

## CHAPTER VI

### Irish Music

THE important contribution of the Irish to the music of the world consists of the collection of melodies known as Irish airs. In this volume "Old Irish Folk Music and Songs" which was edited with annotations for the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland by Dr. P. W. Joyce, President of the Society, the editor collected 842 Irish airs and songs hitherto unpublished though the date of his volume is 1909. In the Preface he discusses the various collections of Irish airs that have been published and after eliminating all those that are repetitions or that represent only very slight variants from others, he concludes that there are over 5,000 different Irish airs that have been already published. Not a few of these are found among the popular music of other countries but in nearly all cases the origin of them can be traced back to Ireland. Indeed some of the most frequently heard melodies in a number of other countries were adopted from or only slightly adapted from Irish airs. Perhaps the best exemplification of that for Americans is that both Yankee Doodle and Dixie are old Irish airs heard in Ireland long before they became popular over here.

Dr. Joyce reminds us: