huts and cromlechs on St. David's Head; but here the scene is more gentle, and not so wild and wind-swept as on that barren headland. The whole district round Locmariaquer is strewn with these great blocks of granite, of enormous size; the greatest, or Grand Menhir, measuring some sixty-six feet in height and about twelve feet broad. This block has been split at some time by lightning, or convulsion, or storm; and the top part in falling has turned a somersault, massive as it is, and now lies with its summit turned to its base. From the top of one of the stones a good view is had of the surrounding district: the little town with its white houses, and the isles all round in the inland sea of the Morbihan; the cornfields and furze-clad moors; and the little boats dotted here and there in the blue calm sea, with their white and red sails. From the little town out to the island of Garvinnis it is but a short row, but through the narrow passage that is called the *trou* is a queer bit of steering, and the boatman may have to wade and haul the boat through. Arrived on the island, at first sight nothing is to be seen: not even dolmen or menhir: only a bare island, and one house and a hut upon it. But on ascending a great mound, and burrowing by a narrow passage beneath it, one has before one the strangest of all these strange, undeciphered, unaccountable remains of a forgotten past. From the summit of the tumulus you look out on the world of to-day, the sea and all the islands and homes of picturesque Morbihan. Within the tumulus you are in a strange building, the home of the dead of untold centuries ago—before the Roman made his home in this western district, and left frequent traces behind him of his homes and occupations. The great granite blocks that form this building are graved in strange fashion, some with scrolls (much as the markings on the ball of a man's thumb), rude triangles, strokes, and zigzags; all meaning—what? No man knoweth.

One would fain linger for hours in and about this monument, but there is the charming sail up the river to Auray awaiting us, a sail full of interest; and then a pleasant day inland to the pilgrimage church and holy fountain of St. Anne — that saint discovered and first mentioned only six or seven hundred years after her death, but now revered as patron saint of Brittany. We have no space here to describe this strange and even astounding place, but that visit over, our "Easy Trip" is finished. Train must be taken back direct *viâ* Pontivy to Dinan, and once more we are *en route* for England and busy, busy life.

A fortnight has sufficed to see all we have described; it could be done in a week at a rush. The expense has been about 25s. return fare from Southampton to St. Malo; say 30s. railway expense in France. The pedestrian ought not to spend more than 6s. per day at hotels; and other travellers, say 1s. or so more. The books to be read upon Brittany are numberless, but few give such a good idea of its people as "Breton Folk," illustrated inimitably by Caldecott. Works upon the Vendean War should be studied; and for the home-life of the peasants and their legends, the numerous tales of Émile Souvestre, in French. The "Morte d'Arthur" and Froissart, too, may be read; but our space is more than filled, and we say "Hold, enough," upon this most westerly "Easy Trip."

A GOSSIP ON FOLK-MUSIC.

FOLK-MUSIC is not an over-done subject, for neither professor nor amateur gives it due attention, albeit it is a phase of every country's art about which the composer, especially, ought to concern himself, and of which the amateur might well learn something. The unique position that folk-songs and national melodies occupied at a period when Western Europe was without music-art of any kind; the great blank such must have filled at the outburst of the Middle Ages, and for hundreds of years before the "youngest of the arts" asserted itself; the element folk-music everywhere constituted in the foundation and development of the various European schools of music; its value and aid as a faithful index of the mind, and longings, and fancy of people of every soil where it has sprung up;

Now fate has fill'd the mea - sure of my woes, And rent my heart with grief un - felt be - fore: No fu - ture bless - ings wounds like these can close, Or mi - ti - gate the loss I now de - plore. &c.

Fragment of a Song on the Death of Richard I., by Gaucelm, a favourite Troubadour to that King and Henry II. From the Queen of Sweden's MSS. in the Vatican Library.

the colour and tinge these popular strains give to the present-day composer wherewith to paint, in earliest natural beauty, the distorted and often unsatisfactory art-creation which the average scientific musician of to-day weaves—these are broad lines of reason why the study of folk-music should be urged upon the student and the amateur.

