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Songs of the
Irish Revolution
and
Songs of the
Newer Ireland

William A. Millen



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SONGS OF THE
IRISH REVOLUTION
AND
SONGS OF THE
NEWER IRELAND

BY
WILLIAM A. MILLEN



BOSTON
THE STRATFORD CO., Publishers
1920

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The STRATFORD CO., Publishers
Boston, Mass.

The Alpine Press, Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

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Dedication

TO

ONE OF MY OWN IN SLIGO THROUGH WHOSE KINDNESS
AND CONSIDERATION I WAS BROUGHT TO ERIN
AND WHO THUS MADE THIS
UNDERTAKING POSSIBLE

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FOREWORD

teer movement. The climax came in the Rebellion of Easter 1916! The Irish Revolution, as it is sometimes termed, was fraught with deeper significance than the majority of men could see.

The general unrest in Ireland's metropolis caused an anxious parent to recall me to the land of my birth and early upbringing — the United States of America! Still, the great trend of Irish Republican thought swept on and carried the country in the General Election of December 1918. But little over two years were required to forge the stubborn iron of public opinion in the furnace of the Newer Ireland spirit! The procrastinating, promising puerile Ireland of Redmond and Dillon became the active, achieving and alert Ireland of the Easter Week martyrs, of De Valera and Arthur Griffith!

A better era for Erin is dawning, for within the Republican fold, no creed nor class privilege prevails. In my student days in Dublin, I used to see the law students, dusky and turbaned from far-off India, wearing the Sein Fein tricolor! It is my humble opinion that the National University of Ireland (my own old Alma Mater) will be the salvation of the country. I wonder if Ireland's critics remember that the leaders and martyrs of the Volunteer movement were men of learning and respectability — that many of the rank and file were college men! I have the faith that the alumni of N.U.I. shall very soon come to be a force in the land. May Ireland be raised to that degree of perfection to which all good Irishmen in particular, and every true citizen of the world in general, would have her in reality. She is already so in our thoughts and ideals. Erin Go Bragh: GOD SAVE IRELAND.

U. S. S. Aulick, October 31, 1919.

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Prologue

Oftentimes, around the fires of memory,
The scenes and friends I used to know,
Come from the shadow-land of Yesterday,
And live again, in Fancy's roseate glow:
And then ere yet we set forth on the morrow
To pioneer our way across the plains untrod,
I think me of my boyhood's days in Sligo,
And neath the moon, I see an olden church of God:
I see the neat and whitewashed cottages
Where in my teens my errant feet once led —
The lakes, the mountains and the villages:
The pastures where the strapping kine were fed.
I see again the little Irish churchyard
Where my forefathers sleep in silence and content:
Ransboro Chapel too . . . my thoughts all guard
Each spot where happiest days of mine were spent!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Newer Ireland

Out of chaos into cosmos,
Out of suffering and throes —
Rejuvenant and joyful,
The Newer Ireland rose!
The Emerald Isle gave up its wealth
To children of her soil;
And industry and learning
Gave brain and brawn their toil!

Her harbors long a barren waste
Were ploughed by ships galore;
And against her purple heavens,
Huge saffron wings did soar!
The exports of her busy sons
Touched earth's forgotten bounds;
And the Celts once hunted as the hare,
Ran with the foremost hounds!

Self-reliant, self-determined —
No more a beggar went
Beseeching strangers' benison;
Her heart with anguish rent:
The Bog of Allen flourished
With dear homes and fields all sowed,
And the rugged Wicklow mountains
Gave the wealth that God bestowed!

Where once the olden days had seen
But blackness and Death's pall;
Ten million Gælic children dwelt

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

From Cork to Donegal!
Her missionaries preached afar —
Her scholars filled the earth;
And seanachus told how an Easter Week
Had wrought New Ireland's birth!

And in lecture halls, the learning
Of Columba thrived once more —
And the Isle of Saints and Scholars
Glowed with Patrick's faith of yore:
Sure the heart o' me was joyful,
For beneath her newer phase,
'Twas the same sweet soul of Ireland,
That had steeled her bitter days!



At the Dawning

Verses written while a student in University
College Dublin (N. U. I.) after the Rebellion of
Easter 1916.

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Patriot Martyrs of 1916!

They died like their sires before them —
Gave all for their Dark Rosaleen:
Life, talent and blood, all for Erin,
In love for their emerald green:
Glad to die for downtrodden Ireland,
Faced the guns of the firing squad
In the yard of notorious Kilmainham,
Returned their pure souls to their God!

They saw their Republic vanish,
As oft Erin's dream hath before —
Men of brains, of position and learning
Paid the price with their priceless gore:
When earth smiled in Maytime's glory,
And bells told of Paschal tide,
These dashing Republican soldiers
Went to meet their Crucified!

Ah, what must have been the greeting
Beyond the dim mountains of Death,
When the souls of those patriot-martyrs
Went forth, with the last feeble breath!
Did not Erin's illustrious army,
Way up in the City of Peace
Welcome their latest comrades
Who bled for dear Erin's release!

Methinks bold Robert Emmet,
The O'Donnell of yore and O'Neill;
With Davis and Rossa and Wolfe Tone;

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Allan, Larkin, O'Brien — all leal —
Hailed the newest heroes of Erin
In Columba's and Patrick's home —
Afar from earth's turmoil and trouble,
In the blessed ethereal dome!

Silent now are their trusty muskets
That gallantly scattered the foe;
Their green-white-and-orange banner
Floats no more o'er the G. P. O.
Yet those heroes shall live undying
Like the spirit of Granuale,
And their deeds shrined in song and story,
Shall summon the clans of the Gael!

Yes, the Fair and the Loving shall mourn them,
And pray for their souls' repose;
But the brave and the dauntless shall murmur
For vengeance against the Rose!
When the names of the tyrants that slew them
Shall have turned to death and decay,
The names of the '16 heroes
Will thrill sober hearts and gay!

Future days shall enkindle that spirit
Of the Old in the willing New,
And make their grandest visions —
Their wildest dreams come true!
Hoary sire and sober matron
Will repeat the saga once more,
And whisper: "O Children of Erin,
Remember the heroes of yore!"

I decipher the uncertain shadows
On the veil of the Future so dark,
And list how proud Erin shall utter

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The names Pearse, MacDonagh and Clarke:
Shall tell with real glowing ardor,
How courageous and well they died;
Of Heuston, McDermott and Plunkett
And the rest with brave Major McBride!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

A Lonely Lamentation

Wail now, O Banshee of the Irish nation,
Wail for the bold and the brave:
Mourn for the patriot sons of poor Erin,
In tears their fond memories lave:
Where are the fervent Republican heroes,
That lately spake, full of good cheer?
O alas, moan, lament, be sorrowful,
For no longer they linger here!

