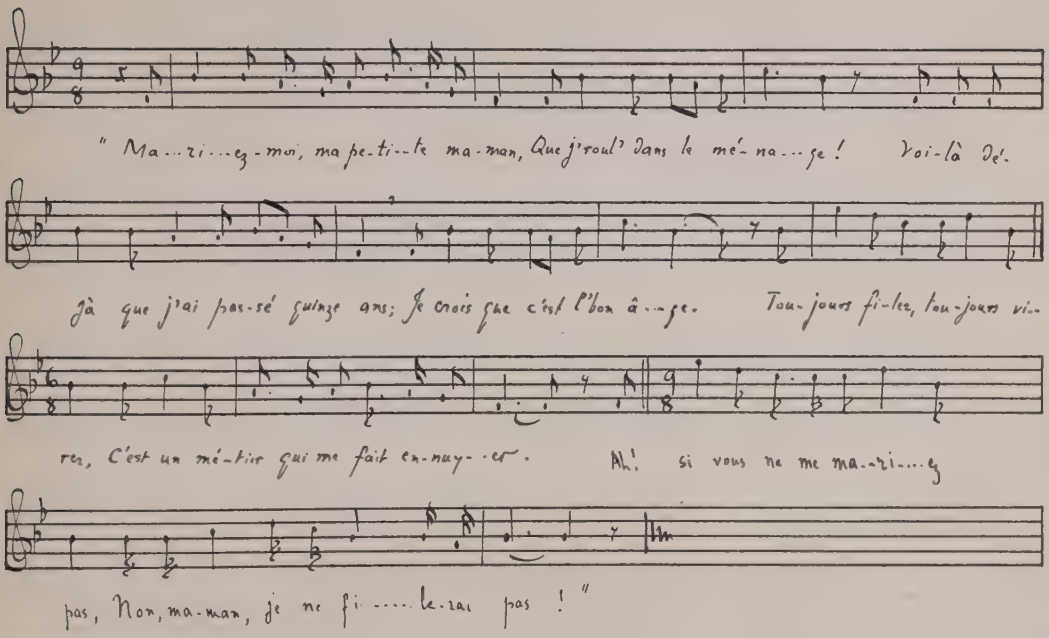
† Nine French versions: Tiersot, *loc. cit.* (Alpes françaises), pp. 302-305; the first of these two versions is quite different from the Canadian. Tiersot mentions two other versions from Savoy, one printed in 1555, the other in 1857 (*Revue Savoisienne*, dec. 1857, in *Etudes sur les dialectes savoyards*, by Despire); also one record from Bresse (Ch. Guillon, *Chansons populaires de l'Ain*, p. 237). Tiersot gives another version in his *Mélodies populaires des provinces de France*. Fragments of two records are given by L. Lambert, in *Chants et chansons populaires du Languedoc*, II, 256, 257; the melody of one of these is not unlike ours. "La fileuse" of A.-J. Verrier, in his *Glossaire étymologique et historique des patois et des parlers de l'Anjou* (II) is the only record which is practically identical with our text.

‡ Nigra, *loc. cit.*, p. 182.

§ Tiersot, *loc. cit.*

It is not commonly known in Canada, though we have more than once recorded it, both in the eastern and western parts of Quebec. The following version, from an old singer in Les Eboulements (Charlevoix County), Mme. Edmond Tremblay, closely resembles Verrier's parallel from Anjou, even to the point of giving the same description for the lover, "le fils du gros (*or* grand) Lucas."

MARIEZ-MOI, MA PETITE MAMAN



1 "Mariez-moi, ‖ ma petite maman,
Que j'roul' dans le ménage!
Voilà déjà ‖ que j'ai passé quinze ans;
Je crois que c'est l'bon âge.
Toujours filer, toujours virer,
C'est un métier ‖ qui me fait ennuyer.
Ah! si vous ne me mariez pas,
Non non, maman, ‖ *je ne filerai pas!*"

2 —"Ah! taisez-vous, ‖ finissez vos cancans!
Ne parlez plus d'la sorte.
Mais attendez ‖ que vous ayez vingt ans.
Vous parlez comme un' sotte.

Filez, filez, || ma bonne enfant,
Fuyez tous ces jeunes amants!"

3 —"Si c'est à vingt ans || que je prends un mari,
Ah! je vous dis, ma mère,
Je voudrais que mon rouet
Y soit réduit || en cendre et en poussière,
Et ma quenouille, sur les tisons,
Tournée en cendre et en charbon."