Wherever the folk-song has lived and flourished amid its pure air of nature, it has emanated from the life of the people, and has grown out of the soil they trod. Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans all had these songs, and while the women lightened their domestic pursuits with their country melodies, the men tempered the war-weapon to their tune, and ploughed many a furrow to their rhythm. With the migration of the German races, when music as an art still was not, the tedium of many a monotony must have been dallied away to a soft folk-theme, or an onslaught in battle intensified by some more soul-stirring glee, which the warrior Teuton learned as he lived. His existence was under little roof save the broad canopy of heaven, while his land-song glittered with rapine and onslaught. Rarely with him was it attuned in peaceful vein—more often impelling its singers to axe and oar with a dash which made Roman enemies fear them as fierce and cunning foes, with the sea for a war school, and their friend in the storm. It is strains such as these—strains which have sprung out of revenge for spilled blood, and out of the many varied and nobler moods that human nature is capable of, which were thrilled into life at a period when there was no art to shape and mould them by, and which constitute the folk-song. Such emanations sprang direct from the heart, and are as psychologically true as music can be :—the shepherd tending his flock, the soldier on the march, the fisherman mending his nets, the sower casting seed, the reaper joyous with his sickle—these chanted a something long before the age of scientific art ; and what such was, is more or less faithfully depicted in every country's national melodies and folk-songs.

The characteristic of the folk-song is the fidelity with which it reflects nature in its human and natural aspects. Unadorned by art, it speaks the simple minds of the people wherever it is met, and as we muse over its tones we not only picture the gaily-attired peasantry who sang it, but the very air of the country to which it is peculiar seems to follow it, and to pervade the surroundings where it is now performed. It tells of the existence and every-day life of workers—in-door and out-door—whose character alone remains to us as we see it reflected in these faithful mirrors of times dear to the lover of his country. See the loftiness, sincerity, and manliness of the Teuton in the folk-songs peculiar to the district occupied by the Germany of to-day, as met in the following bars of a peasant-song :—

What enthusiasm and fancy is met in the folk-song of the Gaul ! How the vigour and hardiness of the Norse asserts itself in his land-music ! See, reader, the loveliness and sweetness of the Provençal bard's soil-song ; and what sturdy bluntness the Slav shows in contrast with the warm enthusiasm and gaiety of the Spaniard !—

RUSSIAN SOLDIER'S MELODY.

ANDALUSIAN AIR.

In these—all of them—we meet with unconcealed truthfulness, and it is surprising how these earliest germs of our present-day musical life are reflected in the tone art styles which we know. Such are the English, which at present has no character at all ; the French, so sparkling and *naïve;* the Italian, suave and graceful ; Polish, mournful and affecting ; German, bracing and arresting ; Spanish, piquant and gay ; Russian, unsympathetic, yet attractive ; Scandinavian, plaintive and depressing ; American, distressingly concordant ; African, horribly discordant : and these all owe their character more or less to the music of the soil which has had no composer, which the earliest inhabitants could not account for, and which we may generalise under some such head as "music which has grown of itself." If any exception appears to exist, it is that of our own country's music, which, by a series of adverse conditions, still being tolerated, has come to be perfectly unrecognisable among the Continental schools of music ; and this, not because we inherit no distinctive character, for, on the contrary, British folk-music has all the mixture of influences which have been infused into us, and which have made us pre-eminent as a people. The soft and fascinating nature of the strains of ancient British bards—which not only so affected the people as to make them revere musicians, but which strains often served to stay contending armies from entering into furious combat—such can be traced as well as the good-humoured heartiness and manly strength and simplicity of the Saxon ; while even more strongly marked is the Celtic character, with its impetuous, sensitive, and ardent swellings of wild melancholy and deep pathos, which no conquest could stamp out, nor even reach, as such music lay hid in its Welsh fastness and Highland stronghold. Scotland, Wales, and Ireland are respectively represented in the following melodies :—

SCOTLAND.

WALES.

IRELAND.