Raise the *keen* in the gloomy homesteads,
Grieve for the martyred dead:
Sit in sackcloth and lowly ashes,
For those souls who forever are fled.
Let the Requiem solemn be chanted;
Toll slowly the old church bell:
Let the sad notes of "Dies Irae"
Be sung for the Brave who fell!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Message of the Dead!

Ho, the Irish Brigade has come to life
In these dismal latter years:
Not "on far foreign fields" do they enter the strife,
Those Irish Volunteers!
The Wild Geese have flown to their native shore,
And they strike with stalwart arm —
Mid the crack of rifle in the capital,
They answer the sharp alarm!

No more 'neath King Louis' *fleur-de-lis*,
Or the banner of Sunny Spain:
They have answered Erin's feeble plea,
Freely and not in vain.
Black '47 has passed and gone,
And the days of '98,
But the spirit of Vinegar Hill lives on
And the Fenian ambitions great;

With the rousing, ringing watchword
That a sorrowful past recalls,
With the treacherous, lying, Orange horde
Outside old Limerick's walls,
The Irish Republic's soldiers
Strike a blow for their Innisfail,
To free from British serfdom
The children of the Gael!

The fiery cross a-blazing fleets;
The tocsin speaks to the world;
'Tis Easter Monday in Dublin's streets — .

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

There New Ireland's flag is unfurled!
Though only a fraction of Erin's sons
Followed the tri-color then,
Their apparent defeat is our strengthening
To rouse up the souls of men!

.

In the blushing modest month of May,
Fifteen brave hearts were stayed:
Confessors one and all were they
For that creed for which Lawrence prayed:
For which brave Hugh Roe gave up his life,
For which Hugh of Dungannon planned:
Aye, for which that valiant soldier fought —
Owen Roe, 'neath O'Neill's Red Hand!

And in later times for which Wolfe Tone,
Lord Edward and Emmet too
Waged all, save honor bright alone,
When stormy tempests blew:
The cause, the creed, the beau ideal
For which Grattan pleaded long,
Of which Moore, Davis, Mangan, sang,
With lyre and plaintive song!

Confessors aye, and martyrs stand
For the cause of yesterday:
That Kickham, Parnell, Mitchell and
Smith-O'Brien loved away!
What are the names, O willing scribe,
The angel will record,
That Erin might the strength revive
Of Meagher of the Sword!

Yes, write them reverently too
Upon each Irish freeman's heart —

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

In burning letters write the True
Who bravely played their part.
Write Ceannt and Colbert, John McBride,
Daly and Thomas Clarke:
The dauntless brothers Pearse — they gleam
Like beacons in the dark!

Write on and let the whole world know
Of Plunkett's deeds of fame;
How Heuston faced and beat the foe;
James Connolly the same!
The O'Rahilly, Gael of the Gaelic soul,
MacDonagh the Muses' friend:
McDermott, the brothers O'Hanrahan;
For all let our praise ascend!

O God of our Fathers, not in vain have they died,
They watch from their felon's graves:
Their spirits within us shall ever abide,
Bringing hope to those reckoned as slaves:
"Idealists all" will the critic sneer;
But they who love Erin's lore
Will breathe a fond prayer for her soldier sons
Who revived the true spirit of yore!

O God of our Fathers, in peace may they rest,
Who died that Erin might live:
If aught was against thy Christ's behest
O God of our Fathers, forgive!
Requiescat: In some grim prison ground,
Those Celtic of the Celts now sleep;
Mingling with their beloved soil,
While we stay behind and weep!

Awaiting the Last Loud Trumpet's call
They slumber . . . their life's work o'er:

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Freely they gave up life and all
To revive the spirit of yore.
For helping hands and loyal hearts
The mighty dead call on the Gael,
"Arise and finish out our work,
For God and Innisfail!"

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Muse of Mars

(To the memory of Thomas MacDonagh, Assistant Professor of English Literature in University College, Dublin, by one of his students there).

I used to hear your lectures in the University,
Where lions guarding, look out upon Saint Stephen's Green:
You were fair Wisdom's priest in that beloved scene,
And we were students seeking for an Arts' degree:
All through the dying Autumn days of dull '15
To Christmas white, your daily task (and ours) went pleasantly!

Then came the tedious term after the Yule:
The welcome holidays appeared and went at Eastertide;
And you, alas, went with them, for you on earth had died —
Now gone to be a truer teacher in a newer school —
To preach the fiery gospel of a Nation sorely tried
Unto a world where only spirits rule!

Beloved Professor! In my foolish heart methinks I know
Your spirit often haunts the school great Newman led:
Like some brave Hamlet, carried off while precious youth was red —
Airing thy grievances and Erin's to July suns and Winter's Snow:

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Mingling with the students when 'tis noonday over-
head,
And walking pensively alone, beneath the moon's
fair glow!

Thine was the scholar's soul, the Poet's and the
Seer's:

Thine was the vision of the sheeted dead and gibber-
ing ghosts —

The battles in the clouds among the arméd hosts
Above the City of Dublin. With the fulness of the
years,

Forsake the doom and darkness over which the
tyrant boasts —

Come, strengthen willing arms and dry the widow's
tears!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Erin Free — Erin Glorified

Hark Erin! Raise aloft thy tear-stained eyelids;
Arise from thy ebonite bed:
Behold in the household of Heaven,
The forms of thy Immortal Dead:
There see the sons of Saint Patrick
In serried ranks appear,
As Princes in God's own Kingdom —
They, deemed but plebians here!

Thou who hast clung in dark desolation
To the sad yet comforting Tree;
Will yet ascend from Mount Olivet,
After death on thy Calvary!
Aye, will mount the stairs of Heaven
When Christ ascends once more,
After Jehosaphat's judgment —
Thy pain and mourning o'er!

In the New Solyma of glory —
Citizens leal to their King,
The Children of Lir and their mother
Shall reign free from sorrowing!
Then truly the Erin that suffered
When others were rich and free,
Will gain from the Sun of Justice,
Her fulness of Liberty!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

To a Rebel Patriot Leader!

(Lines written in memory of Patrick H. Pearse, Commandant-General of the Irish Republican Army during the stirring days of Easter Week, 1916.)

O Eminent Patriot, Poet and Scholar,
 Sadly have I read thy last adieu
Written to thy cherished mother —
 And the little poem penned by you:
How could mortal read that letter
 Of a brave intrepid Gael,
And not feel a throb of anguish
 For the dead in Kilmainham Jail!

