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The Banshee

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guson tells it, were added by him, or were features of the original. I found that he had added nothing, and pruned away nothing. The Seanchus Mor version of the tale is a piece of heroic narrative which neither the Norse nor the Greek nor any other literature I am acquainted with can show anything to surpass in its own way. And I thought, why should not this noble tale find its way into modern Irish instead of the childish folk stories, or inferior tales like the "Boyish Exploits of Finn," which practically represent the output of the modern cultivation of Gaelic? There are not a few other tales which by a little fresh artistic treatment in the way either of expansion or compression done by such a hand as Dr. Hyde's would lend themselves admirably to reproduction for modern readers, for instance, the story of the death of Cuchullin, the Decision of the Sword, the Naming of Cuchullin, the Fight at the Ford, one or two of the Fenian tales from the "Colloquy," the tale of the Death of Conary, the tale of Deirdre. These would form a volume or two of Irish literature such as no Irish reader possesses at present, and one that would greatly enlarge the possibilities of the Gaelic movement, and have a powerful effect in attracting students. Let us, therefore, have ancient Gaelic literature, not only in the English tongue, but also in the modern Gaelic tongue, and thus make it what it deserves to be, a possession for the whole of Gaeldom.

*NOTE.—Mr. O'Neill Russell tells me that this statement, which has been made by eminent scholars of the ancient tongue, is exaggerated.

Concluded.

ON THE BANKS OF THE NORE.

I have the pleasure of living in the midst of a people who, though very kindly and with most beautiful manners, are, I believe, the most torpid, intellectually, of all the county populations of all Ireland. Addressing them about anything literary or political is like shouting in a graveyard to the head-stones and tomb-stones and the poor deaf and dumb dead who lie below. I have too much human nature not to share to some extent in their marvellous torpidity; nevertheless, having had my education in Cork and Dublin, two stirring and bracing counties, I live a life removed, somewhat, from the marvellously Bœotian atmosphere of Kilkenny. So, I have had energy enough to start the "All Ireland Review" even in the midst of this most lethargic air. Moreover, I project, here, on the banks of the Nore, and surrounded, as I am, by a people to express whose intellectual torpidity the English language cannot supply me with the right adjective—here, by the banks of the Nore—I project a Library to be entitled "the Library of the Nore," or "the Slievenaman Library," or by some such name. Four Irishmen of eminence and distinction have already promised me to give me the printing and publishing of their books, and I entertain a good hope that Miss Lynch will allow me to do the same with her marvellous Irish story, "This Lost Land."

Dear Miss Lynch, to judge by all the outcome the land is, indeed, "lost," lost beyond recovery: but Faith and Hope remain, and we shall have a fight for it yet before all ends, and before we are finally handed over to English and Scotch exploitation. So bring up Thad, and Declan, and Gregory, and your own Miss Nannie Lombard, and let us begin; for a beginning must be somewhere. And, dear Miss Lynch, the beginning must be something in the nature of action, not speech.

THE BANSHEE.

There's wailing on the wind, Mary,
There's wailing on the sea,
Oh, place your hand upon my brow,
And lean your face to me.
Twice have I heard the Banshee cry
Above the storm and rain,
I'm waiting for her last low call
Beside the window pane.

Oh, put your arms around me love,
My head upon your breast,
And dry your falling tears, Mary,
They keep me from my rest.
The music on the wind, Mary!
The music on the sea!
Alanna, smile your own brave smile,
The Banshee cries for me.

MARY SEATON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COLOUR.

I am so pleased to see the primrose coat. It is a great improvement, but have you any reason connected with Ireland in your choice of the colour? In itself it is a beautiful colour, the purest expression of luminosity, and as each colour has its own potency and and subtle effect passing from its inner self to our receptive sense, so, yellow must surely speak to us of sunlight with its glorious power of vitalizing nature, purifying, raising, enriching. Surely this is a good cover for the "A. I. R.", and, may be, as some of your readers attain to "the extraordinary physical sensitiveness" which is essential to nature poetry (according to T. W. Roleston), we shall have the green—nature's great tone-colour, and then later the blue, with its steadfastness of purpose, and spiritual purity. I was lately watching the colours produced by some electrical machinery, and it made me think there must be some close affinity between real pure colour and the essence of life, and by life I mean not physical existence, but the real attributes of higher life, love, joy, compassion, endurance, comprehension, &c.

M.

TO W. W.

If W. W. could furnish any more particulars regarding Sir Isaac Wilson, the writer, who is a great grand-nephew of Sir Isaac. would feel greatly obliged. The date of his death (1849?), and obituary notices, or sketches of him, for instance.

J. MARSHALL.

LETTER TO F.

Dear F.—I fear you will never forgive me for that horrible crocodile letter in which I proposed to stock your beautiful Irish river with scaly monsters from the Nile. Some little imp got at the back of my mind when I wrote that letter.

I hope E. has come home safe out of those outlandish regions. I understand that within the borders of the Empire there is not a finer or better drilled Boys' Brigade than that which he commands. Tell him that if I cannot get some of the lazy country gentlemen in my County, nearly all of them ex-soldiers, to do the work, I myself intend to uniform and drill the boys of my County. The only thing they seem to have to do at present is the snaring of our poor little Irish birds and selling them, for a few pence, into life-long captivity in British dungeons.

Tell E. to let me know whether he can send me an organizer and drill-master, and how much I should pay him. Miss Lynch has promised me Thad, and Gregory, and Declan, and Miss Nannie Lombard has kindly undertaken to do all the stitching and mending for my boys. Dear F., I am very serious in this matter; so, please, stir up E., and make him write to me.

LETTER TO A.

Dear A.—And so when we met you could not speak to me "for anger," to me with all and my respect and regard for you, and my understanding of and almost sympathy with your principles and aspirations.

Dear A., it will be all right in the next world, the true world, the real world, and as for this, let it go its own bad way.

As to our own poor country and her destinies—the difference between us seems to be this:—you aim, hopelessly I do think, at a repetition of the most doleful tragedy of '98, I at a repetition of the glorious victory of '82, when we all stood together, and when the British statesman, like the famous 'coon in the story, cried out lamentably, "Don't fire, Colonel; I'm coming down."

Is not that little object lesson from our history worth a great many '98's?—ED.

IRISH POETRY.

Mr. Savage-Armstrong is printing a new volume of poetry which will be published next autumn. Its title will be "Ballads of Down," a companion volume to his "Stories of Wicklow."