

THE Shan Van Vocht

VOL. I.—No. 5.

BELFAST, 1ST MAY, 1896.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

Turlough MacSweeney.

*A health to you, Piper,
And your pipes, silver-tongued, clear and sweet in their crooning.*

Full of the music they gathered at morn
On your high heather hills from the lark on the wing,
From the blackbird at eve on the blossoming thorn,
From the little green linnet whose plaining they sing,
And the joy and the hope in the heart of the spring,
O, Turlough MacSweeney!

Play us our Eire's most sorrowful songs,
As she sits by her reeds near the wash of the wave,
That the coldest may thrill at the count of her wrongs,
And the sword may flash forth from the scabbard to save,
And the wide land awake at the wrath of the brave,
O, Turlough MacSweeney!

Play as the bards played in days long ago,
When O'Donnell, arrayed for the foray or feast
With your kinsmen from Bannat and Fannat and Doe,
With piping and harping and blessing of priest,
Rode out in the blaze of the sun from the East,
O, Turlough MacSweeney!

Play as they played in that rapturous hour
When the clans heard, in gladness, his young fiery call
Who burst from the gloom of the Sassenach tower,
And sped to the welcome in dear Donegal —
Then on to his hailing as chieftain of all,
O, Turlough MacSweeney!

Play as they played, when, a trumpet of war,
His voice, for the rally, pealed up to the blue,
And the kerns from the hills and the glens and the scaur
Marched after the banner of conquering Hugh —
Led into the fray by a piper like you,
O, Turlough MacSweeney!

And surely no note of such music shall fail
Wherever the speech of our Eire is heard
To foster the love of the passionate Gael,
To rouse the old hatred, relentless when stirred,
To strengthen our souls for the strife to be dared,
O, Turlough MacSweeney!

*May your pipes, silver-tongued, clear and sweet in their crooning,
Keep the magic they captured at dawning and even
From the blackbird at home, and the lark on its journey,
From the thrush on its spray, and the little green linnet.*
A health to you, Piper!

ETHNA CARBERY.

NOTE.—Written in honour of the piper from Donegal who played at the Belfast Gaelic League Concert.

The Murder of Red Hugh.

The story of a great crime, long unsuspected, but revealed in our day in the self-damning letters of those who designed it—George Carew, President of Munster, and Lord Mountjoy, English Deputy-Governor of Ireland.

Scene I.—By the Banks of the Lee.



IN a fair garden, sloping to the river side of the Lee, not many miles from Cork, two men sat in a summer house holding private and most earnest converse, one day of early spring in the year 1602. We need not tarry to describe them more than to say one was a very great noble—no other than Queen Elizabeth's governor of the Province of Munster, Sir George Carew himself. The other was a man of poor but venerable appearance, and of no note whatever, save that he had some skill as an apothecary and herb doctor, and in that capacity had been recommended to the president for a work of importance which he had in hand, and which demanded the employment for its carrying out of someone who, like this James Blake, had such curious knowledge and practice. Their converse was in soft whispers, for they seemed to dread lest even the winds should hear it; nor was it of long duration.

"I have no doubt of thy skill by what has been told of thee," said Carew; "but I would fain urge discretion. Make not the attempt at all except in such wise as shall quite evade discovery, or at the very least make proof impossible, except mayhap he be in the very act to embark, in which case any, even a desperate attempt I would advise, to cut off such a rebel, whom, even since his boyhood, has been a dread and trouble unto Her Majesty's governors of this island."

Then there were low-spoken assurances of his discretion from the apothecary. He would not for worlds endanger his Excellency's credit, nor for that matter his own personal safety, he was not without experience in such matters, and so forth and so forth. Then followed some haggling about the price, the blood money that was to be paid; in which the governor gave good heed by no means to offend his hireling, whilst at the same time he strove to abate the extravagance of his demand, saying that such a price he was well worthy of, but he

(Carew) had not money of his own to permit of it, and it was the keepers of the treasury in Dublin Castle that would have to be considered in whatever bargain was made. At the end of all the Lord Carew rode away in the dusk of the evening unto Cork, well contented at heart having found a villain to his mind, and the apothecary stole to whatever humble dwelling he inhabited, no less pleased with the bargain that had been made, which would bring him more gold than he had ever hoped to win by honest labour in his trade between youth and age. Perhaps he considered that for a greater than all the princes of the world only thirty pieces of silver were paid. So went he into Spain over sea to the doing of the blackest crime, save that of Judas, that was ever done in the world; and from Cork unto Dublin Castle a swift rider went from Carew to Mountjoy, the Lord Deputy, to bring news in a great sealed letter that was written in cypher, that the messenger of death was gone on his way.

Scene II.—At a Church Door in Spain.

It was the morning of the 15th of August, the feast of the Assumption, and the people, after the service of the Mass, were streaming out of the door of a Church that stood at the corner of the Market Place at the head of a narrow crooked street in the town of Simincas in Spain. They did not immediately pass to their homes, but tarried in groups as if awaiting the coming forth of some notable person whom they would fain look upon. Even the windows were thronged by the idle and curious, whose attention seemed to be attracted by a party of men who stood together on the Church step. One was a great Spanish noble, high at the Court of King Phillip; but it was not at him they looked in wonder, for he had long been resident in the castle of the town. Grouped behind him as if under his guidance and that of his servants, stood a number of men whose attire and appearance was most wondrous in the eyes of those Spanish burghers, and whose strange manner of speech no less astonished those who were near enough to hear it. They were the Irish, of noble or of simple birth, trusted comrades or true servants and followers in the retinue of Hugh Roe O'Donnell, then on his way from Corunna to Valladolid, where King Phillip's court was, and bideing as an honoured guest in the castle of Simancas, till it would suit his Majesty of Spain's convenience to grant him a hearing concerning the petition he was urging for a Spanish army to be sent into Ireland.

At the door of a leather merchant, exactly opposite the Church, stood a man of middle life whose hair and beard were somewhat silvered, and who seemed to be moved with more than usual excitement at the proceedings. His hands were clasped, his eyes turned up to heaven as if in thankfulness, he was speaking rapidly,

not to the worthy leather merchant nor his wife, but as if to himself, and in a voice loud enough to be heard by the soldiers at the Church door. What wonder if they turned and regarded him curiously, for it was their own native Gaelic tongue in which he uttered his exclamations.

"The God of Heaven and St. Finbar be praised that to-day I see men of my own race in this far-away land." Then to the leather merchant he spoke, as if questioning whose followers they might be, then turned up his eyes to heaven with a most devout exclamation of wonder and rapture. A stalwart kerne of the Clan MacSwyne he was, who stood nearest the stranger, would have stepped across to question him, but at that moment a hush fell upon the crowd, and turning he saw that his chief and master had come forth from the Church, having finished his devotions, and with his head yet bare, stood at the portal with all the radiant glory of his locks shining like fire in the blaze of sun that illumined him. His eyes bright and deeply blue were fixed straight in front of him, as if he looked far away, regarding not at all the curious crowd, whose gaze was steadfastly fixed upon him. He seemed still wrapped in the spirit of meditation and prayer, in which he had continued before the altar in the Church, long after all his companions had left it after the Mass and reception of the Sacrament. There was a look of unutterable sadness in his eyes as he gazed far away down the street, over the groves of olive and orange, straight into the blue unclouded heavens, and his followers knew that he was thinking of another service of the Mass that they had shared with him on the morning of that very festival, ere his great victory of the Curleus. The Spanish noble then approached and spoke, pointed to their steeds that had been led up from the castle and stood now at the church door, pawing the ground, impatient to be mounted. O'Donnell started from his meditation, and answered most courteously in such Spanish as he could command; then strode across to where his horse was held, with a slow, swinging pace which was habitual to him, and by which his lameness was somewhat concealed. Even yet he could not walk far without pain and weariness, for his feet were marred and lamed, since he broke from captivity, and had them scorched by the frost among the Wicklow Mountains. He was ever most at home on the back of a proud steed, so swiftly and lightly he bounded now to the saddle and turned his rein to ride with the cavalier, his companion to the castle. The kerne of the Clan of MacSweeney keeping ever beside him, though on foot to do his least command, as is the fashion of those they call "horse boys" in Ireland.

Then was it, as he turned his steed from the Church and rode by the door of the leather merchant, that the stranger who lodged there, as if he could no longer contain his joy and wonder at sight of this great prince and captain, cried aloud:—

"The blessing of God and of the exalted Virgin upon

thy sword, O'Donnell, and a fourfold blessing on the ship that will bear thee back to Ireland!"

O'Donnell turned round in his saddle, a radiant and sweet smile of surprise on his countenance, and waved his plumed cap in courteous greeting to the stranger. Then bending to the kerne by his side commanded him to return and bid the stranger to feast at the Castle.

A fair banquet was prepared there for O'Donnell and his followers, since they had not broken fast that day. The merchant feasted at the lower end of the banquet hall with the soldiers of O'Donnell, and was kindly greeted by the Chief himself in passing and asked his name and business in that far country, and gave fair answer enough, and in good Irish:

"I am one, Denis Sullivan, of Cork, a merchant, and come here to purchase Spanish wines."

O'Donnell started suddenly as if a snake had stung him, for the mention of the Spanish wines reminded him of the first trap that was set for him by the English in his boyhood, and he fixed his eyes in a sudden, searching fashion on the stranger, then passed to his seat, musing thus:

"I like not his face, nor his too smooth and smiling manner, and he talks Irish not like a native—but yet it may be Irish of Cork, and I may wrong him by my suspicion."

But all through that banquet, when he found the eyes of the stranger upon him, he was troubled and looked at him sternly and haughtily; and the other in turn was somewhat disturbed, seeing that he was distrusted, which might go far to mar his designs, and thought to himself: "I must act warily with this quarry, he has been trapped before and has his suspicions. I will not come nigh him, but rather seem to avoid him except when sought."

So for some days no more was seen by the followers of Hugh O'Donnell of the Irish merchant, who called himself Denis Sullivan, of Cork, but who was no other than the same James Blake who had held secret council with the Lord President Carew in that garden by the Lee.

Scene III.—O'Donnell, in Sickness, repenteth that he left Ireland.

Word was whispered among the townsfolk of Limnascas that the great Irish prince, who abode in the king's castle, was sick of fever, and Blake, the merchant, hearing it, was not at first pleased thereat, thinking, "if he die of that sickness then am I foiled of my reward;" but afterwards, when he heard that O'Donnell, though ill, was quickly recovering, and had taken the fever but lightly, he rubbed his hands together, rejoicing as he considered: "now is my opportunity to attempt it without shadow of suspicion;" and he spent many hours in his room in the leather merchant's, making ready certain phials that he had brought from Cork, and concealing them in cunning manner in the cuff of his wide sleeve, in such a way that

the contents could be opportunely dropped into any vessel without observation.

Then he stopped one of the servants of O'Donnell that was passing, and gave him word that he intended shortly to return to Ireland, and thought it his duty to have the chieftain informed, lest there might be any message he could bear, if his highness would do him the honour to confide in him. The servant of O'Donnell greeted him but curtly, having orders from his master to avoid talk with this man, lest by any chance he should be a spy; but on coming into the castle he nevertheless went into O'Donnell's presence, and told him that the strange merchant from Cork was making ready to journey back thither, and the chieftain's answer was briefly that he would consider the matter, "but," he added, "I have some doubt of his honesty of purpose." Well had it been if he had continued of that mind.

His fever was passing away, yet he had no strength to do aught but lie by a window of the turret chamber and look out upon the land of Spain, and grow ever more weary of it, and sorrowful for the sake of Ireland that he had sailed away from it in anger.