A holocaust dear to the hearts of all Freemen,
 Thou and thy bold companions wert;
A sacrifice rare, that the Spirit of Erin
 Might awaken and watch alert;
Oil for the lamp of Kathleen Ni-Houlihan,
 To guide her through the gathering gloom —
You Patrick Pearse, and your trusty fellows,
 Chose gladly a prison tomb!

“This is the death I should have asked for” —
 Well did your wish come true!
“A soldier’s death for Erin and freedom”
 Was yours, with your dauntless Few!
But now thou art gone, Brave Hero:
 Orator, bold pamphleteer —
Head-master in far-famed Saint Enda’s:
 We breath a true prayer o’er your bier!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Twine then a garland of prayers for the Valiant,
Who martialled the Volunteers:
Let their names writ in blood, shine in glory —
Wax bright with the coming years.
May their spirit live within us —
Undying, true and fierce:
And remember the noblest and purest —
The illustrious Patrick Pearse!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

June — the Artist at Eventide

A rich golden belt clasps the Western sky,
On this eventide in June:
 Cloudlets of violet and pinkish hue
 Float 'twixt the sky-line and Heaven's blue;
Over a halo of tea-rose tint:
The swaying elm trees, half green, half black,
Keep time as the breezes sigh:
One bashful star 'gins in gold to glint,
Into sight like the mother-moon,
 For the lordly sun has gone to rest:
 Then a shy little star, the boldest and best
Calls to brothers and sisters too,
 "Come out, for the sun's not in sight"—
And e'en now his banners bright fade in his track,
 Into the purple of night!



Echoes of Erin

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Awakening

Did they think that the soul of my Erin was dead —
That Saxon wiles had wooed her?
Did they think that heart the years had bled
Now had turned to her vain intruder?
Did they think that the wounds that yet were red,
Could be healed by the kiss of a Tudor?

Vain thoughts for the grasping Saxon band,
For the soul of my Erin so meek,
Awoke, o'er the drugged and drowsy land
In her sons of that brave Easter Week!
For aye be it thus, when true men shall stand,
For God and Erin to speak!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Return of the Celts.

The Celts are going, the Saxons sang
O'er a proud race, famished by hunger's pang:
 They chuckled in their fiendish glee,
 They sail in their coffin-ships over the sea
Away to Southern and Western climes:
They boasted through the London Times,
 In jeering tones, in accents glowing,
 "The Celts are going, the Celts are going!"

The Celts are going . . . but not yet gone:
Thank God, their children still live on
 In the Land of Patrick and Columbkille,
 In the fertile vale, on the rugged hill:
But the Bad Times and the crowbar brigades
Have filled many a hearthstone with green grass
 blades:
 Within many a quiet churchyard gate,
 They sleep, who perished in '48!

The Celts are going . . . but hark on the gale
That sweeps the four corners of Granuale,
 The sound of a rifle in Dublin's fair Town:
 Why it tilts the King of England's crown,
And the bullets of the Volunteers
Are singing the watchword of the years —
 The Wild Geese return from a foreign vale —
 What Ho! The Celts are coming back to Innisfail!

The Celts are coming back again —
'Cross purple hill and mossy glen:

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Not with furtive step, but with tread of men,
The Spirit of Erin, o'er hill and fen
Sweeps with the stride of Owen Roe —
Though footsteps of blood dot the virgin snow —
The Spirit of Erin is marching on
With men of brain and men of brawn!

The Celts are coming back to stay —
To inherit the land of their sires' clay:
The West's awake from Shannon to sea,
She has answered the call of Liberty!
Ye Sons of Banba, arise in your might —
De Valera leads for Erin and Right:
Thank God, the Celts are coming back
Into their own, again!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Mankind's University

The Cross of Christ rears up its head —
The light of Knowledge full is shed
Upon each kindly hill and vale:
Sweet Peace, her benison bestows
And Piety now thrives and grows
With Learning, in dear Innisfail!

From Burgundy the scholars come,
From utmost parts of Christendom:
From far Italian frontiers,
To Armagh, Derry and Clonard,
To go forth doctor, teacher, bard,
From the Isle of Saints and Seers!

Wherever Christ's blessed creed is taught,
The sons of Holy Erin sought
The pagans far across the sea:
From Derry, Clonfert and Lismore
The sainted scholars homeward pour
From mankind's university!

Alas, the mad barbaric hordes,
The Norsemen from their native fjords
Swept down where piety and learning grew;
And tried to tarnish her fair name
Until the day of reckoning came
With Clontarf and Brian Boru!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Misfortune followed from the Danes —
A ruthless foe swept o'er her plains;
The schools — the pride of Long Ago,
Were ruined by a stranger's hand;
The monasteries of the land
Fell, as the walls of Jericho!

The dead alone can fitly tell
Of ruined altar and silent bell —
Of abbeys and schools where the mosses grow:
Well may their children long bewail
The fall of the learning of Innisfail —
Famed Bangor's ruin, and Armagh's woe!

O Learning that once was Erin's pride,
When the pagan ruled half a world beside —
Come, as the foreign scholars do,
From India's and America's pale,
To study with the sons of Gael —
O let great Newman's dream come true!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Saint Patrick's Day at Sea

Saint Patrick's Day upon the ocean wide;
Far, far away from Erin and the shamrocks green;
Apart from friends, and one fair sweet colleen
Exiled from me, her lover, and her home by Shan-
non's side!

Saint Patrick's Day "Somewhere upon the Atlantic
waves"—
O God be with the good old days of yore
When far away in Erin, fun and mirth galore
Ran riot in the land for which my fond heart craves!

Sometimes through the sea, I think I hear the wail
Of plaintive bagpipes down the lonely years,
And then to "God save Ireland" march the Volun-
teers,
And my heart goes trooping onward with the children
of the Gael!

Down whitewashed village streets this holy day,
Fresh plucked shamrocks on each proud breast
airily —
The fifes and drums are playing merrily
The "Wearin' of the Green" to me, from far away!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Protean Land.

I saw once a land where the grasses grew
Greener and yet more green;
And the moonbeams peeped on the rich cornfields
That shone in a silvery sheen:
I saw the fish in her rivers leap,
And the stags on her proud hills roam:
I sighed and longed for that lovely land —
A fairyland, and a home!

But I looked again when the sun was high,
And the sky hung in blue-gold veils;
And I saw her people — a wretched lot,
Living in cabins and jails:
But most of her children were scattered far
To the East and the distant West:
Ah, there seemed no hope, for the foreign yoke
Bore down on that race oppressed!

