

DIARMUID
Ó DONNABÁIN
ROSA

1831 - 1915

SOUVENIR OF PUBLIC FUNERAL TO GLASNEVIN CEMETERY
DUBLIN, AUGUST 1st, 1915

IN MEMORY
OF
O'DONOVAN ROSSA
FENIAN.

TELEPHONES { 3264.
3265.
3521.
TELEGRAMS, "GRESHAM, DUBLIN."

GRESHAM HOTEL,
DUBLIN.

My husband (O'Donovan Rossa) was
as he said of himself in the dock
an Irishman since he was born,
and I can testify that during
his last long illness he was
the same unconquerable
Irishman breathing the same
unalterable desire for the
absolute freedom of his
country and its utter separation
from England that he breathed
in the dock

Mary J. O'Donovan Rossa

July 22nd 1915

A CHARACTER STUDY

O'Donovan Rossa was not the greatest man of the Fenian generation, but he was its most typical man. He was the man that to the masses of his countrymen then and since stood most starkly and plainly for the Fenian idea. More lovable and understandable than the cold and enigmatical Stephens, better known than the shy and sensitive Kickham, more human than the scholarly and chivalrous O'Leary, more picturesque than the able and urbane Luby, older and more prominent than the man who, when the time comes to write his biography, will be recognised as the greatest of the Fenians—John Devoy—Rossa held a unique place in the hearts of Irish men and Irish women. They made songs about him, his very name passed into a proverb. To avow oneself a friend of O'Donovan Rossa meant in the days of our fathers to avow oneself a friend of Ireland; it meant more: it meant to avow oneself a "mere" Irishman, an "Irish enemy," an "Irish savage," if you will, naked and unashamed. Rossa was not only "extreme," but he represented the left wing of the "extremists." Not only would he have Ireland free, but he would have Ireland Gaelic.

And here we have the secret of Rossa's magic, of Rossa's power: he came out of the Gaelic tradition. He was of the Gael; he thought in a Gaelic way; he spoke in Gaelic accents. He was the spiritual and intellectual descendant of Colm Cille and of Seán an Díomais. With Colm Cille he might have said, "If I die it shall be from the love I bear the Gael;" with Shane O'Neill he held it debasing to "twist his mouth with English." To him the Gael and the Gaelic ways were splendid and holy, worthy of all homage and all service; for the English he had a hatred that was tinctured with contempt. He looked upon them as an inferior race, morally and intellectually; he despised their civilisation; he mocked at their institutions and made them look ridiculous.

And this again explains why the English hated him above all the Fenians. They hated him as they hated Shane O'Neill, and as they hated Parnell; but more. For the same "crime" against English law as his associates he was sentenced to a more terrible penalty; and they pursued him into his prison and tried to break his spirit by mean and petty cruelty. He stood up to them and fought them: he made their whole penal system odious and despicable in the eyes of Europe and America. So the English found Rossa in prison a more terrible foe than Rossa at large; and they were glad at last when they had to let him go. Without any literary pretensions, his story of his prison life remains one of the sombre epics of the earthly inferno.

O'Donovan Rossa was not intellectually broad, but he had great intellectual intensity. His mind was like a hot flame. It seared and burned what was base and mean; it bored its way through falsehoods and conventions; it shot upward, unerringly, to truth and principle. And this man had one of the toughest and most stubborn souls that have ever been. No man, no government, could either break or bend him. Literally he was incapable of compromise. He could not even parley with compromisers. Nay, he could not act, even for the furtherance of objects held in common, with those who did not hold and avow all his objects. It was characteristic of him that he refused to associate himself with the "new departure" by which John Devoy threw the support of the Fenians into the land struggle behind Parnell and Davitt; even though the Fenians compromised

nothing and even though their support were to mean (and did mean) the winning of the land war. Parnell and Davitt he distrusted; Home Rulers he always regarded as either foolish or dishonest. He knew only one way; and suspected all those who thought there might be two.

And while Rossa was thus unbending, unbending to the point of impracticability, there was no acerbity in his nature. He was full of a kindly Gaelic glee. The olden life of Munster, in which the seanchaidhe told tales in the firelight and songs were made at the autumn harvesting, and at the winter spinning, was very dear to him. He saw that life crushed out, or nearly crushed out, in squalor and famine during '47 and '48; but it always lived in his heart. In English prisons and in American cities he remembered the humour and the lore of Carbery. He jested when he was before his judges; he jested when he was tortured by his jailors; sometimes he startled the silence of the prison corridors by laughing aloud and by singing Irish songs in his cell: they thought he was going mad, but he was only trying to keep himself sane.

I have heard from John Devoy the story of his first meeting with Rossa in prison. Rossa was being marched into the governor's office as Devoy was being marched out. In the gaunt man that passed him Devoy did not recognise at first the splendid Rossa he had known. Rossa stopped and said, "John." "Who are you?" said Devoy: "I don't know you." "I'm Rossa." Then the warders came between them. Devoy has described another meeting with Rossa, and this time it was Rossa who did not know Devoy. One of the last issues of the "Gaelic American" that the British Government allowed to enter Ireland contained Devoy's account of a recent visit to Rossa in a hospital in Staten Island. It took a little time to make him realise who it was that stood beside his bed. "And are you John Devoy?" he said at last. During his long illness he constantly imagined that he was still in an English prison; and there was difficulty in preventing him from trying to make his escape through the window. I have not yet seen any account of his last hours: the cabling of such things would imperil the Defence of the Realm.

Enough to know that that valiant soldier of Ireland is dead; that that unconquered spirit is free.

P. H. PEARSE.

Grieve not for him: speak not a word of sorrow:
 Although his eyes saw not his country's glory,
 The service of his day shall make our morrow:
 His name shall be a watchword in our story.

Him England for his love of Ireland hates:
 This flesh we bury England's chains have bitten:
 That is enough: for our deed now he waits:
 With Emmet's let his epitaph be written.

THOMAS MACDONAGH.

OIÒCE 1 BPOÇAIR ROSA

1 gcuirteáctain Oiarmaða Uí Donnabáin Rora éirtear féin an oiòce ba éiribíge dem' faogal. Saoilear poimh pé gur Saedéal boib a éirparde oim: an Saedéal ir cnearta vár cápað fuam oim a ví ann. An céad eólar a léigeamair uile i vtaoib "Rora" bain pé le roçpato no le doíacað baintreabaiße i Scibpín bliadain an fábtair. Dean boct a ví i n-a cóinnurde 'ran trpáro do b'ead i. Cé ná raib de mupgail uirte aet mac, fuair pí báp leir an ocpap; agur cé ná raib 'ran mac aet vaoi, b'é toil Dé gur tuig pé nár móp vó corp a máctar vó cup 'ran uais. Ní gnátae cúram vó famail ar a leitéro i nDearmumain. Aet ir ar éigean a ví v'uan ag éinne aipe tabairt vó cóimuraid an trpát úo 'ran vútaiß céadna. Dia eaprainn ir an anacain cuiread na mílte an' gan an cóimra féin mar cumvad oíca. Connaic Oiarmuio ós Ua Donnabáin an vaoi boct ag cup a máctar; ir cé ná raib i nOiarmuio aet ógán vein pé cion fir vó'n vaoi agur cúir pé an corp mar ba vual. Suar le trí píco bliadán ní ba vóadnaige vó capad oim-ra é agur ba leir vóm láitpeac ó n-a veallpam cnearta go raðar i látair an treanvaine vó vein mar ba vútéar vó i n-a óige. Ir aip go veapbta nár táinís malairt meoin leir an aimpir.

