



The National Music of Ireland Containing the History of the Irish Bards, the National Melodies, the Harp, and Other Musical Instruments of Erin

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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can usually download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1850 edition. Excerpt: ... CHAPTER XVII. MUSIC DURING THE MIDDLE AGES--CONTINUED. Having now brought down our inquiries to what in the European annals are termed the middle ages, we find that the people of Ireland were far from enjoying the sweets of peace, the nurse of science, as the sword of the stranger was seldom permitted to rest in the scabbard and as the Irish chieftains had to defend their lands from the inroads of those Anglo-Norman invaders who sought to extend their possession of the fair valleys of Erin. Yet under these very uncongenial circumstances, our music and poetry still flourished. We find that although deprived of considerable portions of their lands, harassed by continual warfare, and subdued in spirit, the undying spirit of music still reigned in the bosoms of the people, by whom it was cherished and so firmly was it implanted in their nature that even the rude hand of strife could not eradicate it, although it might, from their desponding condition, have damped, to some extent, their more fervid aspirations to the tuneful muse. Mr. Walker says, that on the revival of literature in the eleventh century, after the conversion of our Norman enemies, the Irish attempted, ineffectually, to restore things to their former state. The Filean Colleges were re-established, but with less liberal endowments, and with less strict discipline however, they continued to be supported until the reign of Charles the Second. The bardic order was now (eleventh century) divided into two classes--namely, the ollamh re-seanachs, and the ollamh re-dan.- The former were historians and antiquaries--the office was held by certain families by hereditary right. Of this very numerous class I may name the family of the OMaolconry, hereditary bards, and...

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