And I saw the ruins that marked the march
Of this race across centuries:
Cromlech, round-tower and abbey
Arched by the eternal trees!
Alas that the canker-worm of hate
Had set its mark everywhere:
Famine and exile had stifled her all,
And I prayed, "GOD COMFORT HER!"

The legions of Hell were gathered there
To harass each step and path:

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The angels came when the darkness fell,
To pour out the vials of wrath:
But I saw a light in Cimmerian gloom,
And it grew till it reached the sky —
And the voice of the dead through the living spoke,
“Our land shall never die!”

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

A Celtic Christmas

The Twenty-fourth was all so quiet and still,
Save when some homeward cart with Christmas fare
Rattled along as horses climbed the hill —
Yet there was frost and silence in the air!
And just a blotch of palest rose,
Smear'd across the West in timid flight
Was all the meek day said . . . and now he goes,
And there is silence grey, and night!

The gleam of stars that tremble in the frost
Is leading me to Bethlehem, like hearthstone's
ember
Leads back the lone one and the lost,
But now the dark and cold that is December
Is cheered and lighted up — in farmhouse windows
The Christ-Child candles glimmer through each
curtained pane;
Fainter as night advances, each love-lit candle glows,
Till in the dark, they vanish, one by one again!

MIDNIGHT! The blessed hour of the Saviour's birth,
Then clearly through the icy air there swells
Twelve slow and solemn strokes to all the earth,
As Christmas Day is ushered in by chapel bells:
From midnight Mass to Mass at midday hour,
The children for the Babe of Bethlehem will come,
And through the grey gloom, God's eternal power
Is leading them out, the blind, the lame, the dumb!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The student is back from his college now,
Sons and daughters have come to their home again,
And rejoice beneath the berried holly bough,
Twined with ivy and fern, plucked in some sheltered
glen!

For the absent and dead, a prayer to the Lord
Then the Mother uncovers the warm Christmas
treat —

The best that purse and skill can afford,
On the snow-white tables, tasty and neat!

Thus passes the Cherished Christmas Day —
A feast for the body and soul outpoured;
E'en the robin will twitter a merrier lay
For the tit-bits and crumbs from the festive board!
The starlit dusk of Christmas fades and faints
Into Saint Stephen's dawn — the feast of him
The first true witness in life's blood — the van of
saints —
The nearest to the Babe of Bethlehem!

And now like perfume from some fragrant flower,
Saint Stephen's Day brings back the charm of
Christmas morn —

Many an Irish soul at mealtime hour
Abstains from meat, that he who bore first scoff
and scorn

Will ward off fevers and diseases of the flesh:
Today we go a-hunting for the wren,
And some will chase the hares with hounds so sleek
and fresh,
Panting clouds of breath o'er hill and frozen fen!

With masks and costumes queer, down many a quiet
lane,
The wren-boys come to farmhouse doors and sing

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

A Christmas carol — then an old melodion's strain
Pipes out a melody to earth's new Infant King!
Perhaps a good old-fashioned dance tonight
Will gather lads and lassies to the nearby school;
Perhaps a play will make the evening bright,
And social cheer will crown a gladsome Yule!

The Christmas Tide in Erin is the best
That earth can offer: mine the heart that knows
For I have spent them all in East or West —
Wherever on this earth, my wind's will blows:
And when my Sligo hills are wreathed in snow-drifts
wild,
My thoughts fly back there o'er a foreign sea —
Down in my heart I thank the Infant Child
And His sweet Mother, for their gifts of memory!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

A Keen for the Castle of Breffny

Ah, here O'Rourkes of Breffny lived and died,
Where stand these chill and cold grey walls:
What change from days of pomp and pride,
When festive laughter echoed through these halls!
Hearts that were bold and minds of noble power,
Forms that were fair and pure as eyes could see;
All sleep . . . some in the shade of Sligo Abbey's
tower,
And some are slumbering in Creevalea!

The ashes are long since dead on the hearth,
The rains of centuries have dashed in might
Where oft was sung the song of mirth,
And seanachus made short the Winter's night.
Only the cawing of the busy rooks is heard
Where o'er the waters rang the harp of Breffny's
proud bard:
The chattering of some small saucy bird
Replaces now the tread of many a trusty guard!

Here where in glory hung the foeman's blade,
His cherished banners and his tunic too:
Stand bleak walls by the dint of Time decayed,
And ivy hangs a-dripping with the rain and dew,
Like some sad wreath o'er Erin's house of woe —
A tribute to the memory of the brave and dead,
Who, actors in the first scene of that tragic show,
Gladly for Breffny and their Erin, fought and bled!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Here within the crackle of the stout oak logs,
Where crouched the wolf-hounds, panting from the
chase;
Young Prince O'Rourke, fresh from the hills and
bogs,
Gave to the weary stranger, once thrice-welcome
place!
The Castle of Breffny, whose wide portals wider
thrown
To those poor pilgrims in O'Sullivan Beare's re-
treat,
With the grasses of three hundred years is now o'er-
grown:
Many the souls that tarry there, though few the
feet!

Methinks a brighter light ere long will glow,
In place of one that pilgrim eyes had sought,
And yet round Dromahaire, chill winds may blow —
Unquenched will be the torch of Freedom lately
caught
From flames awakened in the Stygian gloom:
And Breffny, the first sad page in Erin's sorrowful
tale,
Long thought to be the epitaph on Nationhood's fair
tomb
Will be a sweet rainbow of promise to the Gael!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Spark

The night was dark — a tiny spark
Glowed in the ashes gray:
Though the wild wind howled,
And the black sky scowled,
Erin knelt there to pray —
And she sat near the hearthstone anxiously,
Waiting for someone, and Day!

She nursed the spark, while she heard the bark
Of distant dogs and curs:
For her own out there,
She made a prayer,
In that desolate house of hers;
And she stirred the embers fitfully —
The embers of turf and furze!

The lightning flashed and the thunder crashed
Around her comfortless cell:
Some grim funeral pyre,
She nursed her fire —
Though she suffered the torments of Hell:
And even her children would not have known
This Shan Van Vocht, their mother's shell!

Though the storms did brew and the fires grew
A dot in the night's black bowl;
The tempters came
With their hearts of shame
And offered her dole on dole —
But through all that weary night of want —
She would not sell her soul!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Somewhere in the world, a flag is unfurled,
Of orange and white and green:
And the dawning streaks
O'er the Eastern peaks
Tell of a vision seen —
For her children have kindled that dying blaze
On the hearth of my Dark Rosaleen!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Sacrifice!