After that disastrous defeat of Kinsale, he had raged for three days so terribly that no man durst come into his presence, not even to offer him food, save only the good Franciscan fathers, Maurice Dunlevy and Flaithe O'Maolconry, who were with him now in Spain and tending him on his sick bed; and they had made bold, as was indeed their duty, to reprove the anger of O'Donnell, but availed not to abate it, and at the end of the third day he had suddenly arisen and solemnly vowed never to lead an army that was of the Irish only into any battle in the world again, after the manner in which they had shamed him before the soldiers of Spain and Don Juan D'Aquita, their great captain, who openly had jeered at the Irish as a barbarous, unsoldierly mob; nay worse, as being unchristian savages for whom Christ never died.

And O'Donnell had arisen from that raging fit of wounded pride, and had gone straight to the shore, without waiting for counsel, even from his comrade O'Neill, and had sworn to go unto King Phillip's court and bring into Ireland an army that would be fit for his commanding, with which he would win great victories and wipe out the disgrace of Kinsale.

Now he had been long enough in Spain to repent humbly of that sinful rage, for as yet he had nothing but promises from the king and no prospect of immediate succour. Moreover he had found in this mighty monarch, whom he had conceived to be one of the greatest warriors of Christendom, was one that would not have been even a petty chieftain in Ireland, for he had never in youth or age girt on a sword for battle or dared danger of any sort, and was king merely because his father had so been before him.

Meditating in this wise, O'Donnell lay on his couch

by the window, or when the full force of the sun streaming on it prevented that, with curtains drawn around, and the Fathers Maurice and Flaitbre sat with him alternately and read from books of devotion, or tales and annals of Ireland. Sometimes he liked silence best, and closing his eyes in that faint and sickly heat, he fancied himself afar on some mountain or shore of his native land, with the white torrents dancing among the rocks in Barnesmore, or great waves coiling and whitening upon the fair strand below Ballyshannon, where Erne runs into the ocean; or he thought of the captivity of his boyhood, out of which God had graciously led him, and of how he rode by his mother's side from Ballyshannon away to Kilmacrenan to be made chief on a bright morn of May, ere ever the doctors would have allowed him to stir at all. He fancied he heard the great shouting of the clansmen around the rock of Doone, when, leaning on the shoulder of Ineen, he climbed unto the stone and stood with his maimed right foot in the track of his ancestors, his sandals with the bandages that he had to wear lying the while among the heather. He thought of all the battles to which he had led those trusted clansmen, and how many thousands of them had fallen, following to battle, on every hillside and plain of Erin, from his own Donegal, where three hundred had fallen around the burning Abbey of the Franciscans, away to the Pass of the Curlious in the West, where they had fallen gloriously, winning for him the glory of that triumph, and down in the far South in the territories of Hy Connill Gaura and Clanawley, and on the heights of Slieve Laugher. His head sank on his breast with shame and the tears welled to his eyes to think of the sorrowful and angry parting that took place at length between them after the defeat of Kinsale. There they stood upon the windy shore, with the wounds of war upon their rugged faces washed by the brine of tears they shed for his going. The blood of their wounds staining all their garments. Those who were too weak to stand were there carried by their comrades to look their last upon the young chief whom they loved so faithfully, but who had spurned them, saying he would lead them into battle no more. Their voices raised in clamorous wailing came across the water like a keen for the dead, and till the low shore sank from sight from the deck where he stood, that cry had followed him even faintly and more faintly till it died away at last. The sorrow he had seen in their eyes haunted him now in dumb reproach, till tears rose in his own, and he knew that he would have given all in the world to have been back on any hill of Ireland with those faithful warriors rejoicing round him, and preparing for the fray, with never a Spanish blade among them to rob them of the glory of their victory.

The stillness of the room was broken one evening, when Father Maurice had thought his patient slumbering, by the sudden question. "The merchant, Sullivan, from

Cork, good Father, I would fain see him, if he has not ere this departed. Donal knows where to find him."

The Franciscan rose quietly and called to a servant, who came anxiously entering, to know how the chieftain fared.

"He is better, by God's blessing, has been asleep peacefully this hour back, and wakes asking to see the merchant Sullivan, who lodges in this town. Let him be brought without delay."

So to the little room above the leather merchant's shop where Blake had been waiting patiently, like a tiger crouching for his prey, the summons came. Waiting to don his best robe, in the sleeve of which as we know were certain phials cunningly concealed, he hastened after the messenger to the castle, and treading softly as a cat he entered the sick room of Hugh Roe O'Donnell.

Scene IV.—The Poison Cup.

O'Donnell lay still upon the couch by the window, his bright locks flowing upon the purple brodered cushion on which he was supported. Father Maurice, the Franciscan of Donegal, sat in a carven chair at his couch head, and on a table nigh hand was a flask and goblet, from which from time to time he had served some cooling drink to the young chief, for the day was sultry, and often he thirsted. Blake's heart gladdened at the very sight of that serviceable cup, which seemed ready set for the villanous deed he intended, but his joy showed not at all. With a woeful countenance, with broken sorrowful exclamations in the Irish he had so aptly learned during his sojourn in Cork, he fell upon his knees and humbly kissed the hand of O'Donnell that lay idly upon the coverlet. Many a mighty warrior had fallen by that hand, and now was it touched as by the serpent's sting of one by whom it was to grow cold and helpless in death. Ere he rose from his knees that hypocrite breathed a devout prayer for his victim's recovery which he meant should never be, and O'Donnell, moved by the man's apparent distress and concern for him, assured him most graciously and sweetly, that his sickness had quite abated, and that he only lay thus quiet to gather strength, and in obedience to Father Maurice.

"He tends my body no less carefully than he tends my soul, and it is to his care under God's grace that I owe my present recovery."

Sullivan, as this liar called himself, was then at the chief's command seated, and for an hour or more he related all the news he could to O'Donnell, telling him how the clans of the South were disaffected, and looked only for O'Donnell's returning to rise against the tyranny of Carew. "Even those who have submitted to the President," he said, "are ill content, for he is a hard and grasping man, and does not sufficiently reward

and enrich those who serve him," and at this saying he laughed inwardly, thinking how it would afterward tickle Sir George to hear the character he had given him to this arch-rebel. All this while he was watchful least an opportunity might present for his crime; but the Franciscan evermore filled the goblet, sitting at the table where it was, while O'Donnell conversed with the stranger.

At length the sun having gone down, that careful friar, fearing some sudden chill, would have the chief's couch moved from the window, and made some stir to do it. O'Donnell would have risen to permit that, but the apothecary seeing now his chance, passed to the head of the couch and helped the good father to move it aside. So came it that he passed his arm over the table where the goblet stood, and from the phial cunningly concealed in his sleeve, through a narrow pipe or quill, he let drop into it unnoticed that fiery poison he had prepared—a certain but a slow venom that brought about a fever and sickness and final death, that seemed like enough to the fever of which O'Donnell had before suffered. Before he left that turret chamber of the castle, bowing lowly and murmuring prayers for the chieftain's well-being, his eyes were satisfied with the sight of O'Donnell raising that goblet to his lips and quaffing the death draught that was designed for him by the villany of Carew and Mountjoy, of which great lords this Blake was but the murderous instrument.

It was the day of the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist precisely, on which that foul deed was wrought, a day that had been marked by all the prophets of Erin for some unspeakable calamity to befall. Whether that prophesied woe was fulfilled in the death of Hugh O'Donnell I know not; only this, that before or since Erin hath suffered no more grievous loss, and no blacker crime has stained the hand of her oppressors.

Of how O'Donnell lay for twelve days after in agonising torture; of how he died at length resignedly; of how his followers mourned him, I shall not relate; only this, that at that stately funeral the king of Spain ordained him at Valladolid, none more bitterly lamented his loss, none more loudly and clamorously praised him than the stranger merchant of Cork, and the simple Irish soldiery honoured him for that grief, saying: "He saw our Hugh no more than twice or thrice, and yet he loved him so!"

Months later, when he came again to a secret meeting with the president Carew in that garden by the Lee, he was able thus to assure him: "I can swear to your Excellency that I have fairly kept my bargain; it was done as you advised, and none will ever be suspected for it. He was sick of fever when he sent for me; his attendant friar never left the apartment; I served him to no drink, and nothing that I did was observed. Trust me, it will never be known or whispered." Then he counted the gold, the price of that noble life, and both parted, well content that the record of that infamy was hidden for ever; but in three hundred years it leaped to light, in letters of Carew's own writing which set forth plainly how it was done by his and Mountjoy's command, and by the hand of James Blake, the apothecary of Cork, as here related.

IRIS OLKYN.

"My Share of the World."

I am jealous, I am true,
Sick at heart for love of you,
O, my share of the world!
I am cold, O, cold as stone
To all others, you alone
Are my share of the world!

Measureless my joy and pride,
Would you choose me for your bride?
O, my share of the world!
For your face is my delight,
Morn and even, noon and night,
O, my share of the world!

To the dance and to the wake,
Do I go but for your sake,
O, my share of the world!
But to hear your voice a while,
Meet your eyes and win your smile,
O, my share of the world!

And the gay word on my lip
Never lets my secret slip
To my share of the world!

Light my feet trip over the green,
But my heart cries in the keen:
O, my share of the world!

My poor mother sighs anew
When my eyes go after you,
O, my share of the world!
And my father's brow grows black
When you smile and turn your back,
O, my share of the world!

Seven times slower creeps the day
When your face is far away,
O, my share of the world!
Seven times darker falls the night
When you are not in my sight,
O, my share of the world!

I would go beyond the seas,
I would part with wealth and ease
For my share of the world!
I would leave my house and home
If you only whispered, "Come!"
O, my share of the world!

Houseless under sun and dew
I would beg my bread with you,
O, my share of the world!
Houseless in the snow and storm
Your heart's love would keep me warm,
O, my share of the world!

I would pray and I would crave
To be with you in the grave,
O, my share of the world!
I would go thro' fire and flood,
I would give up all but God,
For my share of the world!

ALICE FURLONG.

"My share of the world," an Irish phrase of endearment.

Mo Chailín Óg Deas Dilis Féin.

Mo chailín óg deas dilis féin,
 Ní'l seod a gcoróin rígh
 Do ghlafeinn agus mé faoi leun
 In áit seirc fíor do chridhe;
 Dá líonfaidhe domhsa ciste óir
 Do thréigean blas do phóg,
 B' fheárr liom do ghrádh, mo rún, mo stór,
 Mo sgoth 's mo chailín óg.
 Mo chailín óg deas dilis féin,
 Is bocht gan maoin an té
 Bheirfeas a ghrádh faoi locht a's péin,
 Do reult geal caoimh a lae;
 Acht tú do bheith lámh leis go deó,
 Budh thréine é 'na leómhan,
 Ní aireóchadh sé aon dith níos mó,
 Ná bochtanas ná brón.

T.O.R.

[TRANSLATION].

My Colleen Dear, My Loved, My Own.

My colleen dear, my loved, my own,
 There's not on kingly brow
 A diadem that ever shone
 So dear to me as thou;
 Than all the treasures earth can hold,
 All gems of glittering sheen,
 Dearer to me a thousand fold
 Art thou, my fair colleen.
 My colleen dear, my loved, my own,
 Poor and unmarked is he
 Who in his sorrow, sore and lone,
 His day star makes of thee;
 But with thee ever by his side,
 He'd feel nor pain nor woe,—
 Strong in the love of thee, his bride,
 All tears should cease their flow.

T.O.R.

The Irish Language.

IN the April number of the SHAN VAN VOCHT an article appeared on the above subject, written by Mr. Henry Dixon. Its practical and sensible character place it in a very different category from some recent utterances on this subject, but there are one or two points connected with Mr. Dixon's references to myself to which I should wish, if permitted, to take some slight exception.

