

ERIN MAVOURNIN.

BY NORAH.

The Montreal *Witness* lately offered a prize for the best poem on Ireland, and the following has been adjudged the prize. The author of it is Mr. A. McDougall, of Pembroke:—

I know Canada is very fair and pleasant—it is well
On the banks of its broad river 'neath the apple trees to dwell;
But the heart is ever wilful, and in sorrow or in mirth
Mine will turn, with sore love-longing, to the land that gave me birth;
And I wish that, O but once again! my longing eyes might see
The green isle that lies smiling on the bosom of the sea.
It is fed with heaven's dew and the fatness of the earth,
Fanned by wild Atlantic breezes that sweep over it in mirth;
And its green robe, starred with daisies, is so brilliant, fresh and fair,
With a verdure that no other spot of earth affords to wear.

There are banks of pale primroses that like bits of moonlight show,
There are hawthorn hedges blossomed out like drifts of perfumed snow,
Blue bells swinging on their slender stems, and cowslips on the lea,—
I was better for the lessons they in childhood taught to me.
From where Antrim's giant column at the north are piled on high,
The sentinels of centuries tow'ring up against the sky,
From mountain top and purple heath, from valleys fair to see,
Where streams of flashing crystal bright are flowing to the sea,
To Kerry's lakes of loveliness that dimple in the sun,
'Tis fair as any spot on earth that heaven's light shines on.

O Erin, my mother Erin! dear land more kind than wise,
I dream of thee till loving tears come thronging to my eyes;
Thou hast nourished on thy bosom many sons of deathless fame,
Who while the world will last shall shed a lustre on thy name.
While "Foyle's proud swelling waters roll on northward to the main,"
While yet a single ves.ige of old Limerick's walls remain,
Shall those who love thee well, fair land, lament that fends divide
The sons of those who for each cause stood fast on either side,
From every ruined castle grey well may the ban-shue cry
O'er bitter waters once let loose that have not yet run dry.

O would the blessed time might come, when partly feeling done,
The noble deeds of both sides will be gathered into one!
On the battle-fields of Europe thy sons quit themselves like men,
'Till those who made them exiles wish for their good swords again;
Wherever fields were fought and won in thickest of the fray,
Where steel bit steel, thy sons have fought and laurels bore away.
And thou hast bards in deathless song thy heroes' praise to sing,
Or make hearts throb responsive when for love they touch the string,
Thou hast lovely white-armed daughters, so tender and so true,
As modest as the daisies and as spotless as the dew,
With flashes of sweet merriment, and virtue still and strong,—
They fire the patriot's heart and charm the poet into song.

Thou hast nourished those right eloquent to plead with tongue and pen
For those eternal rights which men so oft deny to men;
And, land of saints, in song like mine but little can be said
Of those who stand for God between the living and the dead.
Thou'rt not without His witnesses, for children of thy soil,
In lofty and in lowly life, are found who walk with God.
Land of hearty welcome! who travels the valleys o'er
Knows more of human kindness than he ever knew before
While some are kind to friends alone, thy sons, whate'er befall,
More like the blessed sun and rain, have kindness for all.

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The Head of Oliver Cromwell.

"Senex" writes to the London *Times* as follows:—Several imperfect statements having lately appeared on the above subject, let me explain what became of the remains of Cromwell. Partly from printed records, and partly from what I heard from Mr. Wilkinson, to whom some of the press have alluded, I learned that Oliver Cromwell died at Whitehall Palace, on the 3rd of September, 1658, after a protracted illness. He had been long suffering from ague, and his case is cited in medical books as one of a man who died of ague while our warehouses were groaning with Peruvian bark, which we did not know how to use. During this illness he became so depressed and debilitated that he would allow no barber to come near him, and his beard, instead of being cut in certain fashions grew all over his face. After his death the body lay in state at Somerset House, having been carefully embalmed, and was afterward buried with more than regal honours in Henry VII's Chapel in Westminster Abbey, where it lay until, after the Restoration; it was taken out of its grave, as were also the bodies of Ireton (Cromwell's son-in-law) and Bradshaw; the latter, as President of the High Court of Justice, having pronounced sentence of death, on Charles I. The three bodies were taken in carts to the Red Lion, in Holborn, and on the 30th of January, the anniversary of King Charles' death, they were removed on sledges to Tyburn, where they were hanged until sunset, and then taken down and beheaded, their bodies buried in a deep pit under the gallows, and their heads stuck upon the top of Westminster Hall, where at that time sentinels walked.