“Erin must die” the tyrant decreed,
Though the tyrant had glutted his devilish greed
On her life-blood and wealth,
With a vampire’s stealth:
And poor Erin toiled on up Calvary’s slope —
To the place of skulls and of lesser hope!

Her nobler children saw her distress;
The Crown of Thorns they take and caress:
The stronger and bolder
Snatch the Cross from her shoulder —
The latest farthing of devotion they pay —
In the winepress of wrath, her pain allay!

O noble children from noble womb,
Who cheerfully chose the darkening tomb,
And heartsblood gladly gave,
That generations no longer slave
Beneath the tyrant’s hated yoke . . .
Sacred the very sacrificial smoke!

O priests of the newer dispensation,
Who live in the hearts of the Irish nation —
Your blood has more than sanctified
The colors and creed for which you died —
Let all men know your freeborn sacrifice,
And knowing, shall appreciate the price!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Eve of All Hallows in Erin

Mellow October is waning fast;
'Twill die at the stroke of midnight bells
That peal through the silence and dead of night
From the big Cathedral in Sligo Town,
Built on the beautiful River of Shells!

Tomorrow will be the Feast of All Saints —
The Militant Church will celebrate
The glory of King and Queen made poor —
The humble exalted — for Jesus' sake —
In the Church of Mary Immaculate!

But that for the morrow — this haunted night,
Joy for the Harvest haggarded now;
And fun ere the gloom of Winter,
Will keep Summer's smile within our hearts,
Till Spring returns with swallow and plough!

The sun that was sickly and yellow today
Set behind the cairn of Knocknarea:
A rosy, robust chap, and now the lanes
And shucks around the fields are hidden
By a mist that is ghostly and grey!

The straggling carts rattle homewards,
And the howling of some distant dog
Lends a sense of weirdness to the scene:
Whiter than snow are the fields neath the moon
That gleams alike on hill and bog!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The flicker of the open firelight plays
On the curtains and yellow blinds
Of many a happy home tonight,
The Gael their ancient Sawan hold once more
With gleeful hearts and cheerful minds!

Loughey boys shall have their night this Halloweve:
A riot of home-made fun and revelry:
Gates shall be missing the dawn of All Saints:
And cabbage stumps will rattle on many a cottage
door,
Just for a bit of pure deviltry

Happy the unwedded maid who finds
The ring in her piece of home-made cake:
A bride before twelvemonths she'll be:
And the bouchaill will read the Fate's decree,
For his future colleen's sake!

In the depths of many a lonely kiln,
Unwinding a ball of yarn:
The lover will see life's future mate:
The mirror reflects my love this night,
As I eat an apple by candlelight in the barn.

Nora will know which one of her boys
Will be true, by the chestnuts that jump on the
grate:
Rosy apples and cakes and nuts galore
Will load the tables, this set night —
Anon the mystic rites we'll celebrate!

The ritual of Halloweve demands
The unwed, uncertain lover to fare
For one thirsty night on a salty herring —

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Oh, the tricks that are played with the Sphinx of
Fate —

In my homeland, from Grange to Ballysodare!

While far away in my Erin they play

Their jokes this Thirty-first, mid moans and grins
My cup of sadness is turned to wine of joy,
Because I know a prayer for me, their roving boy,
Is offered up, before the evening meal begins!

While in verses rude I write the story of this night,

As 'tis in my own place 'round Sligo:
And live in spirit as once I lived in flesh —
I know that I am leagues away from those dear
scenes —

A rover on the restless Gulf of Mexico!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Caed Mile Failte

To sea-bound battlements I came,
In a land that once held a fair proud name
 In the Western sea;
And guarding the glory of bygone days,
I heard that password, that Heavenly phrase —
 Caed Mile Failte!

What wealth of earnest, goodly cheer
From smiling Irish lips to hear
 Caed Mile Failte!
The kindly Celt's forget-me-not;
Ah, sweeter words were never thought —
 Caed Mile Failte!

They mean, "We open up our land,
Our homes, our hearts and give our hand
 To you, our friend:
Rejoice and enter Erin's gates,
Where kindest, heartiest greeting waits —
 Caed Mile Failte!

Poor outcast, yet of golden parts,
We gather you unto our hearts,
 Caed Mile Failte!
Our land is poor, but yet our best
Is all for you, our welcome guest —
 Caed Mile Failte!

Our treasure-house is opened up,
Come, drink a brimming measure cup —
 Caed Mile Failte!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Drink in the legends and the lore,
Our music, history — and more,
 Our literature and ways!

.

Some friends will wish your future well,
And health and happiness foretell —
 Vain, idle hopes:
But the Celtic saying welcomes you
In robes that other folks would rue —
 Caed Mile Failte!

Ah, in my wanderings I have heard
The kindly, genial greeting word
 Of many climes:
The “Viva” of the Portuguese,
But one is sweeter far than these —
 Caed Mile Failte!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Vision of Granuale!

I have caught the Irish spirit
From the legends and the lore;
And learned to love my sires' land
From shore to rocky shore
I have seen the peace of Tir-n-an-ogue
In gentle country lanes:
And the martial fire of Owen Roe
Flashed in thunder and the rains:
I've seen scattered shrines of Druid gods
In groups of sturdy oak:
I have knelt at moss-grown altars,
Loved by genial country-folk:
The sorrowed tale of suffering
Is writ in Breffney's halls,
But the hymn of hope and freedom
Rings through glens from waterfalls:
The ancient glory of Erin,
Stands inscribed in Clonmacnoise;
In the fields and heath-clad mountains
I have listened to her voice:
Her spirit falls upon me
As I read her martyr's prose,
And glean history from the ballads
Of her glory and her woes!
Her retinue of fairies
From the cromlechs and the raths,
And the leprechauns and banshees
That haunt the lonesome paths —
All these passed before my vision
In one glorious review —

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

As I dreamt of holy Ireland,
Beneath skies of Southern blue:
And I've seen the Shan Van Vocht in her
When bogs were grey with cloud:
Sweet Kathleen Ni Houlihan
Came with the Maytime proud:
Sure I'm thinking of the heathered hills,
And fields all fringed with furze
And I'm praying that 'twill come again —
The glory that was hers!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Stranger's Castle

In the gentle peace of an Irish vale
A stranger full armed in a coat of mail
Rode into the dell
Where Peace did dwell,
And built a stronghold in that paradise —
A stain beneath the genial Irish skies
That ever meditate upon the sons of Gael!