Ir eóil vó'n faogal ead a tápla vó Oiarmuio i gcaiteam na haimprie rin. I vtopac a faogail cúir pé Cumann ar bun i Scibpín cum reancup éireann vó múinead: faoirpe éireann an cúram ir mó ví oíca, ám. Níor v'fava go raib uimhór Dearmumán ar a vtaoib, agur Riagaltar Sacran i n-a gcoinnib. Cuiread an vligé ar flóigtið aca i vTraigli: tápla nár vaoi vó vó vó aet vaine. Aimpair acrainn a ví ann an trpát úo. Ví an f'rainn ag bagairt ar f'róinriar Seóramh, Imprie Artaípe, agur ví pávpaig Mac Matgáimna de éine Saedéal i n-a ceann uparó i nAim na f'rainnce. Ví f'arabailoe ir a cómaeða ag bagairt ar an bPápa agur muinntear Sacran ag cabpugað leó. Cúirpde fléibte na Mumán pé bairt larpac an uair eirgead le Aim Matgáimna. Cuair Seoirpe Mac Sigipio ir Tadó Ua Súilleabáin go vó an f'rainn ag bponnad claidim ar an vaoipeac Saedéalac bliadain a 1860. Ví Seán Mirtéil i n-a vteannta. Tá Seoirpe Mac Sigipio ir Imprie Artaípe i n-a mbeatair fóp. Faro faogail cuca agur fíor-pac oíca. Táinís an Count Cairéall Mac Domnail ó'n Artaípe ar lorig cabpac vó'n Pápa ar muinntir na hÉireann an bliadain céadna. I gcionn mí vó ví vó míle Saedéal ag tpoio 'ran loval. An uair v'filleavap abailé pé veirvad na bliadna ní raib don iongnad aet an fáilte cuiread pómpa ar fuio na Mumán. Fé ceann bliadna bup cogad Aimeirce amac, agur, fóipioi, ví Saedil i n-a míltib ag tpoio i gcoinnib a éile ann. An bliadain rin airpigead corp Ooirvéalbaiß ílac Maghura ó San Francipco go hÉipinn. leat-céad míle fear vó ví ag gluairaeet 'ran troçpato go Gláir Nardean.

Ví Oiarmuio Ua Donnabáin Rora ag obair go vóeallac le linn na haimprie rin. Ir beag bótar ná bóitpín féin i nÉipinn uile nár éirteir pé. Mar don leir rin ví pé ag treópað páipéir nuairveeða i náe Cliaet. Cúir roçpato ílac Maghura oipead ran mupnís ar Saedéalaið Aimeirce go raib ráil i nÉipinn le congnaim móp uata gan ró-moill. Ví ráil le congnaim ó muinntir Aimeirce féin tar éir an cógair mar vóigail ar a vdeapna Saedil vóib. Aet an uair tug éireannaiß foða pé Canava bliadain a 1866 v'fáß Aimeirce breall oíca. Tamall poimir rin cuiread an vligé ar Ua Donnabáin Rora ir ar a cuirteáctain i náe Cliaet. Copain pé 'ran cúirt iapaeða é féin pé mar véanpav leomán; aet b'é breit na cúirte a cup pé glar go ceann píce bliadán. Cuiread go capcair

i Sacraib é féin i r garrad Saedéal i r iad uile ceangailte le rlabraib. A leitéro de marlaó i r de bapcaó i r mar tugad do anhrúo níor ceapad riam fé rmaóail na Rúire. Baimead a cuio éadaió de ó éroiceann i r o'fágaó gan éadac gan rolar gan biaó gan deoc é i n-áruir cumang i gcoip an gheimhúo i r ríoc i r rneaceta timceall air. Ceanglaó a láma i r a cora i r otreó go mbíod air pé rheim bró i r uirce éaiteóde cuige o'alpaó ar an uplár fé mar oéanpaó muc no maopad. Táinís a bean i r a leand ar éuairó cuige : ní leigfíde oóib teacó i látair a céile. Cuiread i n-uil do go raib a éairíoe ag ragaíl báir i n-a timceall. Da labraó ré ór íreal geobpaóde de coraib ann ; da labraó ré ór áro oéanpaóde a lapcaó. Níor b'iongnaó an feoil ag lobad da ballaib. Tar éir tamail o'airtpegead ó éarcair go capcair é, agus toirce náir laigtois ar a mírneac da deapcaib uile oubaire na deamain a bí ag raire air gur ouine ailla é. I r gnatác an t-éiteac ar tarraac ag an Sacpanac. Acó tug muinnteari tiobpaio ápann rreagra ar Seán Duíde : togaóar an gemitac mar feiripe bliadain a 1869, agus rcaiolead paor ó'n gcapcair é bliadain a 1872, an tan cuiread ruais ar luéc an gailloacair ag Toaga Móir éarraigé.

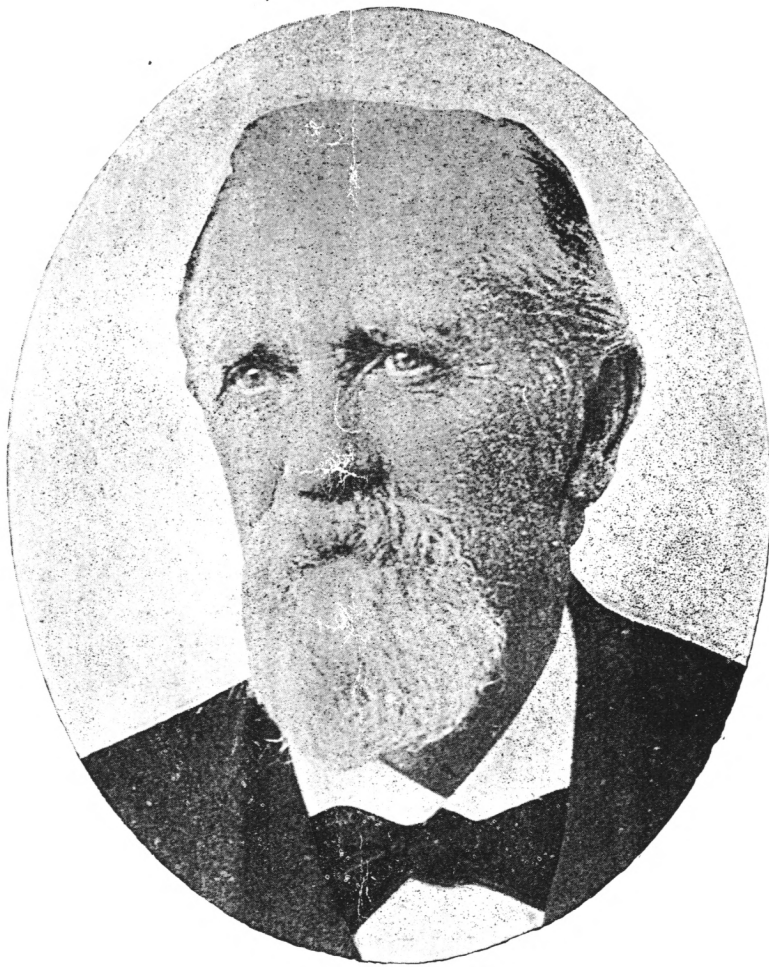
Cuaró ré go ndimeirce, acó leanaó anhrúo féin é. Meapad a meallaó i r a breabab i r a éur ar rcaórán, agus an uair teir ar a náimtoib é deigilt ó raotair a raogail no cor do baime ar cuiread bean ós cuige i r lámaó rí é, cé náir máirb, agus tá an piléar roin, tar éir deic mbliadain rídeac, ar ioméur aige go oí an uais. An trát capad oim-ra é ní ag tagairt do'n oioó-úráio ruair ré i gcapcairib Sacpan a bí ré ; acó bí dian-feag air toirce go bruaire ré leabair i leabarlain an arcais i r é ag teacó tar raile i r an leabair roin lán de na rean-bréagair i n-a éaioib féin.

An t-eólar a bí aige ar feandur éireann an ruo i r mó éur iongnaó oim-ra. Ní raib ouain ná rceal dáir éuala riam i nliú Rátac nac raib aige de glan-meabair. Bí ré ag tagairt do na gáonair ríadaine, ó ráopaig Sáirréal go ráopaig Mac Matgáma. De'n cine céadna Mac Matgáma i r é féin. Ba deag cine i nDearmúmain gan cuio oíob fé réim i ndarmaib éóipa i r dimeirce. Ní raib a mírneac ag trágaó ! Géillear do, mar gur deag líon tige ar m'aitne gan gaolta aca i ndarmaib iapaceta. Bí deapbrátair rean-mátair dom féin ar an noream a tug roga fé Canada, 1866. Cuaró garrnac mo rean-mátair eile do'n loadail ag coraint an pára ar garabailoe. B'éigin do deapbrátair mo mátair teidead go ndimeirce toirce a beic amuis i '67, agus o'fíll ré com luac i r bí de ceao aige i '72. Bí ré ra baile oíreac i gcómair mo baite-re, agus b'é m'atair baiteige é. Acó b'éigin do imteacó go hártraoile arir agus ní'l a ruan ná a tuairce againn ó roin. Deag líon tige i nDearmúmain ná réapad oíreac céadna i r breir do máoréam, má'r máoréam é.

