

is not to be forgotten, that a country is not unmindful of an honourable public life. Let us hope that ere long we may not be able to reproach ourselves for this neglect of our patriot's tomb.

## IV.

So far I have spoken largely of McGee as the politician and the orator, and less of him as a poet and man of letters. His poems we have had collected for us in a volume of 600 pages. Of his poetry and its merits abler men than I have spoken. One of the foremost critical journals of the old land, the London *Athenæum*, denominated him the "one true poet" of the Young Ireland party. The giddy whirl of politics, with its enticing fascinations, wooed him from the muse to a large extent in his later life, and so it is that possibly his fame as a poet will largely depend upon the earlier efforts of his genius. To his poems during the "Young Ireland" agitation I have already adverted. The inspiration of such a cause produced many songs, which, to use the words of Charles Gavan Duffy, "touched him like the voice of spring" and merited the felicitous phrase of "Irish Undeified."

All his poems breathe forth his love for his native land. He sings:

I'd rather be the bird that sings  
 Above the martyr's grave,  
 Than fold in fortune's cage my wings  
 And feel my soul a slave;  
 I'd rather tune one simple verse,  
 True to the Gaelic ear,  
 Than Sapphic melodies rehearse  
 With Senates listening near.  
 My native land! my native land!  
 Live in my memory still;  
 Break on my ear, ye surges grand!  
 Stand up, mist-covered hill!  
 Stand in the mirror of my mind,  
 The land I love to see;  
 Would I could fly on the western wind,  
 My native land, to thee!

And again, in a poem entitled "Homesick Stanzas":

Twice had I sailed the Atlantic o'er,  
 Twice dwelt an exile in the West;  
 Twice did kind Nature's skill restore  
 The quiet of my troubled breast—  
 As moss upon a rifted tree,  
 So time its gentle cloaking did;  
 But though the wound no eye could see,  
 Deep in my heart the barb was hid.