After quoting my statement that the one and only way to preserve the Irish language as a living tongue was to make it the medium of instruction in the schools, Mr. Dixon observes: "Anyone who has paid the slightest attention to the subject knows that the way indicated by Mr. Rolleston is the only way by which the National tongue can be preserved." One would think so, indeed; but, unfortunately, as a matter of fact, Mr. Dixon is gravely mistaken. The Gaelic League is a body whose members must be supposed to have paid

some attention to the subject, but the Gaelic League at a meeting held on Jan. 31, with the express object of replying to my statements and questions, adopted a resolution declaring that the "home," not the school, was the "true school of the Irish language;" that they wished to make Irish the "language of the fireside;" and that the schools were to be regarded only as a "powerful auxiliary force, but not the primary force." A more mistaken or unpractical view it would be impossible to conceive, for it practically means the pursuance of the present policy which has brought the language to what it now is—the language of a peasantry who despise it even when they can speak nothing else, simply because it is the language of the fireside alone, and destitute in their eyes of all association with scholarship and education. But, nevertheless, this is the view which the Gaelic League has solemnly adopted, and the fact that such a body can hold such a view must be reckoned by Mr. Dixon among the gravest obstacles which the cause of the Irish language has to contend with. That cause is palpably doomed unless the whole energies of its defenders are at once directed towards the one vital point—the introduction of the Irish language as the medium of instruction in the schools in all Irish-speaking districts. Everything turns on that, and the indirect, as well as the direct, consequences of success in this project will prove to be of the deepest importance.

Furthermore, Mr. Dixon refers to my "lamentable want of knowledge" of the efforts which have been made in this direction, because I said I had never met "anyone who ever dreams of the possibility of carrying out such a programme." Mr. Dixon has apparently not observed that I spoke in the present tense. I am well aware of the efforts of the past, and I am glad to see that there is now some faint hope—for it is no more than that as yet—of an effort being made in the future, but at the time when I wrote, my statement was perfectly accurate; for the effort to make Irish the "medium of instruction" in the schools (not to "have it taught," then, which is quite a different thing) had been apparently abandoned as utterly hopeless, and no person or organization was doing anything, or even hoping to do anything, in this direction. The programme which Mr. Dixon agrees with me in regarding as the only possible and practical programme for the salvation of the language was, as we see, formally repudiated by the Gaelic League, and it forms no part of the official programme of the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language. If I was mistaken in my assertion I shall only be too glad to own it, but in the mass of correspondence which my lecture on Irish literature gave rise to, I have not met with a single fact which would tend to disprove it.

Even now, in spite of all the interest which has lately been taken in this subject, there is a great deal more of vague talk about the glories of the ancient tongue and its value as an instrument of culture than of serious and practical effort to preserve it. It does not say much

for the devotion of our Gaelic enthusiasts that their united energies have not succeeded in giving us that grand desideratum of the learner—a handy and accurate working dictionary of the modern language, such as anyone who wishes to learn any other European language can purchase for a few shillings. With the material in existence there would be no real difficulty in producing such a dictionary; it would find a ready market. It would require no profound philological knowledge, but it would require method, pains, and a year or so of steady application; and it is altogether not so easy a method of expressing one's sympathy as by writing letters to newspapers and addressing public meetings. The true criterion of our devotion to any cause is the trouble we will give ourselves about it. We are taking a great deal of trouble at present and making a great deal of fuss about getting back the money of which our national schools have been defrauded, and I have no doubt but that it will be got back; for if it is not, our Irish members will hear of it very seriously. But in our national language we have a far more precious treasure, and it is daily melting from our grasp. There is still time to save it, but once lost it can never be replaced by all the money in the British treasury, or all the Acts of Parliament that may be passed "go bruinne an bhrátha."

T. W. ROLLESTON.

The Shan Van Vocht.

By Michael Doheny.

THE sainted isle of old,
Says the Shan Van Vocht,
The sainted isle of old,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
The parent and the mould
Of the beautiful and bold,
Has her blithsome heart waxed cold?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

The Saxon and the Dane,
Says the Shan Van Vocht,
The Saxon and the Dane,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
The Saxon and the Dane
Our immortal hills profane;
Oh! confusion seize the twain,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

What are the chiefs to do?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
What are the chiefs to do?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
What should the chieftains do
But to treat the hireling crew
To a touch of Brian Boru?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

They came across the wave,
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
They came across the wave,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
They came across the wave,
But to plunder and enslave,
And should find a robber's grave,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

Then be the trusty brand,
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
Then be the trusty brand,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
Then be the trusty band,
Firmly clutched in every hand,
And we'll scourge them from the land,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

There's courage yet and truth,
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
There's courage yet and truth,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
There's a God above us all,
And whatever may befall
No invader shall enthrall,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

An T-Sean Bhean Bhoichd.

Tá innis naomh na g-cian,
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd
Tá innis naomh na g-cian,
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd
Thug bídh do laochraibh dian
As do bhérthib manla mín
Ann a croidhe anois fuair críon
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.

Tá'n gall's dánair déan
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd
Tá'n gall's dánair déan,
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd,
Tá'n gall's dánair déan
Aig truailliughadh'r g-cnócúir féin
O! trom-mhallachd orthú's léan
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.

Cad é is cóir d'ar sluagh?
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.
Cad é is cóir d'ar sluagh?
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.
Cad é is cóir d'ar sluagh,
Ach blas ghaisce Bhrian Borúimha
A thabhairt do'n námh go cruadh?
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.

Do tháinig thar an fhráigh,
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd
Do tháinig thar an fhráigh,
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.
Do tháinig thar an fhráigh,
No gail le gorta's crádh;
Ann a bh-fuil is cóir a m-báich
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.

Dá bhrígh sin bidheadh an lann
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.
Dá bhrígh sin bidheadh an lann
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.
Da bhrígh sin bidheadh an lann
Ann gach lálmh go cruadh' gus teann
Agus ruag na gadaidhth' sean
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.

Tá 'gainn misneach fós ás cliu,
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd,
Tá 'gainn misneach fós ás cliu,
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd;
Ta Dià na córa dlúth
A's bidheadh geal ar g-cath nó dubh
Ní beidh 'rainn slabhraidhe trugh',
Ar s an t-sean bhean bhoichd.

SEANDUN.

Aig seo athrughad do rinne an t-atar eadbhard
Mac Cathaidhe aèr an t-sean bhean bhoichd
O'n m-beurla le Micheal Doitheamhnaigh.

THE
Shan Van Vocht :
 A NATIONAL MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

Edited by ALICE L. MILLIGAN.

OFFICES (*pro tem*)—

65, GREAT GEORGE'S STREET, BELFAST.

Subscriptions—1/3 Half-yearly ; 2/6 Yearly.

Agents' Orders to be addressed to the Secretary, Miss Anna Johnson ; Literary matter to the Editor.

To Erin.

Somewhere beneath your changing skies

I know a heart beats truee,

O mother dear, and desolate,

To your sad cause and you.

Somewhere one waits the signal-word,

Telling the dawn appears

In glory on your lowly brow,

Worn with the cruel years.

Somewhere his daily toil goes on,

And through it, wearily

He hears your cry upon the winds

That sweep from mount to sea ;

In dreams he draws a shining sword

Against your foe accurst :

His love hath built a shrine for you,

His land is still the first.

Within the city's sordid streets

He misses, night and noon.

The joy of sweet, wild country ways,

Of thrush and blackbird tune ;

Not there, not there, his home should be,

But in a glen, away

Where gorse blooms upward like a flame,

And streamlets sing all day.

Yet, from my green hills, sheltering

The buds on hawthorn trees,

Mayhap some comfort shall go forth

To other paths than these ;

Mayhap the little song I sing

Shall breathe, though far apart,

A note of summer melody

To that brave, loyal heart.

Gaelic Athletes and the National Movement.

THE newspaper or magazine that devotes space to the transactions of the Gaelic Athletic Association with a truly sympathetic desire to encourage its growth has a very delicate duty to perform. The mere devotion of space is not the one, nor the chief thing necessary to make the movement a success. There is not, perhaps, in the wide

range of cumulative human action when organised—from the first assembly of law-givers to that of a dockers' union—anything which requires more delicate handling than a great athletic association conducted on National and democratic lines.

In countries possessed of political freedom and native constitutions, where the laws spring up with, and become part of the race itself, or, in other words, moulded in sympathy with racial customs and usages, the difficulty of governing an organization of the kind under discussion must evidently diminish. Thus it is that a people acquainted with the routine and machinery of their native legislature, and controlling its decrees, should have, from an experience of the working of so great a model, little trouble in reconciling themselves to the government of the minor organizations that are intended to cater for their amusement and social happiness.

This is not said in order to palliate any of the shortcomings of Irishmen when put to the test of self-control, for I hold that they acquit themselves in a manner superior to the English when all the passion and viciousness of their race is brought to the surface on the football field. Over and over again have scenes of violence and bloody sequels resulted from some inter-parish match under Rugby rules in England, yet no newspaper of any standing in that country would dare to cry out for the suppression of the sport on that account. In Ireland we are less fortunate; a trifling disturbance on a side line would be magnified a hundredfold by some of our Nationalist "dailies," while moderate space would be denied to gatherings where many thousands of sympathizers assembled to witness the old games played in a spirit of friendly rivalry. Then, again, our newspapers are prone to allow themselves to become the receptacle of vulgar abuse which young Irishmen in their unthinking hot-bloodedness fling at one another. A paper sympathizing with the development of National athleticism should strive to make its space more useful to the movement than to the narrow prejudices of the individual.

It has been well said that the Gaelic Athletic Association combines a great deal of the incongruous elements of the Irish character—a vast amount of the virtues, and no small share of the vices of our race. Men superior to local prejudices are, therefore, the best suited to guide the destinies of an organization of the kind.

Personal spleen and narrow enthusiasm are qualities that should be entirely absent from the G.A.A., in order to insure its permanency and utility as a great National organization. Submission to authority and loyalty to the constitution are the essential qualifications to become a good Gael. The unbridled passions of players will inevitably develop into violence where the softening influences of a brotherhood do not exist among the contestants.

Should the National idea be not kept constantly before the minds of our young Gaelic men, the energy employed

in the cultivation of Irish muscle may be diverted into unworthy channels, from which the fruits of this magnificent organization would spring up as rank weeds, and until our young men who so strenuously strive for goals and points in the hurling and football fields, perfectly understand that these are trifling considerations compared with the cohesiveness and discipline of a great National force, the G.A.A. will not count a feather's weight in the "parliament of man." Let us then thoroughly understand this first principle—that every achievement in the athletic field is prompted by the ambition to have the country rather the club or individual profiting the honour and glory. Thus we can remove the sting from defeat and make the victory one in which both victor and vanquished may equally take a pride.

John Mitchel in Exile.

True men all, who for Ireland's raising,
Strive as he strove in our Native North ;
Hear a song in a true man's praising,
Made as meed of a Patriot's worth :
For never since Swilly's waves were riven
By the passing keel of our chiefs of fame,
Has Ulster unto Ireland given
Another nobler than Mitchell's name.

For his country's sake, in her hour of sadness,
With the gloom of famine on every hand,
His heart was stung to a generous madness,
And he called aloud to the patriot band
To break the yoke that was laid upon her,
To change for ever her slavery's lot :
To those who answered, but failed, be honour—
And shame on the cowards who answered not.

Then he felt the thirst of an exile's yearning,
And bore the load of a felon's chain,
With the deathless love of the patriot burning
In heart of fever, and throbbing vein.
And through weary years of his sternest trial
He dwelt afar on the desolate sea,
In lone endurance, and long denial
Of his true wife's love, and their children's glee.

And in after times, though they shared beside him
The felon's cot 'neath the southern zone,
For long years more, was one glance denied him
Of the fair, green isle, that he called his own.
And no soothing words from her lips most tender,
No light of love in his children's eyes,
Could make him a home midst't that forest splendour,
'Neath the stranger stars of Australian skies.

There was half the world between him and Erin—
A thousand leagues of the barren foam,
'Twixt him and the rivers murmuring clear in
The bowery dells of his boyhood's home ;
And yet, o'er Australian rivers rushing,
There came like an echo, sweet and low,
In the musing ear of his memory gushing,
The murmurous call of his native Roe.