Most countries have, or have had, folk-music, but very little is noted down; and respecting the tunes of such, tradition alone tells us of the beautiful and the pathetic in those long-lasting strains of many forefathers, before the art of notation was known or invented. The early music, however, of any country would be largely permeated with such primitive musings —just as inflexions, prefixes, and suffixes serve as the distinguishing features in the growth of language; and, therefore, if we wish to arrive at the colour and character of this folk-music, it will be found reflected in the earliest written specimens of any nation's music. The early contrapuntists, for instance, used the most popular folk-melodies as themes for their masses and motetts. Breath of the sod, the original folk-song, with all its glow of truth and warmth, gave life to many a kindred tone centuries after, when, thanks to Guido d'Arezzo's great invention, the perpetuation of music became possible; and it is to this age (1000—1300) that we must turn for the earliest written specimens of folk-music.

The absence of earlier examples is regrettable enough, since they would have been eminently serviceable towards tracing the musical form of the secular song of the early Middle Age period. Such would throw a strong light on the habits and customs of the period, and to possess the notation of this music of the people, the roundelays and refrains which were common at all the dances and festivals from the seventh to the thirteenth century, would be to get far back indeed into "Merrie" England. We possess the words of a sixth-century song of the time of Clothair II. (584—628), and those of Roland's song of Charlemagne's time, but the music of these and of the love-songs which were forbidden, and those which were not: of the mournful songs or "laments" which were chanted at night over the graves of the dead—these, and the pæans of praise and battle-song, all had music which is lost for ever, because the light of the age led no one to note it down. It is certain, however, that the early folk-song had a distinctly popular rhythm and flow. In many cases, too, it would be quaint and original, even fantastic and comical—as when used to accompany the evolutions in out-door life and enjoyment. It was essentially the people's possession, and in an age when city life was not, and when out-door sport and pleasure was all that men lived for, the music would be attuned to the circumstance. There was agricultural pursuit, and frequent war and plundering excursions, but rude enjoyment and revelry occupied the people largely. Sports and fairs and out-door gatherings were frequent—to which it was not uncommon to beseech the attendance of the Knight of the Shire from whom the vassals held their fief or tenure. The music was measured to the wants. There were, as there ever will be, performing monkeys and conjuring bears, which were accompanied in their evolutions with a light and frolicsome air from rebec, pipe, and rota: there were fools of the fair, and mountebanks; the dancing camel, buffoon, and rope-walker; "Punch and Judy" was unknown, but its prototype in the rough "representation" of some sacred or secular subject riveted the attention of our ancestors, as they gaped outside the caravan and travelling theatre; hawkers of things to eat and clothes to wear, tricksters, gamblers, vendors of Continental novelties, professional story-tellers, adventurers, strolling players and minstrels—these were all there, and had their music suited for their respective businesses and performances; and all this was an outcome of a traditional art more or less familiar to, and recognisable by, one and all. Far more often than not these strains were lively, and of an animated character, suited to the dance, and somewhat devoid of expression. From this we may assume that the folk-song had a precursor in the popular dance-tunes, to which, in time, words became wedded —when such vocal folk-music grew more expressive. Where feeling and emotion are strongly marked in primitive melodies, as in the case of many of the ancient Scotch and Irish melodies, they bespeak deeper and stronger passions than would be aroused by more peaceful enjoyments—passions akin to deep-rooted affection for home and kindred, and a fierce hatred for conquerors who were spoilers and violators of the sanctity of these. I cannot but lean, too, to the thought that it is owing to the burdens of war, and other oppressions, rather than to other theories concerning scale formations, that the music of nations which have been conspicuous in the throes of war partakes so largely of a plaintive and affecting character. Indeed, the scale itself is but the outcome of the national disposition or cast of mind.