"Molam tú féin i r do leitéro," arfa Rora líom i noeiread na dála. "Feair ós tura, bail ó Dia oir. Rugad tú an bliadain do rcaiolead míre ó glaraib gail. Tá do raogail rímac, de deoin Dé. Claoró leir an nSaedilg. Ní'l a commaic de úrlair agair i gcoinnib Sacpan, agus ní'l ráruagad i néirinn áin inoiu ar luéc coranta na Saedilge. I r móir é mo oócar arair."

I r iomda litir a bí agam uair ní ba diaónaige, agus níor rorib fé riam éugam acó tré Saedilg. Ní raib don paiopeaca aige acó paiopeaca Saedilge. Pead tamail máit roim a báir i r deag a labair ré acó Saedilg, agus i r deag ionntaioib a bí aige ar éinne acó luéc labairta Saedilge. Pocail Saedilge na pocail deirb a tuic ó n-a béal. Níor árpais ré aigne i otaioib éireann ná Sacpan riam. Daoine gan náir aoir go noearna. Leanaó Saedil ar a lois agus ní baogail oóib.

seán ua ceallais.



ROSSA

THE INFLUENCE OF FENIANISM.

In 1843 there were more than a million men of fighting age on the soil of Ireland who supported O'Connell's demand for Repeal with their voices, and waited for his word to support it with their hands. An English Cabinet Minister surveying the situation, observed that the growth of Irish Population was a menace. Hence, the Famine.

In 1845 the potato-blight appeared in Western Europe. Germany and the other Continental countries affected closed their ports to the export of foodstuffs until the respective Governments were satisfied that none of their people could be starved. The Young Irelanders demanded that the Ports of Ireland should be similarly closed. As this would have shortened England's food supply and kept the Million Repealers of Military Age alive, the British Government refused. The Parliamentary Party of that era—which had consented to put Repeal on the shelf in return for a prodigious number of Commissionerships, sub-Commissionerships, Inspectorships, stipendiary magistracies, and so forth—supported the Government's refusal and proclaimed the Young Irelanders Factionists, Traitors, Infidels, and Enemies of Repeal.

Thus, between 1846 and 1850 the potential Repeal Army vanished, and England was kept supplied with cheap food from Ireland. In each year of the Legislative Famine Ireland raised on her soil food for the sustenance of from sixteen to twenty millions of people. Out of her population of 8,000,000, two millions were destroyed in the same period by hunger, hunger-fever, and emigration to escape hunger-fever.

The Young Irelanders who attempted resistance to the course of British policy had their newspapers suppressed, and their bodies transported to England's Penal Settlements. Next, the Tenant League, founded by Gavan Duffy, Geo. Henry Moore, and Frederick Lucas, succeeded in electing a pledge-bound Parliamentary Party to the British Parliament, where the British Government at once bought it up.

Thereafter, the Reduction of Ireland proceeded swiftly and smoothly, with the help of the Encumbered Estates Act. Lord Sligo, for instance, wiped out 10,000 people who dwelt upon the soil then in his possession, and whose ancestors had dwelt there for a thousand years, and Mr. John George Adair, desiring to have good shooting and civilised surroundings, bought a countryside and left no living thing of the human species on it. The natives wept—"throwing themselves on the ground," writes the Unionist "Derry Standard's" correspondent of the day—" . . . they burst out into the old Irish wail—and their terrifying cries resounded along the mountain-side." But Mr. Adair, or Lord Lucan or Lord Sligo, or Mr. Allan Pollock or Lord Leitrim suffered no other inconvenience. For it had been ground into the Irish peasant that it was no sin for the British Government to exterminate HIM, but it was damnation hereafter for him to conspire to exterminate the British Government, or even to shoot a John George Adair.

It was in this forlorn and seemingly broken-spirited land the Fenian Movement was founded by James Stephens, John O'Mahony and Michael Doheny—all three Young Irelanders who, in 1848, had urged the people to fight rather than let themselves be legally famished. It spread through the land, although the British Government mobilised all its sacred and profane artillery. When Fenianism attempted armed and open war with the British Empire, the British Empire was able to defeat it without calling the French, the Russians, the Japanese, the Servians, the Belgians, the Italians, the Ghoorkhas the Senegalese, and the Fiji Islanders to its aid, but the spirit of Fenianism, which was the spirit of Young Ireland, which was the spirit of Ancient Ireland, it could not defeat. Fenianism had recalled Irishmen to their manhood. It had exorcised the

British Theology and convinced the better part of the Irish that to permit themselves to be destroyed without offering resistance was not a meek submission to Providence entitling them to heaven hereafter, but plain suicide—a sin against God.

The spread of this conviction led to the farmers of Tipperary when their landlords came to exterminate them, using guns at Ballycohey and elsewhere to exterminate their landlords, their landlords' bailiffs, and their landlords' police. A British Government alarmed at this practical Fenianism immediately did what it had refused to the appeals, arguments, pleas, and supplications of forty years of oratory and resolutions—passed a Land Act recognising the right of an Irish farmer to object to being extirpated off-hand. Within a dozen years thereafter the spirit of Fenianism had smashed Landlordism in Ireland into fragments, and the Irish farmer was free to live and eat of his own corn.

So long as the spirit of Fenianism diffused itself through the body politic, Ireland marched on a hundred paths of political, social, industrial, and educational effort to National Regeneration. When the body grew corrupt Ireland shrivelled in men's minds from a spiritual force and a National entity to a fragment of Empire—an Area. Again, the Body Politic has healed and awakens to consciousness of that soul within it which the Political Atheist denies. No man will watch the body of O'Donovan Rossa pass to its tomb without remembering that the strength of an Empire was baffled when it sought to subdue this man whose spirit was the free spirit of the Irish Nation.

ARTHUR GRIFFITH.

ROSSA—ARCH REBEL

“I robbed no man, I spilt no blood, tho' they sent me to jail,
Because I was O'Donovan Ross, a son of Granuaile.”

These are the only lines I remember of an old street ballad which seems to have been very popular when I was a child. I don't think I ever knew any more of the verses, the air of which I remember quite well; but they were the first medium through which the name of the great rebel of Ros-cairbre reached my ears. It was not, of course, until some years afterwards that I was able to appreciate who O'Donovan Rossa was, and why he was sent to gaol, the reason given in the ballad I must suppose seeming quite sufficient and satisfactory at the time. It was in that admirable compilation, “Speeches from the Dock,” that I got the first satisfactory account of O'Donovan Rossa, and of his predecessors and confederates in Ireland's glorious and unwavering struggle for National Independence.

The story there told of Rossa's defiant attitude towards Judge Keogh, “a regular Norbury,” as he called him; and the manly cheerfulness with which he heard the savage sentence of penal servitude for life, was sufficient to give him a very high place in my boyish esteem as a National hero, a place he has retained though many ideals have since been shattered, and many idols dethroned.

In September, 1831, O'Donovan Rossa was born, his baptism, as recorded in the Parish Church of Roscarbery, taking place on the 10th of that month. His parents were of the old Gaelic stock, both sides numbering chieftains of Carbery among their ancestors. They were anxious to give their son the best available education, and sent him to the school at Ross, where he made steady progress in his studies. In those years English was

still a foreign tongue in this as in many other southern districts; and the iron grip of the Penal Laws had scarcely been loosened from popular teaching. As Rossa himself has recorded:—"The Irish language was the language of the table, the language of the milking baan, the language of the sowing and the reaping, the language of the mowing, the mihall and the harvest home. The English language may be spoken when the landlord or English-speaking came the way; but the natural language to every one in the house was Irish, and in the Irish language I commenced to grow."

