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From Mississippi's Shore

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FROM MISSISSIPPI'S SHORE.

I congratulate you on the noble work you have done in the "All Ireland Review." With great pleasure I receive it every week on the banks of the Mississippi, the father of waters. I am greatly interested in the "Gates of the North," and I particularly admired your letters to the Queen. May God bless her Majesty, and give her long life to do what you ask her. I send you the whole poem which my little girl has copied out of the fifth vol. of the "Emerald," a paper published in New York in 1870. The "Emerald" took it from the "Waterford Citizen." I don't think that this poem was ever printed in the Irish language. I have another poem of Shaun O'Dwyer a Glanna, in the Irish language, translated by Michael Doheny; it is very good. I used to hear it sung on the banks of the Suir. I have been at the fair of Glenn when a boy. There is a fine collection of Irish songs in the "Emerald," all translated into English. Shall I send them to you? I hope you will publish "The Gates of the North" in a book. I am quite taken up with the hero of the story, Cuculain. I am also interested in Miss Lynch's story; she writes from life.

WILLIAM KEYES,
476 E. Fifth St., Winona, Minnesota, U.S.

Thanks. Yes; please send the poems.—ED.

SHAUN O'DWYER A GLANNA.
Old Jacobite Ballad, by a Cappoquin Girl.

I.

All night in lonely sorrow,
I waited for the morrow—
Upon the heathy mountain top,
I lingered for the dawn,
To see beneath me spreading,
Field and farm-steading,
Hill and dale and valley,
Meadow, moor, and bawn;
And westward where I sought her,
There rolled the deep Blackwater,
With the gentle Bride and Finisk,
That to swell her bosom came;
Of all a farewell taking
With a sad sore heart and breaking—
Oh! Shaun O'Dwyer, a chorra,
We're worsted in the game.

II.

Oh! Shaun O'Dwyer a Glanna,
What head but yours could plan a
Blood-red midnight foray
On the churlish Saxon knaves—
Could lead through glens and passes
Your spears of Gallowglasses,
And launch them like the lightning
Over crimson English graves—
Could plant the yawning cannon
'Gainst wall with gun and man on,
Or lead the deadly sally,
Though the breach it gaped with flame.
You would sweep your foes before you
When the battle's blaze lit o'er you.
Oh! Shaun O'Dwyer, a chorra,
We're worsted in the game.

III.

In truth you left a sparse field,
When side by side with Sarsfield,
We charged the Dutch at Limerick,
And swept them from the wall—
When we led the men of Decie,
With Calahan and Tracey,
And Colonel Teague O'Mahony,
The boldest of them all.
With the green flag flying o'er us,
Christ! how they cowed before us,
In one short breath—a burst of death—
We wrapped them in its flame.
At our very sight they shivered
In a trance of fear they quivered,
Yet, Shaun O'Dwyer, a chorra,
We're worsted in the game.

IV.

After Aughrim's great disaster,
When our foe, in sooth, was master,
It was you that first plunged in and swam
The Shannon's boiling flood;
And through Slieve Bloom's dark passes
You led our Gallowglasses,
Altho' the hungry Saxon wolves
Were howling for our blood.
And as we crossed Tipperary,
We rieved the clan O'Leary,
And drove a creacht before us,
As our horsemen southward came.
With our swords and spears we gored them,
As through flood and fight we bore them,
Still, Shaun O'Dwyer, a chorra,
We're worsted in the game.

V.

Long, long we kept the hill-side,
Our couch hard by the rill-side;
The sturdy knotted oaken boughs,
Our curtains overhead.
The summer's blaze we laughed at,
The winter's snow we scoffed at,
And trusted to our long steel swords
To win us daily bread;
Till the Dutchman's troops came round us
In fire and steel they bound us;
They blazed the woods and mountains
Till the very clouds were flame;
Yet our sharpened swords cut through them,
In their very heart we hewed them—
Oh! Shaun O'Dwyer, a chorra,
We're worsted in the game.

VI.

Here's health to your and my king,
The sovereign of our liking,
And to Sarsfield, underneath whose flag
We cast once more a chance;
For the morning's dawn will wing us
Across the sea, and bring us
To take our stand, and wield a brand
Among the sons of France.
And though we part in sorrow,
Still, Shaun O'Dwyer, a chorra,
Our prayer is "God Save Ireland!"
And pour blessings on her name."
May her sons be true when needed—
May they never feel as we did,
For, Shaun O'Dwyer a Glanna,
We're worsted in the game.

SHAUN O'DWYER A GLANNA.

My friend, Mr. Cavanagh, of the U.S., writes to say:—"The song was written by the late John Walsh, of Cappoquin (my brother-in-law). It was first printed in the Christmas number of the 'Waterford Citizen,' 1869, over the signature 'A Cappoquin Girl.' About 12 years ago I contributed a series of 'Papers on the County Waterford—historical, topographical, legendary, and poetical,' to 'The Messenger,' of Worcester, Mass. In these 'Papers' I included many of John Walsh's poems of local interest, and among them the one in question. I was treating of 'The O'Briens, of Comerach,' popularly designated 'The O'Briens of the Silken Bridles.' The last chief of this clan was a contemporary of John O'Dwyer, of Glynn, and, like him, was forced into exile after the overthrow of the Jacobite cause in Ireland. He subsequently distinguished himself in the French service. He it was who (I presumed) addressed the words of the song to his compatriot, O'Dwyer, on the eve of their departure for France.

"I may say that in the concluding lines of the poem, the writer referred to an event and a cause nearer and dearer to him than anything connected with the Stuart dynasty.

"There was never an Irish version—either original or translated—of John Walsh's 'John O'Dwyer a Glanna.' The writer of it translated several old Irish songs into English, but (so far as I am aware) he wrote no Gaelic poetry himself.

"I presume you can furnish Mr. O'Grady with a perfect copy of the song, but if not I shall be happy to do so when I next hear from you."

This last I am, unhappily, unable to do, but I am writing by this post asking Mr. Cavanagh to send it directly to yourself. I should so much like you to know this good and faithful worker (in his own