

The Twa Sisters (Child 10C)

- 1 THERE were two sisters sat in a bour;
 Binnorie, O Binnorie
 There came a knight to be their wooer.
 By the bonny mill-dams of Binnorie
- 2 He courted the eldest with glove and ring, 5
 But he loed the youngest aboon a' thing.
- 3 He courted the eldest with broach and knife,
 But he loed the youngest aboon his life.
- 4 The eldest she was vexed sair,
 And sore envied her sister fair. 10
- 5 The eldest said to the youngest ane,
 'Will ye go and see our father's ships come in?'
- 6 She 's taen her by the lilly hand,
 And led her down to the river strand.
- 7 The youngest stude upon a stane, 15
 The eldest came and pushed her in.
- 8 She took her by the middle sma,
 And dashed her bonnie back to the jaw.
- 9 'O sister, sister, reach your hand,
 And ye shall be heir of half my land.' 20
- 10 'O sister, I 'll not reach my hand,
 And I 'll be heir of all your land.
- 11 'Shame fa the hand that I should take,
 It 's twin'd me and my world's make.'
- 12 'O sister, reach me but your glove, 25
 And sweet William shall be your love.'
- 13 'Sink on, nor hope for hand or glove,
 And sweet William shall better be my love.'

- 14 'Your cherry cheeks and your yellow hair
Garrd me gang maiden evermair.' 30
- 15 Sometimes she sunk, and sometimes she swam,
Until she came to the miller's dam.
- 16 'O father, father, draw your dam,
There 's either a mermaid or a milk-white swan.'
- 17 The miller hasted and drew his dam, 35
And there he found a drowned woman.
- 18 You could not see her yellow hair,
For gowd and pearls that were sae rare.
- 19 You could na see her middle sma,
Her gowden girdle was sae bra. 40
- 20 A famous harper passing by,
The sweet pale face he chanced to spy.
- 21 And when he looked that ladye on,
He sighed and made a heavy moan.
- 22 He made a harp of her breast-bone, 45
Whose sounds would melt a heart of stone.
- 23 The strings he framed of her yellow hair,
Whose notes made sad the listening ear.
- 24 He brought it to her father's hall,
And there was the court assembled all. 50
- 25 He laid this harp upon a stone,
And straight it began to play alone.
- 26 'O yonder sits my father, the king,
And yonder sits my mother, the queen.
- 27 'And yonder stands my brother Hugh, 55
And by him my William, sweet and true.'
- 28 But the last tune that the harp playd then,
Was 'Woe to my sister, false Helen!'