All through his life Rossa kept up his interest in the old tongue of his ancestors, which he spoke more eloquently and fluently than English; and when towards the end of his days it was practically impossible to rouse his interest in any subject, his devoted and talented wife has told me, that the only way of awakening his attention and getting him to respond, was by addressing him in the melodious accents laden with the tradition of bye-gone glories, and of many battles fought against the spoiler and oppressor of his native land.

Rossa was a generous high-spirited youth of seventeen at the time of the '48 movement which he saw sink in a failure that might have been averted, or at least rendered less inglorious had the people been allowed to make a stand, even against the overwhelming odds arrayed against them, instead of being counselled to an ignoble peace, which involved the degradation of dying famine-stricken in the ditches, or by the roadside. In his touching verses, "Jillén Andy," Rossa records an actual incident of the English-made famine, which so buried itself into his soul, that he determined to do at least one man's part to rouse his countrymen out of despair and apathy, and make a further, a more carefully and secretly prepared, and a more uncompromising fight for Irish freedom.

But he had naturally to bide his time; and the most he could do after the '48 failure was to keep himself and his youthful associates clear of the new "moral force," or "constitutional" Tenant League movement, which, whilst having a handful of well-meaning patriotic men among its founders, soon fell into the clutches of the self-seekers and sycophants led by Messrs. Sadlier and Keogh, who became so notorious as the "Brass Band" of that period.

In 1856 Rossa and a few other patriotic young men took the first active step towards counteracting the demoralising influences at work in the country, by initiating a political organisation on the lines of the "Emmet Monument Association," which a remnant of the exiled '48 men had started in New York, and which was the precursor of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, or the Fenian Movement, as it came to be more generally known and called. Some of the sturdiest young Nationalists in Skibbereen, where Rossa was then living, identified themselves with the new movement which on Rossa's suggestion was called the "Phoenix National and Literary Society," signifying in his own words, "that the Irish cause was again to rise from the ashes of our martyred nationality."

In May, 1858, James Stephens paid a visit to Skibbereen armed with a letter of introduction from James O'Mahony, of Bandon, to one of the leading members of the Phoenix Society, Donal Oge McCartie, who was the first man to take the Fenian oath in Skibbereen. Donal Oge in turn administered the oath to Rossa, who then initiated other leading members, until the whole Society was sworn in to the great revolutionary organisation. In a small country town it is almost impossible for a fairly large body of young men to continue constantly meeting without attracting attention to themselves, and before the end of 1858 the members of the Phoenix Society were not alone warned from the altar steps, but from the columns of the "Nation" newspapers also, then under the editorship of A. M. Sullivan. The "Irishman" of the time referred to the warning of the "Nation" as "an imprudent shout of alarm," and went on to say:—

"It would seem that there is a political organisation in Munster. We learn from unquestionable sources that it has no connection with Ribbonmen or midnight conspiracy but prudently or imprudently, wisely or rashly, its members believe that by its means they can help in bringing back the independence of Ireland. We fear the wholesale denunciation of all forms of secret societies by well-meaning amiable persons misleads and confounds the people, and makes them blind to the line where morality ends and crime begins. A secret organisation for the amelioration of Ireland is no crime."

The result of all this "well-meaning" publicity was that in December, 1858, Rossa and his leading associates were placed in the dock, and after suffering eight months imprisonment were released in July, 1859. The imprisonment, however, was the least serious effect of clerical and parliamentary zeal for "law and order," so far at least as Rossa was concerned, for on his release he found that a flourishing business which he had built up in Skibbereen had practically been ruined, and that some of his best customers among the neighbouring gentry, and their assiduous imitators, refused to have any further dealings with a convicted "felon." The police authorities also worried him about licensing matters, and as the local Bishop also took sides against him, he was reluctantly compelled to emigrate to New York in 1863.

John O'Mahony and the other leaders of the revolutionary movement in America gave him a cordial welcome, and he would probably have continued his work for Ireland there, but for his recall towards the end of 1863, to take up the business management of the new Fenian organ, "The Irish People," a position he filled with conspicuous ability up to the seizure of the paper, and the arrest of practically all its staff, including Rossa himself in September, 1865. When brought up for trial in November of that year Rossa conducted his own defence with the result referred to in the beginning of this hasty sketch. In January, 1871, he was released as a result of the Amnesty agitation, on condition that he went into exile.

It is unnecessary that I should dwell here on the shocking details of Rossa's treatment in prison, beyond saying that in the course of a fairly extensive reading about Siberian, Italian and other prison systems, I have encountered little to equal, and certainly nothing to surpass in vicious malignity the methods resorted to by the English authorities to crush, break, or humiliate that proud, dauntless spirit. Nor does space permit me to make more than passing reference to his return for Tipperary, in 1869, by the substantial majority of 103 votes over the Government and clerical candidate, Mr. Denis Caulfield Heron. Needless to say the election was declared void, but its significance was fully appreciated both in Ireland and abroad.

With the exception of a brief residence in Cork some ten years ago, Rossa continued his activities for the Irish cause in America until the weight of years and increasing ill-health compelled his withdrawal from public affairs. For many years he conducted a newspaper, the "United Irishman," of which I used to see occasional copies, and enjoy its breezy and genial personal notes. For, despite the fact that to the English O'Donovan Rossa, more than any other man of his time, typified the most desperate and sanguinary type of conspirator, he was in reality one of the kindest and most tender-hearted of men.

That a man of such innate gentleness and nobility of temperament should feel compelled to resort to the most desperate and violent methods to bring about the realisation of a passionately cherished ideal is in itself the most eloquent commentary, and the most emphatic condemnation, of English rule in Ireland.

O'LEARY CURTIS.

ROSSA IN THE DOCK

The very spirit of defiant patriotism animated Rossa as he faced Britain's judges charged with disaffection towards the foreign occupation of his country. Rossa in the dock is a picture that will live in the hearts and minds of Irish Nationalists. Proud, brave and resolute, he embodied the spirit of Fenianism, the historic spirit of Irish Nationalism, and gave inspiration to the young men of his time. It was the attitude England detested most of all, for it was likely to be imitated by other rebels, and to stir the conscience of every manly Irishman. Political intriguing could be outmanœuvred by her astute instruments in the Castle, and in editorial rooms. The frank defiance and denial of her sovereign right could be punished in the individual, but it was a dangerous and contagious doctrine for Irishmen to hear. When the spirit is finally broken, and the voice of a Rossa is heard no more, then the men who died for Ireland may sorrow for her ignoble fate. David must not be intimidated by the bulk of Goliath's body.

Rossa, a man of magnificent masculinity, could not be cowed by British judge or British soldier. In prison he withstood hardship and torment with the same dauntless courage. He was never tamed. He knew the cause he suffered for was just; he fought for his country's freedom. When compelled to eat his food from an English prison floor with his hands manacled behind his back, no thought of dishonourable desertion passed across his mind. The hope of avenging the wrongs of his country, and of re-establishing her independence brightened his dark cell. His gaolers were amazed to hear him laugh, for he had some of Wolfe Tone's philosophy, and looked for no mercy from the enemy. In the dock he was the Irish Nationalist according to John Mitchel and Robert Emmet.

Late in 1859 Rossa found himself facing British officials, "charged with treason of some kind to something belonging to England." Alongside him was a man against whom it was alleged that he walked down the street, "with a military step." It was a star-chamber trial in a room in Cork gaol, and after many months Rossa was released. For some years he was able to do good work, but soon found himself in the hands of the enemy.

In November, 1865, O'Donovan Rossa occupied the dock in Green Street Court-house. He conducted his own defence in a vigorous and characteristic manner. The infamous Keogh was his judge. Rossa knew well what his fate would be, but was not in any way intimidated. He badgered the detectives, debated with the crown lawyers, and argued with the judges. When the prisoner in the dock undertook to read the files of the "United Irishman," horror sat upon the faces of the judge, jury and attorneys. Judge Keogh had to sit on the bench while Rossa read to the court the bitter satire and fierce invective written about him by the Fenian leaders. For eight hours the indomitable Fenian continued his defence, and only gave in when his physical powers were exhausted. "A regular Norbury," he gasped, as he announced that the defence was concluded. When asked the usual formal question, Rossa refused to say anything as to why sentence should not be passed upon him.

"With the fact that the Government seized papers connected with my defence and examined them—with the fact that they packed the jury—with the fact that the Government stated they would convict—with the fact that they sent Judge Keogh, a second Norbury, to try me—with these facts before me, it would be useless to say anything."