And they who dwelt in that valley fair
Oft wondered what the stranger knight kept there;
And rumors ran
That the fairy clan
Kept holiday in its walls of mystery —
For the stranger kept under lock and key
This castle haunted as a banshee's lair!

The Stranger came both early and late
To lead some Croppies to the castle gate:
Whispering, pale
He told the tale
Of Protestant tyrants that had tracked their sires
To Death, with famine, sword and fires —
Craftily the Stranger sowed the seeds of hate!

This same Stranger took some Irish Protestants aside,
And to their ears a secret he'd confide:
A hideous plot
Was being wrought
By Croppies to disrupt the Island Home,
And set a tyrant Pope of Rome
Upon the soil for which their sires died!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The years are not long (nor the memory spent)
Since the Stranger went forth on his errand bent:

And kept apart
The Irish heart—

For Croppy and Orange madly vied
To win the day for their own dear side,
While the stranger laughed to his heart's content!

But there came a day in Erin of ours,
When the Stranger left his castle's towers:

A messenger white
At dead of night

Came riding hotfoot from the Stranger's shore
With the startling, terrible news of war—
"Come quick, and gather all your powers!"

While the Stranger was fighting his foemen bold,
Some were seen to enter the castle's fold:

For Orange and Green
Went there to glean

The secret that held them both in awe,
And made them enemies within the law—
So together they entered the Stranger's stronghold!

They searched cranny and nook and every place;
And they swore an oath in the Stranger's face,

Did Orange and Green:
And that gentle scene

Became no more a bugbear for them both:
In its halls they joined a solemn oath—
United we stand for the Irish race!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The New Irish Brigade

No Irish seas sing requiem,
Nor Irish winds shall moan o'er them —
Whose bones and ashes scattered wide
Throughout the known world today —
As soldiers, saints and scholars, they
Toiled far from Shannon's side!

Some as brave warriors undismayed,
And some in a gentle cloister's shade;
And some as builders of states were seen;
And more in Learning's lecture hall . . .
But the sorrow of Erin smote them all —
The love of their Dark Rosaleen!

Brave exiles from their native shore,
Gladly and willingly they swore
To work and fight and die at last
For the land wherein they settled down:
In quiet field and noisy town —
'Neath many flags their lives were passed!

Down through the bitter centuries
A flag that fluttered in the breeze
Was carried through war's blood and fire:
An emblem of their creed unfurled:
Confession unto all the world:
On battlefield: in lonely choir!

A legend writ in blood and love
On foreign fields did float above

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

That dauntless band where'er they strayed:
From Ramillies to Landen's plain:
From Ypres down to sunny Spain —
The conquering Irish Brigade.

The passing of olden scepter and crown
Dimmed not the Irish Brigade's renown:
Through the turmoil of a Civil War,
Meagher's famed Brigade right nobly stood
And wrote their fame in steel and blood,
From Virginia's slopes to Georgia's shore!

When the pillars of the whole world shook,
The field the Irish soldiers took:
The requiem now sobs and swells
For Anzac, Scotch, Canadian,
For French and for American —
From Flanders to the Dardanelles!

"Faithful always and everywhere"
Was the motto their fathers used to bear:
Though not always a decimated race
Torn by famine and prison and steel,
They always heard the stranger's appeal —
They never stood in the tyrant's place!

And say ye that this race is dead —
That these famed Wild Geese all have fled?
Forgot their ancient, earned renown —
They only sleep till the Judgment Day,
Victors on fields of awful fray?
Seek ye the answer in Dublin Town!

The stranger's cause has well been fought:
The stranger's liberty dearly bought

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

With Irish blood and Irish tears:

Know ye, we fight for our Motherland,
And on Erin's shore we take our stand
For those rights we have fought for years!

Faugh a ballagh, and clear the way,
We are out for Victory today;
We trample the olden bigots and lies,
And rear our standard of truth and light
Aloft above the blackness of the night —
A newer light is breaking in the Irish skies!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Cardinal Newman

A Prince of Holy Church and king among them all:
Brave brainy giant who could throw the gauntlet
down

With any savant who wore cap and gown —
He left his sireland for an island small —
Kind, noble Christlike heart and mind serene;
That fellow-men might tread on learning's way:
All creed and color made of common clay —
He came to Dublin and Saint Stephen's Green!

Saint Stephen's Green in Dublin's heart
Was where a Churchman had his noblest dreams:
There where a scholar wrote his learned themes —
Above the city's din and smoke apart:
Through twilight of the Nineteenth Century, ghost-
like and faint,
He came like some blessed vision to make whole
again;
To cure the lepers and drive pain from writhing
men —
A pious scholar and a learned saint!

And then the years crept on with their reward
Of dead sea fruit for sinners and a life of woe:
Great Newman saw his scholars come and go,
And seeing, in his heart he thanked the Lord!
Those same frail frescoes that looked idly down
On sage professors busy with their books and class,
In later days beheld a wonder come to pass —
A dream as of Gerontius, came in Dublin Town!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Aye, once again from East and West
The foreign scholars flocked to Erin's shore
To drink a draught of learning and rich lore —
Once more the lights of Knowledge blazed on Erin's
crest!
After the wailing night of persecution, want and
woe —
After the hedge-school and the hunted sire,
One came to Erin — lit a quenchless fire;
Newman's the hand that set the turret lights aglow

The flame of hope that seemed to flicker in the grease
Blazed forth, as once a Paschal fire that Faith did
feed,
In liberty for every class and any creed,
That blended green and orange in the white of com-
mon Peace!
Saint Stephen's Green beheld the flash of gun and
battle scars,
And saw her sons for Mother Erin slain —
Brave college men that fought for Ireland's
gain . . .
While Newman's spirit prayed among the stars!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Sons of the Younger Ireland

There's a grey college bordering Stephen's Green :

There's a church just beside the lecture halls :
And there's vacant seats where the boys were seen

In the busy classes and choir stalls!
Full of life and learning's every phase,
They were hopeful then, in my younger days.

There's a little professor who used to teach

His English class in the afternoons —
A soldier's heart with a scholar's reach,
He lectured through harvests to busy Junes . . .
But they buried him since in a Rebel's grave:
His life for Erin and freedom he gave!

There's a brand new college they're building at ease

Around the corner 'long Earlsfort way —
Where the old Royal once conferred degrees —

But that's the tale of another day!
Mine be the dreams of Newman's domain
Where the souls of the Younger Ireland reign!

The sons of the Younger Ireland laid

Their caps and gowns and texts aside,
And grasped the keen and willing blade —

And manned machine-guns with their sires' pride:
Brave Arthur Griffith's ardent pen
Made hirelings into martial men!