Ireton's head was in the middle, and Cromwell's and Bradshaw's on either side. Cromwell's head, being embalmed, remained exposed to the atmosphere for twenty five years, and then one stormy night it was blown down, and picked up by sentry, who, hiding it under his cloak, took it home and secreted it in the chimney corner, and, as inquiries were being constantly made about it by the Government, it was only on his death-bed that he revealed where he had hidden it. His family sold the head to one of the Cambridgeshire Russells, and, in the same box in which it still is, it descended to a certain Samuel Russell, who, being a needy and careless man, exhibited it in a place called "Lare Market." There it was seen by John Cox, who then owned a famous museum. He tried in vain to buy the head from Russell for, poor as he was, nothing would induce him to part with it. When the head, however, came to be resisted with money, and eventually, to clear himself from debt, he made the head over to Cox. When Cox at last parted with his museum he sold the head of

Cromwell for £230 to three men, who bought it, about the time of the French Revolution, to exhibit in Mead court, Bond street, at half a crown a head. Curiously enough, it happened that each of these three gentlemen died a sudden death, and the head came into the possession of the three nieces of the last man who died. These young ladies, nervous at keeping it in the house, asked Mr. Wilkinson, their medical man, to take care of it for them, and they subsequently sold it to him. For the next fifteen or twenty years Mr. Wilkinson was in the habit of showing it to all the distinguished men of that day, and the head, much treasured, yet remains in the family.

The circumstantial evidence is very curious. It is the only head in history which is known to have been embalmed and afterward beheaded. On the back of the neck, near the vertebrae, is the mark of the out of an axe where the executioner, having, perhaps, no proper block, had struck too high, and, laying the head, in its soft, embalmed state on the block, flattened the nose on one side, making it adhere to the face. The hair grows promiscuously about the face, and the beard, stained to exactly the same colour, by the embalming liquor, is tucked up under the chin, with the oaken staff of the spear with which the head was stuck upon Westminster Hall, which staff is perforated by a worm that never attacks oak until it has been for years exposed to the weather.

The iron spearhead, where it protrudes above the skull, is rusted away by the action of the atmosphere. The jagged way in which the top of the skull is removed throws us back to a time when surgery was in its infancy, while the embalming is so beautifully done that the cellular process of the gums and membrane of the tongue are still to be seen. Several teeth are yet in the mouth; membrane of the eyelid remains the pia-mater and the dura-mater, thin membranes, which I believe lie over the brain, may be seen clinging to the inner and upper part of the skull. The brain was, of course, removed, but the compartments are very distinct. When the great sculptor, Flaxman, went to see it, he said at once, "You will not mind my expressing any disappointment I may feel on seeing the head?" "Oh, no!" said Mr. Wilkinson, "but will you tell me the characteristics by which the head might be recognized?" "Well," replied Flaxman, "I know a great deal about the configuration of the head of Oliver Cromwell. He had a low, broad forehead, large orbits to the eyes, a high septum to the nose, and high cheek bones; but there is one feature which will be with me a crucial test, and that is, that, instead of having the lower jaw bone somewhat curved, it was particularly short and straight, but set out at an angle, which gave him a Jewish appearance." The head exactly answered to the description, and Flaxman went away expressing himself as convinced and delighted.

The head has also a length from the forehead to the back of the head which is quite extraordinary, and one day, before Mr. Wilkinson retired from the practice, his assistant called him into the surgery to point out to him how exactly the shaven head of a lad who was there as a patient resembled the embalmed head of Cromwell up stairs, and more particularly in the extreme length between the forehead and the occiput.

Mr. Wilkinson mentioned the circumstances to the gentleman who brought the