The man who had sold his country proceeded to pass sentence on the man who had plotted and planned to free her. "The prisoner," he said, "had entertained these criminal designs since the year 1859."

"I was an Irishman since I was born," interrupted Rossa.

The judge said he would not waste words by trying to bring him to a sense of his guilt; and Rossa smiled.

The sentence was that Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa be kept in penal servitude for the term of his natural life.

"All right, my lord," exclaimed the unconquerable Irishman, and with a smile to his friends in the court, he walked with a light step from the dock.

NORTHMAN.

THE POLITICAL "FELON"

Writing a week after O'Donovan Rossa was convicted in 1865, John Mitchel declared that the Fenian prisoners who had been called upon to stand before courts and juries had all behaved nobly, but, to his mind, the conduct of Rossa was noblest of all. "It was very imprudent of him to take this course, and, in fact, it brought on him a sentence for life instead of twenty years. But, at any rate, he did the thing that was right, and just and manly." The venal and perjured renegade who pronounced the iniquitous sentence referred to the prisoner's experience of "the clemency of the Crown" in 1859. For eight months, from December, 1858, to July, 1859, Rossa and his comrades of the Phoenix Society were kept in jail without trial, although the Habeas Corpus Act was not suspended, and were compelled to work as if they were convicted prisoners. To obtain the release of one of their body, who had been tried before a packed jury in Tralee and sentenced to ten years' penal servitude, they finally consented to plead guilty to the charges laid against them, and were then set free. The royal "clemency" was of the usual order where Irish "rebels" are concerned. It was a politicians' shift to avoid exposure before the world of their mean breach of their own laws, of which they had been guilty. Whig or Tory the game is played under the same rules. It was a Liberal Government, of which Mr. W. E. Gladstone was a leading member, which made "So-help-me-God" Keogh a judge, and it was during Mr. Gladstone's first Premiership that O'Donovan Rossa endured the worst tortures of his prison life.

Bravely as Rossa had borne himself before Judge Keogh and the packed jury, his courage and fortitude came triumphantly through infinitely greater trials during his six years' incarceration in English convict prisons. Deliberately it was planned that the political prisoners should be subjected to every form of personal indignity that mean cruelty could invent. To make them feel degraded and outcast from humanity was the object of their penal treatment. From the highest rank to the lowest in the prison service, the word had been passed that the spirit of these men must be broken.

The instruments of British vengeance were truly fitted to the task. The English convict system was calculated to make the jailer indistinguishable, except by his uniform, from the most brutalised of his prisoners. The worst devilry of which the system was

capable was reserved for the punishment of Rossa. He was sentenced to penal servitude for the term of his natural life, and his jailers certainly tried their worst, short of actual assassination, to shorten the term of his imprisonment. Few forms of torture that could be tried without risk of early discovery were left untried upon the proud and stiff-necked Fenian. He was a marked man from the first day he entered prison, and were it not for his powerful constitution and high spirit he would not have survived the protracted ordeal.

Rossa was received into Mountjoy Prison on December 13th, 1865, and thence transferred to Pentonville on the 23rd of the same month. He was removed to Portland on the 14th of May, 1866, placed—to use the official term—“on second probation” at Millbank on the 20th of February, 1867, and removed to Chatham on the 24th of February, 1868. It was in Chatham that he was handcuffed with his hands behind his back for a period of 35 days, a fact which was accepted as proved by the Commission of Inquiry over which Lord Devon presided. About this fact Mr. Gladston’s Home Secretary, Mr. Henry Austin Bruce, got up in the House of Commons and lied in the manner of his kind. Long before the report of the Devon Commission had appeared, showing, amongst other unpleasant revelations, that Rossa had been compelled to lap his gruel like a dog, Mr. Bruce’s identity had been hidden under the title of Lord Aberdare—another act of royal clemency! The report of that Commission is absorbingly interesting, if read in collation with the history of the times. Rossa’s sufferings in prison were tempered or increased in strict keeping with events in the outer world. He fought his fight, knowing little or nothing of what was going on in Ireland or abroad. He personified in the struggle with his jailers that spirit which ultimately compelled William Ewart Gladstone to recognise that something must be done to avert danger from England. If the “intensity of Fenianism” disestablished the Protestant Church in Ireland, Rossa’s fortitude in prison must have assisted Mr. Gladstone in no small degree to realise that he must change his policy. Of what was the legislative result of his altered mind, it is not for us here to speak. But it behoves us to remember that he whom we mourn to-day, whilst still a chained and tortured inmate of a felon cell, could by his unconquerable spirit, affect the course of British policy. He who runs may read the lesson of his noble example.

L. S. O R.

NA FIANNA EIREANN

Someone has said that every Irishman is born a rebel; this assertion may seem rather sweeping, but it is undoubtedly a fact that nearly every Irish boy is instinctively a rebel. All over the country, even in districts untouched by Fenianism, and in which are no traditions of the sacrifices and struggles of local Fenians, we find Tone, Emmet, Dwyer, Rossa, and men of their stamp figuring as heroes in the conversations and confidences of the boys, who may have no knowledge of the particular deed or deeds of any of them, little or no conception of their aspirations or their hopes, but one thing always is clear to the youthful mind—all their heroes fought for Ireland and against England.

This National instinct in the boys of Ireland is truly wonderful; it guides them unerringly and without apparent reason; their knowledge of the men whose names are linked together in their imaginations being, in most cases, gleaned from fragments of

conversations overheard, from snatches of ballads sung willy-nilly by their elders, or, mayhap now and then from the lips of a forlorn ballad-singer, the latter not being nearly so common now as was the case a dozen years ago.

It is unfortunate that until quite recently no very serious attempt was made to guard and guide our young rebels through their school days, and through that period of transition between boyhood and manhood, that period during which so many dreams are forgotten, so many illusions shattered; during which one might almost say the man of the future is made. There were many endeavours to capture the young minds for the nation by the establishment of language and history classes, by the formation of juvenile football and hurley clubs, they all met with some success, but in the main the boys tired of the routine, and were lost in the tide of anglicisation.

About five years ago Na Fianna Eireann was started, in a very modest way, in Dublin, and since then the organisation has spread in a wonderful manner throughout the whole country. The boys of the Fianna have solved the difficulties which attended previous efforts in this direction, they have done this by combining work and play, by completely controlling the organisation themselves, thus making each individual boy feel that he himself is more or less responsible for the success of their work. The boys make their own laws, elect their officers, smooth over their difficulties and settle their differences with surprising tact and diplomacy; so each one feels that he himself is the organisation.

The effects of the training in the Fianna on the boys who will form the next generation of the men of Ireland cannot be over-estimated. The discipline of camp, parade and drill-hall will remain throughout their lives; the independence of thought, action and initiative acquired in the conducting of the routine work of the different corps will result in manliness and self-reliance, and lastly, the physical training and outdoor life will give them what some English chronicler said were possessed by their forefathers "strong bodies," as well as a healthy outlook.

It is not, however, in the camp and on the march that the most important work of the Fianna is accomplished, for from the National aspect it is much more important that the spirit of the Fenians should be kept alive, that the national instincts of the children should be transformed into national convictions before they reach the age of manhood, and it is here the Fianna have triumphed. Their history classes give them a more intimate knowledge of the men who figured as heroes in their childish imaginations; they learn with undiluted joy of the glorious deeds of Owen Roe and Hugh O'Neill, of the supreme heroism of the men of '98, and the men of '67, who gloried in the service of Ireland, and their language classes bring them into closer touch with the spirit of the Gael—the spirit of the Fianna of Fionn, of Cuchullan and Fergus, whose deeds are recounted with enthusiasm, and whose lives stand forth as models of perfection for Irishmen.

And if the effect of the training of the Fianna is such on the individual who shall estimate the effect on the nation, when the hundreds of boys who are now in the different corps come to take their places in the National fight? Imbued with a belief in the righteousness of their cause, fired with a love for Ireland implanted in their hearts from childhood; with the example of great lives and great endeavours before them; we can look forward with confidence to that day which is surely coming; when the final struggle for the consummation of the hopes of Rossa and the others will take place. We know that the boys of the Fianna will be in the forefront of the fight, and we know that the boys of another generation will recount their deeds with the same pride as the boys of to-day recount the deeds of the Fianna of Fionn.