4 —"Bell' rigotton, || si je prends un bâton,
J'arrang'rai ton corsage.
Si je connaissais quelque méchant
Qui voulût t'avoir en mariage,
Je lui dirais pour le certain:
'Prenez ma fille || et corrigez-la bien!' "

5 —"Ma bonn' maman, || le fils du grand Lucas
M'a demandée en mariage.
Il m'aime bien, n'en doutez pas;
Il m'a donné son cœur en gage.
Il n'écoute tous vos cancans.
Il m'aime bien, || car c'est un bon enfant."

6 —"Marie-toi, ma fille, || puisqu'il est de ton goût.
Finis-en au plus vite.
Car tu verras, || quand tu s'ras marié',
Si tu fileras, ma petite!
Dans le ménage pour être heureux
Faut que chacun || travaille de son mieux."

7 La bell' Julie || rencontre son amant.
Ell' lui raconte son histoire:
"Il faut s'en entretenir maintenant.
J'y ai fait consentir ma mère."

—"La belle, pour ta récompense
Prends donc en gage un doux baiser.
Marions-nous, ‖ *soyons heureux!*
Après, tu fil'ras si tu veux."

TRANSLATION

1 "O marry, marry me, my mother dear,
For I would be a-housekeeping.
See now! I've gone beyond the fifteenth year,
I think it's an age for marrying.
Spinning and spinning, about and about,
It's a thing that tires me out and out.
But oh! and if you will not marry me,
Why no and no! I'll not a-spinning be."

2 "Now have an end of tantrums, daughter dear,
Have done, I say, with fiddle-faddle.
Better to wait till you're in your twentieth year
And not be chattering this twaddle.
Spinning and spinning you must do,
These young Sir Lovers are not for you."

3 "And must I wait the twentieth year to wed,
O then, my mother, I tell you this—
I would my spinning-wheel were powderèd
Into an earthy, dusty mess,
And I would my distaff burnt up whole
And fell in ashes and in coal."

4 "My pretty rogue, if I should take a stick,
I'd have it tickle smooth your bust,
And if I knew a bad one, loving-sick,
Who said, 'I marry her will and must!'

Him for certain I would tell,
'Take my daughter and beat her well!' "

5 "Mother, big Lucas has a son, and he
Has asked that I do marry him;
He loves me well, there can no doubting be,
His heart and mine like one do seem.
He takes no heed of your tantrums wild;
He loves me well, he's a lovely child."

6 "Then marry, my daughter, and marry him all you will,
The sooner the better! Have done, have done!
And you shall see, my dear, when you've married your fill,
If you shall spin, if you'll have spun!
For a-housekeeping all happy to be,
Each must work and willingly."

7 And pretty Julie meets her lover again
And tells her story to him over.
"Now we must talk of how and where and when,
'Tis mother says, 'Go marry your lover!' "
"Sweetheart, for thanks I give you this,
Take for my token a sweet kiss.
Now we shall marry, happy we,
And if you wish, you'll a-spinning be."

MY FAITHLESS LOVER IS FORGETTING

WE might at first sight have discarded this song, charming though it is, as it seems not to share in certain obvious characteristics of the old folk songs. Cross rhymes, alternately feminine and masculine, give it a touch of modernity. True enough, it affects the familiar pastoral disguise, which is as old as the troubadours themselves. But this literary device in itself is no criterion of age; it has survived to the latter days of the court of France, even to a poet such as Florian in the early nineteenth century.

One feature, however, places our song outside the circle of modern compositions: the seven-syllable measure of its lines, which is, as we have seen, the possession of ancient Romance dialects and also of the folk literature of France. And there is no doubt that, in spite of a few discrepancies, this rhythmic pattern stands at the back of our pastoral effusion.

