

Furl that Banner, softly, slowly,  
Treat it gently—it is holy—  
For it droops above the dead.  
Touch it not—unfold it never,  
Let it droop, there, furled forever,  
For its people's hopes are dead !

Poets love to weave in verse the glorious deeds of the hero. The same spirit that nerves the arm of the patriot to strike for home and country inspires the bard with heroic theme and song. It has been almost universally conceded that the greatest general of the present age was Robert Lee. So great a military man as Sir Garnet Wolseley holds this opinion. It is not to be wondered at, then, that Father Ryan, who knew the brave Southern soldier intimately, pays tribute to the dead hero in the following glorious lines :—

THE SWORD OF ROBERT LEE.

Forth from its scabbard pure and bright,  
Flashed the sword of Lee !  
For in the front of the deadly fight,  
High o'er the brave in the cause of Right,  
Its stainless sheen like a beacon light  
Led us to victory.

Out of its scabbard where full long  
It slumbered peacefully,—  
Roused from its rest by the battle's song  
Shielding the feeble, smiting the strong,  
Guarding the right, avenging the wrong  
Gleamed the sword of Lee.

Forth from its scabbard high in air,  
Beneath Virginia's sky—  
And they who saw it gleaming there,  
And knew who bore it, knelt to swear  
That where that sword led they would dare  
To follow and to die.

Out of its scabbard ! never hand  
Waved sword from stain so free,  
Nor purer sword led braver band,  
Nor braver bled for a brighter land,  
Nor brighter land had a cause so grand,  
Nor cause a chief like Lee.

Forth from the scabbard ! how we prayed  
That sword might victor be,—  
And when our triumph was delayed,  
And many a heart grew sore afraid,  
We still hoped on while gleamed the blade  
Of noble Robert Lee.

Forth from its scabbard ! all in vain,  
Bright flashed the sword of Lee ;—  
'Tis shrouded now in its sheath again,  
It sleeps the sleep of our noble slain ;  
Defeated, yet without a stain,  
Proudly and peacefully.

We feel grateful to the "dead singer of the Sunny South" for his poetic gifts to our hearts. His pure thoughts will enshroud our souls as the incense of prayer and devotion envelopes the altar. His poems, full of the heart-blood of the South, breathe no ill-will towards the North. Born under Virginian skies of Irish parentage, he loved freedom with an intensity begotten of Southern chivalry and Celtic valor. We know his love for the South as seen through the spirit of his muse—that he loved the land of his forefathers, beloved Ireland, may be gleaned from the spirit that runs through his well-known poem, "Erin's Flag" :—

Unroll Erin's flag ! fling its folds to the breeze !  
Let it float o'er the land, let it flash o'er the seas ;  
Lift it out of the dust—let it wave as of yore,  
When its chiefs with their clans stood around it and swore  
That never ! No ! never, that Banner should yield  
As long as the heart of a Celt was its shield ;  
While the hand of a Celt had a weapon to wield,  
And his last drop of blood was unshed on the field.

THOMAS O'HAGAN.

MR. O'BRIEN'S VISIT.

MR. O'BRIEN'S visit to Canada, so far, has been a great success—for Lord Lansdowne. It has benefitted the Coercion party here and in England, it has put the Catholics of this Province at least in an awkward position, and it has done harm to the cause in Ireland. The present Governor-General might come and go to Toronto as he did once before and receive only the shabbiest recognition, but thanks to Mr. O'Brien, he has been feted and eulogized, addresses have poured in on him from all quarters ; an anti-Roman holiday, so to speak, was proclaimed for him and 15,000 people cheered themselves hoarse on his behalf. While Mr. O'Brien was having a rather undistinguished dinner at the Rossin House, Lord Lansdowne's carriage, with the Luggacurgan landlord in it, was being drawn from the Opera House to the vice-regal residence by his enthusiastic followers.

The Catholics of the country had a right to expect that a man of the unquestioned ability of Mr. O'Brien would have sense enough to take up the situation as he went along. Montreal is the great Catholic city of Canada ; and were not the echoes of Davitt's visit still ringing in the ears of the people there ? Well, this same people did not want Mr. O'Brien on his present mission. Then, before that, was not Archbishop Lynch's intimation something to be seriously considered ? Does any man in Canada or America know more of the Irish people here than he does ? Again, the warning of the venerable Father Dowd was added on behalf of a city and Province that no one knows better than he does. Mr. O'Brien does not know this country as well as these gentlemen. He does not know how far resolutions in Parliament or in the Legislatures are the real voice of the people—how much must be set apart as genuine love for Ireland and how much deducted for the chances of the next election. He counted too much on appearances. Well, he has had some experience of the voice of the people in the Queen's Park yesterday ; and if he returns to Ireland with the impression that the public expressions of sympathy for Ireland already given are not to be strained by any further effort, he will have learned something. Unfortunately, however, his visit has undone most of the good fairly to be expected from these resolutions. If he had come on any other mission, there is not the slightest doubt but he would have been welcomed as he deserved ; but his present coming was ill-advised, and the object was—to put the matter fairly—the object and purpose was unworthy of the talented man Mr. O'Brien certainly is and unworthy of the cause he represents. There is no other word to express it. Landlordism in Ireland is bad, and Lansdowne may be a bad landlord, but for a sensible man to come some thousands of miles to tell us Canadians that we should drive Lansdowne out of his position because of that, is about the silliest thing that any one in his senses could conceive of.

It will be in order for some one to say that Mr. O'Brien is in the secret pay of Lord Lansdowne. He has done him immense service, at all events.

D. A. O'SULLIVAN.

IN MARY'S MONTH.

Madonna Mia, turn those gentle eyes  
In adoration lifted to the Throne,  
A moment downward, thro' the floating skies,  
To earth, whence truth and holiness seem flown.  
Thou wert His Mother, Mary, and Thou art ;  
Yet on the Cross He gave us sinners Thee,  
And bade Thee guard within thy stainless Heart,  
Such ingrates vile, such lepers white as we.  
O Mother loved—loved spite of darkening sin,  
That wraps as with a pall this world of woe ;  
Open Thy tender Heart and take us in,  
Save from the dangers footsore pilgrims know ;  
Making to bloom these withered souls of ours,  
Madonna, in Thine own sweet month of flowers.

—MARY E. MANNIX, in *Ave Maria*.