For the unlettered peasant with donkey and cart —

(Unlettered because of a stranger's laws);

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

For sake of a people sick at heart,
The college men gave their lives for the cause:
And surely no star shines half as bright
As those meteor-souls that flashed in the night!

They sparkled across Old Erin's ken —
The fiery crosses that blazed from afar:
Foretelling the combat to red-blooded men,
And heralding the morning star. . . .
The dawn is breaking across the wrack,
And an army stirs in its bivouac!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Power of Blood

'Tis said that on the field of Waterloo
The prettiest flowers spring from out that fertile
soil,
Watered in years ago by blood of heroes bold,
Who bravely fell amid war's dread turmoil —
Strange thought, that Flora should prefer that crim-
soned mold
Whereon to nourish flowers the fairest ever grew!

There is a power in blood that all men know —
'Tis valued far above earth's paltry dross —
For blood is potent where gold sickly shines:
On Golgotha the Blood of Christ shed on the Cross
Purchased a gift which ten of Pluto's mines
Would not have bought for all their glittering show!

The fight for Freedom was begun in blood;
From Lexington to Yorktown it ran red:
Thank God, not vainly did that life-blood flow,
For Liberty from her secluded bed
Came forth that all the world might know
That out of evil, God distills good!

The Irish race has chafed beneath the chains
Outworn and fastened by a stranger's hand:
With one brave effort, Irishmen
Have fought and bled, proclaiming to the land
That Liberty no longer seeks a glen,
But walks abroad through all the fertile plains!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Surely the blood that flowed in Dublin's streets
When Easter bells were ringing holy peace,
Will yield a thousand-fold for all the Gael,
And from the tyrant's chains obtain release
For Motherland, our cherished Granuale . . .
O Blood that breeds a purpose in each heart that
beats!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Erin, Saint Patrick's Crown of Joy

That Paschal fire once lit upon the hill of Slane
By him who like the Baptist, feared not kings,
Burns bright today within the bosoms of the Gael,
Unquenched and undiminished by the tyrant reign
Of Persecution, whose foul arts did fail
To pervert Erin's children, safe neath Heaven's
wings!

Brave Erin! patient, strong, enduring all for Christ!
To earth thou lookest not for well-earned meed:
The Tribe of Levi 'neath the new regime of God
Art thou — ne'er wilt thou be enticed
To wander from the path that Patrick trod:
Fidelity to Peter is thy creed!

As in thine olden days, scholar and saint
Went forth to bear glad tidings to a pagan world:
May thy anointed sons set out like them,
Keeping alive the fires of Faith lest they grow faint—
Leading the exiled Celt into the New Jerusalem—
Untainted in lands where o'er sin's jagged cliffs
all creed is hurled!

The reign of Anti-christ sets in apace,
But Erin as of yore, a beacon bright
Shall beam again far o'er the shapeless surge —
For she, the Mother of a martyred race,
Shall strive for Jesus' sake to heal and purge
A sin-stained world now settling in the dusk
of night!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Fair Bride of Christ and Mother of the Gael!
To thy Apostle's wish ever firm and true:
He who upon Croagh Patrick humbly knelt;
Imploring that in Jehosaphat's dread vale,
He might be judge o'er his own Celt,
Will witness bear for thee before the wondering
nations' view!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

My Fettered Bride

Centuries ago they bound my love,
My own dear Rosaleen Dhu:
Fettered her tender limbs with a chain —
Made her walk through the mud and the cheerless
rain:
Rejoiced in her sorrow and laughed at her pain —
The heartless Saxon crew!

Through the times of the cruel Penal laws,
Avourneen, you were bent to the sod:
Your priests were hunted and done to death —
The invader poisoned Religion's breath —
But in spite of his heinous shibboleth —
You were faithful to your God!

Yes, they made her drink a chalice of woe —
A goblet of blood and tears —
Till she nearly died at the dismal sight —
At the Famine's dark and dreadful night —
She mourned o'er her children's hapless plight —
In those pitiful, heartrending years!

Though they tore your body and made you weep
Through the years that in anguish roll —
Though they placed you on the torturing rack,
And beat you blue and beat you black,
And made your children a wretched pack —
They could not subdue your soul!

Yes, the soul of Erin lives on aflame,
Through the rain and the blinding sleet:
Soothing the wounds that pain and smart,
Vivifying the weakened heart,
Helping the body to do its part —
Till the world's pulse ceases to beat!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Queen's Harp!

(Written en route to the Azores)

The Muses and Art have both combined
To picture the Mother of God and o' me:
But yet the choicest lags behind
The One Reality!
Not mine the power of brush or pen
To portray you to my fellow-men,
Sweet, Gentle Mother!

But tonight, as the wild wind roars aloft,
And is answered by the wilder sea;
And darkness veils all ocean craft —
Stella Maris, Ora pro me!
And let my willing heart of clay
Be the harp, on which Thou tonight shall play,
Queen of the Angels!

My thoughts be the music plaint and sweet
That proceeds from chords touched by Thy hands:
Music that shall give courage to faltering feet,
To cheer me over foreign lands
Of earth, and desert wastes of sea,
To Death . . . to Victory . . . and to Thee,
Fair Queen of Heaven.

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Bells of Sligo Cathedral.

O Bells of Sligo Cathedral
That hang in a silvery chime;
The dowry of a maiden fair
Is the gift that brought you joy-bells there,
When Death claimed the maid in her prime:
Bells that peal out the hymns of our olden Faith,
In a tone that is soft and sublime!

The sweet bells of Sligo Cathedral
Are chiming down boyhood's way:
Chiming softly again
Over snows and through rain;
Or when Summer and I keep holiday:
Chiming up from the vales to the mountains
That encircle Sligo Bay!

The dear bells of Sligo Cathedral
Are calling the rising hour —
Boys in my college of Summerhill
Must arise, when the Angelus over Lough Gill
Peals from the belfry tower:
From truant September to studious June,
Those bells wield a tyrant's power!

The joy-bells of Sligo Cathedral
Their pæan of peace outpour:
"Adeste Fideles" when Knocknarea
Is white from the cairn to the sea —
And when primroses peep — the Winter o'er
Easter hymns will sound on the holy bells,
From Strandhill to Aughamore!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Now the bells of Sligo Cathedral
Are chiming across the years,
Messages sacred of other days,
Calling me back from my godless ways,
To the Lord of my hopes and fears:
Telling in silver-toned accents
Of those dear days my lone heart reveres!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Lough Gill

Killarney of the Northwest.