That sweet voice out of the distance calling,
Awaked in the exile a quenchless pain,
Lest those woodlands fair and the waters falling,
He never in life might behold again ;
Nor the whius ablaze on the uplands stony,
Of high Dungiven and its glens forlorn,
Or the daisied lawns of beloved Kilbroney,
And purple heath on the peaks of Mourne

And e'en by the side of his true love wedded,
In that penal clime he could stay no more ;
For more, far more, than such life he dreaded
Death and a grave on the convict shore.
So, through scenes of danger, and feats of daring,
He passed from that hell of sin and hate,
Afar through the isles of ocean faring,
On and away to the Golden Gate.

And a haven calm after woe and danger,
A helping hand and a sheltering breast
Was granted unto the exiled stranger,
And his home was long in the friendly West ;
But at last o'er the waves of ocean sailing,
He came to a land ; to his own more nigh,
And on when the fires of life were failing,
To Ireland's shore at the last to die !

Where the ships come in to the Narrow Water,
From the shadowy breast of the land shut bay,
That exile so true to Erin brought her,
His lonely heart from the far away.
'Neath Northern earth is John Mitchell sleeping :
Men of the North who guard his grave,
The hope he cherished is in your keeping,
The land he lived for is yours to save.

IRIS OLKYRN.

JOHN KEOWN.

BY MAC.



ON the sunny side of the sunniest hill in all Donegal, a hill from whose top you look up to the Croagh Gorm mountains in all their grim wildness, and looked down upon island-dotted Donegal Bay in all its sweet peacefulness, John dwelt. When the big fierce winds, escaped from their keep in the mountains, came tearing down in all their savagery, and went howling around, they never could find John's cabin it was so cosily hidden under a steep bank ; but the warm sun knew the same hut well, and few were the days he didn't look steadily in on it and flood it, and bathe it with his warm beams. And there wasn't a place on all the hill that the daisies and the buttercups pitched their little white and yellow tents so thickly as around John's. And there the bees gathered most numerously, caroused the farthest, and rioted the most noisily. Outside, John's gleamed in the sun like the quartz on Laghty Ban, inside it was as bright as a new pin : the delf shone on the white dresser, white chairs, well and often sand-washed, stood around the walls, the ashes were

tidied on the hearth, a little blaze was always frolicking on it, a spotted-white cat blinked and purred lazily on one side of it, and a choir of crickets on the other filled the house with melody, Madgie, in frilled white cap, slithered about in her heel-less slippers, fixing and arranging, and wiping and brushing, humming all the time; while John—singing, most probably a love-verse of his own composition—sat upon the table, and sewed and sang, and sang and sewed. We had no cynic in Cruckagar; and Pasteur never longed more for a hydrophobe to test his new discovery than I for a cynic on whom to try the effect of an evening in John Keown's.

John, as was natural in one of his trade, was reflective: and—breaking the traditions of his trade—he was truthful; he was amiable in a benevolent fashion, giving you the sense of being under a very pleasing obligation to him; he was philosophical, contented with himself and all the world; he was keenly sympathetic and deeply religious; if he had one little failing, just to show he was human, it was dogmatism, and the slightest discernible leaven of vanity, but for that dogmatism and vanity, you who chatted with him felt that by your own involuntary infantine simplicity in his presence, you were more than half guilty.

That dogmatism John, being human, could not have evaded. For the reverence paid him by the naybours was so little short of worship that the wonder was why his dogmatism and vanity did not assume fuller and more aggressive proportions. John was *the* wondherful man at Cruckagar. And, indeed, it would have been strange if he were not. For, besides having the reversion of Father Dan's copy of the *Nation*, on the corner of the board before him and within reach of his hand were the proud boardings of years, something of which not John alone, but all Cruckagar was justly vain—a library of thirteen books or parts of books! The Prophecies of St. Columbkille, a book worth its weight in goold, may well head the list: then there was *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, a most wondherful book which John never could take up, but his work for the remaindher of that day was as good as done, and he'd forget his very mails if Madgie didn't dhrag him and the book asundher: and Irish Rogues and Raparees, the most delightfulest of books, was quite at home on top of the History of the Holy Bible (wanting the back, and otherwise sadly maimed): Dr. Gallagher's Sermons, in Irish, a book which John wouldn't take your neck-bone for, adjoined the true history of Valentine and Orson—the like of which for rale wondhers wasn't in prent within the four seas of Irelan'; again, Keating's History of Ireland, very much abridged, from active service, Old Moore's New and True Almanac (for a date six years back, but preserved on account of its poetry), and Willy Reilly and his Colleen Bawn, the best thrue story written for a long time, were neighbours:

The Lily of Israel, a book no mortal man could read and not be in love with: a dismembered volume of the *Dublin Penny Journal*, a beau-ootiful book: Ward's Cantos on the Reformation, the bate of which for rale downright poethry was not, John believed, easily to be found; and lastly the gray-aetest book, and the most convincin' of any was ever put into prent or, I suppose, ever will be, to wit, Cobbett's History of the Reformation.

On a Sunday evening it was a delightful treat to form one of the circle of edified naybours who sat around in John's cabin, listening to the measured cadence of John's voice, as in reading for us some beau-ootiful or wondherful passage from one or other of the treasured volumes, his solemn and impressive tones (for Willy Reilly and His Colleen Bawn, the History of the Holy Bible, and Valentine and Orson were all rendered with the same solemn intonation) rising over and obscuring the continuous hum which from the nectar-sippers on the hill without, flowed ever in of the open door. Cruckagar universally admitted that for force, beauty, loftiness, and every other excellence, John's reading was unsurpassed and unsurpassable. Before a big word, too, he invariably paused to smack his lips as he might before bread and butter, and the loudness of the smack and consequent intellectual enjoyment it expressed was in proportion to the length and difficulty of the word. To his pronunciation, certainly, Dr. Johnson, if he were listening, might not always agree; for it is true that John never did tie himself down to the precedents set by lexicographers. His pronunciation of the more lengthy words had frequently a breezy originality, and always an easy, an off-hand, appropriate, and convincing ring, about them that made the naybours smack their lips in turn and eloquently shake their heads at each other. It was universally admitted that John Keown *took* more out of a page than another would take out of half-a-dozen chapters. When John assumed his brass-rimmed spectacles, and opening one of his volumes proceeded to read, you seemed looking on the subject through a magnifying glass. The most trivial subject or sentence became under his treatment absorbingly interesting and highly impressive. His delivery seldom dallied in insignificant italics; he read ordinarily in small capitals, but few sentences escaped him unembellished with fat large capitals, every word a mellow mouthful.

Though each book in the library had its own sturdy champions, the one most generally favoured was, I am certain, Cobbett's History of the Protestant Reformation—John's own favourite no less than ours. On the subject of great writers, I remember once having had the misfortune to remark that I believed Shakespeare was the greatest English writer. I was immediately crushed, and made to look in the naybours' eyes rather more contemptible than I should have wished by John's scathing rejoinder: "*Shakespeare! Shakespeare!* Shakespeare might have been very well *in his way*—BUT WHAT WAS HE TO COBBETT?"

I first thoroughly ingratiated myself with John one day he found to his astonishment that I could name him "the twelve Signs of the Soady-ak." He instantly promoted me in his favour, and pronounced me a chile clivir beyont his years, and the only wan in them parts fit to discoorse him on Joggraphy and Asthronomy. Then he taught me the Signs in English poethry—

"The Ram, the Bull, with the Heavenly Twins;
Nixt comes the Crab, and the Loy-on shines,
The Vargin with her Scales;
The Scorp-yun Archer on the Goat,
The Man that holds the Watherin-pot,
The Fish with glistherin' tails."

as well as in Latin with the proper *stingo*—"Arreys, Tar-us, Jimminy, Kensers, Lay-o, Vaargo, Libra, Scorp-yun, Saggritarus, Capper-y-cornus, Aquarrus, and Piskes."

As might be expected, John had literary predilections. Poetry he considered his forte, some of his best-loved pieces being those (which he still sung) addressed to Madgie in their courting days long long ago—

"As I roved out one mo-o-orning
In the sportsome month of Ma-a-y,
With gallant notes the hills ado-o-orning,
Were black-birds and thrushes ga-a-ay.
Down by a salubrious grove I wa-a-andered,
And it's there I chanced for to esp-y-y
A fair lovely damsel who me-a-andered
Like a fair comet in the sky-y-y."

The Mount behind his house was his Parnassus. "Just only let me lay down me work out of me hands on a beau-ootiful evenin'," he would say, "an' climb up the mount, an' lie down an' stretch meself on the top, an' view the beau-ootiful spec-tackel that's to be seen from there, an' I'm not five minnits lyin' there till I'm filled up to the throat with poethry, and ready to varsify on any subject."

A few years since, I was preparing a little book for the press. When John heard this, he sent for me "It's toul' to me," he said, "that ye're writin' a gray-ate boo-ook." I replied it was true I was preparing a book, but hardly a great one. "An' why," said he, "didn't ye ax my advice afore ye undhertook such a thing. I started a boo-ook once meself, an' I wrote seven pages of it. An' be advised by me, an' if ye want to write a boo-ook, an' a gray-ate wan, go up to the top of that Mount there without, an' view all round ye on all sides, an' commence at Mullaghmore, an' relate of the mirmaid that come into the house where they were saying the Rosary there; an' then tell of the wather-keeper that was shot be the poochers on the Dhrowes river; an' the fairy bridges at Bundoran, an' the falls at Ballyshanny, an' the fairy cave on the hill, an' Misther Kelly's brewery, an' then take in the Pullens of Brown Hall, an' the potthen-makin' on the Throwers' mountains, an' the man that murdered his wife long ago at Laghey, an' the oul'

Abbey of Dinnygal, an' the robberies at Barnesmore, an' oul' Calwell of Lough Esk that the divil (Lord bless us!) come for an' caried off in a coach, with four headless black horses, at midnight; an' the man that hung himself at Drimark, an' the Frinch vessel that come in in '96, an' the watherfall on Suhall mountain, an' John Porter that was carried off up to Roscommon be the fairies from Glencoagh, an' the gran' hotel at Carrick, an' Slieve-a-Lhaig, an' all them points. Get down them all, an' ye'll make a wo-ondher-ful boo-ook entirety." And that it would undoubtedly be a very wo-ondher-ful one under these conditions I heartily agreed with John.

John's faith in the fairies, the good people, was firm as his religious faith. There wasn't a hill, or a vale, or a *shia*g bush for miles around, but he could relate a wonderful fairy tale about. Some, John said, held that the fairies were the "Tootha day Dannians," but his own fixed belief was that they were undoubtedly fallen angels. When the rebellious ones were cast out of heaven, along with them were thrown those who, taking a neutral course, had declared neither for nor against Lucifer: some of these fell into the sea, becoming mermaids; and the remainder upon dry land, becoming fairies.

The fairies are friends of man, because they still look forward to redemption. "It's fifty years ago that Father M'Groarty (God be merciful to him!) was stopped on the mountain road at midnight of a night that was as clear as the day with the moonlight. He was stopped by a throop of the good people. As far as his eye could carry along the road was the wee horsemen—not less nor twenty thousand. A sigh that sunk his very heart went along the whole line of them, an' he asked them in God's name what they wanted. From all corners of the worl' they said they had come there that night to meet him an' ax him could he give them any hope. He considhered; an' then he answered them, that if there was wan dhrap o' blood among the twenty thousand, as much as would sit on the point of a pin, there was still hope for them. When they heerd this, a heart-rending scrame went up from the twenty thousand, an' they turned their horses' heads an' disappeared lake the win."

