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{ Terms in Advance :
ONE DOLLAR A YEAR.

A LEGEND OF ST. PATRICK.

(In the *Dirge of Ireland*, by Bishop O'Connell of Kerry, the fact on which this legend is written may be found.)

GLEAM'D the sunray, soft and yellow,
On the gentle plains of Meath,
Spring's low breezes, fresh and mellow,
Through the woods scarce seem'd to
breathe.

And on Tara, proud and olden,
Circled round with radiance fair,
Deck'd in splendour, bright and golden,
Sat the court of Laoghair.

Chieftains with the fleasg* of glory,
And the coulin flowing free ;
Priest and Brehon, bent and hoary,
Soft-tongued bard and seanachie ;
Silence fill'd the sunny ether,
Eager light in ev'ry eye,
As in banded rank together
Stranger forms approacheth nigh.

Tall and stately—white beards flowing
In bright streaks adown the breast—
Cheeks with summer beauty glowing,
Eyes of thoughtful holy rest.
And in front their saintly leader,
Patrick, walk'd with cross in hand ;
Which, from Arran to Ben Edar,
Soon rose high above the land.

Silence fill'd the sunny ether,
Eager light in ev'ry eye,
As he told how he came thither
With a message from on high ;—
How he came to quench the fire
Of a dark faith overthrown ;
And to bow the sons of Eire
To the one true God alone.

And he spoke until the shadows
Shifted round from south to east,
Till the music on the meadows
Of the roving bees had ceased ;
Till the breezes of the even
Wander'd inland from the sea,
Still he told the laws of heaven,
And the glories yet to be.

* Anglice, collar ; coulin, Anglice, long hair.

On the Druids' brows was looming
Heavily a thick'ning cloud,
While a wild and thrilling humming
Rose up from the startled crowd ;
Rose up still the gather'd voices
Through the pasture-scented air,
And the heavenly court rejoices
As down kneeleth Dubtach there.

Then the king arose with malice
In his face from ear to ear,
"I am bearded at my palace
By this band of strangers here!
By the kingly soul of Niall,
Now I swear my blade will smite
Him who now declines the trial
Which will prove whose gods are right !

As for me my path's before me,
'Tis the way our fathers trod—
Of the noble sire that bore me,
His brave god shall be my god ;
He, the sun of war and glory,
Would he own a god of peace ?
But ye've heard the stranger's story,
And those battling doubts must cease.

Open wide yon low-roof'd dwelling—
One of each must enter in ;
Fire the roof—the blaze upswelling,
Let it scorch the heart of sin.
He who cometh forth unharm'd,
"To his god bend down the knee ;"
Then the crowd, with pulses warm'd,
Crieth forth, "So let it be !"

Like a maiden in her beauty
When her bridal dawn's awake,
"Father, let this be my duty,"
Thus the young Benignus spake ;
"I have seen a loving vision,
I have heard low voices thrill—
Oh, it was the bright elysian
Shadow of th' Almighty's will !"

"'Tis His call, my son," replieth
Patrick, with a holy smile ;
"Thou the demon host desisteth,
All their arts and fiendish guile.