As an art factor, the folk-song cannot be over-rated. Out of it and the few notes of Gregory—known as the Gregorian tones, and which served the religious requirements of the time—the vast structure of modern musical art has grown. John de Muris (1300), Odington of Evesham (1260), Franco of Cologne (1220), and Guido (1022)—these all fed upon and experimented with the tones which rose in the atmosphere in which they lived. They manipulated traditional tunes and ditties as they heard them, and out of their labours, England contributing its quota, the first European school—the Flemish—merged, the masters thereof gladly availing themselves of fragments of old folk-songs for the tenor themes of their contrapuntal studies. It is refreshing to find master musicians not ashamed of the fount which made their art. The great composers have set a laudable example to lesser musicians in this respect, and the more the army of rising native composers imitate it, and seek for colouring matter in the early music and national and traditional melodies of our country, the more is another century's art-work likely to partake of that distinctive character which it ought certainly to have, and the absence of which in every new work nowadays is much to be deplored. Rich as Handel's inventive powers were, he could go to the Italian peasantry (*pifferari*) for the theme of his

pastoral in the immortal *Messiah:* Weber was brimful of romantic melody, yet he owes many of his charming melodies in *Preciosa* to the vocal performances of Spanish soldiers: Scotch melodies abound in Boieldieu's *La Dame Blanche:* Spohr—and how fertile he was!—has written a violin concerto upon a Spanish air: the lovable Mozart stops the current of his heavenly muse for the sake of reverting to some national melody dear to him: the king of composers—Beethoven—turned to Russian melodies whereon to base the quartetts he dedicated to a prince of that country—his patron Rasumowsky: Rossini—politest of composers—to flatter a Russian lady acquaintance, took one of her country's national airs as the text for "Il Vecchiotto" in *Il Barbiere*—in short, the range of music abounds in instances of the kind; and since men to whom it must have proved more irksome to copy a melody than to compose one, have not disdained the source, fledgling composers of to-day may perchance be emboldened to glean betimes in the wide and many-coloured field which folk-music opens out. A few lines of such spontaneous art may, perchance, give wings to a whole mass of inert music, as the interpolation of that beautiful melody, "The Last Rose of Summer," has done for Flotow's feeble opera, *Martha.*

It was the minstrel in England, the minnesinger in Germany, the troubadour in Southern France and Provence who added grace and romance to the folk-song by their polished singing and delicate accompaniments—using the popular melodies to carry stories of romantic and historical interest; and it was this form of art which stood for many centuries between the old folk-song and that which a scientific art eventually created. The Norman Conquest gave a great impulse to this improvised music, and since it occupied the attention of men of high estate and low, it constituted often a much-needed social link; but the troubadour's greatest service, as we view it, was in moving the art a step onwards — taking the folk-song out of uncultured mouths, and stamping its natural beauty and freshness with the additional charms of fancy and romance, which were the characteristic of the Norman age. Such a song—in modern notation of course—is the following by Thibaut, King of Navarre (1201—53)—

With these born singers who lent their aid towards making the old folk-song into the song creation in its best form—as we know the song—I must leave the subject. One is loth to leave so many-sided a phase of art, and I commend it to the study of the music student and loving amateur as one of the least considered, yet most beautiful fields of study.

FREDERICK J. CROWEST.

VENTILATION AND HEALTH.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

LET us take a walk down Fleet Street."

The great big author who, in days long gone by, used to make this remark and proposal to his friend, no doubt needed a breath of air after dining well, if not wisely, and talking for hours in a stifling little inn-parlour. On emerging, the atmosphere of even Fleet Street must have felt comparatively fresh and invigorating. No more unwholesome habit could, methinks, be indulged in than that of occupying, for a certain number of hours every day, a badly-ventilated, perhaps smoke-filled room, and—talking all the time. Yet this is just what thousands and thousands of our city men do. The results are a congested brain; a weakened, flabby, or even fatty heart; disorganisation of the liver, and consequent dyspepsia. It is the liver, indeed, that gets all the blame.

"What's up to-day, Jackson?" (N.B.—This scrap of conversation between a medical man and his friend is from the life—such life, I mean, as the friend possessed.) "What's up to-day, *mon ami?* You don't look your old self."

"In what particular?"

"Well, Jackson, if I must speak plainly, you look rather pale and quivery about the cheeks, rather fishy as to eyes, the upper lids of which seem a trifle œdematous, while——"

"Oh, stop your searching analysis. Not that you're not right, for I was too long in the billiard-room last night; and the smoke, and perhaps the soda-water, didn't agree."

"Soda-water? Yes."