The mount behind his house was a most gentle place. "Sittin' on the boord of a nice evenin' in harvest, its often an' often I stop with the thread half-drawn to listen to the lovely music o' them that comes floatin' down the hill an' in o' the door; an' I never get tired listenin' to it, for anythin' so parfactly beau-ootiful niver was heard. An' full o' their harmless jokin' wee tricks, they are, too, for I've many an' many a time when I'd be maybe in the biggest hurry to finish up a piece o' work, fin' them snap the needle out o' me fingers; an' there was no use lookin' for it, for I wouldn't get it; nor takin' a new needle, for that wan

would go too. All I could do was just to take a sthroll up the hill an' lie down an' stretch meself for an' hour, an' when I'd come down again there I find the needle lyin' on the boord afore me."

But ah! you should have seen John on a Sunday morning, when having taken out his jet-black suit, and carefully brushed it, and Madgie having produced his snow-white linen, he had donned all, and Madgie had taken the glossy black silk tie and knotted it upon him in an elaborate bow-knot, of which the ends came out over the lapels of his coat, and he had brushed and assumed his glancing castor, and, large prayer-book in hand, gone forth to Mass, daintily picking the choicest spots upon the road whereon to step with his highly-polished and jerging "spring-sides," Madgie proudly watching him from the door. If you could have seen John then, you would have esteemed him for the gentleman he undoubtedly was. More surely so, if you had had the privilege of being one in the respectfully attentive and admiring company that gathered around him and eagerly absorbed the words of wisdom he scattered from him as he went. For on the journey to Mass on Sunday mornings John was ever in his moralising mood, his discourse more than ordinarily edifying and instructive. Pal to the Iphaysians, the wisdom of Sent Ligouray, and the Meracles of the early Church were his favourite themes; the account of a wonderfully miraculous dish, worn strung round his neck by an Italian hermit long ago (which he had gleaned from the *Dublin Penny Journal*), was frequently asked for and given on these occasions, we reverently uncovering out of respect to the sacred dish, the worthy example having first been set by the widow's Pat.

I was never more astonished than when one day John being entertaining me to a dissertation on the Greek alphabet (information got in his encyclopædia—the *Penny Journal*), as he sat at work upon his table, he suddenly remarked that he could read French from cock-crow to candlelight the longest day in summer. In all his life I doubt if John was guilty of a single, deliberate lie, much less a boasting one. So I was greatly relieved when, returning to the subject some days later (for it preyed on my mind), I elicited that he could *read*, not *understand* it; that was the accomplishment on which he had been pluming himself. But he added that he knew a good many French phrases. "John," I said, "can you consther me *Parley voo frongsay*?" "I can that," John said, pausing in his work; "*Parley voo frongsay* has two mainin's: wan is, *Come in an' sit down, an' rest yerself, for it's welcome ye are!* and the other is, *Plaise, ma'am, would ye oblige me by lendin' me the loan of yer gridiron?*"

For many and many a happy evening, John Keown I am thy debtor, heavily, heavily, over head and ears, and but that I am not now in a versifying mood I would

fain thus show my gratitude to thy memory and the memory of those days that shall not come again. The smallest fraction of thy great wealth France's king couldn't purchase with all his kingdom and all his gold.

For *thee* the seasons unfolded all their shades and shadows. Ten hundred thousand flowers to *thee* offered up incense from sun dawn to sun down—daisies and violets, heather-bell, hare-bell, and golden furze; and the bees hummed, and the birds choired to gladden thy path. And in the mystic gloaming and quiet night troops of fairies, the brightest, the merriest, the trickiest Donegal could boast, danced and played around *thy* cabin and on *thy* hill, blessing it and blessing thee by the favour of their presence. The neatest, the tidiest, the happiest, the most cheerful of womankind was thy Madgie. The true philosopher's stone was within thy breast; thy heart, expanded with love of everything and everybody, was surely as big as a mountain and as genial as a May morning: peace, happiness, and content filled thy cabin to the very door. Then, John, God was with thee, now thou art with God. May thy Heaven be as gladsome as was thy earth!

Sketch of the Rise and Fall of the Fenian Movement of '67.

(BY U. I. O.)

CHAPTER VI.

The Chicago Convention.

THE next important event of general interest in the transactions of the Revolutionary Movement was the National Convention, or Congress, held in the Fenian Hall, Chicago, on the 3rd November, 1863.

It will be observed that the organization, up to this time, assumed the form of a secret military association, particularly in Ireland, while in America its transactions were quite open to public scrutiny, and its affairs were conducted under the sole guidance of its two able founders.

Their methods differed considerably as did their surrounding circumstances. In Ireland, Stephens carried on his work in secrecy and silence, while his name was whispered with bated breath from man to man. In America, O'Mahony followed a different method; hurling the force of his eloquence against the British government in press and on platform.

It will be remembered that both he and Stephens in their respective spheres of action, exercised, without question, the fullest powers of Commanders-in-chief. True, they had never been selected or formally appointed by their followers, but they held their positions by the stronger bond of creative right, and no one dared dispute it.

Nevertheless, O'Mahony wished to let the world know the confidence reposed in him by his disciples, and accordingly issued an order on the 10th September, summoning the various centres in America to attend a General Convention in Chicago, on the 3rd November, 1863, for the purpose of considering the affairs of the organization: and to draw up a constitution, with rules and bye-laws for its future government. These and "other matters pertaining to the welfare of the Brotherhood, demanded the consideration of its assembled wisdom."

In response to this summons sixty-three circles, comprising fifteen thousand men, sent representatives to the "National Congress," as did the Brotherhood in Ireland, Canada and other places. John O'Mahony opened the convention by a long address, expressing, and evidently concurring in, the desire of those present to reconstruct the organization on the model of the institutions of the American Republic, which governed themselves on the elective principle.

Then divesting himself of the authority which he had hitherto assumed, he was, of course (as he expected), immediately elected Head Centre.

After due consideration the convention declared the organization to be—"An Association having for its object the national freedom of Ireland, and composed for the most part of citizens of the United States of America, of Irish birth or descent, but open to such other dwellers on the American continent as are friendly to the liberation of Ireland from the domination of England, by every honorable means within our reach, collectively and individually, save and except such means as may be in violation of the constitution and laws under which we live, and to which all of us, who are citizens of the United States, owe our allegiance."

Had the Convention, on this memorable occasion, contented itself with the above declaration and its "Address to the people of Ireland" it would have evinced a much more justifiable claim to the title of "assembled wisdom" than any rational being would care to allow it, after wading through the multiplicity of meaningless resolutions which it passed, and in the propounding of which so much valuable time must have been wasted.

Three of these were remarkably conspicuous for their absurdity. In the first, the Irish Republic was—a little prematurely—proclaimed as being "Now virtually established." In the second, James Stephens was acknowledged—(in kind consideration for past favours)—as "Representative of the Fenian Brotherhood in Europe." While the third stated that the "assembled wisdom" took advantage of Charles J. Kickham's presence amongst them to send home by him to Stephens, the two preceding resolutions. It seems the only necessity for the last of these resolutions was to preclude the possibility of Charles Kickham's escaping the severe sentence which, two years later was pro-

nounced upon him, in consequence of its existence. It was found, with the other two, in the possession of Thomas Clarke Luby, when arrested on the 15th September, 1865, and all three proved to be the only solid fragments in the huge pile of evidence built up against the '65 prisoners, upon which the British Government thrust them into prison under "life sentences," and, to a great extent, frustrated the plans of the organization.

In addition to the numerous resolutions there was an "Address to the People of Ireland" which ran as follows:—

"Brothers,—We deem it prudent to withhold for the present from publication in the newspapers certain important resolutions having special reference to the revolutionary element in Ireland, which has been submitted to this convention by the Head Centre of the Fenian Brotherhood in America, and unanimously adopted.

"Printed copies of these resolutions will be placed before the different circles of our organization in this country, and will also be transmitted at the earliest fitting opportunity to our friends at home.

"In the meantime, we do not wish to separate without addressing a few guarded words—such as we can afford to have read by all whom it may concern—regarding the present aspect of our cause.

"We are solemnly pledged to labour earnestly and continuously for the regeneration of our beloved Ireland. That pledge, with the blessing of Divine Providence, we shall redeem; and when the wished for hour will have arrived, we shall be prepared with you to meet the implacable persecutors of our race in battle array; to put an end for ever to the accursed system under which our unhappy people have suffered such cruel tortures, or die like men in the attempt. And in what holier cause has man ever died? How much Irish blood has fallen upon the battlefields of the world? Alas! how much Irish blood has been shed in the service of our country's oppressor—the plunderer and murderer of her people—the fell enemy of her faith. Over this subject and others connected with it we have pondered long and bitterly. But our resolve is fixed and irrevocable, the foul stigma which attaches to our name must be wiped out.

"We do not ask, Will you be ready! We know you are ready. Nine-tenths of the Irish people have at all times been ready, in heart and will to dispute with armed hands the invader's right to enslave or exterminate them. But this is not enough. We must be 'skilled to do' as well as 'ready to dare.' We are thoroughly convinced of the utter futility of Legal and constitutional agitations, parliamentary 'politics,' and all similar delusions. These things have brought more suffering upon our people than would be caused by the most protracted and devastating war. The best of them would but expose the ardent and brave to the vengeance of local despots, and be it remembered that such sacrifices beget no noble aspirations.

"No enslaved people ever regained their independence,

or became formidable to their enslaver, without 'illegal' (in the enslaver's sense) pre-organization. Poland had its 'illegal' (in the Russian sense) organization, long before those glorious 'legions of despair' unfurled the flag of revolution. Had Italy no 'illegal' (in the Austrian sense) organization, the sword of MacMahon had never flashed in victory on the field of Magenta. Had not the American colonies of England their trained militia, the 'trampled province' could not have sprung into a 'free and glorious republic.' Hungary was pre-organised. But why multiply instances? The lesson that history teaches to struggling nationalities, and illustrates by many a bright and many a dark example is that *pre-organisation is essential to success.*

"With it there may be defeat and glory. Without it there must be defeat and shame. Some politicians seem to think anything approaching a military organization impossible in Ireland. But its possibility and feasibility, when guided by courage, prudence, devotion and ability, have been proved to our satisfaction; and this fact is the very foundation of our conviction that the day of deliverance is at hand. We say our deliverance, for the privilege of living among a free people, and of sharing the blessing of free institutions, but make us feel the more keenly the sufferings and degradations of our own land. But our hearts swell with hope and exultation when we think of the living fire that burns within her shores, defying the combined efforts of the open foe and false friend to extinguish it.

"No matter how powerful and devoted her exiled children might be, we should tremble for the issue if there were no true men left in Ireland, no worthy descendants and disciples of the heroes of '98. We do not wonder at the enemy's persistent endeavours to emasculate or to banish you.

"Americans already admit that the non-recognition of the revolted States by England is due to the attitude which the Irish people have assumed, at home and in this republic. If the Irish people at home and abroad were united in a band of brotherhood for the salvation of their own country, would the United States hesitate for an hour to strike a blow which would be followed by two inevitable results—peace in America and liberty in Ireland?

"A deep responsibility rests upon Irishmen in the present generation. The fate of their country trembles in the balance. Emigration is doing its exhausting work. Other influences are leagued with the oppressor to quench the spirit which has triumphed over the dungeon and the scaffold, and which even famine could not kill. Let us falter now and Ireland's doom is sealed; a grand old nation—grand even in her chains—is blotted from the map of the world. But there shall be no faltering, no cowardice. Our country cries to us for aid, and points to the grave which the foe has dug for her. Armed legions shall interpose between her and that grave.

