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## INTRODUCTION

In this collection of Norwegian folk music – presented from a new angle – we have selected some of the most popular and traditional songs and ballads from various parts of Norway, choosing where possible those which can most easily be rendered into English and are most likely to make their appeal to a wide audience.

In order to stress the essentially local character of so many of these songs they are illustrated by pictures from the appropriate localities, or with scenes which have a special bearing on the text – employing a technique not unlike that of the documentary films, – though in many cases a typically Norwegian setting has itself suggested a song. A brief introduction is given to each song, with notes on the words, tune, setting, composer etc. As far as practicable an attempt has thus been made to present Norway pictorially as well as musically.

Most of Norway's folk tunes are in a minor key, and in order to avoid monotony we have tried to introduce some of the better known melodies in a major key, though this has occasionally entailed omitting a few of the more familiar "minor" songs. The necessary transposition and simplification have been carried out in order to make the music readily available for singing and playing.

The bulk of the songs here presented had never been translated before, or else the text had been rendered in a form which was not adapted for singing, and in rendering them into English our translator Mr. R. Christophersen has tried, as far as possible, to recreate some of the rustic and home-spun qualities of the original. The great difference in accentuation and intonation between English and Norwegian, and the fact that most of Norway's folk songs are written in some kind of dialect, have rendered his task anything but easy. If we have achieved, in the words of Edward Fitzgerald, the great translator of the "Omar Khayyam", a "live sparrow rather than a stuffed eagle", our task will not have been in vain.

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