

bridal gift with her. One cannot help thinking that women must have been very reasonable in those days! "Every woman must have her free will," is an axiom laid down in the Brehon laws as a principle. Women's names are found amongst those of the judges, and even of the warriors, and we are told of various learned women or druidesses. When the Fianna, or Irish militia of the third century, were established by the great King Cormac, there were various conditions necessary to be observed by candidates desiring to join it, showing both intellectual gift as well as military skill, but the two first injunctions which were laid upon every soldier were :

1st. Never to seek a portion with a wife, but to choose her for good manners and virtue.

2nd. Never to offer violence to a woman.

Is it much wonder then that Moore should immortalize the reverence in which the sons of Ireland have always held their women, from the earliest times, in those lines we all know so well :

Rich and rare were the gems she wore,  
And a bright gold ring on her wand she bore;  
But oh, her beauty was far beyond  
Her sparkling gems and her snow-white wand.

"Lady! dost thou not fear to stray,  
So lone and lovely, thro' this bleak way?  
Are Erin's sons so good or so cold  
As not to be tempted by woman or gold?"

"Sir Knight! I feel not the least alarm:  
No son of Erin will offer me harm,  
For, tho' they love woman and golden store,  
Sir Knight, they love honor and virtue more."

On she went, and her maiden smile  
In safety lighted her round the green isle;  
And blest for ever was she who relied  
Upon Erin's honour and Erin's pride.