SEAN MAC GADHRA.



MRS. O'DONOVAN ROSSA and MISS EILEEN O'DONOVAN ROSSA
who journeyed from America to accompany the remains to
the last resting place

CUMANN NA mBAN

In the great revival of Nationalist spirit in Ireland during the past couple of years, or rather in its outward manifestation in the Irish Volunteer and kindred movements—for the spirit itself never ceases to exist, no aspect is more hopeful or inspiring than the splendid manner in which the women of Ireland have risen to the occasion—realised their responsibilities, and taken their rightful place by the side of their fellow-countrymen as an essential auxiliary force in Ireland's Army of Freedom. The part played by the women of Ireland at this momentous time of stress and crisis is ever quite worthy of the superb tradition of Irish womanhood in the National struggle from the remote times of their warrior Queens: Scota and Maev; Mairgread O'Carroll, of Offaly; Queen Dubh, the mother of Hugh Roe O'Donnell, the gallant women of Limerick; Mary Doyle, the heroine of Ross; Betsy Gray, of Ballynahinch; Mary McCracken, the devoted sister of that truly gallant Irishman, Henry Joy McCracken, and the betrothed of Tone's best loved friend, the handsome and lion-hearted Thomas Russell; Rose Hope, the faithful sister of the true and sturdy Jimmy Hope; and one who was faithful unto death, and whom British bribes or bayonets could not weaken nor terrorise, the humbly-born and noble-souled servant of Robert Emmet, the peerless Anne Devlin.

Then at a later period we had in the Young Ireland Movement many women of splendid character and attainments like Speranza (Lady Wilde); Mary Eva Kelly, and Ellen Downing; and the story of the revolutionary movement, of which O'Donovan Rossa was so prominent a figure, is also illumined by the names and deeds of devoted women like Ellen O'Leary, Mrs. Clarke Luby, sister of J. de Jean Frazer; Mrs. O'Donovan Rossa, Lizzie Duggan, sister of Denis Duggan; and those faithful Dublin women, Mrs. Boland and Mrs. Butler, who in turn gave Stephens the shelter of their family circles in Dublin, when the English Government had the walls of the city placarded with the offer of £1,000 for the Fenian Chief's apprehension. And later still, in the troublous period of the Land League, Ireland had the services of many fearless and enthusiastic women, who stepped into the gap when the popular leaders were arrested, and helped to carry on the movement. Of the women nearer our own period there is no need that I should mention more than one; but she was, indeed, an outstanding figure, the most exquisite and Irish of our women singers, and the most uncompromising of militant Nationalists, Anna Johnston, of Belfast, or, as she is, perhaps, better known by her pen-name, "Ethna Carbery."

Certainly the women of our time have a glorious and an inspiring tradition to inspire them in their work for the old land.

And Cumann na mBan gives promise of worthily living up to that splendid standard. The organisation was founded in March, 1914; and from the first has had a central body of earnest and able helpers. Its primary objects are of an entirely practical character, and may be summarised as comprising the advancement of the cause of Irish liberty, by organising Irishwomen to help the Volunteer movement in every possible way, by helping to get arms and equipment, and by forming classes for the study of First Aid and Ambulance work. Many of the members have also learned rifle and revolver shooting, in which accomplishments they have shown much skill and proficiency. Such important work as signalling, map-making and scouting, also finds many earnest students among the members.

In the ranks of Cumann na mBan there is a place for every patriotic Irishwoman, and plenty of good work to be done. It is not by any means necessary that a girl or woman should be of Amazonian character to join the organisation, as there is full scope for the gentlest as for the most warlike activities. A great number of the members of some of the branches have taken out certificates in nursing and first-aid work, which will undoubtedly prove useful even if their possessors never hear a shot fired. The organisation should certainly appeal to all patriotic Irishwomen who would like to do something else besides standing idly by while the great destiny of their native land was being decided. It is only by taking a part in such good work, that the dream for which O'Donovan Rossa and his confederates suffered in English prisons can be brought to its full realisation.

G.

WHY THE CITIZEN ARMY HONOURS ROSSA

In honouring O'Donovan Rossa the workers of Ireland are doing more than merely paying homage to an unconquerable fighter. They are signifying their adhesion to the principle of which Rossa till his latest days was a living embodiment—the principle that the freedom of a people must in the last analysis rest in the hands of that people—that there is no outside force capable of enforcing slavery upon a people really resolved to be free, and valuing freedom more than life. We in Ireland have often forgotten that truth, indeed it may be even asserted that only an insignificant minority of the nation ever learned it. And yet, that truth once properly adopted as the creed of a nation would become the salvation of the nation.

For slavery is a thing of the soul, before it embodies itself in the material things of the world. I assert that before a nation can be reduced to slavery its soul must have been cowed, intimidated or corrupted by the oppressor. Only when so cowed, intimidated or corrupted does the soul of a nation cease to urge forward its body to resist the imposition of the shackles of slavery; only when the soul so surrenders does any part of the body consent to make truce with the foe of its National existence.

When the soul is conquered the articulate expression of the voice of the nation loses its defiant accent, and taking on the whining colour of compromise, begins to plead for the body. The unconquered soul asserts itself, and declares its sanctity to be more important than the interests of the body; the conquered soul ever pleads first that the body may be saved even if the soul is damned.

For generations this conflict between the sanctity of the soul and the interests of the body has been waged in Ireland. The soul of Ireland preached revolution, declared that no blood-letting could be as disastrous as a cowardly acceptance of the rule of the conqueror, nay, that the rule of the conqueror would necessarily entail more blood-letting than revolt against the rule. In fitful moments of spiritual exaltation Ireland accepted that idea, and such men as O'Donovan Rossa becoming possessed of it became thenceforth the living embodiment of that gospel. But such supreme moments passed for the multitude, and the nation as a nation sank again into its slavery, and its sole articulate expression to reach the ears of the world were couched in the fitful accents of the

discontented, but spiritless slave—blatant in his discontent, spiritless in his acceptance of subjection as part of the changeless order of things.

The burial of the remains of O'Donovan Rossa in Irish soil, and the functions attendant thereon must inevitably raise in the mind of every worker the question of his or her own mental attitude to the powers against which the departed hero was in revolt. That involves the question whether those, who accept that which Rossa rejected have any right to take part in honour paid to a man whose only title to honour lies in his continued rejection of that which they have accepted. It is a question each must answer for himself or herself.

But it can neither be answered carelessly, nor evaded.

The Irish Citizen Army in its constitution pledges its members to fight for a Republican Freedom for Ireland. Its members are, therefore, of the number who believe that at the call of duty they may have to lay down their lives for Ireland, and have so trained themselves that at the worst the laying down of their lives shall constitute the starting point of another glorious tradition—a tradition that will keep alive the soul of the nation.

We are, therefore, present to honour O'Donovan Rossa by right of our faith in the separate destiny of our country, and our faith in the ability of the Irish Workers to achieve that destiny.

JAMES CONNOLLY.

THE IRISH VOLUNTEER IN 1915

Of the Irish Volunteers as an organisation this is no place to speak. Of the causes that led to the founding of that organisation it is yet impossible to speak in such a way as to shut out political discussion; and political discussion should cease when the present duty of the Nation stands clear. But of the Irish Volunteer, of the man for Ireland in 1915, one can speak, as one can speak of O'Donovan Rossa in 1867, and so for ever.

Most Irishmen have grown up with the feeling, whether vague or clear, that the most noble thing for them in life, after the service of their God, would be battle for Ireland. Even those who have done little or nothing to arm themselves and their countrymen for battle have known that feeling strongly. It is not merely the love of country felt by the fatter nations, the love of the traditional ways of thought and of life familiar to them, the love that brings home-sickness to the heart with the fear of exile or of death. It is not merely the love of the sod of Ireland, the love of nature here. It is not merely the love of liberty, of the rights of man. It is not merely hatred of the age-long oppression suffered by our race. It springs not merely from economic grievance, or from grievance against the administration of alien law, or even against the denial of native law. It is the knowledge that there lives in this country, in this race, a holy cause that will be served and served in blood, and served still though it be betrayed by every man and woman of us but one. While the fire of this cause burns in one Irish heart, the Nation lives. It is our doom and our dower. Failure in its service has brought upon us the calamities of our history.

