

Soon after their removal to Wexford, the McGee family sustained a heavy blow in the death of the accomplished and most exemplary wife and mother. The rare worth and the varied attainments of this lady may be estimated by the profound respect, the more than filial affection, so to say, with which her eminent son cherished her memory all the days of his life. Of his father he was wont to speak as an honest, upright, religious man ; but his mother he loved to describe as a woman of extraordinary elevation of mind, an enthusiastic lover of her country, its music, its legends, its wealth of ancient lore. Herself a good musician and a fine singer, it was to the songs of her ancient race she rocked her children's cradle, and from her dear voice her favorite son, the subject of our sketch, drank in the music—the sweet old Gaelic melody—that rings in all his poetical compositions, as a lingering echo from the past. His passionate and inextinguishable love for the land of his birth, her story and her song, may be traced, and was ever traced by himself, to the same source. Even the strong and vigorous, yet simple religious faith, which was one of the mother's characteristics, was no less discernible in her son—at every stage of his life manifesting itself in profound respect for religion and its ministers, and for everything that men should hold sacred here below ; while the fervent piety of the true Irish mother is happily found reflected in the truly religious tone of all his latest poems.

The loss of such a mother, it is needless to say, was keenly felt by such a son ; and through all the changeful years of his after-life, her gentle memory shone like a star through the clouds and mists that never fail to gather round the path of advancing life.

But the mother slept in her quiet grave in the old Cistercian Abbey, and years rolled over the head of our young poet, each one bringing sorrow and change—his might