Have you never seen the gleaming Lake?
Then a journey, friend, you must surely take
 From Sligo Town
 To Cairn Crown —
And catch a glimpse of that vision rare,
 To view the wooded islands fair
From the margin of the brake.

You may sail through the rushes and up the stream —
Up the Garavogue where the waters gleam:
 Through the "Narrows"
 Like trusty arrows —
And land on the islands fringed with fern:
 Hawthorne is the ashes — an Abbey the urn
Above the spot where the old monks dream!

Creevaley Abbey near the Bonet's side,
From the isles through the haze is faintly spied:
 And Breffny's halls
 Your spirit calls —
A ruined castle on a charming shore —
 The sorrowed of Erin, evermore:
Once a haughty chieftain's pride!

O'er the dim Ox Mountains the moonbeams peep
When Cathedral chimes are lulling to sleep
 Far and faint
 In language quaint —

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Then the ghostly Lady of the Lake
Must walk abroad for Erin's sake—
A watch o'er Breffny, Dervorgil must keep!

Alone in the moonlight you must steal
When the islands are bare, and pilgrims kneel
At Christmastide:
O'er the waters wide
A vision of friars with habits white
Stained with their life-blood you must sight—
For your ears the bells of olden Holy Cross will peal!

You must see and learn from sweet Lough Gill
Devotion that tyrants could not kill—
In Tubbernault's well—
In each Abbey cell:
You must know of a nation's tragedy
That is linked with the ruins of Breffny—
You must drink in the beauty of valley and hill!

Have you never seen the Gleaming Lake?
Then a journey, friend, you must surely take,
To the fair Northwest,
When the season's best:
From Hazelwood or from Dooney Rock
You may feast your eyes on the silver lough—
Go, friend, for health and spirit's sake!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

The Spirit of Summerhill

The tanned and robust scholars
Are flocking into town;
In from the farms and the villages —
In from the hills of brown:
Into Sligo on the River of Shells,
Up to the College gates,
Through the old dim grey quadrangle,
To where Learning sits and waits.

Our Fathers will tell of a college
On the Shannon banks in Athlone;
But we are the boys of a Summerhill
That we're proud to call our own!
What pathos and joy, what laughs and tears,
Our college cup can fill —
But who shall know all that the name stands for —
None save a student of Summerhill!

Though long be the years we are parted,
Far from hearth and homeland we roam,
SUMMERHILL shall aye be our talisman —
We've a pride in our college home;
For those years in the College of Mary
Have fitted us well for the strife —
Gladiators, that training has made us,
To fight in the arena of life!

Those tedious years of study
Have flown all too soon —
Exams. and games are over,

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

With the latter days of June:
But our Alma Mater we're proud of,
For Summerhill we stand —
She has made us better and stronger
For God and our Native Land!

AUTHOR'S NOTE:—Summerhill College, Sligo, Ireland, is the Alma Mater of John McCormack, the noted Irish tenor, and of Burke-Cochrane, the famous lawyer.

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Daybreak

Night came with chill and bitterness —
 With want and woe:
After the glory of sunset,
 And the afterglow:
Night beat with wings of blackness,
 Like a harpy wild —
And blotted out the moonbeams
 From Erin's child!

The red went from the sunrise —
 For red was hate:
Keen watchers woke the sleeping
 Hard by the gate:
The dawning flush was orange,
 The trees were green:
But my soul was in the whiteness
 That lay between!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

Erin's Easter Bells

The Easter moon wore just a haze of cloud,
When bells began to peal o'er hill and verdant
vale—
'Cross Banba's bogs and fertile fields well ploughed,
In my dear Erin of the dauntless Gael.
God-sent peace then settled down
With sunrise over field and town,
As Easter bells all softly told their tale!

What is the message o'er hill and lea
This Easter-tide that the glad bells bring?
What are the tidings they carry to me,
At the end of April's burthening?
"They tell of One that the Romans slew:
They tell of Life, resurrected anew—
That Death's dominion hath taken wing!"

The seasons fade: the years depart:
The bells of Easter ring out to the breeze:
I listened . . . but sadness came on my heart. . . .
They had lost their olden witcheries
"They toll for those who loved too well
The Land of Erin: and now the knell
Peals out for the souls of these!"

Still the Easter bells of Erin tolled
Their sadness unto early May—
They were slow friars, gaunt and old—
Lost was their merry roundelay:

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

But the words of the Risen Christ came back
As my soul lay on the torturing rack:
"They too, shall arise some day."

They laid Erin's broken body away—
With machine-gun and cannon they sealed her
tomb—
And they set their soldiers of alien clay
To guard her in death and doom!
*Like her Risen Lord did our Erin arise
And cast her chains to the utmost skies—
While Easter bells chime, there shall be no gloom!*

Again *Regina Coeli* chimes
And Alleluias are heard once more—
How changed these days in Erin's times,
A sentry guards her island door:
He wears a trusty bandolier:
He is an Irish Volunteer—
The death-cap and dungeon are ancient lore!

Aye, the Bells of Easter peal far and wide:
They who were slain, rise again:
Resurrection for those who nobly died
In a barrack-yard, in the Stranger's jail:
Love is rewarded and duty done:
A hundred flock, where before was one—
The Easter Bells are our Holy Grail!

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

L'Envoi

The Ireland that bowed to wrongs and woes,
Has passed from beyond our ken:
The freshness of morning has gladdened our hearts:
The Easter Week heroes have taught us our parts—
In our ranks are pure women and men!

ARISE! Ye sons of the martyred dead—
Let the Irish banshee wail;
For I've heard her a-keening in crowded towns,
And o'er lonely bogs and on quiet downs—
Whisper, and list to the gale!

Are your ears made of stone that ye hear not the
tread
Of legions of men clad in green—
The Shawneens they cringe as they call on their king:
The staunch "Soldier's Song" we shall live by and
sing—
Ah, well may the Sassenach keen!

FORWARD! Ye children of Easter Week—
They shall feel the strength of Irish steel:
For I've seen the blush in cheeks that were snow:
The old men are straight and the children grow—
All shall work for the Gaelic weal!

There are wheels to be turned and meal to be ground—
For the Children of Banba increase!
Brain and brawn has each its own portion to do—

SONGS OF NEWER IRELAND

We have mourned for the Old, let us welcome the
New—

Our penance has changed into peace!

TO VICTORY! Too long has the Tyrant reigned—

He has ground us to dust 'neath his heel of mail:

Thank God, that the Sassenach's day is done—

The Vision is Life, and the battle's near won—

Onward for Innisfail!

WILLIAM A MILLEN.





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