"Here we have soldiers armed and trained (thousands of them trained in the tented field and amid the smoke and thunder of battle), with able and experienced generals to lead them. Let the cities and towns and

parishes of Ireland have their brigades, regiments, battalions, and companies of partially disciplined soldiers silently enrolled. Above all things, let every man be pledged to obey the commands of his superiors; and pledged also never to move without such commands: *for obedience to command is the first and most important requisite to the perfect soldier*, all the rest is secondary. Thus, you will not only be prepared to strike with effect, but all rash attempts at insurrection will be prevented. Without such an organization as we contemplate, partial uprisings of the people would be sure to occur, leaving no results but the sacrifice of brave men, and, perhaps, the ruin of our cause. When we strike, let us strike home. And are there not strong arms within the enemy's own shores to second the blow? Circumstances are in our favour such as Providence never before vouchsafed to an enslaved people. We have but to act as becomes brave and reasoning men, and ours shall be the pride and the glory of lifting our sorrowing Erin of the streams to her place among the nations.

"Brothers, rely upon us. We rely upon you."

It is interesting to note, that amongst the delegates attending this convention was the informer, Nagle, who had arrived from Ireland in September '63, and had called at O'Mahony's office for the purpose of making himself known to the American Head-Centre. The result of his introduction there and elsewhere, and the disasters that accrued from it, may be gleaned from a perusal of the trial of Thomas Clarke Luby and others, for treason-felony in November '65.

(TO BE CONTINUED).

Red Hugh O'Donnell's Speech to his Army before the Victory of the Curlious.

"He made little or no account of the words of the nobles and chiefs, and he said to them that this was necessary, and he declared moreover, that there was an old saying from long ago, that it was not by the number of soldiers the battle is decided, but by the power of God, and that he is victorious whosoever trusts in the Trinity, and believes that the one God is against the crowd that is on the side of cheating and with the few that are on the side of right. We, though a small number, are on the side of right, as it seems to us, and the English whose number is large are on the side of robbery, in order to rob you of your native land and your means of living, and it is far easier for you to make a brave, stout, strong fight for your native land and your lives whilst you are your own masters and your weapons are in your hands, than when you are put into prison and in chains after being robbed of your weapons, and when your limbs are bound with hard tough cords of hemp, after being broken and torn, some of you half-dead after you are chained and taken in crowds on waggons and carts through the streets of the English towns through contempt and mockery of you.

My blessing on you, true men; bear in your minds the firm resolution that you had when such insults and

violence were offered to you (as was done to many of your race). That to-day is the day of battle which you have needed to make a vigorous fight in defence of your liberty, by the strength of your arms, and the courage of your hearts, while you have your bodies under your control, and your weapons in your hands, as it is not a necessity that the English should be your conquerors. Have no dread or fear of the great number of the soldiers of London or of the strangeness of their weapons and arms, but trust in the God of Glory. I am certain if you take into your minds what I say to you that the English will be defeated and that victory will be with you."

The troops listened to the words of the prince. It was not difficult to hear, though they were not very close, on account of the loudness of his voice and speech.

IRISH TRANSLATION.

Níor tug O'Domhnaill toradh air an gcomairle mheata na nuasal agus na naireach do bhí'na theannta, acht dubhairt leo gur bh'éigin an cath so do chur agus dubhairt go mór mhór go raibh sean rádh san aimsir fadó nách le h-íomad fear gaisge bristear cath, acht le neart Dé.

Dubhairt sé fós go nbuaidheann dream dá gcuireas a ndóigh 'sa Trionoid agus chreideas go bhfuil an t-aon Dia amháin i n-aghaidh lucht déanta na h-eugcora. "Tamaoid," ar seisean, "cé nách fuil puinn againn ann, dar linn féin air bothar an chirt, acht tá na Sacsannaigh i na sochaidhe móir ar tí gaduiheacht agus éigin chum sibhse do chur air fán as seilbh bhúr sean. Is usa dhaoibh ar an adhbhair sin, cómhraic, treunmhar, calma, buan, do chur anois ar son bhúr dtír dhúchais 'nuair atáthaoi saor agus airm in bhúr lámh, na ar ball 'nuair a bheidh sibh gabhtha i gcarcair gan airm gan brigh, gan luadháil baill, bhúr gcoirp ceangailte le teudánaibh righne, garbha, cnáibe; sibh briste, brúigte, bascaigte Cuid aгаibh Cath-mharbh ó bheith tarraingthe air chartachaibh agus turcaillibh thré shraidslightheibh Shacsanna fá tháir agus tharcuisne.

Beannacht uaimis orraibh a fhòrmhuintir. Tabraidh in bhúr meanman an dutracht calma do bhí libh 'nuair a tugadh geurleannamhain orraibh agus air bhúr sinsear róimh gurab aniu lá in chatha, gurab anois an uair chum cómhraic fearamhail fíothmhar do dheunamh ag cosaint bhúr sairse le neart bhuir lámh agus cruas bhuir gcroidhe.

Tá airm in bhúr lámh agus bhuir gcoirp air bhúr gcumus agus measaim go deimhin ná beidh sluagh gallda cosgrach. Ná bidheadh eagla ná uamhan orraibh roimh laochruidhe Lúndon ná ó neamhghnathacht a narm, acht curidh bhúr ndóigh agus bhúr saoi-leachtain i Rígh na cruinne.

As dearbh liomsa dá dtabraidh bhuir naoidh an abraisim libh go sraoinfíthe air ghallaibh agus go mba libh an buadh. Bhídear na sloigh ag eisteacht le

fuighlibh na flatha. Níorbh' dheacair dóibh é chlos cé na rabhadar i n-athchomair do mar bhí fuaim le na guth agus le n a urlabra.

Le h-aon inntinn amháin do ghealladar ós árd go ndéanfadais mar fhorchongair sé dhóibh.



"God save all here & bless the work;
Says Rory of the hill."

UNDER this heading we shall record from month to month what is being done in different departments of work for the advancement of Ireland's cause, and for the cultivation of her people. We shall be pleased to receive, from Literary Societies throughout the country, complete reports of each month's meetings.

National and Literary Societies.

Irish Literary Society, London.—Mr. A. P. Graves, hon. sec., has kindly sent us the following report:—Mr. Barry O'Brien, the well-known Irish historical writer, delivered a lecture on Sir Charles Napier and Sir William Napier, the distinguished Irish soldiers and military historians, before the Irish Literary Society of London, on Saturday evening. The hall of the Society of Arts, in which the meeting took place, was crowded with the members of the society. General Sir William Butler appropriately occupied the chair, for he has written a charming monograph on Sir Charles Napier—the more interesting of the brothers—in MacMillan's "Men of Action" Series, and by his side was the old war correspondent of *The Times*, Sir William Howard Russell, who, like the chairman, is an Irishman and a member of the society. Mr. Barry O'Brien's lecture was a masterly sketch of two remarkable men of genius, who have upheld the fame of the Irish race for valour and strategy on many a battle-field in Europe and India; and its entertaining and instructive character was enhanced by several limelight views of maps, battle scenes, and portraits. Mr. O'Connor Power, Mr. W. M. Crook (secretary to the Eighty Club), Sir Wm. Butler, and Mr. A. P. Graves took part in the discussion which followed, and finally a hearty vote of thanks, moved by Dr. Colles and seconded by Mr. MacDonagh, was tendered to Mr. O'Brien for one of the most delightful treats the society has yet been afforded.

The National Literary Society, Dublin, has had several interesting private members' meetings, of which we have seen notices in the paper, but have been given no secretarial report.

The C. J. Kickam Society is arranging for the celebration of the Battle of Antrim anniversary on a large scale, and for a series of excursions to historic spots in the neighbourhood, to take the place of meetings during the summer season.

The Irish Women's Association, Belfast Branch.—A lecture was delivered under the auspices of the above, on "Red Hugh O'Donnell," by Miss A. L. Milligan, on Friday evening, March 17th. Mrs. M. T. Pender presiding. Miss Donnelly sang "The Coolin," and Miss Devoto "My Heart and Lute," during the course of the evening.

Moneyrea Branch.—Mrs. Margaret M'Culloch, president of the above, with the lady members, will undertake the decoration of the grave of Elizabeth Gray, the heroine of the Battle of Ballynahinch, for June 24th.

The Oisín Club, Mount Charles, Co. Donegal.—This social and literary club, which had a most successful career for some years back, but dissolved about a year back, has been reconstituted, and will meet under the presidency of Mr. Kirke, Mount Charles. We are interested to hear that this club successfully carried on a mutual book lending and home reading circle similar to that recommended in the February number of our paper.

The Celtic Literary Society, Dublin.—On Friday, April 10th, Mr. Fred Ryan presiding, the editor read the current number of the *Seamachie*, which contained a farewell address in Irish, by the editor; "A forecast of coming events," by Calma; "Bank holidays," by Kilmacanague; "Irish emigration," by Celt; "Columcille in exile," by Hí-Fiachra; "The dawning of the day," by Fear na Muintir. Mr. E. R. Whelan, on April 17th, read a paper on "Industrial Education."

The Glasgow Young Ireland Society is proceeding with enthusiasm with the work of helping on the revival of the Irish language, the class now numbering 30 members. A large number of Irish-speaking Donegal people are resident in Glasgow, so the movement has a suitable sphere for development in that city.

The Irish Language.

The Belfast Gaelic League.—The Congress held April 10th was attended by delegates from Dublin, Cork, Farney, and elsewhere. The chief speakers were—Dr. Boyd presiding,—Mr. P. M'Ginley, to whose energy and enthusiasm much of the success of the undertaking was due; Mr. P. J. O'Shea, Mr. Ward, Mr. John M'Neill, Mr. Hayes, Dublin; Mr. Conor P. Kielly, and Mr. Peter Lawless, Cork. The evening concert held in the Ulster Hall Annexe was a brilliant success. The attendance was good and a large sum was realised. Some of the best local singers had been secured for the occasion, and several items were rendered in the native language; "The Coolin" and "Gramachree" by Miss L. Gallagher, being particularly well sung. Mr. Owen Lloyd on the harp, and Turlough M'Sweeney, from Donegal, with the Irish pipes, gave the National musical instruments their due place on the programme. The members of the Belfast Gaelic League are to be congratulated on taking a distinguished place in the recent competition in *The Weekly Independent*. Dermot Foley taking first place in Ireland in composition; Mr. M'Ginley and Mr. P. J. O'Shea also distinguishing themselves in that department of the competition, and the latter gentleman securing a prize in another.

The Cork Gaelic League.—The three Irish Classes met as usual every Monday and Friday evening during the past month and were very fairly attended. Sgoireacht nights were held on Friday evenings at 9, the proceedings being carried on exclusively in Irish. Songs were given by Messrs. P. Stanton, D. O'Shea, P. S. Carey, M. Shandy, P. J. Lawless, J. Maynicken, and C. O'Kelly, Hon. Sec. Folk lore stories were related by Messrs. D. Kineally, T. Murphy, D. L. Fleming, and C. O'Connell, whilst Messrs. J. S. Wayland and O. J. Bergin, B.A., contributed airs on their violins. The delegates to the Belfast Congress gave at the Council Meeting, April 17, an encouraging account of their visit.

The Donegal Gaelic League.—A congress will be held in Donegal on Saturday afternoon, May 9. Members of the Dublin Gaelic League—Mr. M'Ginley, Dr. Boyd, Mr. Hussey, and Miss Milligan, Belfast—are expected to be present.

The Gaelic League, Dublin.—On Friday, April 10th, Mr. Conor O'Reardon presiding, Mr. P. Nally read a most interesting paper on the Matabele war, illustrating how Irish adapts itself most readily to description of current events.

Amnesty.

Irish National Amnesty Association.—A convention was held on Tuesday, April 7th, at 41, York Street, Mr. M. Lambert, president. Delegates were present from Limerick, Belfast, London,

and the chief Amnest Branches through the country. The speakers were:—Messrs. P. Hootor, J. Redmond, M.P.; K. O'Brien, Dr. Kenny, Messrs. J. A. O'Sullivan, James Ward, T. M'Donald, A. J. Marron, J. J. Organ;—Birmingham. Mr. P. Troy took the second chair, and Mr. M'Cabe proposing and Mr. H. Dubbin seconding the vote of thanks to Mr. Lambert.