Adventure in its service has won glorious reward unsought, and has always forbidden the end. It is not governed by material advantage. Those who make the great journeys guide their course by the stars.

With this spirit ever moving them or troubling them, the Irishmen of this generation have grown up. Most of them have anxiously prayed that when their destined duty arrives their eyes may be made clear that they may know it, and their hands made cunning, that by some wild luck they may be skilled to serve it. Many have been confident that they will know it, and so have got themselves ready for it. Some have gone to meet it, prepared to bring it.

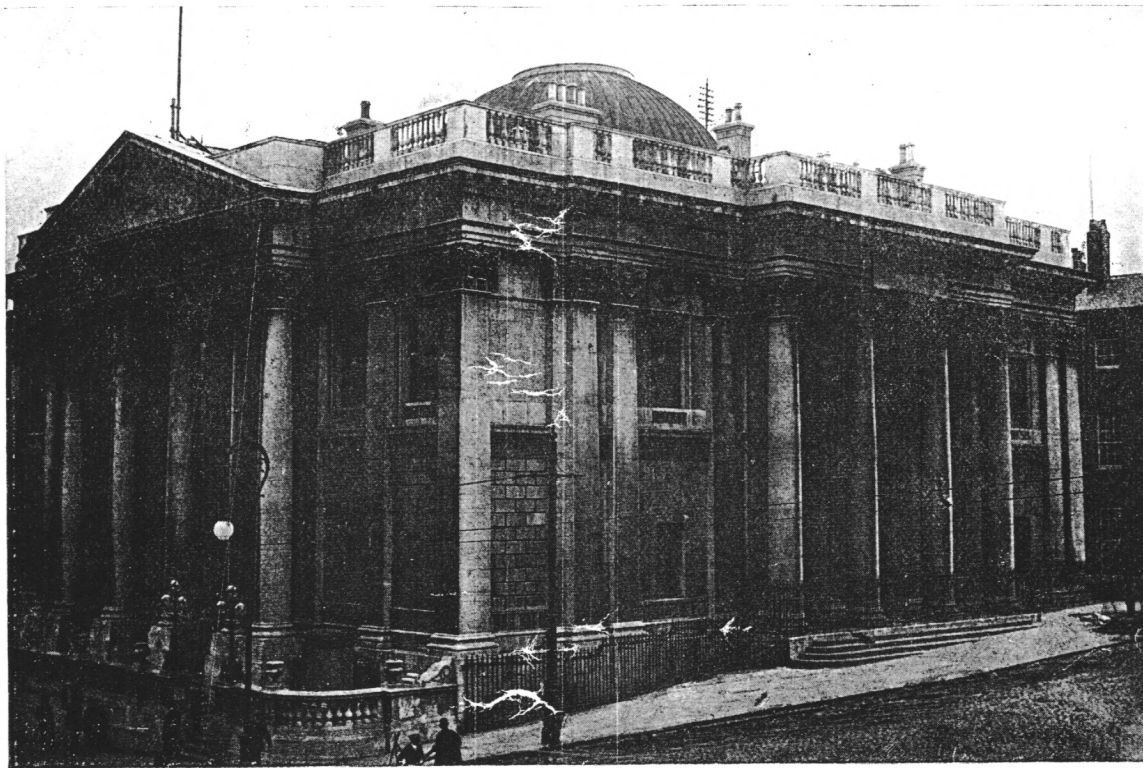
Until November, 1913, it was possible for Irishmen to feel vaguely this sense of duty and of destined service, to be taken or refused. Since then this much at least is clear, that all who are to take the service of this country must prepare themselves for that service. Those who before that time had talked of doing what the heroes of the Nation had done, those who had written essays or poems or plays, those who had made speeches in honour of Eoghan Ruadh O'Neill, or of Tone or Emmet or Rossa, all then found that, like the poet of Plato, they had uttered great and wise things which they themselves did not understand. They recognised that in them, with their reason and their calculation, there was another thing that looked through their eyes and beat with their hearts and spoke through their lips, and they knew that that other thing was the master of all their acts. That other thing told them that ease was to them a temptation of the devil, that the service of Ireland, to be a holy service, must be an arduous service. It told them that they should mistrust everything that came to them with rewards and promises of rewards. It told them that to seek fame in duty was a sin to Ireland, and a desire doomed to frustration.

The duty then was clear, and all to whom the heritage of nationality is given were gloriously glad.

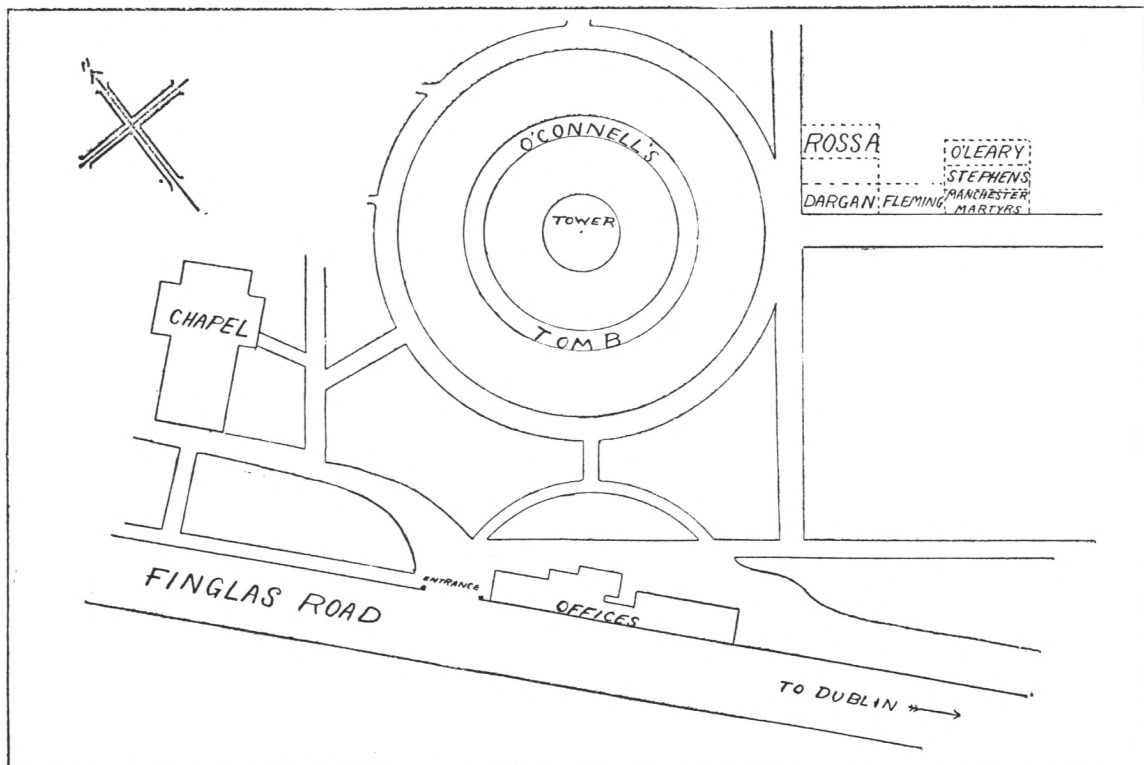
Twenty months have passed since the first public enrolment of Irish Volunteers. The men who came at the beginning and have remained true to the undertaking they signed then, are now armed and trained to the use of arms. Others, who, through force from without or through a temporary failure in themselves, were led astray for a time by the English party divisions, which are the only political divisions among Irishmen, have come back and are coming back every day of late. And new men are coming in every day of late. Courage grows as our path is seen by all to be the old path. To-day for every man that is outlawed or imprisoned by the British Government hundreds know themselves Irishmen and join the Irish Volunteers. It is good for the Nation to know that Irishmen to-day are enduring what the men of the nobler generations endured, that the prison treatment which O'Donovan Rossa suffered in Chatham is suffered to-day in Mountjoy by Sean MacDiarmada.