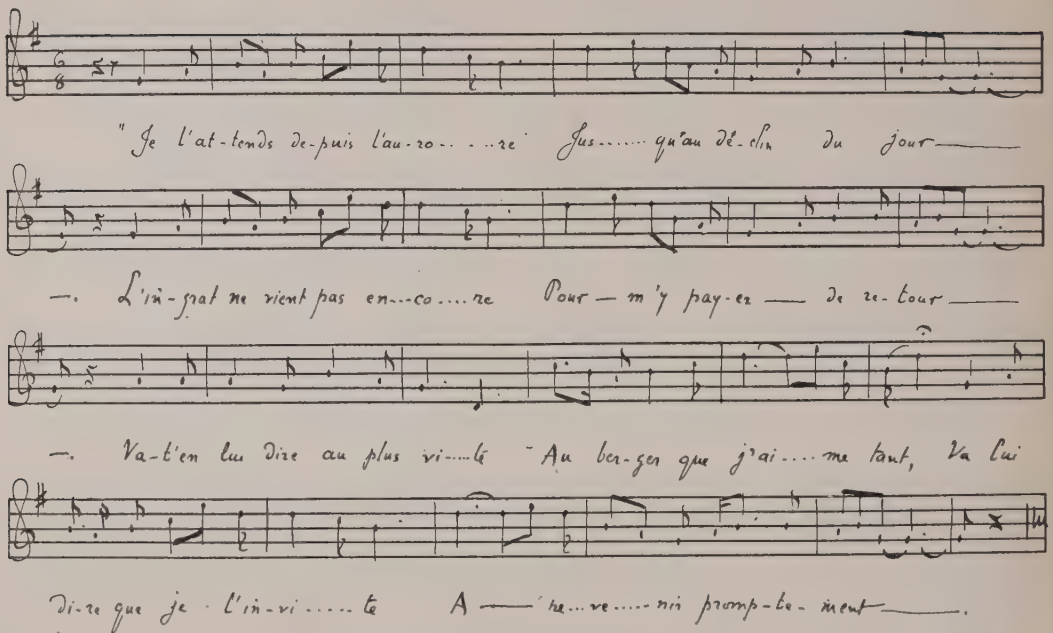
My Faithless Lover for some reason does not seem to have maintained its hold on the memory of folk singers. It is scarcely ever heard among those of Canada, and may not have been remembered in northern France. Yet it has come to our attention two or three times in collections from southern French provinces, on the very frontiers of Italy. Servettaz found a variant of it in Savoy,* and Tiersot, while quoting a French version—not in dialect or "patois"—from the Alps, states that it seems more at home in Tarentaise than anywhere else. He also mentions a version from the Val d'Aoste.†

Our song, like the former, was recorded from an old woman, Mme. Edmond Tremblay, of Les Eboulements (Charlevoix County), Quebec.

* Cl. Servettaz, *loc. cit.*, pp. 22, 23. *Cf.* adaptation in Bouchor et Tiersot, *Recueil de chants populaires pour les écoles*, 3e série.

† Julien Tiersot, *Chansons populaires des Alpes françaises*, p. 351.

L'INGRAT NE VIENT PAS ENCORE



1 "Je l'attends depuis l'aurore
Jusqu'au déclin du jour.
L'ingrat ne vient pas encore
Pour m'y payer du retour.
Va-t'en lui dire au plus vite
Au berger que j'aime tant,
Va lui dire que je l'invite
A revenir promptement."

2 —"Il est, ton berger, ma chère,
Mais il est temps d'y penser.
Il est avec une belle
Qui prend soin de son troupeau;
Brûlant d'un' amour pour elle,
Il la voit sous les ormeaux."

3 —"Dieu du ciel! est-il possible?
M'aurait-il abandonné'?
Que ce coup-là m'est sensible!
Pour moi, quelle cruauté!
Je voudrais pour tout dans le monde
Ne l'avoir jamais revu.
Que ma joie serait profonde
Si tu m'étais inconnu!

4 "Ah! te souviens-tu, mon traître,
Quand tu étais dans ce bois?
Tu jouais sur ta musette,
Aussi sur ton haut-bois.
Tu m'avais fait la promesse
Que tu m'aimerais toujours.
Mais déjà tu me délaisses
Dans le plus beau de mes jours."

TRANSLATION

1 "Since break of day I've been a-waiting,
Waiting till the night;
My faithless lover is forgetting.
O can his love be slight?
As fast as you can, go say to him,
The shepherd I love too well,
O as fast as you can, go pray to him,
'Come back to your damozel!' "

2 "There is time to think of him, I fear,
Your shepherd—my dear, my dear!
For he is with a beautiful girl
That takes care of his sheep.
I think his heart is in a whirl
When he sees her in grasses deep."

3 "And can it be, O God of Heaven,
He has forsaken me?
I feel this blow that he has given,
I feel his cruelty!
For all the wide world I would
He had never come to me.
Joy would be running in my blood
Had your lips been dumb to me!

4 "Oh, can you remember, traitor dear,
When you were in this wood?
You played your bagpipe, high and clear,
Your oboe in solitude.
You spoke to me of everlasting
Love and lovers' ways,
But even now our love is wasting
In my most beautiful days."