Public Meeting in Dublin.—The convention was followed by an evening meeting in the Ancient Concert Rooms. Mr. M. Lambert, presiding, said that the delegates from North, South, East, and West of Ireland, and from England had that day met to devise means for pressing forward the aims of their association, and this convention in its representative character would be a denial of the statement that the Amnesty demand was not a general one. That time last year they had announced the release of two prisoners, and since that time two more had been released. Eleven out of twenty-seven only remained, and that should encourage them to redouble their efforts. Mr. M. Donnell, Glasgow, conveyed to the association the thanks of the released prisoner M'Culloch. Mr. Orpen, of Limerick, spoke of Mr. Egan's mission to America, and proposed a resolution urging the formation of Prisoner's Aids Funds and organising of public meetings. Mr. Marron, Bradford, seconded the resolution. Mr. W. J. Leahy, T.C., proposed a resolution soliciting support for the recently organised fund to enable released prisoners to start in life afresh. Mr. M'Namara seconded it. A vote of thanks to the chairman brought the proceedings to an end.

London Amnesty Association.—On Wednesday, 15th April, a meeting was held, Dr. Mark Ryan in the chair. Mr. J. A. O'Sullivan the association's delegate at the Dublin convention, gave a report of proceedings, and gave notice of a resolution that the executive in Dublin should be made executive for Great Britain and Ireland.

Belfast Amnesty Association.—Sunday, April 19th, a meeting was held in the National Hall, Royal Avenue. H. Dubbin, presiding. Mr. Dobbin, Mr. Sherlock, and Mr. P. M'Parland, to the Dublin convention, gave an account of the meeting and proceedings. Arrangements were discussed for holding an Amnesty meeting in Belfast, on the second Sunday of May.

Decoration Day.

A proposal has been before the public for some time that the Sunday following June 20th, the anniversary of Wolfe Tone's birth, should be observed as a National decoration day. To ensure the success of this scheme, which we hope to see taken up from end to end of Ireland, no society, or set of societies, no particular body of Nationalists, should have direction of it; it should be rather on the lines of a universally observed custom like the wearing of shamrocks on Patrick's Day. For the benefit of our readers in different parts of the North we will prepare and publish a full list in our June number, and hope that those dwelling in the neighbourhood who are in sympathy with National aims will visit and adorn these sacred spots.

Answers to Correspondents.

PATRICIUS (Belfast) has sent us a most interesting paper which goes to prove that the birthplace of St. Patrick was France, not Dumbarton, which unfortunately we cannot find room for.

P. J. W.—Kindly send your name and address. Your poem we would like to publish.

PYRITES.—Your poem, "Western Memories," we hold over, and hope to publish in next issue.

EMMET LITERARY SOCIETY, BELFAST.—Your report came too late for publication last month. Send us address of your society and reports monthly in future.

M'FINGAL.—Your poems received; thanks, we will make a selection.

J. DIRANE.—Domnal Og will be published next month.

The Story of Betsy Gray.

A Visit to Her Grave.

"Oh! what glorious pride and sorrow
Fill the tale of ninety-eight."



MAD the cause which Betsy Gray espoused in '98, and for which she sacrificed her young life, been more successful, no Irishman or Irishwoman would have been ignorant of the fate or burial place of Ireland's Joan of Arc. One whole day of uninterrupted success and she would have been "wafted to eternal fame." Still her story is the most heroic in the annals of female patriotism in Ireland, and fortunately her burial place is known, has been reverently cared for, and will yet be one of the shrines to which true Irish hearts will make their pilgrimage.

The Hebrews had their warrior prophetess, Deborah, who "arose a mother in Israel," and when "the rulers ceased in Israel," and there was neither "shield nor spear seen among the forty thousand in Israel," she took up the reins of leadership that had proved too weighty for the hands of ordinary men, rallied nobles and commons to the standard of Jehovah, and proved herself the greatest national leader between the time of Moses and Joshua and the days of King David.

The ancient Britons had their warrior queen, Boadicea, who mustered her thousands against their Roman conquerors before the English had left the marshes along the Elbe to settle on the banks of the Thames.

France had her valiant Joan of Arc, who saved her country from sinking beneath the might of England, and ere English cruelty had burnt her to death she raised the siege of Orleans, crowned the king, and inspired the men of France with a courage that has known no wavering for centuries.

"Bregentz, that quaint city by the Tyrol shore," rejoices in the sacred legend which tells how the town was saved one night more than three hundred years ago by the patriotic daring of one of its humble daughters.

Ireland, too, has had her Betsy Gray, of Granshaw. Though in point of success she does not rank among the warrior queens of history, her devotion to country and her bravery in battle are unsurpassed, while the pathetic tragedy of her cruel death by the hireling minions of England would make the coldest heart bleed with pity and indignation. Her story is briefly told. She was born in the townland of Granshaw, a few miles from Bangor, Newtownards, and Donaghadee, in the County of Down, near "the six lane ends." Her brother, George Gray, a young farmer, and her sweetheart, Willie Boal, were leading and trusted United Irishmen, and Betsy was the confidant of the society. When the famous June of '98 arrived, and the valiant men of Down "turned out" to overthrow English government in Ire-

land, Betsy sought a place in their ranks, but through intensity of affection this was denied her. However, her patriotism was of too true and deep seated a character to allow her to be quiescent now that the decisive moment had arrived. Despite the loving solicitude of her father and friends, and the injunctions of brother and lover, who had already repaired to Ballynahinch, the brave-hearted girl yoked a fine mare to a block-wheeled car, laden with home-made bread, butter, and cheese, and started alone with all the fearlessness of the true patriot, and reached the hill of Ednavady on the night of the 12th of June. Next day was fought the famous battle of Ballynahinch—a battle that was really won by the half armed and undrilled farmers of Down, in a hand to hand encounter with the effective artillery and well-equipped infantry and cavalry of England, backed by the accursed yeomen of the Ulster landlords. But in the moment of victory, when the English trumpet sounded retreat, the patriots of Down, unaccustomed to military technicalities, mistook the sound for an advance of the enemy with re-inforcements. As the enemy had possession of the roads leading to north Down, whence the vast majority of the patriots had come, they retreated by the Lisburn Road, and made into the fields in small batches, in many cases throwing away their arms. In the hottest and most glorious part of the fight, when Munroe led his intrepid pikemen to the very muzzles of the English guns, Betsy Grey, mounted on her splendid charger, and dressed in green silk and brandishing her light and brightly burnished sword, rode by the side of the general leading the faithful hearts of Down in the desperate and victorious charge. What wonder they were successful against such fearful odds. Where the chivalrous Munroe and the dauntless and beautiful maiden (for, if tradition be correct, there was no fairer face in Ireland) led, who could fail to follow? Small wonder, then, that this contingent, as it rushed from the slopes of Ednavady and assailed the English lines on the left, was completely successful and bore down all opposition! Alas! courage however intrepid, devotion however pure, can never compensate in battle for ignorance of military technicalities and manœuvres. Betsy Gray, her brother, and lover had to join in the rout and make for the open country. The yeomen bloodhounds—trained in connection with the Hillsboro', Castlewellan, Mountstewart, and other rent offices in Ulster—were ready for the work of massacre which regular troops would have disdained. They shot down and sabred without mercy, and continued the work of slaughter for days. The patriots hid in bog and copse; a very few escaped their savage pursuers. Betsy Gray, her brother, and lover, gained a tract of unbroken country covered with rocks and furze, about two and a-half miles from Ballynahinch, near the old Lisburn Road, and now close to the new road leading to Lisburn. Of what befel her there I learned something not hitherto recorded when I visited

the spot a few days ago (on the 16th of March), and also had confirmation of much that is chronicled in Mr. W. G. Lyttle's "Story of Betsy Gray," published at the *Herald* Office, Bangor, Co. Down (price 6d.) which is an ample, and, I believe, only available written source of information concerning this Irish heroine.

She had dismounted early in the flight to escape detection, and had hidden her sword in the thatch of a cottage where it was afterwards found, and according to Mr. Lyttle's book, it is now in possession of Mr. Lindsay, Mount Royal, Portrush. The rough rocky tract to which she and her brother and lover retreated was admirably chosen, for it was impassable to cavalry. But a party of Anahilt yeomen were in hot pursuit. They attacked the two young men, now unarmed, who were keeping well in the rear to protect the faithful Betsy, and ruthlessly proceeded to shoot and sabre them. Betsy came to their aid and was instantly shot in the head. The tragedy was seen by a few men from an adjoining hill some distance off, and one of them said "at any rate they will not touch the girl." But soon they saw her rush between either her brother or lover and his assailants, and that instant they saw her fall. So the Armstrongs, on whose farm the deed was perpetrated, learned from those who had witnessed it. Neither youth, beauty, nor womanhood, checked the cruelty of these Anahilt savages who had been trained to human butchery in the ranks of the Hillsboro' yeomanry. The heroine, her lover and brother now sleep in the same grave. It lies several yards from the scene of the tragedy, and is very picturesquely situated in a small mossy dale that dips down somewhat abruptly like a saucer, between rocks crowned with furze, thorns and other brushwood. As moss sinks, it is probable the ground where the grave was made 98 years ago was higher than it appears to-day. Underneath the turf, which is only a few feet deep, the subsoil is clay and gravel. The grave itself is a square mound slightly raised and marked off from the rest of the surrounding turf, and situated on one of the slopes of the little dale. An old beam of bog-oak lies athwart the mound, and is partly covered with the green sward, and on one side is a small clump of stones.

The present owner of the farm, which is situated in the townland of Ballycreen, is Mr. Armstrong. He inherited it from his family who have held it continuously since long prior to '98. Mr. Armstrong is most courteous to the strangers making a pilgrimage to this romantic spot on his property, made sacred for ever by the ashes of the true and heroic trio who nobly risked and nobly lost their young lives for love of Ireland. Sixty years ago the land surrounding the grave was an open common. An old man, named Mr. Rea, who lived on an adjoining farm told Mr. Armstrong many years ago that in '98 the country around was unfenced and covered with hazel and sally bushes, with

here and there an odd potato plot. But to the honour of the Armstrong family, be it said, they ever reserved the plot as sacred, and never in all these years put plough or spade in the little dale where lie in one grave the remains of brother, sister and lover.

"They were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
And in their death they were not divided."

A touching episode hitherto unrecorded, as far as I know, was related to me by Mr. Armstrong. His uncle, who was a boy in '98, told him that he was taken by his mother late in the evening to the scene of the tragedy. (They were afraid to look out earlier, as the yeomen were still scouring the country and cutting down without discrimination all whom they set eyes upon). They found the three lying close together. Betsy and one of the men were quite dead, but the other man (tradition says, her brother) was still alive. He and poor Betsy were lying directly opposite to each other, and their feet were touching and overlapping. As the man's feet were still twitching in the last agonies of death, Mrs. Armstrong tenderly turned and moved Betsy's corpse slightly aside to prevent further mutilation, and smoothed down her disordered robe. Mr. Armstrong's uncle informed him that all three had been fatally shot and only slightly sabred.

It is said, the ear-rings were cut away from Betsy's ears, and the rings taken from her fingers by the ruthless yeomen, who were always ready to burn homesteads, slay the living, and desecrate the dead. Such was the character of the hirelings of Ulster landlordism. How base must have been a system and a cause that hired and trained such protectors!

Mr. Armstrong talked in his boyhood with the men who had assisted at the burial of the martyred dead in the vale of Ballycreen. So there is no shadow of doubt as to where the grave of Betsy lies.

All Irish patriots and all who have the instincts of humanity and reverence in their breasts should feel a deep debt of gratitude to the Armstrong family for guarding as holy ground the lonely burial place of these Granshaw heroes of '98. By this reverence they have enriched their own souls, and carved for themselves a place in the affections of their country.