The Irish Volunteer in 1915 is the heir to Irish Nationality, handed down from revolt to revolt since the alien plunderers came here seven hundred and fifty years ago. The Irish Volunteer has taken up in his generation the traditional policy of the Irish people,—abandoned for a few decades,—the policy of physical force. The Irish Volunteer stands pledged to the single service of Ireland in Ireland. He alters not his allegiance with change of circumstance. He owns one loyalty—to Ireland. He knows one duty—to Ireland. His deed cannot die into the air like a word. The ideal that he has conceived in his heart can never die; it is one for ever with love and honour and right; it is the ideal of his country free, in the happy enjoyment of the sacred gift that has kept her children true, and that leads him now to battle, to sacrifice and to victory.

THOMAS MACDONAGH.



City Hall, Dublin, where Rossa's Remains lay in State



Plan showing site of Rossa's Tomb in Glasnevin Cemetery

ROSSA AS A POET

Although the literature of the Fenian movement has not the outstanding qualities of that produced during the '48 period, more especially in the domain of poetry, there was at the same time a fairly considerable number of contributions of good verse to the pages of the "Irish People," including a few poets of genuine power and accomplishment. Pre-eminent among these were T. C. Irwin, Dr. R. D. Joyce, J. F. O'Donnell ("Caviare"), and, of course, Charles Kickham, who, as a novelist, political writer and lyricist, is, perhaps, the most considerable literary figure of them all. Miss Fanny Parnell contributed some striking poems; and the editor's own sister, Miss Ellen O'Leary, also wrote occasional lyrics of much unaffected simplicity and charm. Mrs. O'Donovan Rossa, who has written many graceful poems, some of which are included in a volume published in New York in 1868, also wrote for the Fenian organ over the pseudonym "Clíodhna;" and there were a number of other writers whose aim was more in the direction of propaganda than deliberate artistic achievement.

Among these must be included the name of the hero-warrior whom all good Irishmen unite in honouring on this sad yet inspiring occasion. O'Donovan Rossa was too active and ardent in the practical work of revolution to devote himself with the necessary assiduity to the cultivation of the poetic art. Whatever he felt impelled to say or write, came straight out and was transferred to the printed page, I imagine, with the minimum of polishing or correcting. That he had the essential stuff of poetry in his temperament, I have no doubt whatever; and although all his poems bear evidence of hasty execution, there are, at the same time, many stanzas which give evidence of what he might have accomplished in a finished style, had he taken his undoubted talent more seriously. But I am not sure that I do not prefer those rough-hewn, straightforward verses as they are. They are more characteristic of the bold, dashing, impetuous personality of the man than any more elaborate artistic productions could possibly be.

The bulk of Rossa's work in verse is small, and could easily be included in the series of pamphlets which are so useful and popular at the present era of "small-nationality" liberating. His best known poem, perhaps, is the infinitely pathetic "Jillén Andy," which is a veritable transcript from life, and indeed one might say from death also. It is the record of a famine burial in which Rossa himself participated as a youth, the grim details of which so impressed his imagination that he was able to set them forth with striking fidelity and uncompromising realism twenty years after. "Jillén Andy" was a poor widow-woman who died of starvation in black '47, in the town of Rosscarbery. Her son, Thade, came to Rossa to tell him of his mother's death, and to ask his aid in making her grave:—

"Now in the dark churchyard we work away,
The shovel in his hand, in mine the spade,
And seeing Thade cry, I cried myself that day,
For Thade was fond of me, and I was fond of Thade."

'After describing the carrying of the poor, wasted body to the graveside, there is the following touching description of the laying of the coffinless body in the clay:—

"I stand within that grave, nor wide, nor deep,
The slender wasted body at my feet;
What wonder is it if strong men will weep
O'er famine-stricken Jillen in her winding-sheet.

Her head I try to pillow on a stone,
But it will hang one side as if the breath
Of famine gaunt into the corpse had blown,
And blighted in the nerves the rigid strength of death.

'Hand me that stone, child.' In his hands 'tis placed;
Down channelling his cheeks are tears like rain;
The stone within his handkerchief is cased,
And then I pillow on it Jillen's head again."

Recalling this graphically described scene in prison, where the poem was written, Rossa continues:—

"Welcome those memories of scenes of youth,
That nursed my hate of tyranny and wrong,
That helmed my manhood in the path of truth,
'And help me now to suffer calmly and be strong."

One of Rossa's most finished poems was written on the occasion of poor Edward Duffy's death in Millbank Prison, where Rossa himself was also immured for a time. Another fellow-prisoner named Lynch whispered the words, "Duffy is dead," through the grating of Rossa's cell one morning, and one of the stanzas describes the effect the sad news had upon him:—

"That whisper through the grating has thrilled through all my veins,
'Duffy is dead!' A noble soul has slipped the tyrant's chains,
And whatever wounds they gave him, their lying books will show,
How they very kindly treated him, more like a friend than foe.

For these are Christian Pharises, the hypocrites of creeds,
With the Bible on their lips, and the devil in their deeds,
Too merciful in public gaze to take our lives away,
Too anxious here to plant in us the seeds of life's decay."

I can only quote one other stanza:—

"To lay your head upon the block for faith in Freedom's God,
To fall in fight for Freedom in the land your fathers trod;
For Freedom on the scaffold high to breathe your latest breath,
Or anywhere 'gainst tyranny is dying a noble death."

Rossa also made some translations from the Gaelic which he loved so well; and these I think if collected and published along with his original poems would make a little volume which all good Irishmen would like to have among their cherished literary possessions.

O'LEARY CURTIS.

Ó Donnabháin ROSA.

Diarmuid O Donnabhain Rosa!
 Honour and love to the name!
 There is nought in it mean or ignoble,
 It speaks not of serfdom or shame;
 It tells of a life lived for Ireland,
 Of a heart fond and fearless and true,
 Of a spirit untamed and defiant,
 That the foeman could never subdue.

They chained him, they starved him, they scourged him
 They tried every devil-sent plan
 To blacken the heart of the hero,
 To shatter the mind of the man;
 They made him an exile, an outlaw,
 They slandered him living and dead,
 But his love or his hate never wavered,
 Till the spirit God gave him had fled.

His crime was that Ireland, his Mother,
 Had called him to dare and to dree,
 That one day her bonds might be riven,
 That one day her limbs might be free
 From the chains of the English enslaver—
 And proudly he answered her call,
 Nor cared what the future might bring him,
 So Ireland were freed from her thrall.

Bear him back to that Mother who loves him,
 Bear him back to the land he loved well,
 Go forth 'mong the children of Ireland,
 The tale of his triumph to tell;
 In their hearts plant the seeds of his story,
 In their minds light the dream of his soul,
 And point them the road that he travelled,
 The rough road to Liberty's Goal.

Diarmuid O Donnabhain Rosa,
 Glory to God for his life,
 For the glorious memory he leaves us,
 To strengthen our hearts in the strife,
 Till the cause that he lived for has triumphed,
 Till the darkness of thralldom has fled,
 And Ireland, unfettered, shall honour
 The names of her patriot dead!

Brian na Banban.

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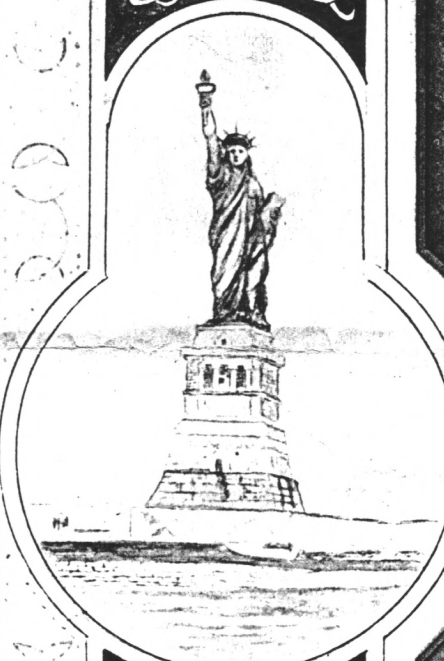
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Wiel Opus
Sigari machonjura
not only
so far as the people
of the world
are concerned
they are all



1916



1776



Memento
 OF THE VISIT OF
 The American Commission
 OF Irish Freedom
 When the delegates were entertained
 at 5 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin.
 May, 1919.

