

ful were the emotions of my dreaming soul that I awoke in terror and could only say in broken accents: "Upon all men, O God, have mercy!"

M. L. S. C.

Irish Historical Ballads.

IT had been a cherished purpose of the late Thomas D'Arcy McGee, than whom no knightlier soul ever wrought for Ireland or for Canada, to bring together in metrical form the principal events in the history of Ireland—to write a ballad chronicle of the island from its earliest legendary settlement to the dawn of our own era. He had designed at least one great epic on the tragedy of Clontarf; and his numerous poems on Irish subjects drawn from the remote past and breathing all the fire and vigor of the earlier Celtic lyrists, bear intrinsic evidences of his desire to link them into a continuous narrative. But he never lived to complete his purpose; and it was left for Aubrey de Vere in his beautiful poem "Innisfail, a Lyrical Chronicle of Ireland," to bring to its successful completion the work which the hand of an assassin prevented Thomas D'Arcy McGee from achieving in its entirety.

Irish history is singularly rich in romantic episodes, and these have given rise to hundreds of ballads, many of them the initial attempts of aspiring writers. Indeed, it has been said, by the editor of a recent collection, that out of these efforts a whole metrical history of Ireland might be constructed—and it would remain forever a monumental tribute to the poetic genius of the race, for it would comprise at least a score of volumes, all of substantial size. Many of the finest poems that have ever been written on Irish historical happenings—ballads that have in them the glow of fire and the ring of steel—find no place in any of the anthologies or "poetical treasuries" issued from time to time in Dublin, New York or London by enterprising publishers. The songs and ballads of Robert Dwyer Joyce, for instance—a writer who, in melodious verse, illuminated the old legends of Ireland's past with the play of a brilliant fancy—were allowed, after passing through one or two editions, to sink into that obscure state expressed in the publishers' catalogues by the