Mr. Armstrong contemplates making a path direct from the road to the grave, and raising a stile at the road for the convenient entrance of strangers visiting Betsy's burial place. He would most willingly facilitate the erection of a suitable memorial of Irish granite on the sacred spot. This I trust will be accomplished in the near future. Thousands of Irish men and women would consider it a privilege to contribute to such a memorial.

"No tombstone marks that humble grave,
Nor tree nor shrub is planted there,
And never spade disturbs the spot
Where sleep the brave, where rests the fair."

And when at length a happy freedom and more prosperous days dawn upon our enslaved and poverty-stricken Ireland—a statue of the noble and fearless maid, robed in her own beloved green, mounted on her charger and brandishing her patriot sword, as when she led the true hearts of Down to glorious battle, may be raised sometime and somewhere in her native county, and where more appropriately than in the streets of Ballynahinch?—to do honour to the faithful Betsy Gray, who sacrificed her life in the sacred cause of Irish freedom. L.

On May Morning.

With tender eyes and wind-blown hair
 Stood Kathleen in her girlhood's pride,
 The whins in blossom, bright and fair,
 Had yellowed all the rough hillside,
 And filled with golden spikes the air ;
 And Kathleen's little feet all bare
 Sought in the grass to hide.

The mountain streamlet, strong and fleet,
 Paused in its crystal way,
 As loath to leave my Kathleen's feet,
 Who so inanced the day ;
 What fairer thing could heaven greet,
 Or streamlet murmur to, than sweet,
 Wild Kate on a morn of May ?

PYRITES.

Soldiers Four.

Assist me now, ye Muses,
 And lend me no excuses,
 Concerning these few verses I mean for to relate,
 To trace a horrid murder, was none near Blarismoor ;
 By Lake and Colonel Barber,
 I dare not mention farther,
 Such perpetrating murder is treason I am sure.

—Old Street Ballad.



IRELAND is a land of tears and smiles, sadness and pleasure, sunlight and showers, excelling more than other lands in extremes ; as in climate so in the characteristics of her inhabitants. The world over, do we ever meet finer samples of peasantry than in Ireland, true, daring, joyous, to whom the very delight of living is a happiness beyond the ken of many people. But, then, do we not find too many of what has been described as the "black Irish" ; men false to their friends, traitors and informers, disgraces to their country. The contrast is great between such men and those heroes who have suffered for the cause they believed in, who, like the brave M'Kinley of Connagher, when a prisoner at Coleraine with two others, was offered a respite from two o'clock until four to enable a reply to come from the authorities to a message sent them before the execution should take place. When M'Kinley heard such a respite was granted he immediately said, "No, I have staked my life deliberately on the issue and have lost. I neither ask nor will accept any quarter from the enemies of my country." He was accordingly executed at once, whilst banishment instead of death was the reward of the other two who accepted the respite.

Of such grit was made the "Soldiers Four" : Daniel Gillan, Owen M'Kenna, William M'Kenna and Peter Carron, privates in the Monaghan Militia. Active had they been in the popular cause—United men themselves, they had united many others to the ranks of the revolutionary army. Soldiers many, and civilians not a few, had joined with them, but the informer was early at work, and in May, 1797, their secrets were discovered. On the sixth of that month, the Lord Lieutenant having

heard of the disaffection of the Monaghan Militia, granted a free pardon to all the men who should acknowledge themselves guilty of taking the oath of the United Irishmen, and express contrition. The regiment was paraded in the Barrack Square in North Queen Street, and out of the ranks stepped 70 men acknowledging their offence. General Lake then addressed the men, pointing out the clemency of his excellency, and desiring all the men to adhere their allegiance to the King. The "Soldiers Four" were not amongst those who expressed "contrition" for an act they gloried in. Their actions were however known to the authorities ; the old street ballad says "Lynch and Reels deceived them" and so they were tried by court martial, found guilty and sentenced to be shot for "not using their utmost endeavour to suppress mutiny and sedition, being present thereat, and for not giving information to their commanding officer of such mutiny."

On Tuesday morning, the 16th May, 1797, the streets of Belfast witnessed a sad spectacle, which all the blare of trumpets and the roll of drums, the flashing of steel, and the bright uniforms of the soldiers could not enliven.

A guard of soldiers, horse and foot, with the whole Monaghan regiment, guarded two cars, upon which sat the "Soldiers Four" with two priests. The march was to Blaris camp, a little way beyond Lisburn, where the soldiers were to be shot by their own comrades, Irishmen too, they who had been "united," for we are told that the Colonel of the Reay Fencibles, a Scottish Regiment, was asked to allow his men to fire, and indignantly refused, so as it has often happened, Irishmen fell by the hands of Irishmen at the dictates of a stranger. Wincing under the disgrace of this incident, Dr. Drennan wrote the following scathing lines :—

When bid to take aim at the Irishman's heart,
 The stout Caledonian recoiled with a start ;
 The first of my country, the first of my clan,
 Ever ordered to fire on a blindfolded man.
 You will find fitter tools to perform such a deed,
 And by Irish hands let the Irishmen bleed.
 In the spirit of Cain let them murder each other,
 And the United fall by his United brother ;
 So the Irish went first, and the Irish went last,
 And guarded by Irish the prisoners past,
 On their coffins knelt down, took their silent farewell,
 The United men fired, the United men fell.

This tragedy, however, had a brighter side, for the poor victims prior to their execution were exhorted to turn informers and reveal the names and actions of their comrades. This they stoutly refused to do. Even Owen M'Kenna's father, when brought to the scene to try and save his son's life, stated his son should never save his life by treachery, for, if he did, he himself should be the first to take it. No such thoughts, however, disturbed the last hours of the dauntless four, true to themselves, true to their comrades, true to their country, under the quiet heavens they knelt upon their coffins, and were shot—by their own comrades. This took place at two o'clock in the afternoon, and the whole regiment was filed past the dead bodies.

The burial took place at once. No trappings of woe were at that funeral, no military march was played, nor volleys fired over the grave. Quickly and quietly were they laid side by side, in old Blaris churchyard, just inside the gate on the right-hand side, and no stone or monument records the sleepers' names.

That same evening the Monaghan regiment returned to Belfast. As the cold stars looked down upon the "firing party" surely strange thoughts must have heaved

within their breasts, chilling them to the heart, as cold almost as the four silent bosoms in Blaris Moor.

Three days later the Monaghan regiment, with other military in Belfast, wrecked and demolished the "Northern Star" printing office, throwing the types into the street, for, amongst other things, the interest that paper had taken in the fate of the "soldiers four."

The following pathetic lines are from the pen of William Sampson, who was sometime editor of the "Northern Star," and are well worthy of a wider knowledge :—

My soul is sunk beneath a world of grief,
My blood runs chill and slow thro' every part,
Nor can this world's joys afford relief,
For bitter anguish preys upon my heart.

Four Irish lads, with no dishonour stain'd,
Four gallant youths as Ireland ever saw,
Have met their doom, by treachery arraign'd,
And murder'd by the blight of barb'rous law.

What was their crime? To love their country well,
To wish it's union and to wish it free;
For this they bled, for this they nobly fell;
True to themselves—O, Ireland—and to thee.

Since wicked men, their evil ends to gain,
First sent the soldier to a foreign grave;
And order'd countless thousands to be slain,
None perish'd half so honest, or so brave.

I saw the dismal light! I saw them brought,
Solemn and silent, to the bed of death;
From slavish hirelings they receiv'd the shot;
And yielded up to heaven their native breath.

A thousand times, to tempt them to betray,
Life and rewards were offer'd them in vain;
They proudly cast the proffer'd boons away,
And spurn'd the tempter with a cold disdain.

Nor friends nor kindred their firm souls could move,
Sweet images that clung around the heart;
They left them all their wealth—their country's love—
And bade farewell! for ever more to part.

I saw the aged father standing by,
Scorning by treason his son's life to save,
For he could bear to see his darling die,
But not to live a traitor or a slave.

Intent and firm he watched the ruffian stroke,
Intrepid courage beaming in his eye;
Nor ever other words than these he spoke,
Son, thou hast taught thy countrymen to die.

Oh! truth and honour, where must you be found?
Not in the palace, or the glittering court;
You rather dwell within the lowly cot,
And with the simple and the poor resort.

For from an humble stock these heroes grew,
Strangers to fortune, and unknown to fame,
By heaven alone endow'd with hearts so true,
And rich in death, which consecrates their name.

B.

Musings on Slievenamon.—No. I.

BY A DRANGAN BOY.

SLIEVENAMON-FION! What memories throng around thy historic name! Looming gracefully amidst the green vales of Tipperary, many an ardent eye often gazed on thy gloomy outline, and drank in with avidity the inspiration which hovers 'round thee. Mountain of fair women! Those who have drank deeply of the ancient love of Erin disagree as to thy origin. One

calls thee the "Mountain of the Women of Fevin," an ancient territory corresponding to a modern barony which stretches beneath thy shadows. Others delve more into the depths of the past and say you took your name from a race of Tuathe-De-Danaan, fair-haired beauties who inhabited thy dells in the ages long ago. They tell us that a company of Finn M'Cahill's warriors, as they chased the deer along the old mountain sides, once fell under their spells, upon whom those enchantresses cast a deep sleep and flung into the caverns of a fairy palace, still pointed out on the eastern shoulder of the hill, there to remain, like others in Innishowen and Kildare, till the real and final struggle for Erin's redemption takes place. 'Tis about time now that Irishmen should forget that the shades of past heroes can give them no further help in this long-fought fight than what the memory of their heroic deeds should inspire. If you wish for freedom, trust yourselves and yourselves alone. All others have axes of their own to grind, and you'll find in the end that turning the whetstone for them shall be a sore and disappointing business.

But to Slievenamon. However its name grew, it still stands, one of those finger posts which dot the long and weary road, travelled in sunshine and storm by those sons of Ireland who have ever bent their steps on the thorny paths of freedom. Many a weary and foot-sore outlaw found shelter and repose in the lonely caverns of Slievenamon, cared, tended, and consoled by the fair descendants of those lovely "women of Fevin," who had given it its name. Let us ascend its craggy sides as the cloudless summer sun dispels the haze which lingers over its frowning brow. Step by step as we advance and gaze over the boundless landscape beneath, spot by spot draped over by the halo of historic romance comes into view. The winding Anner croons along its base, made famous by the magic pen of Tipperary's poet-patriot, our illustrious Charles J. Kickham. His ashes mingle with their native clay in the shadow of the old mountain where oft he wooed and won that genius which now places him amongst the foremost in our Irish Walhalla. As we stood amongst the thousands who throng by times around his honored sepulchre the spirit of Davis seemed to hover near, and catching it somewhat, our wayward muse burst forth the following refrain to

KICKHAM'S GRAVE.

In the valley of Compsey there is a green grave,
Above it the shadows of Slievenamon wave;
A pleasing pall o'er the lov'd tenant inside,
Is the gloom of that mountain, his "darling and pride."

Tipperary stands round it to honour once more
The hero that sleeps there, the pure life that's o'er,
And breathe from his spirit the gushing refrain
Oft rous'd the dark slave to his manhood again.

The friends of his childhood, companions of youth,
And maidens whose beauty he sang of, and truth,
Who wept for his fate when in prison he lay,
Round his sanctified grave are all gathered to-day.

And young men who vow that the fetters accurst,
Which shackle their limbs they're determined to burst,
Have come to his shrine that resolve to renew,
And pledged it again, their lov'd Kickham, with you.

No altar more meet to lay such vows upon,
No witness more fitting than old Slievenamon;
No music more sweet than the Anner's croon near,
The nurse of his song to his muse ever dear.

While Slievenamon towers, while his lov'd Anner flows,
While Compsey's green grass on his honor'd grave grows,
Shall Kickham be named and his virtues be known,
As ages to come shall each claim him its own.